

Date: June 24, 2002

To: Ald. Michael S. D'Amato
Judiciary & Legislation Committee Chairperson

From: Emma J. Stamps
Fiscal Review Analyst Senior

Subject: Questions for Year 2002 Candidates for Municipal Court Judge

In response to your recent request, the Legislative Reference Bureau has prepared the following confidential questions to be asked of candidates during the 2002 Municipal Court Judge interview. Please contact me at extension 8666 if you require further assistance.

1. What lessons can the Milwaukee Municipal Court learn from nationwide court experiences of caseload management?
2. In the last 2 years, the Municipal Court system has experienced significant employee turnover with respect to top management positions. What do you perceive is the greatest administrative challenge facing the next Municipal Court Judge?
3. In your opinion, what are the most significant issues affecting public confidence or basic understanding of the Municipal Court system and what role would you, as a Municipal Court Judge, have in increasing confidence in the court system?
4. The Municipal Court is responsible for processing all City ordinance violations initiated by citizen complaint and by the following departments: Neighborhood Services, Health, Library, and Police. Reportedly, the Municipal Court caseloads are increasing disproportionately to court space allocation per staff, raising concerns of client privacy and safety for public and staff. What short term and long run options do you perceive are available to the court to relieve those concerns?
5. Cases involving youth have a significant presence in the Municipal Court system. What has been your judicial experience with youth crimes?
6. What is your working relationship with the Department of Neighborhood Services and Health Department commissioners?

7. Briefly describe your professional experience relating to handling ordinance violations in Municipal Court.
8. What volunteer or community experience have you had in working with the community? Briefly describe your pro bono legal work.
9. How would you describe your judicial philosophy?
10. What was your most demanding court experience?
11. Have you ever lobbied for or actively supported a change in state law that would affect Municipal Court? What was the change and why did you support it?
12. What innovations used in other courts around the state and country would you recommend the Municipal Court utilize for improving upon what are, in your belief, the Municipal Court's most discernible strengths and weaknesses?
13. How would you evaluate the expanded use of court commissioners to handle full-time court intake? Has it been successful?
14. Do you think that communication between the Common Council and the Municipal Court is in need of improvement and, if so, how would you recommend it be improved?
15. How important do you believe it is for a Municipal Court Judge to have a good working relationship with the Milwaukee Chief of Police?