

Charter Revision Commission Questionnaire

August 4, 2009 Primary Election

- 1. Name: Patty Fedewa
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- 3. DOB: August 2, 1968
- 4. Education:
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 Email address: future@fedewachartercommission.com
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 Employer: National Labor Relations Board
 Occupation: Attorney since November 1994
 How Long: hired by the NLRB July 31, 1995
 High School Degree: St. Patrick's High School, Portland, Michigan, 1987
 College Degree: B.A., Michigan State University, 1991
 Postgraduate Degree: J.D. cum laude, Detroit College of Law, 1994

Please list any previous public office to which you have been elected or appointed, beginning with the most recent:

Member, Detroit Department of Transportation Advisory Commission
2004 to the present

- 1. Explain in 50 words or less, why you are seeking a seat on the charter revision commission.

I care deeply about our City, and despite all of its problems, have seen that change and reform can happen. This is an excellent opportunity to give Detroit a new foundation. I plan to donate whatever stipend I receive to the City to due to our budgetary crisis.

- 2. Describe any professional, educational, or civic experience that has prepared you to play a constructive role on the commission.

Since 2002, I have been the leader of Transportation Riders United's Bus Improvement project. In this role, I have advocated for bus riders in front of City Council, the Mayor, and the SMART Board. We have successfully improved bus service and prevented proposed fare increases from going into effect. Before 2002, an organized presence did not exist to watch-dog DDOT and SMART. I have had to actually use the charter to advocate for amending ordinances, determining the role of an advisory commission, and understanding the

roadblocks to regionalism.

Since 2000, I have been a member of the West Village Association Board. I know first hand how difficult it can be to keep a neighborhood viable in our city.

During 1999 and 2000, I was the treasurer for the 15th District Democratic Party. A terrific experience that taught me about politics and campaign finance. I was an elector for the 2000 presidential election.

3. What special expertise (legal, financial, etc.) would you bring to the charter revision commission?

I am a lawyer who understands the role of administrative procedures and unions first-hand.

3. (sic) List any prominent individuals or organizations that have endorsed you.
Sheila Cockrel, City Council

4. Which of the following best describes your approach to the charter revision process?

C. The charter commission should take a zero-based budgeting approach to its task, preserving only those elements of the current charter that have been demonstrably effective in moving the city forward.

5. If you could change only three provisions of the existing charter, which three would you focus on?

1. Electing city council by district. Sec. 3-106
2. Providing the city council with practical removal powers for elected and appointed officials. Sec. 2-107.
3. Elimination the vote requirement of the citizens if the structure of our transit system changes. Sec. 7-1404.

6. Which of the following best describes your attitude toward the current rules for electing city council?

B. Detroiters would be better served if most council members were elected by and accountable to single member districts.

7. Do you support changes in the way the police chief and/or the police commission is selected?

Yes, as to the police chief, because I support a 30-day "veto" right for all appointed positions – whether paid or unpaid. Similarly, the police chief should be subject to the same removal procedures available to all appointed and elected

positions. These provisions would apply to both paid and unpaid positions.

No, with regard to the police commission. However, I would require that the police commission review all discipline matters before arbitration rather than the system as it is now. I would also want the police commission to review "active" employees that are unable to work as to whether they should be directed onto disability or retirement. Although the police commission has become too much of a rubber stamp, public review of these and other citizen concerns does serve a purpose. Perhaps, a police commission with more responsibilities would do more, but I am open to discussion on these ideas.

8. What changes would you support, if any, in the governance of the city's two employee pension funds?

The charter is not the place to reform the pension funds because collective bargaining agreements "trump" charter provisions. These funds need significant reform for the reasons stated in your articles and others.

Incidentally, the charter's reference to the 1974 charter in the provisions regarding the funds is not useful. To the extent possible, the charter should be a self-contained document. Vague (and currently inaccurate references) in the charter add to confusion. Due to these and other unhelpful references (do we need to say in the charter that the city is subject to FOIA?), I would like the charter to be reduced to 30 pages or so. With fewer required department and the removal of unenforceable platitudes, this should be possible.

9. Would you commit to participate in one or two public candidate forums sponsored by the Free Press?

Yes.