



The Municipal League of King County  
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### 2009 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE KING COUNTY ELECTIONS DIRECTOR

The Municipal League of King County requests every candidate who participates in the candidate evaluation process to **submit background information prior to his/her interview with a candidate evaluation committee**. The questionnaire is the basis of the League's research and interview process. The League's ratings are non-partisan; they are based on standards of Involvement, Effectiveness, Character, and Knowledge, all of which have been developed and refined over the past 100 years.

A printed version of the questionnaire is available for candidates who prefer to use the traditional format. To obtain a hard copy, please contact the League office. A copy of this questionnaire will be provided to Candidate Evaluation Committee members to help them prepare for your interview. Candidate responses, except the confidential section, will be available to the general public at the League website.

The Municipal League requests the following materials from candidates. Please check to make certain you have sent in your:

- Candidate Questionnaire**  
Sent by:  Email  US Mail  Fax  Not Sending
- Resume (education, employment, and professional activities)**  
Sent by:  Email  US Mail  Fax  Not Sending  
 Check here if you DO NOT want your resume posted on the League's website
- Campaign Materials**  
Sent by:  Email  US Mail  Fax  Not Sending
- Constituent Newsletters and other publications**  
Sent by:  Email  US Mail  Fax  Not Sending
- Photograph**  
Sent by:  Email  US Mail  Fax  Not Sending

**Note: Electronically submitted questionnaires are strongly preferred. All materials can be emailed to [cec@munileague.org](mailto:cec@munileague.org). They can be processed and made available on-line far more rapidly than handwritten or typed submissions.**

For non-electronic submissions, please print clearly and legibly and return the application **as soon as possible in order to allow the committee the greatest amount of time to prepare a complete report on your skills and experience.**

If you have not yet been contacted to schedule an interview, or if you have questions about the candidate evaluation program, please contact the League office at 206-264-1070.

If you have a disability and require accommodation to participate in the candidate evaluation process, please contact the CEC Coordinator at the League office.

**A League volunteer Candidate Investigator is waiting to receive your questionnaire to begin his or her work. Please complete and return your questionnaire to the League office at your earliest convenience.**

**Please have your questionnaire to us no later than Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

If you have any question about completing the questionnaire, please feel free to contact us at 206-264-1070

# 2009 Candidate Questionnaire

King County Election Director

## SECTION I

### BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
David	W.	Irons

2. How long have you resided in King County?

**30 Plus years**

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### CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Irons for Elections

Address: 300 Queen Anne Ave N, #620

City/State/Zip: Seattle, WA 98109-4599

Campaign Phone: 425-443-6603

Campaign Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Campaign E-mail: david@ironsforelections.com

Campaign Website: www.ironsforelections.com

### POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
Associate Commissioner King Conservation District	Appointed	2006 to Present	Outreach Committee
King County Council	Elected	2000 to 2005	Chair and Vice Chair of a number of committees including Vice Chair of the Budget Committee
Issaquah School Board	Elected	1992 to 1999	President of the Board
Washington State School Director Board of Directors	Elected	1994 to 1999	Board Member
Precinct Committee Officer & State Committeeman Republican Party	Elected	2007 to 2008	Committee Member
City of Seattle Habitat Conservation Plan Oversight Committee for the Seattle Water Shed	Appointed	2004 to Present	Committee Member
Lake Sammamish State Park Advisory Committee	Appointed	2004 to Present	Committee Member
Chairman of the 5 <sup>th</sup> Legislative District Republican Party	Nominated and Ratified	1995 to 1997	Chairman of the Organization

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run
King County Executive	2005

## SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
- **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
- **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
- **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?

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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

**In 7<sup>th</sup> grade I ran to be the student representative from my home room class to our student council. The student council put on dances and I wanted to be on the dance committee. What I found was the student council was involved in real issues impacting the students of Glades Junior High School. I found it a challenge and highly rewarding to defend the rights of my fellow students. I went on to run for and was elected as one of two student representatives for the Junior class to John F. Kennedy High School's Student Senate. I found a personal passion for doing what was the right thing to do and helping others through elected office. I fulfilled this passion as a student representative on my college's executive board, and as a member of my community when elected to the Issaquah School Board and the King County Council. I am honored to serve the public through elected office and that's the reason I'm running for Director of Elections.**

**The challenges of King County Elections are familiar challenges I have faced in my years as an Executive in private business. Identifying the right choice of technology to recommend is very different than identifying a good choice. Designing and implementing fail proof systems has been a hallmark of the cutting edge technology company I founded eleven years ago. Bringing together and managing a team of professionals who take pride in their work and consider themselves as a family member of the team operating in a culture of integrity and fairness is the final element of any successful organization.**

**The King County Elections Department is facing some steep challenges in 2009. Implementation of HAVA (Help America Vote Act), an ongoing County budget crisis, moving to an all mail in ballot, setting up Voting Centers, filling over 14 empty positions in the Department and smoothing the transition into the newly elected office of Election Director will take a calm hand on the wheel. I am ready for that challenge.**

**Addressing the multiple needs facing the Elections Department while building a world class Elections team is what the citizens of King County asked for when they voted to have a non-partisan elected Director. I have a proven track record of building and managing just this type of organization and I am excited to run for this seat and have the opportunity to work with the highly skilled professional in the elections department and new team members to bring about this goal.**

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

**This new office will be more than a manager. The new Elections Director will be an independent executive of a department within King County Government. As a past Vice Chair of the King County Council budget committee I have a unique knowledge and understanding of this bureaucracy. I have experience being elected to non-partisan and partisan offices which provides me with unique insights into the needs and wants of party organizations and of individuals. My proven leadership style is to surround myself with the best and brightest individuals available and instill a culture of integrity, fairness and hard work. Then work with the team to define a clear vision for success and provide the team with the resources to be successful.**

**In the book "The Heart of Change" a discussion of the Toyota management style includes the reality that real change comes not from spewing forth a great deal of facts and figures. It comes, instead, by having a well designed plan that touches people's hearts as much as their minds. When people on a team buy into a plan with their hearts and minds they will put their souls into making the plan a success.**

**I believe in this as a basis of management style and have implemented it successfully as the CEO of a technology company and as a King County Councilmember.**

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.
1. **Eleven years ago I founded a cutting edge technology company. This company grew to provide services in six states from Washington to Ohio. We provided cutting edge technology to convention centers. This required us to install a new computer and phone network every four to seven days then remove most of the installation. We were required to meet and/or exceed a 99.99% success rate which we did. Growing a high tech company while providing the highest level of customer service that become one of the leaders in our industry was most rewarding. In 2007 I received two unsolicited offers to purchase my company, in October 2007 the company was sold to our chief competitor. The company that purchased my company hired me to remain on as CEO for one year to facilitate the merger of the two companies.**
2. **While on the King County Council I wrote a number of ordinances that help change to face of our communities. One that will have long lasting impact for generations to come was the charter amendment to move to a bi-annual budget. After struggling with budget shortfalls and broken processes for two years I realized we needed to look at how to have a successful re-occurring budget process, not just fiddle with the small pieces. I wrote a charter amendment that Larry Philips agreed to Co-sponsor to gradually change the structure and process of the King County Budget process to a bi-annual budget process. This was passed overwhelmingly by the King County Council, endorsed by the PI, and passed by roughly 60% of the voters of King County.**
3. **County Councilmember Julia Patterson and I were holding a public form on transportation when an elderly man slumped over in his chair from an apparent heart attack. After checking him and realizing his heart and breathing had stopped, I began to give mouth to mouth CPR. At the same time Jim Jacobsen (deputy general manager of Metro) began check compressions. The man made a full recovery and I was able to meet him after he returned home. The medics credited the swift action by Jim and myself with saving the mans life.**

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

**Please see my biography and resume below. Every elected office, every volunteer opportunity has created my skill profile. Thank you.**

## Professional Experience

- CEO of Convention Communication Provisioners Inc., a Telephone/Internet company - 1997 to 2008
- Chief Operations Officer of Brigadoon.com - 1995 to 1997
- VP & Co-owner of All Points Cable TV - 1982 to 1995
- Real Estate Agent for Kamas Realty - 1979 to 1982
- Construction Superintendent for Mueller Group - 1977 to 1979
- Alaska Pipeline construction - 1975 to 1977

## Public School Experience

- Issaquah School Board - 1991 to 1999
  - President - 1994 to 1995
  - Legislative Representative - 1996 to 1998
  - Federal Relations Network Representative - 1996 to 1999
  - School Board Rep for the teachers contract negotiations - 1997 to 1998
  - School Board Rep for the bus drivers contract negotiations - 1998
- Board of Directors - Washington State School Directors Association - 1993 to 1999 - Unanimously elected twice to this position by Puget Sound School Board members
- Board of Directors - King County Directors Association Buying Coop - 1991 to 1995
  - President - 1993 and 1995
  - Volunteer School Committees
- C2B2 - Maple Hills Elementary - 1988
- PTSA Nominating Committee - Discovery Elementary - 1990
- PTSA Maple Hills, Discovery, Beaver Lake Middle School - 1989 to 1999
- Feasibility Committee - 1988 to 1989

## Community Service

- Habitat for Humanity of East King County Board of Directors - 2003 to 2006
- "We the People" High School civics competition judge 2002 to 2008
- Friends of Youth Advisory Board - 1996 to 2000
- Issaquah Chamber Board of Directors - 2007 to present
- King Conservation Association Board member - 2006 to present
- Down Town Issaquah Association - 2006 to present
- Volunteers for Issaquah Schools, Fundraising Co-Chair - 1998
- Ski Instructor, teaching 6- to 12-year-olds - 1990 to 1998
- Salmon Days Volunteer & Parade Announcer - 1992 to present
- 4th of July Kids Parade Volunteer & Parade Announcer - 1991 to present
- Volunteer & Run Announcer for Ski-For-All - 1997
- Rotary Club of Issaquah - 1990 to present
  - President - 2000
  - Board of Directors, Vocational Education - 1994 to 1995
  - Chairperson Middle School Scholarship Program
  - Co-Chair Issaquah Rotary Run Race Course - 1994 to 1998
  - Co-Chair Rotary Golf Tournament to benefit DARE, High School and Middle School Scholarships

## King County Council Experience

- Councilmember for District 12 1999 to 2005
- Vice Chair Budget and Fiscal Management Committee
- King County Council's Representative to Elections Canvassing Board 2000 to 2001
- Growth Management and Unincorporated Areas Committee
- Transportation Committee
- Vice Chair Natural Resources and Utilities Committee

- Utilities and Technology Committee - Chair 2000 to 2001
- Regional Transportation Investment District Executive Board - 2005
- Cedar River Council - Co-Chair 2000 to 2006
- Cedar River Watershed Habitat Conservation Plan Oversight Committee - 2003 to present
- Eastside Transportation Partnership 2000 to 2006
- KPSRC Economic Development District Board
- PSRC Growth Management Policy Board
- Lake Sammamish State Park Advisory Board

## Community Awards and Honors

- Evergreen Award, Arboretum of the Cascades - 2001
- Distinguished Citizen Award, King County Medic One - 2002
- Meritorious Service Award, King County Sheriff - 2003
- Honorary Membership, Navy League of the United States, Seattle Council - 2003
- Honorary Membership, Lake Sawyer Hawks RC Flyers - 2003

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

**The most important duty of the Director of Elections is managing the Elections Department in a way that ensures the Department provides the accurate counting, reporting and archiving of ballots and all election collateral and data. This is important so that the office has transparency, accountability and integrity and is perceived by all stakeholders to have the full trust of the voters of King County.**

**This past November and in November 2007, 57% of the voters of King County supported the ability to vote for an Elections Director. The voters wanted the office that counts their ballots to be transparent and accountable to them - not the Executive's office. It will be vital that this Department carries out the policy mandates of the County Council and begins the task of setting up Voting Centers and implementing the mail in voting mandate.**

**In converting the County to mail in voting with Voting Centers throughout the County, we will need to have a handle on new technology being promoted by vendors of election equipment. This new equipment demands an understanding of technology and systems management. This is important because accurate and fast counting of ballots, systems dealing with millions of pieces of paper must be certified and vetted by a Director experienced with similar systems and the ability to understand technology that deals with data.**

**It is important to have good people. Every election is only as good as the people administering it. This is important because, technology aside, human beings are touching ballots. I will use my proven management experience and leadership abilities to create a culture of integrity and fairness so that, together with excellent staff members, we continue to build a King County Elections Department that is a world-class example of modern election practices and procedures.**

**Advocating for the budget necessary to run a modern Elections Department in a cost-effective manner is important. As the past Vice Chair of the King County Council Budget Committee I understand the processes that will be needed to ensure the King County Elections Department is properly funded and that new processes and equipment are cost effective and promote honest access to voting.**

**EDUCATION BACKGROUND SUMMARY  
FOR PUBLICATION IN CANDIDATE EVALUATION REPORT**

The Municipal League's Candidate Evaluation Report is distributed to voters in print and on our website. It includes a summary of the candidate's education. Please summarize your education in 120 characters (letters, punctuation, and space all combined). The League will delete material that exceeds the space limit by beginning with the last entry. Suggested order is (degree) (subject) (school) (year, if desired).

**Note:** *If this question is left blank the League will not include education information in your candidate profile.*

**Education: Two years at Bellevue Community College; Two years at Oakland University, Math and Economic studies.**

**CIVIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY  
FOR PUBLICATION IN CANDIDATE EVALUATION REPORT**

The Municipal League's Candidate Evaluation Report includes a summary of each candidate's civic involvement. Please summarize your civic involvement in the space below. We will make every attempt to include the information in the Candidate Evaluation Report as submitted. Due to space restrictions in the Report, your response is limited to 500 characters (letters, punctuation, and spaces all combined). It is important that you list your involvement beginning with the most important and ending with the least important. If you exceed the length of response permitted, or if the League should find it necessary to shorten responses for publication purposes, deletions will be made beginning with the last item listed.

**Note:** *This information will appear verbatim on the League's Candidate Evaluation Report. If this question is left blank, the Municipal League will not include information on your civic involvement in the Report.*

Check here if you would like the Municipal League to copy the first 500 characters from Question 4 to paste into this section.

**Please include information from Question 4.**

## Finished!

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If at all possible, send your response to the Municipal League electronically as an email attachment, or insert it into an e-mail message ([cec@munileague.org](mailto:cec@munileague.org)). Mail and fax numbers are listed below. If the League has not contacted you to schedule an interview, please call the League office at your earliest convenience.

Don't forget to send the following to the Municipal League: a resume, a photo, campaign literature, and, if you are an incumbent, constituent newsletters and other materials. Please use the check-off list on the cover sheet of this packet to indicate which items you have sent.

**A League volunteer Candidate Investigator is waiting to receive your questionnaire to begin his or her work. Please complete and return your questionnaire to the League office at your earliest convenience.**

**Please have your questionnaire to us no later than Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND GOOD LUCK IN YOUR CAMPAIGN!

### THE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE OF KING COUNTY

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