

TCR CITY OF HOUSTON ELECTIONS 2009 QUESTIONNAIRE

1. DO YOU SUPPORT CAPPING RESIDENTIAL PROPEERTY TAX APPRAISALS AT A MAXIMUM 5% INCREASE PER YEAR?

Burks: Yes. I believe the city and government in general over regulates. Our citizens need to keep as much money as they possibly can in their procession. With more money in our citizens' control they tend to spend more which brings in more revenues for the city. This practice will allow the city to receive substantially more revenues than the old habit of increasing fees, water rates, sales and property taxes.

2. DO YOU SUPPORT A REQUIREMENT THAT THE CITY NOT RAISE TAXES WITHOUT A SUPERMAJORITY OF AT LEAST 60% OF CITY COUNCIL?

Burks: Yes. I believe our mayor and city council have never explored common sense ways in increasing revenues. Therefore they have resorted to raising taxes as a quick fix and an easy way out. In my opinion council has shown poor judgment in their actions. It is easy to raise taxes using a small majority of members voting. Some council members have been known to be conveniently absent when the vote to raise taxes is done. New ideas are needed when it comes to increasing revenues not being conveniently absent so one could say they didn't vote for it. The percentage of 60% makes council more accountable causing them to work harder to resolve our financial problems in the future.

3. DO YOU SUPPORT A SPENDING CAP LIMITING THE INCREASE IN CITY SPENDING TO THE RATE OF GROWTH OF POPULATION PLUS INFLATION?

Burks: Yes. A spending cap definitely would eliminate unnecessary spending and cause council to become proficient in spending. Uncontrolled spending is the main cause of our financial troubles today.

4. DO YOU SUPPORT ESTABLISHING A "GRACE" TYPE COMMISSION TO IDENTIFY WAYS FOR THE CITY TO ELIMINATE FRAUD, WASTE, ABUSE, INCOMPETENCE AND SUGGESTED OPERATING EFFICIENCIES?

Burks: Yes. I believe an outside commission should audit our city's financial and city department budgetary usage. This allows greater transparency and enables council to work on more serious city problems such as flooding, pension problems and much more.

5. DO YOU SUPPORT THE CONSOLIDATION OF CITY FUNCTIONS WITH HARRIS COUNTY WHERE IT IS PRACTICAL?

Burks: Yes I support this only when it is practical to do so. We need more inter-local agreements with the Harris County, Metro, our Independent School Districts including our Community Colleges and Universities. This prevents duplication in spending in all agencies which is cost effective in itself.

6. DO YOU SUPPORT ENDING RACE AND GENDER BASED AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAMS TO BE REPLACED BY A NEED BASED SYSTEM?

Burks: *Yes, only if we have sufficient safe guards with penalties in place to assure especially minorities they will be active and equally accepted participants in all the day to day operations, employment, present and future economic development of our city.*

7. DO YOU SUPPORT THE RIGHT OF CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS TO ADD ITEMS TO THE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA IF APPROVED BY A MAJORITY OF MEMBERS?

Burks: *Yes. This makes for a well informed council and represented citizenry. All members work for the citizens and it is through the members the citizens speak. It is time for a change and this will be a good change.*

8. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE PRIVATE PROPERTY FROM INDIVIDUALS OR CORPORATIONS FOR THE "GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY" WITHOUT PAYING FAIR COMPENSATION?

Burks: *No. I support individual property rights. Government should only take private property when it is protecting citizens and not for a convenience. I believe fair and substantial compensation should be the only way to acquire private property.*

9. DO YOU SUPPORT THE GRANTING OF PUBLIC TAX FUNDS FOR PRIVATE OR SEMI-PRIVATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS THAT ARE NOT ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED?

Burks: *No.*

10. DO YOU SUPPORT EXPANSION OR REORGANIZING THE POLICE DEPARTMENT SO THAT OFFICERS PATROL WITH A PARTNER, AT LEAST DURING NIGHT HOURS?

Burks: *Yes. This provides officer safety and effective delivery of police services. With our population increasing there is already a need for more than one officer to respond to a complaint. This is good for all Houstonians on all police day and night shifts.*