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## Sangamon Valley Group of the Sierra Club Springfield Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Gail M. Simpson

Office Sought: Alderman Ward 2

Last year, the city of Springfield reached a historic agreement with the Sierra Club for a clean energy plan to reduce pollution levels, purchase wind power, and increase investments in energy efficiency and conservation programs. Questions 1-3 relate to the agreement.

1) Part of the plan calls for increases in annual spending on energy efficiency and conservation programs. Will you support keeping Springfield's commitment to those efforts by maintaining the spending levels called for in the energy plan?

Yes.

2) Will you support maintaining the City's commitment to purchase at least 120MW of wind power for Springfield, of which 60MW will be paid for by the State of Illinois?

Yes.

3) As part of the agreement, CWLP will offer a green power program, where residents and businesses can choose to purchase some or all of their electricity from wind power and other renewable resources at a higher cost. Currently, this program does not require CWLP to acquire additional green power when customers participate in the program. Do you support allowing customers to pay for additional clean energy development (beyond the 120MW requirement) through this green power program?

I would not have a problem with residents who, with all available information at their disposal, agreed to purchase some or all of their electricity from wind power and other renewable resources at a higher cost. It would be an option available to them.

4) Would you support using wells in the Sangamon River Valley as a secondary source to meet the city's future water needs, which would be a less expensive and more environmentally friendly alternative to building a second lake?

I have concerns regarding the reliability of wells alone as a secondary source to meet the city's future water needs. Additionally, I would question the fiscal responsibility of requiring additional funds for new wells when the land has already been purchased for Hunter Lake. I would need to see specific studies on the wells and their sustained reliability.

5) What actions would you take to enhance the network of bicycle paths in Springfield?

I would like to see a bicycle planning task force developed to determine the overall need and interest in bicycle paths in Springfield. They would also need to assess the use of existing bicycle paths in terms of frequency and ease of use. The taskforce would also need to determine the amount of grant funding from the federal government that would be available.

6) What actions would you take to encourage development within Springfield's city center, and discourage sprawl?

Seriously dealing with the issue of safe neighborhoods through stronger and improved community policing, and addressing poor overall school performance in District 186. These are concerns that determine whether individuals and/or businesses would consider Springfield's city center conducive for revitalization. Springfield's center and areas east, south and southeast of the center could be valuable areas if mindsets are changed. Mixed used development in the areas of housing and business development should be examined by the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce under their Quantum 5 Growth Initiative.

7) Many cities, including Normal Illinois, have adopted ordinances that promote sustainability, energy conservation and environmental concerns for buildings. Do you think Springfield should promote green building practices such as providing incentives for developers, or rewriting zoning, storm water management, building, and other ordinances? If yes, what steps should Springfield take to implement these standards?

Yes. A system of educating its citizens and a gradual implementation of these practices as is hopefully outlined in the agreement with the Sierra Club and CWLP for annual spending on energy efficiency and conservation programs

8) Do you support the expansion of Springfield bus service into evening hours? Are there any other steps you would take to encourage increased use of public transportation?

Yes, I support the expansion of Springfield bus service into evening hours, if there are major changes to how the buses currently operate. I would make the transfer system much less cumbersome. Springfield is a large enough city that buses converging on downtown as a transfer station is an antiquated system and should be restructured. Not only it is inconvenient it adds unnecessary travel time. Directional transfers are a better option for a city of this size and I believe would encourage greater and easier use. Also, buses ran on a more convenient and more frequent schedule would increase rider ship.

9) Will you support the phasing-in of energy efficient and low pollution vehicles into the city's fleet?

Yes.

10) Please add any comments you may have.

I support the Sierra Club's efforts to change our mindsets regarding conservation and energy efficiency, but some of your strong arm tactics make people more resistant than they might otherwise be if a different approach was used.