

St. Charles City Council Candidates (contested races)

	Ronald Silkaitis (Ward 1)	Robert Kasper (Ward 1)	Ryan Bongard (Ward 2)	Angela Churchill (Ward 2)	Vicki Spellman (Ward 3)	Paul Lencioni (Ward 3)	Carolyn Waibel (Ward 3)	Steven Weber (Ward 5)	Lauren Duddles (Ward 5)
Question									
1. Do you agree that local municipal governments have a responsibility to address climate change through their policies, practices, ordinances and regulations?	Yes	No response (NR)	Yes	No response (NR)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No response (NR)	Yes
2. Do you accept campaign contributions from any of the following entities or their lobbyists, executives, officers, or representatives?									
Illinois Municipal Electric Agency (IMEA)	No	NR	No	NR	No	No	No	NR	No
Northern Illinois Municipal Power Agency (NIMPA)	No	NR	No	NR	No	No	No	NR	No
Illinois Municipal Utility Association (IMUA)	No	NR	No	NR	No	No	No	NR	No
Prairie State Generating Company	No	NR	No	NR	No	No	No	NR	No
3. Do you own bonds or an interest in bonds issued by IMEA or NIMPA?	No	NR	No	NR	No	No	N/A	NR	No
4. Will you invest the time needed to become actively involved in the oversight and regulation of the City's municipal electric utility?	Yes	NR	Yes	NR	Yes	Yes	Yes	NR	Yes
5. Do you support efforts to involve more stakeholder participation (from residents, taxpayers, and ratepayers) in the City's energy planning process?	Yes	NR	Yes	NR	Yes	Yes	Yes	NR	Yes
6. Do you support creating local incentives (economic and non-economic) to promote greater energy efficiency and transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources?	Yes	NR	N/A – see comment	NR	Yes	Yes	Yes	NR	Yes
7. Do you support the adoption of zoning codes (for example, “stretch codes”) and ordinances that will further the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources?	Yes	NR	Yes	NR	Yes	Yes	Yes	NR	Yes
8. Will you support regular implementation of actions in furtherance of the Greenest Region Compact goals?	Yes	NR	Yes	NR	Yes	Yes	Yes – see comment	NR	Yes
9. If you are seeking office in St. Charles, do you support the early renewal of the contract with IMEA through 2055?	No – see comment	NR	N/A – see	NR	No – see comment	See comment	No – see comment	NR	No

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*****Comments shown on next page*****

Comments:

Ronald Salkaitis: *“At this time, I cannot support an early renewal of the current contract with IMEA. The contract is set to expire in 10 years, in 2035. The new proposed contract with IMEA would have a duration of 20 years, expiring in 2055. The City of St. Charles needs to do its due diligence and make a thoughtful and environmentally responsible decision on whether to renew the contract. I would like to see St. Charles explore other viable options for our electricity needs, with renewable energy sources being a priority. The City of Naperville hired a consultant to study different ways to provide energy to their city. I would like to see St. Charles act similarly to help ensure that we can make a well-informed decision about our future energy needs and sources. It is an important decision that will impact the city, the environment, and our residents for many years to come.”*

Ryan Bongard: *“[Regarding Question 6] Need more information on non-incentive options. Also need to be mindful of the financial feasibility of offering incentives given the budget pressure on municipalities. [Regarding Question 9] More information and commitment is needed from IMEA to [?] approve/disapprove an early renewal. This includes energy mix expectations by council/public, availability, interest in long-term relationship.”*

Vicki Spellman: *“I do not believe that St. Charles should commit to a new contract 10 years early, for an additional 20 years, with so few specifics from IMEA on how they will use these financial commitments, and so few assurances about when and how goals to move to cleaner energy production will be met. One of the coal plants that supplies IMEA (Marissa, IL) is among the dirtiest in the country. It is contributing to climate change, health harms and environmental damage from its large pollution output. Cleaner solutions are available, potentially for the same or lower costs, according to some experts. I would like to see St. Charles work with an expert consultant to help advise the city on potential options for a different energy partner, along with what the cost and infrastructure impacts would be, if any. We have time to do this right.”*

Paul Lencioni: *My support or opposition to continuing to buying electric supply from IMEA is not currently final. I do not support renewing the IMEA contract within the next 6 months or until we have good insight into quite a few decision elements. 1) We must understand what alternatives exist to purchasing energy from IMEA – realistic, viable alternatives which effectively meet all our goals. To leave IMEA without a reliable, competitive, improved alternative is the worst outcome to this consideration. 2) We must understand what improved or “better” than IMEA would mean. I do very much believe that “more renewable” is a part of “better” and an important part of this consideration. It is, however, not the only consideration.*

Our power must continue to be predictable, affordable, and reliable as well. I would love for St Charles to never be powered by a fuel source which contributes to global warming. I would love to support a zero coal burning option. We know that’s not possible. I balance that priority with ensuring we have reliable, reasonably affordable, predictable power supply.

Those are the criteria I will use to make my decision as to how St Charles will acquire our energy in the future. We still must know how far we can push IMEA through negotiations toward producing the most aggressive investment in renewable energy they are willing to make. We still need have proposals for alternatives to renewing our energy contract with IMEA. When we have made those best efforts, then we can make a good, well-informed decision on where we will acquire our energy in the future. Today, the path forward is not clear.

Carolyn Waibel: *"[Regarding Question 8] I would like to learn more about this. [Regarding Question 9] As Alderman it is imperative to do due diligence with the IMEA contract: * Require RFP with multi competitive bid. * A study to evaluate the current energy, resources, costs, sources. *Hard stop on the push to sign the IMEA contract for 2035 in 2025."*