



Friends and Neighbors:

First, thank you all for the outpouring of support we've received for my Park Commissioner campaign. From posting our yard signs to all the encouraging words and emails, it's really meant a lot to me, Sarah and Tessa.

There's some news we feel it's important to share that you may become aware over the next few weeks.

We learned through a friend that the New Trier Republican Organization (NTRO) sent an email encouraging its members to vote for me. **To be clear, I have no affiliation with this group whatsoever and did not seek their endorsement. Until recently, I hadn't even heard of the NTRO.** I've reached out to the NTRO via email and phone for an explanation and have not received a response.

I wanted you all to hear this from me since some of you have asked friends and relatives who may not know me personally to post yard signs and endorse my campaign. I would not want to put you or them in the uncomfortable position of being affiliated with a group (even unknowingly) that they don't support.

As you may know, the Park Commissioner campaign is *non-partisan*. Or at least it's supposed to be. There are no Democrat or Republican candidates. Just candidates.

Full disclosure, I have voted for both Republican and Democrat candidates in past local and national elections. Which may be why the NTRO recommended my candidacy. Perhaps I had voted for enough Republicans over the years for the NTRO to see me as "one of them."

Except I'm not. I consider myself an Independent and vote for whom I perceive to be the best candidate, regardless of party affiliation.

I'm running for Park Commissioner because I believe in the unifying power of our parks. In an often divisive time, they are a great gift to our community and I'm happy and honored to support them any way I can. I also know that many in our community feel their voices aren't heard so I want to support you as well.

Like an uninvited guest, it's a shame that partisan politics and its purveyors have obnoxiously stormed through the front door of a non-partisan election. And that allegedly non-partisan political groups behind voting "palm cards" are telling the community on Facebook and elsewhere NOT to vote for me—not on the basis of my qualifications, campaign or character—but simply because I was included on a list sent out by the NTRO, unbeknownst to me.

It's also a shame that our 10-year-old daughter is worried—not that Dad might not win an election—but that people in the community might not like us anymore or that she might be teased or bullied at school (her words, not mine).

As a father, it hurts me deeply to hear this. I would never have run for office had I known it would have a negative impact on my family. On the contrary, I thought it would be a great lesson and fun experience for her about the importance of volunteering your time and serving your community. To a certain degree, I was wrong.

My goal as a Park Commissioner and member of this community is to bring people together, not divide us with harmful “us vs. them” political rhetoric. A main reason I’m running is that I believe protecting, nurturing and improving our parks is something we can all agree on.

I know very little about the political affiliations of any of you because I really don’t care. How you vote, whom you support, is none of my business. In our family, we don’t judge people by their voting records. You’re all great people whom we’ve come to know over our time in Wilmette and we value your friendship. That’s all that matters to us.

One of my favorite poems is *Human Family* by Maya Angelou. When I hear the tiresome, divisive, partisan yapping and rancor that infects our society today, I often think of her poem’s final two stanzas and it gives me hope that someday soon, with her words in mind, we can find a path forward:

***I note the obvious differences between each sort and type,  
but we are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike.***

***We are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike.  
We are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike.***

Thanks again for your support and for reading this. And don’t forget to vote (whomever you choose to vote for)! You don’t need someone’s “palm card.” Research the numerous great candidates and make up your own mind.

Please reach out with any questions or if you’d like to discuss further.

Mike