

January 22, 2009

Keith West  
2714 E. Franklin St.  
Richmond, VA 23223

City Council of Richmond  
900 E. Broad St.  
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Members of the City Council,

Please consider my application to fill the vacant council seat for the 7<sup>th</sup> District.

My qualifications are included in the attached resume, highlighted as followed:

- **Support of Residents of the Seventh District-** I am the only applicant to have been elected to public office by the people of the district. No other applicant can demonstrate this level of support.
- **Knowledge of the District-** I walked the entire district in campaigning for School Board, attended numerous meetings and events, and talked with and answered the concerns of many residents of the district. My knowledge of the full range of people, needs, and issues in the district are unmatched among applicants.
- **Knowledge of School Budget and Issues-** For the first time in many years, there is no one on the City Council with experience on the School Board. As the schools are a large part of the city budget, which is threatened by decreases in state and local revenues, my in depth knowledge of school budgets and operations would benefit the Council.
- **Young Family-** The exodus of families with young children and the disruption that causes in communities is one of the most serious issues facing the city. If appointed, I would be the only member of the Council with young children and would therefore be able to provide insight on the issues facing this troubled demographic.
- **Finance Experience-** Finance is one of the most serious issues facing governments at all levels. My experience running a business and overseeing the finances of community and government organizations would be an asset to the Council this year.

This vacancy has revealed divisions in the district which need to be addressed as well as a need to develop more leadership. If appointed, I would initiate the following over the coming year:

1. **Create a representative task force to identify the issues facing the district.** The goal would be development of a strategic plan for the district, which would contain measurable objectives and suggested means of achieving them, whether through private or government initiatives.

2. **Create a District Leadership Council** to serve as a forum for civic associations, philanthropic organizations, schools and others to meet regularly to enhance understanding and cooperation among the citizens and organizations of the district. A committee of the Council would be assigned to identify, recruit, and develop leaders to serve in various roles, including city boards and commissions.

I have lived, owned a business and been involved in civic activities in the 7<sup>th</sup> District for over 10 years. For these reasons and more I believe I would be an asset to the city, the Council, and the people of the 7<sup>th</sup> District serving as a representative on City Council.

Sincerely,

Keith West