

**PEORIA PEOPLE'S PROJECT**  
**P.O. BOX 6165 PEORIA, IL 61601**  
**TEL 309.423.3213**  
**www.peoriapeoplesproject.org**

**Peoria People's Project Candidate Questionnaire 2019**  
**City Council at-Large**

Candidate Name: Aaron Chess

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Candidate Phone: 309-922-6405 \_\_\_\_\_ Campaign Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate Questions**

Please provide written answer to the questions below. We encourage you to keep your responses to 1-2 paragraphs and to provide specific and concrete answers to your questions.

1. What do you believe City Council's role is in building a world class education system in Peoria?  
I believe that as a council we would have to work with our school districts and help provide them with the proper resources that are needed to give the students their proper education. We have to make sure our schools are safe enough so that the students who are raised in broken homes can have a place to take their minds off things and feel safe and welcomed. We have to encourage the schools to prepare are students in areas of poverty for life after Highschool with educating them on the proper life skills, etc..
2. A recent study by Governing.com stated that the Peoria Metro Area schools were the most segregated in the country. What solutions would you offer to correct this glaring disparity?we need to make sure we have educators in the schools who aren't their just for a paycheck but there to help the students succeed in life. Kids find school as a place to be able to showcase their talents with hopes of getting scholarships or recognition to pursue higher education.
3. If the state of Illinois raises the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, how will you ensure that employers are paying workers in Peoria the new minimum wage?  
If they aren't paying the minimum wage that would be breaking the law. As a city we would hold businesses accountable to follow the states new law.  
Do you support a fair tax structure in Illinois where the rich pay their fair share of taxes? If so, would you use your political capital to move this agenda forward? Yes I support everyone paying their fair share.
4. What is your plan to equitably integrate our neighborhoods? We have to make our housing more affordable. Also we have to make sure that our men and women have jobs so that they are be able to keep up with necessities of owning a home.

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5. Peoria as a whole has the highest black unemployment rate of any metropolitan area in the nation. What solutions do you have to lower the unemployment rate of members of the black community? Teaching our men and women the necessary skills for trade and vocational. So that they too can become their own entrepreneurs by taking their skills and starting up their own companies. Also they will be able to make a great living wage if they were trained those skills since those are the skills our communities are lacking.
6. The south side community, which has the highest population of low income, black residents in Peoria, has twice the rates of breathing problems like asthma and COPD than the rest of the city of Peoria due to the coal electric plant that sits nearby. What will you do to ensure environmental justice on the south side? We have to hold the coal plant accountable. I would urge the council work closely with our environmental groups and the EPA to ensure that we do something about this problem.
7. What ideas or solutions do you have to solve the food desert issues that currently exist within black and brown communities in Peoria? Local grocery stores! It all goes back to supporting small businesses and urging members of the communities to come together and purchase one of the vacant building in town and turn that into a grocery store for the community.
8. Our schools and our city needs additional revenue to make investments in underserved areas of the community. Would you support closing TIFs and returning money back to the taxing bodies such as Peoria Public Schools, Parks and Libraries? We also should look at where else's is our tax dollars are going to. I believe that we should return money back to the schools , parks and libraries

Thank you for your participation.