

\*\* Alderman \*\*  
**Michele Smith**

Chicago's 43rd Ward



## City Council Update

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### [Clark Street Consumer Survey](#)

Take a minute to answer a [questionnaire](#) about what businesses you'd like to see on Clark Street. The Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce will use the information to work with realtors, property owners, entrepreneurs, elected officials and business owners to attract the right businesses to the corridor and help existing businesses thrive.

[Click here to take the survey.](#)

### [59th Annual Ginza Fest](#)

**August 8 - 10, 2014**

**7:00 PM**

**Midwest Buddhist Temple**

The 59th Annual Ginza Holiday, a large Japanese cultural festival, will be presented by the Midwest Buddhist Temple on August 8th, 9th, and 10th at 435 W.

Dear Neighbor,

Last Wednesday's City Council meeting produced a number of important ordinances.

### **9-1-1 Tax Provides Pension Relief**

City Council approved a 56-percent increase in the monthly surcharge on telephone bills, commonly referred to as the "9-1-1 Tax." This [ordinance](#), which takes effect on September 1st, 2014, allows for a monthly increase (from the current, monthly fee of \$2.50 to \$3.90) on every land line and cell phone in the City.

Today, the 911 center is partly funded by general revenue. This new tax will bring additional funding to 911 centers directly from phone taxes, freeing up about \$50 million dollars that will be used to fund the city's share of the pension relief that was recently negotiated with the City's municipal workers. While the revenue generated is temporary, and will expire within a year, this fee increase is necessary to finance next year's pension obligations, which are significantly underfunded, and represent a tremendous liability to the City's future fiscal health.

While no elected official - myself included - is pleased to vote for any additional fee increase during these difficult economic times, this is a partial solution as we work to right size our remaining obligations.

As reported in [previous newsletters](#), I am committed to pension reform, and will continue to keep you posted in the coming months as we work to address decades of neglect to this critical issue.

### **Board of Ethics Ordinance**

Also on Wednesday, an [ordinance](#) passed granting the Chicago Board of Ethics the power to investigate allegations of campaign finance violations by members of the Chicago

Menomonee Street.

Four Waza Craftsman of Japan will share their unique history with Ginza visitors, who can also enjoy the outdoor stage, exhibits, food, and music.

This is one of my favorite neighborhood fests, and is great for kids.

For more information visit their website at [www.ginzachicago.com](http://www.ginzachicago.com).

**Chicago Hot Dog Fest**  
**August 9 - 10**  
**Corner of Clark and**  
**LaSalle**

Join the Chicago History Museum for Hot Dog Fest! Admission is free and food tickets can be purchased at the festival and online at [chicagohotdogfest.com](http://chicagohotdogfest.com).

**Pitch in Chicago**  
**Neighborhood Cleanups**  
**August 23, 2014**

Mayor Emanuel and the Department of Streets and Sanitation are calling on residents to team up and clean their communities through the new Pitch In Chicago day of service on Saturday, August 23.

Join with your neighbors and call 3-1-1 or our office to register your "Pitch In Chicago" team and the area or school you plan to clean. The City will provide you and your community tools to get the job done.

Community registration deadline is Friday, August 15, 2014.

**Chicago Air and Water**  
**Show**

City Council.

The Legislative Inspector General, Faisal Khan, had previously claimed that he had the power to investigate such violations, but there has been considerable debate, as his authority was not specifically stated in the ordinance.

Unfortunately, while I fully intended to vote on the measure in City Council - and would have joined the six Aldermen that voted "no" on this ordinance - I was called off the floor to discuss another legislative matter and the vote occurred during my absence.

**I believe that all public officials - including myself and my colleagues on the City Council - should be held to high ethical standards of conduct. As a former federal prosecutor, I am acutely aware of the absolute need for strong oversight of each and every individual who is a public servant.**

In fact, in April of 2013 I joined a group of aldermen to call for aldermen to be subject to the same ethical oversight as all other City employees, which was reported in my [newsletter](#). I also voted for strengthening the Legislative Inspector General ordinance in the past, and [reported](#) that as well.

The continued lack of oversight of City Council must be addressed, including the requirement that aldermen can only be investigated following the submission of a signed and sworn affidavit. I am working with some of my colleagues on the City Council to craft measures for further reform, and I will continue to keep you informed as this proposal is developed.

**Medical Marijuana**

An [ordinance](#) was passed requiring anyone seeking to establish a medical marijuana dispensary or a cultivation center to seek a "Special Use Permit" in "B3" business districts and "C" commercial districts. As many of you know, seeking a special use permit requires notice to be posted at the site, and we always seek neighborhood input through our local neighborhood associations.

While I support the legalization of medical marijuana, I do not believe that dispensaries should be located in "B3" business districts (in the 43rd Ward that includes Lincoln Avenue and parts of Armitage, Halsted and Wells) under any circumstance. I therefore voted against the ordinance.

**August 16 and 17  
10am - 3pm**

The Chicago Air and Water Show begins August 15th with a practice show, and continues August 16th and 17th! The Blue Angels will be present at this year's show.

Beginning Monday, August 11, 2014, the parking lot at North Avenue beach will be closed for site preparation, which will continue throughout the week. On Friday, August 15th, beginning at 10:00 am there will be Air Show rehearsals, which will end at 3:00 pm.

The parking lot at North Avenue beach will re-open to the public on Monday, August 18th at 3:00 pm.

43rd Ward Office  
2523 N. Halsted  
[www.ward43.org](http://www.ward43.org)

Office Hours:  
Monday  
9 a.m.-7 p.m.  
Tuesday-Thursday  
9 a.m.-6 p.m.  
Friday  
9 a.m.-12 p.m. & 2 p.m.-6 p.m.

Contact us:  
phone  
773-348-9500  
email  
[yourvoice@ward43.org](mailto:yourvoice@ward43.org)

The ordinance passed by a vote of 45-2. Should a dispensary seek to open in the 43rd Ward, I will notify and work with residents to ensure full community review.

### **Minimum Wage Increase**

Mayor Emanuel introduced a plan to gradually increase the minimum wage in Chicago to \$13 an hour by 2018.

I am concerned about the impact of such a raise on Chicago-area employment, especially if it is imposed only in Chicago, not throughout the State or County. I therefore co-sponsored a [resolution](#) calling for hearings on the impact of a potential wage increase on business in Chicago.

I encourage interested residents to email my office at [yourvoice@ward43.org](mailto:yourvoice@ward43.org) to make your opinion known. This feedback is vital as I continue to consider my position on this issue.

For a summary of other measures introduced and passed at the City Council meeting, click [here](#).

Sincerely,



Michele Smith  
43rd Ward Alderman