

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Jeff Smith Files for Mayor of Evanston

Evanston attorney and community activist Jeff Smith on Monday, December 19, 2016 filed nominating papers to run as an independent candidate for mayor of Evanston, Illinois, in the April 4, 2017 consolidated election. Smith was the only candidate to file in the December filing period in which Evanston mayoral candidates have filed for many decades.

Said Smith, in a personally released statement, "Evanston is a great town that can become an amazing town. Evanston should be a leader in Illinois; to do that we need to show how government can work better. Key is engaging the passion and creativity of Evanston's residents."

Smith, a longtime Evanston resident, would bring to the mayor's office an unusual combination of experience in government's executive branch, in business, and in grassroots activism. An area native educated at Northwestern University and Harvard Law School, Smith served as Assistant Corporation Counsel under Chicago Mayor Harold Washington, and as General Counsel for Illinois's Department of Natural Resources from 2013-2015 under Gov. Quinn, on the executive team of a 1500-person department with a budget in excess of \$200M. He served without pay on the Evanston wind farm study group appointed by Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl, and then on the state offshore wind council whose recommendations led to two new laws.

In Evanston, Smith has long been associated with environmental, planning, preservation, and good government causes. An early proponent of green building and renewable energy, he opposed privatizing city assets such as arts and rec centers, or the Harley-Clarke lakefront property. As founding president of Central Street Neighbors Association, Smith advocated for form-based zoning, and sensitivity to neighborhood character in development, and cautioned against unintended cumulative economic consequences of ad hoc decisions. He worked with the Evanston Public Library Friends to preserve branch libraries, secure library board independence, and urge expanded services to the underserved. He helped Friends of the Civic Center fight the sale and demolition of Evanston's city hall, and spoke and wrote in favor of a walkable downtown during the "Tower" debate. He has served on boards of local groups ranging from the local Democratic Party to Citizens' Greener Evanston. Outside Evanston, Smith has worked with Illinois environmental groups, and was a board member of PeaceAction. A father of two whose children attended the Evanston public schools, Jeff Smith is also known for volunteer leadership with youth sports teams, Scouting groups, and school parent groups.

Smith is a veteran of the independent wing of the Democrats, and a critic of machine politics. He carried Evanston in two races for county office, but lost by 1500 votes in a 2010 legislative primary.

Smith plans to ramp up his campaign after the New Year, saying, "Most folks are worn out by the last election; we all deserve some political downtime during the holidays." However, he previewed 7 initial points for which he would advocate as candidate and mayor:

- **Protect the Lakefront** from piecemeal privatization and environmental threat
- **Keep Evanston Affordable** for younger and low/middle/fixed-income residents
- **Pursue Deep Green** planning for carbon-neutrality and true sustainability
- **Preserve Evanston's Unique Character** by more thoughtful development
- **Work for Real Diversity** through proactive marketing and honest discussion
- **Invest in Arts and Humanities** not only for their own sake but as economic strategy
- **Foster a Culture of Peace** from the international level to Evanston's own streets

for more info: Jeff Smith (847) 372-9324