

**Local 1522 Election Questionnaire**  
**City of New London, Council Election, 2011**  
**Candidate Name: Adam Spreccace**

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- 1) Why are you seeking election and what qualifies you for the position?

I am currently a member of the New London City Council and am running for reelection to a third term because I want to maintain a degree of consistency during the transition to the Elected Mayor form of government. I am also running for reelection because I feel I still have more to give back to the City of New London. I believe I am qualified for this position based on my almost four years of experience as a City Councilor, current Chair of the Council's Administration Committee, past Chair of the Council's Public Welfare Committee, liaison to several city boards and commission, and my 17 years as an engineer which have provided me with objectiveness and the drive to employ due diligence in reaching decisions.

- 2) If elected what would your top 3 priorities (goals ) be? Why? How will you go about achieving these priorities?

My first priority if reelected is to ensure a smooth transition to the Elected Mayor form of government. While this new position is certainly very powerful, a City Council will still exist and will retain specific powers in order to provide checks and balances in the new governmental system.

My second priority is to maintain the forward momentum which has developed over the past almost four years. Since first being elected, New London has seen constant improvement in many areas including city infrastructure, parks, buildings, and rolling stock. Taxes have also stabilized during this time and include a tax reduction and zero tax increase over the last two years. Attention to these areas goes a long way in promoting to would-be investors that New London is serious about attracting new businesses and residents to increase our tax base.

My third priority is to focus on areas that have not seen improvement over the past few years but where potential for improvement is evident. In my opinion this includes our school system where although city councilors have limited ability for affecting change, they can draw attention to areas in need of improvement and provide opportunities that the school district could take advantage of.

Achieving these priorities will require an ability to work closely and effectively with the new, elected Mayor as well as with the other city councilors. I believe I possess this ability and hope to be able to continue my effort to help New London.

- 3) Are you currently, or have you ever been a union member? If yes when and where?

No.

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### 4) A) What concerns if any do you have with New London's public safety unions?

I believe concern is too strong a word, but my only issue with New London's public safety unions is with some of the statements made over the years regarding what they believe to be are the intentions of city officials during budget development. The impression I sometimes receive is that union leadership takes an "us vs. them" position in presenting cases to their membership. I will always be honest and open when making decisions and hope that all employees know that my actions are always the result of what I believe are in the best interest of New London.

### B) What concerns if any do you have with New London's public safety departments?

As I said in my response to the Police Union questionnaire (which is similar in some ways to this questionnaire so some answers are identical), I feel the biggest issue within the New London Police Department today is with morale. Clearly there exists within the department, disagreement regarding the changes that have been implemented over the past couple of years. I believe that given time, these disagreements would be worked out and in the absence of other issues, would only affect morale temporarily. However, coupling this with the uncertainty of a new, elected Mayor results in an elevated level of apprehension that negatively affects morale. Once upcoming elections are over, I hope to be in a position to provide balance to discussions about change in the police department that assists in improving morale.

I feel that the New London Fire Department is one of the most efficient departments in the city. That said, I consider that the biggest issue with the Fire Department is with regard to personnel. I believe it as important to hire more firefighters from New London. Recently we had the best opportunity to do this in some time but we fell short. Therefore, I would be interested in investigating ways to encourage New London residents to seek positions with the Fire Department when available and also provide incentives for existing firefighters living outside of New London to move into the city.

### 5) Under what conditions would you support privatization of municipal services?

I do not now, or in the foreseeable future, see a need to privatize municipal services. The conditions that would need to exist to consider such a move would entail a situation where the city was in the middle of an obvious financial crisis, and city unions refused to work reasonably with the city in finding a solution. Since we just avoided the closest we've come to such a financial crisis, and since by my observation, the city and the unions have worked as a team, I cannot envision such a scenario at this time.

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- 6) A) Would you be in support of appointing a Local 1522 member to any municipal commission, committee, task force, advisory or oversight board that directly impacts local 1522 members?

I would not have an issue with appointing a Local 1522 member to a municipal commission, committee, task force, advisory or oversight board that directly impacts local 1522 members provided that their oversight did not produce a conflict of interest. Some commissions may specifically need representation by union members to function according to their rules. However, others would only impact Local 1522 members occasionally and incidentally. In those instances, I would expect any member so appointed to act appropriately and recuse themselves in obvious instances of conflict of interest. In all applicable cases, however, per our City Charter, I would only support appointing individuals who resided (and in some instances were electors) in New London.

- B) Would you support establishing a search committee to hire non-union, upper management positions in New London's public safety unions?

This would depend on the circumstance but in general, yes. I would, however, expect that any individual currently in the respective department interested in a particular position be considered along with anyone else.

- 7) In 1975, legislation was passed which required that disputes between management and firefighters be resolved through mediation, fact finding and binding arbitration.

- A) What is your position regarding employees having a right to collectively bargain for their wages, hours, benefits and their working conditions?

I support collective bargaining for employees as a way to maintain a healthy relationship between the city and its employees. My position with respect to unions is that they serve an important role in keeping employers "honest." I do believe, though, that this is a two-way street and that unions need to consider the constraints that the current economy is placing on government budgets.

- B) What is your position on restoring fairness and equity to the collective bargaining process including the binding arbitration process by reverting to the pre-1990 statute?

As with all issues that I need to know more about, I keep my mind open and investigate all associated details until I make a decision. I am not familiar with the 1990 action that changed the binding arbitration process. As such, I will defer an opinion until I learn more.

- 8) Will you publically support the rights and ongoing existence of Unions in New London?

As I stated above, I do not foresee the need to move away from having unions in New London. During my almost four years on the City Council, I believe the relationship between the unions and the city has been healthy. As such, I would support their rights and ongoing existence for as long as our working relationship remains as it is.

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- 9) Currently Local 1522 members are covered under 3 different retirement plans. These plans often necessitate firefighters to work into their sixties, at times accumulating 40+ years of service. Even with this accumulation of age and service, post retirement employment is typically necessary for firefighters to continue supporting themselves and their families.

Several years ago the city moved the police union in the State MERS retirement plan. To what extent would you support Local 1522 entering into the State of Connecticut MERS retirement plan?

I am in favor of open discussions with any union interested in establishing a sustainable retirement plan that both the union and city consider agreeable. The current economic landscape does not look as though it is about to change anytime soon and even if it does, I believe governments have grown cautious about retirement plans and their potential for increased burdens down the road. Therefore, I would welcome any discussion that takes long term planning into consideration.