

Message to the DWC from Sandi Cole:

Please accept my apologies for not being physically present in the meeting today. I had a previous work commitment in East Chicago that I needed to respect and keep. I want to thank the Democratic Women's Caucus again for their endorsement and support. I know that it was an unusual endorsement, and one that not everyone from the Caucus agreed with. However, I commend the Caucus leadership, as I believe that the endorsement process was comprehensive, open and fair. I also want to publicly congratulate my opponent Steve Volan. He ran an excellent campaign and I wish him the best. I believe that healthy competition raises the bar for all of us, and to that end, I believe that District 6 will benefit from my participation in this primary.

The campaign was a journey that I would do again. I met some incredible people, made many new friends, learned a tremendous amount, and had some fun along the way. There are always "lessons learned" on any new journey, and these are some of mine:

1. While campaign literature and social media is important in a race, nothing is better than face to face, door to door campaigning. It is hard work, takes more time than I ever imagined, and sometimes requires thick skin.
2. Prepare early and often for public appearances and forums. Take time to study the issues and learn to speak without notes.
3. Ensure that at least one person on your campaign team has the time and energy to work hard for you and do the things that you may not have time to do.
4. Don't be afraid to ask for money.
5. Have one clear, concise message that becomes connected to you and your campaign.
6. Use the data given you, and find ways to make sense of it! (this is a huge challenge!)

And here is my advice to those who might choose to enter this journey in the future:

1. Never take yourself too seriously. In this day and age, no one has all the answers for all of the issues. Therefore, listen to those you will represent, ask for their ideas, and follow through on promises.
2. Underpromise and overdeliver. Never compromise your integrity by promising something that you can't support.
3. Eat right, sleep well, and take care of your body...don't sacrifice your health.
4. Relationships, relationships, relationships...they are important on many levels.
5. Listen to those who have been there and don't be afraid to ask questions.
6. Surround yourself with people that you can trust unconditionally and who will give you honest feedback.

7. Realize that public office is all about service; it isn't meant to feed the ego or build a resume.
8. And if you are not the winner by numbers, realize that if you conducted yourself with integrity, you are in fact, a winner.

And finally, some suggestions:

1. It would have been helpful to have current council members create a "cheat sheet" of important bullet points regarding pending legislation and issues before council.. the learning curve is huge, and this would have helped.
2. Coordination of activities between endorsed candidates would be helpful. For example, if a volunteer is handing out literature at early vote for one endorsed candidate, it would be great to do so for all endorsed candidates.
3. And while I am not an advocate of more meetings, it would have been useful to have organized several more meetings for endorsed candidates to share experiences and learn from one another.

Let me end with a story. Senator Birch Bayh was a family friend when I was growing up. He is one of the reasons that I am politically engaged today. In each of his election bids, I was passionately involved. I remember how upset I was when he was defeated by Dan Quayle. I was angry and took it personally. I have some years of age on me now and hopefully a bit more wisdom. I am neither angry nor do I take this defeat personally. Clearly running for office places one in a position of vulnerability. However, perspective is important, and it is important to know why you are running and where you place it in your overall life perspective. Public office should not define a person; it should be a means by which a person shares their passions and life experiences with others. I look forward now to having the time to return to my personal passions with Habitat and education.

Again, thanks to all of you for your belief in the Democratic Women's Caucus and the things that it stands for.