

Here's (**Jay Baldwin's**) report from last night's candidate forum that I moderated at NIC.

There were over 100 students, faculty and community members in the room, mostly students (70%) age 18-50. An additional 20-25 people were turned away at the door because the venue seating was full and already had some folks standing.

All 8 candidates participated.

The format was each candidate made a 2 minute opening statement and a 1 minute closing remark. Nothing remarkable was said.

Between the opening and closing I asked 3 questions of my own to all candidates, interspersed with student questions directed at specific pairings of candidates. It was all remarkably cordial.

In fact, if I had to write a headline for the event, it would be something like: **CHALLENGERS ENDORSE INCUMBENTS!** My lede might be, "In a stunning turn of events, challengers for three city council seats and the mayorship say they agree with the incumbents...on everything."

I was most disappointed in the challengers' non-response to my questions re: Transparency, LCDC, and the Ed Corridor.

Here was my first question: "[on their websites and elsewhere]The challengers are calling for more transparency, while the incumbents say they're doing much to be as open as possible. Question: What does transparency look like, what needs to be done differently, and/or what efforts have been made?"

Dan: No response. Adams: No response. Brannon: Talked vaguely about the need for openness in government, no specifics. The incumbents listed the efforts city hall has made re: Chan 19, website, city blog, and public comment.

My Qs re: LCDC and Ed Corridor got similar treatment.

Here's my disappointment, all of the challengers write on their websites and elsewhere a number of allegations etc., about malfeasance at city hall, but when seated next to the person they accuse, they were silent or, often, agreed with the position of the incumbent. It was stunning.

I purposefully gave each challenger an opportunity to distinguish themselves from their opponent and state what they would do differently, and each, very intentionally, remained silent on the issues they make the most noise about.

The effect was, I think, that they convinced people that there's no need for change because those currently in office are doing a great job. I left shaking my head.
