David Earl Williams III’s 2027 Chicago Election Analysis: The 20th & 24th Police District Councils, Their Candidates & Community Accountability

An Independent Assessment of Four Candidates in Chicago’s 20th & 24th Police Districts: Qualifications, Community Involvement, Public Safety & Transparency.

DAVID EARL WILLIAMS III | NOV 10, 2026



As Chicago’s 2027 municipal elections approach, I want to begin by recognizing Nassir Faulkner, a candidate for the 20th Police District Council whom I have had the pleasure of knowing personally. Although he is running alongside Rebecca Kling and Eric Smith as part of the DC 20 Alliance, my assessment focuses exclusively on Nassir, as I am not sufficiently familiar with his fellow candidates to evaluate them fairly.

I also want to wish Nassir a belated happy birthday! Unfortunately, work obligations prevented me from attending his November 5 birthday celebration and campaign launch. Consider this recognition of his public service a small birthday gift.

Nassir Faulkner: A Familiar Face, a Record of Service, and a New Chapter in Chicago’s 20th Police District



Nassir Faulkner brings nearly a decade of experience in state and county government, public policy, communications, and community engagement to his campaign. A longtime North Side resident since 2012 and a resident of the 48th Ward since 2017, his professional background includes service in the Illinois Comptroller’s office and leadership as president of DePaul University’s College Democrats, where he advocated for educational accessibility and financial assistance for undocumented students. Faulkner also previously ran for alderperson of Chicago’s 48th Ward in the 2023 municipal election, demonstrating his continued interest in public service and local government.

Faulkner was also an inaugural member of the Obama Foundation’s Community Leadership Corps, an initiative promoting civic engagement and community leadership. Additionally, he serves as secretary of the board of directors for Care for Real, a nonprofit organization providing food assistance and essential services to individuals and families on Chicago’s North Side.

His government experience, nonprofit leadership, and involvement in civic initiatives provide relevant qualifications for a Police District Council position, where community engagement, public safety discussions, and police accountability are central responsibilities. His campaign, alongside Rebecca Kling and Eric Smith, also received an endorsement from ONE People’s Campaign in October 2026.

I appreciate his involvement in civic affairs and his years of public service. His background offers voters an opportunity to examine how his government experience and community involvement could translate into representing residents of the 20th

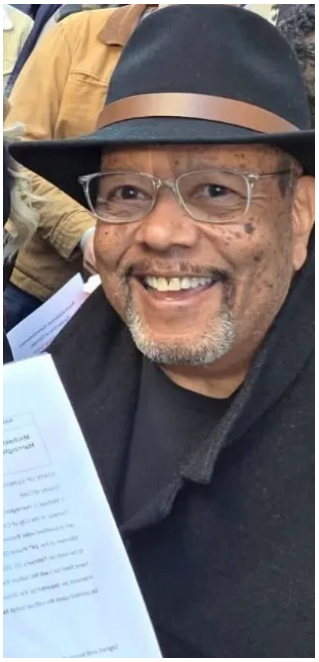
Police District. I wish Nassir continued success in his endeavors and look forward to following his campaign.



Next, let’s examine the 24th Police District Council race, featuring Michael J. Harrington, Ishmael Rufus, and Keola Jean-Joseph, and what the PEOPLE should consider before casting their ballots in February 2027. Having run for this office in 2023 and received 7,074 votes, I understand its responsibilities firsthand.

Nearly four years after these councils were established citywide, too many Chicagoans, particularly those in the 24th Police District, remain unaware of their existence or purpose, raising legitimate concerns about public outreach, transparency, and accountability.

Michael J. Harrington: Political Experience, Community Accountability, and Unanswered Questions



Michael J. Harrington has spent decades involved in Rogers Park politics, serving as co- chair of Network 49, participating in police accountability efforts, and previously serving on the boards of A Just Harvest and the Rogers Park Community Council. He also worked as Director of Operations for the Chicago Teachers Union, ran for 49th Ward alderman in 2003, and supported Bernie Sanders in 2020, as I did.

His political résumé is extensive, but what has Harrington personally accomplished that has meaningfully improved the lives of Rogers Park residents? There’s a difference between contributing to community progress and simply associating with organizations and individuals who have achieved results.

Which initiatives did he spearhead? What problems did he resolve? Political connections and meeting attendance aren’t substitutes for measurable accomplishments.

Harrington also helped elect current District Council members Veronica Arreola and Marilyn Pagan-Banks. Yet, from my observations, the council continues to struggle with public visibility, outreach, and community participation.

Many residents remain unaware the office even exists, something I warned about following the 2023 election. But hey, if you’re lucky enough to stumble across a Facebook announcement, you might actually discover when the next meeting takes place.

If Harrington helped establish the council's current leadership, what exactly would he do differently? More of the same, or meaningful improvements in accessibility, transparency, and public engagement?

I've also spoken with voters who have expressed concerns about his accessibility and commitment throughout a four-year term. These are concerns worth addressing because public service requires more than winning an election. What matters is a candidate's demonstrated commitment, availability, and willingness to serve effectively from beginning to end.

The council has already experienced an early departure, with Edvette W. Jones stepping down approximately six months into his term to focus on his growing family. While personal circumstances can change, candidates should understand the responsibilities they're accepting before seeking office.

Ultimately, anyone pursuing a taxpayer-funded position should be prepared to explain what they've accomplished, what they intend to achieve, and how they'll remain accountable to the PEOPLE they're supposed to represent.

Political longevity isn't an accomplishment by itself, and public office isn't a participation trophy. Rogers Park doesn't need another placeholder offering more of the same. Residents deserve representatives who demonstrate through their actions—not merely their associations—that they're prepared to serve the community throughout their entire term.

Ishmael Rufus: The Importance of Community Representation



My friend Ishmael Rufus is running for Chicago’s 24th Police District Council, and I believe he has the experience and potential to make a meaningful difference.

Ishmael is a Chicago Public Schools graduate who has lived and volunteered in the 24th District for approximately a decade. His community involvement includes organizing neighborhood block cleanups, volunteering with United Working Families, and participating in campaigns connected to the 50th Ward, Brandon Johnson’s 2023 mayoral campaign, and the Bring Chicago Home initiative.

He has also contributed to civic technology and community initiatives, including work examining Chicago’s parking-ticket system, nonprofit organizational leadership, and volunteer mentoring.

I believe Ishmael could bring those experiences to the District Council, particularly by improving transparency, promoting public meetings, keeping residents informed, and encouraging greater participation. Far too many residents remain unaware that this office even exists, something I’ve raised concerns about since the 2023 election.

Ultimately, I believe Ishmael has the potential to do a good job, provided he remains accessible, listens to residents, and gives them a meaningful voice in decisions affecting their neighborhoods.

Being my friend doesn’t exempt him from the same expectations I have for anyone seeking public office. Public service should be about accountability, engagement, and tangible results, and I hope he puts his experience to work for the PEOPLE of the 24th District.

Keola Jean-Joseph: Community Experience and the Importance of Public Engagement



Although I don’t personally know Keola Jean-Joseph, who is running for Chicago’s 24th Police District Council, I’m willing to give her the benefit of the doubt based on her professional background and experience.

Jean-Joseph currently serves on the 24th Police District Council, having been appointed in 2025, and holds a community engagement role. Her background includes work at an addiction research institute, supporting people in recovery and helping improve the quality of care through research.

Jean-Joseph has lived, worked, and volunteered in the district for approximately 14 years. Her political experience also includes six years with the 40th Ward Democrats, eventually serving as deputy committeeperson and participating in voter outreach and community organizing.

As I mentioned previously, it’s concerning that far too many residents are still unaware that the District Council even exists. I would like to see greater emphasis on promoting public meetings, expanding neighborhood outreach, and ensuring residents have meaningful opportunities to voice their concerns.

Because Jean-Joseph already serves on the council, I believe it’s reasonable to ask what specific improvements have occurred during her tenure, what obstacles she’s encountered, and what she intends to accomplish if elected to a full term.

While I recognize Jean-Joseph’s experience, I believe the real measure of public service is accessibility, accountability, and tangible results. I hope she continues building on that experience while helping make the council more visible and responsive to the communities it represents, if elected.

Ultimately, the PEOPLE deserve to be informed, involved, and heard.