

Debra Shore launches re-election campaign
Special to the online edition of Windy City Times
by Carrie Maxwell, Windy City Times
2011-06-29



On a stormy evening June 21 Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) of Greater Chicago Commissioner Debra Shore hosted a fundraiser at Erie Cafe along the Chicago River to announce her re-election campaign. Approximately 250 people attended the event, including luminaries from local and state government and representatives from LGBT organizations such as the Victory Fund.

Shore is hoping to serve another six-year term as one of nine commissioners. The openly lesbian commissioner will be running against other hopefuls for one of three seats to be voted on next year.

The commissioners are elected at large and serve on a salaried part-time basis. Their main goal is to protect the health of citizens and area waterways via reclamation and treatment of wastewater in Cook County—one of the world's largest wastewater-treatment agencies. Shore chairs the committees on stormwater management as well as state legislation and rules.

Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle introduced the commissioner, saying "there is none than I am prouder to support than Debra Shore. ... When I first met Debra Shore I thought this is a real anomaly; here is somebody who is an environmentalist that wants to serve on the MWRD. ... Debra is a well-qualified advocate."

Shore began her remarks by thanking everyone for their support especially her partner, Kathleen Gillespie, and her staff. "Six years ago on the summer solstice, at our home, I began an improbable journey. ... I decided to run. .. but was not well-known in Cook County. ... However, six years ago I came in first in a field of nine in the democratic primary ... and I am very proud you are joining me here tonight as I announce my campaign for re-election," Shore said.

To describe what she does Shore took out some props. She asked everyone to imagine that a bucket contained all of the seawater on the planet. Then she said that a teacup represented all of the freshwater frozen in glaciers. Out of all the freshwater in the teacup only a teaspoon of water would remain for us to drink, she said, and 20 percent of the world's drinking water is in the Great Lakes.

"We are charged with caring for a precious resource and I want to say if anyone wants to make an additional contribution of \$500 you get to take the props home," Shore said to much laughter. "I protect drinking water for millions of people and I treat rain as a resource. I am a steward of one of the world's great repositories of freshwater, Lake Michigan."

For more information on Shore and her campaign, visit <http://www.debrashore.org>.