

Park board president to run for City Council seat

BY FRED MANN

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Janet Miller, the Wichita Park Board president, announced Thursday she is running for the District 6 City Council seat.

Miller, 43, who has never run for public office, said her campaign already has raised a "very significant" amount of campaign funds, and signed up 125 supporters and more than 90 volunteers.

In a speech to about 200 people at the Midtown Community Resource Center, Miller vowed to reach out to

all corners of the community to achieve a prosperous economy and a vibrant quality of life.

Although the city faces financial challenges, she said, "Now is not the time to retract, or retreat, or to think small. Now is the time to plan for the future and to make smart, laser-focused investments that will grow our local economy and our community."



Miller

The District 6 seat, which represents a swath of central and north-central Wichita, will be vacated in April when term limits force out two-term council member Sharon Fearey.

Bob Aldrich, who narrowly lost the 2005 primary race for the same seat, announced his candidacy Wednesday.

Miller, whose husband is state Rep. Nile Dillmore, D-Wichita, said in an interview that her campaign is focusing for now on three broad themes — the economy, neighborhoods and quality of life.

Quality-of-life issues play into economic development more than people have traditionally understood, she said.

"The basics are important — we must have basic city services — but we have to have things that also bring new people here to increase the number of people who pay into the tax base so we don't have to increase taxes of those who are here already," Miller said.

Candidates have until Jan. 27 to file for office. The election is April 7. Three City Council positions are up for election next year.