

On March 8th Bedford Township voters will go to the polls to decide if they should approve a request by Lake Erie Transit, and approved by a unanimous vote of the Bedford Township Board to place in on the ballot, for a renewal and an increase in a current millage to provide bus transportation in the Township. Currently Bedford Township property owners are paying \$300,000 per year. If approved, this amount will increase to \$350,000 per year. Information supplied by Mark Jagodzinski, General Manager for LET, indicated that in FY 2015 the cost of a one-way trip was \$22.57, of this amount Bedford Township taxpayers paid 70%, which works out to \$15.80 per one-way trip. This amount is based on the number of riders which has varied over the last 4 years from \$12.32 to \$15.80.

I have used the LET Bedford Dial A Ride service and must say I was very impressed. It is too bad that more Bedford Township residents have not taken advantage of the service. Based on the past low ridership numbers, I feel that whether this millage passes or fails, the taxpayers with the assistance of the Township Board, need to investigate other options to provide bus transportation for Bedford Township residents at a lower cost. It seems if this contract was put out for private bid, there would be plenty of interest in providing this service at a much lower cost than \$15.80 for a one-way trip.

There is a definite need to provide transportation for the handicapped, senior citizens and those who do not have other means of transportation. Under the current agreement between Bedford Township and LET, even if the millage fails, bus transportation will continue at least until December 31, 2016. This will give taxpayers plenty of time to investigate other options. The current contract with LET has a provision that allows Bedford Township to opt out of the agreement at any time with a 60 day written notice. Unless there is a dramatic increase in ridership, the Bedford Township Board needs to consider exercising this option and investigate more cost effective transportation.

I have posted complete information on my "Bedford Yes" web site concerning the LET millage request. Please go to the following web page, study the facts and decide what is best for the residents and taxpayers of Bedford Township:
<http://www.bedfordyes.com/BedfordTownshipBallotProposals.htm#march8> .
The important thing is to vote on March 8th!