

Stewart walks over write-in challenge

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BEDFORD TOWNSHIP — It wasn't quite 10 p.m. Tuesday when Bedford Township Supervisor Walt Wilburn and his Republican challenger Greg Stewart met discreetly inside the township hall.

Mr. Wilburn was conceding defeat in his write-in bid for a third term at the helm of Monroe County's most populous township. He was bested by fellow Republican Mr. Stewart who captured 78 percent of the 8,693 votes cast in the race.

"I knew I was facing an uphill battle," Mr. Wilburn said from the supervisor's office shortly after his meeting with Mr. Stewart. "I thought I had a good shot."

Mr. Wilburn lost the Aug. 6 primary to Mr. Stewart by only 231 votes. Tuesday he lost by more than 5,000.

Both men said the other had run a clean, fair campaign and pledged to work together transitioning Bedford Township into the next administration.

"Bedford has to utilize its resources," Mr. Stewart said, referring to Mr. Wilburn and his past eight years as supervisor. "We are still going to need and use his talents."

In his tenure Mr. Wilburn has overseen the renovation of the township hall, the purchase of a new fire station, a new Monroe County Sheriff's Office substation, a local tax for deputies to fill it and the repair of more than 30 miles of township roads.

"I'm proud of what we've been able to accomplish," Mr. Wilburn said. "Greg's going to make a really good supervisor. He's got a big job ahead of him and he knows I'll help. I love Bedford Township."

Mr. Stewart, who has been Luna Pier City administrator the past five years, will formally announce his resignation of that post at a scheduled meeting Thursday. A transition plan there is already afoot and Tuesday night Mr. Stewart seemed ready to get to work in Bedford Township.

“The excitement is over,” Mr. Stewart said. “I understand the feeling of responsibility. I’m ready.”

The 62-year-old said he has no agenda per se, but does plan on focusing on three main areas as supervisor. The first is being fiscally responsible with taxpayer money, he said.

“Ensuring that there is openness in township government,” is the second, Mr. Stewart said. “I believe that we can utilize technology and the township’s Web site to make available for the public much more information.”

The third leg of Mr. Stewart’s plan involves using his skills in economic development.

“I want a strong Bedford,” he said. “Bedford is not the largest subdivision of Toledo. We are the biggest community in Monroe County. We need to step up and be a part of the county and the state.

“(Gov. Rick Snyder) has talked about collaboration between the state and the local units,” Mr. Stewart said. “We need to see what we can do to be part of that.”

Mr. Stewart and his wife, Marti, have one daughter. They have lived in Bedford Township for 24 years.



Rick Steiner, Marti Stewart, Laura Collins, and Bedford Township Supervisor candidate Greg Stewart (left to right) watch as initial numbers trickle in at the Bedford Township Hall Tuesday night.