

Bedford candidates field questions, debate issues

BY ANDREA PECK

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Those interested in learning more about candidates for Bedford Township trustee had the chance to attend a Meet the Candidates forum Wednesday night at the Whitman Center to find out where each candidate stands on issues concerning Bedford.

The event was hosted by Jim Krieger and Bedford Renaissance, a bipartisan political action committee in Bedford Township. It was moderated by Rebecca Regnier, a television journalist. Dr. Kojo Quartey, president of Monroe County Community College, gave opening remarks.

The 10 candidates for the four trustee positions are Michael Sprott, TC Clements, Rick Steiner (incumbent), George Welling, James Nyhan, Michelle Bork, Gregory Robinson, Brent Cook, Nancy Tienvieri (incumbent) and Bob Stammer.

Nancy Tienvieri and Brent Cook were absent from the forum.

Candidates were asked a series of questions that were submitted by audience members.

What is the role of a township trustee?

TC Clements, a Republican, said the role of a township trustee is to be the person that represents the best interests of the township.

"We are the people you elect to represent you on matters that come before the township," he said.

Where do you see Bedford in 2 to 5 years and how would you encourage younger families to move here?

Michael Sprott, a Republican, said he feels the best way to get young families to move to Bedford Township is to offer them housing they can afford.

"We're not building housing that is attracting the younger generation," he said.

What are three goals you have for Bedford?

"Better roads, a better public transportation system and a better government," said James Nyhan, a Republican.

How do you think the roads are doing?

Bob Stammer, a Republican, said he feels the condition of the roads has improved, but more work needs to be done.

"Hopefully things get better as funding gets passed," he said. "We always need funding for local roads."

What do you think Bedford's biggest asset and liability are?

George Welling, a Republican, said he feels Bedford Township safety services, such as the fire department and police officers, are the township's biggest asset.

"I think our greatest liability is a lack of trust," he said.

What do you feel is the

best primary use of taxes?

Rick Steiner, a Republican, said he feels primarily, taxes are best used for roads, parks and schools.

"We must use our money wisely," he said.

Do you support the renewal of the fire millage?

Mr. Welling said he supports the renewal of the fire millage.

"I support the renewal of the fire millage," he said, adding that he supports the purchase of new equipment for the department, if warranted. "If they need new equipment, we have to give it to them."

How would you encourage the township and schools to work together?

Mr. Clements said he would encourage inter-agency cooperation for services used by both the township and school district.

"We can collaborate and create savings," he said.

Mr. Steiner said he would encourage quarterly meetings with township and school officials to discuss issues.

Do you support the renewal of the senior millage?

"I do support the renewal of the senior millage," said Mr. Stammer. "Our seniors, you have to take care of them."

In what way do you think the Gordie Howe Bridge would affect Bedford?

Mr. Nyhan said he feels it could bring business into the area, and stressed the importance of preparing for that.

"We need to streamline information to handle new opportunities," he said.

Does Bedford get their fair share from Monroe County?

Greg Robinson, a Democrat, said he feels county and township officials should have open communication.

"We need to engage in a dialogue with the county," he said.

What is your stance on big box stores coming to Bedford?

Mr. Welling said box stores have the right to move into Bedford.

"People have property rights under the law," he said. "They have the right to move in."

Where do you see Bedford business expanding?

Mr. Stammer said he feels better communication with business owners would improve business in the township.

"We should sit down with businesses," he said.

How many hours would you work if elected, and how would you communicate with voters?

Michelle Bork, a Republican, said she would have open communication with Bedford Township residents, and she would use their input to make better changes.

"I'm always learning from people," she said.