

WHY SHOULD I VOTE FOR YOU?

A Tool to Help Question and Evaluate Candidates for Bedford Township Office

1) Priorities – What should be the top five priorities of Township Hall over the next four (4) years? (1 = most important) Why do you feel these are the top five?

A: Improving police protection

B: Improving fire protection

C: Improving parks and recreation

D: 2 Promoting economic development

E 3 Reducing the size of Township government

F: 1 Full Disclosure of Township financial records (publish on Township web site)

G 4 Maintaining and improving infrastructure (roads, water, sewer)

H: Reducing litigation against the Township

I: Up-dating Planning, zoning and land use

J: (See F) Promoting greater fiscal responsibility and lower taxes

K: Improving services for citizens and being more customer friendly

L: Improving the use of the Township Public Access Station on Buckeye Cable.

M: Making better, bold and courageous decisions that benefit the entire township long term in spite of intense written and vocal pressure from special interest groups.

N: Recognizing and protecting the property rights of all citizens

O: 5 Improving the use of the Township web site to communicate with residents.

Why do you feel that “Your top Five Priorities” are the most important?

(1) I have made open financial records number one because it also relates to mandates from the state that will eventually affect our revenue sharing. Simply and straightforward, financial information of revenue and where it goes will help build trust in the Township. This is a simple issue, but it's a must to accomplish.

(2) A government entity must not diminish its responsibility to assure that business, which bring jobs and help sustain the community, are treated fairly. Economic Development at the Township level should include a positive attitude and infrastructure. The prevalent perception in the Township is that opportunity is limited and there is no desire to let new businesses grow. We need to change our attitude. Infrastructure is really A,B, and C, police and fire protection along with parks. Let us not forget other aspects of infrastructure, namely roads.

(3) Every dollar spent by the Township should benefit as many as possible, providing services for the general welfare of the community. Throwing money at a problem, when the fight is for a few, or the battle was known to be lost, needs to stop. The Township should not assume that times will get better and that revenue is guaranteed. I can think of no better way of putting it than; Waste not want not.

(4) I consider building and maintaining our infrastructure the most important service provided. This is the core good of economic development and why the Township exists and collects taxes. Please remember that fire, police and roads are part of these vital services.

(5) The Website is a tool that either needs to be used or not waste our money. The Website needs to be a dynamic, interactive tool that brings value to the citizens. Timely information and ease of access must encourage visitors to make our website a part of their internet routine.

2. What is your position on economic development for Bedford Township, especially the Temperance area? What is your plan to encourage economic development?

My opinion is that Economic Development is attitude and infrastructure. The work that is being done in Temperance should be encouraged, promoted and given the flexibility to advance the community without unnecessary intrusion.

3. What is your position on "Town Hall Meetings" where township officials can meet with residents to discuss their concerns and to keep them informed of what is going on in the township? Would you be willing to have these on a monthly basis and also have them televised?

The Township Hall meeting would be a tool to use for certain issues that need input quickly from the entire community. Those meetings should be televised.

I would rather begin by making changes to the agenda format. An administration report that highlights the activities and possible future projects being addressed in the Township should be provided and read. Issues must not only be discussed the night that actions are taken.

4. What is your position on using the Township Access TV Channel on Buckeye Cable to communicate with the public? For example, a monthly one-hour TV show hosted by the Supervisor or Clerk to get current information out to residents about various issues, township boards and up-coming meetings. Since most Township Board meetings do not last the full 3 hours that is allotted, this show could be broadcasted at the end of one of the meetings each month with the public in attendance.

The Township Board agenda needs to change first. I have proposed an administration report to highlight activities, and the board can discuss those items on the report. I also would adjust the public input to make comments on those activities, the agenda in general; and place the comments before any actions so that the public's view is informed and timely. I believe that if the public has a question then that question should be addressed at council input.

5. What is your position concerning having all board members being fully informed before decisions are made at Township Board Meetings? Do you think that there is enough discussion on issues by all board members when decisions are made currently?

I want to have online secure folders for all board members. The trustees can then upload information, agendas, and draft minutes of all board meetings from our secure server. All board members will have an up to date information packet to access at any time. I believe that discussion is sorely lacking at board meetings.

6. Do you feel that the current practice of having a township attorney in attendance at all Bedford Township meetings is necessary?

I believe once a month in most cases is sufficient.

7. What do you see is your role as a member the Bedford Township Board? Do you think that all board members should take the responsibility for placing topics on the meeting agenda?

I believe that all board members should have the opportunity to suggest items prior to the agenda deadline.

8. Over the past 8 years the current Bedford Township Board has made a number of important decisions. Do you agree with their decision on the following matters? If not, what is your opinion on these decisions?

a. Bedford Township was involved in 3 major lawsuits in the past 4 years which cost residents thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours of lost time by Township officials.

The Township needs leaders that can have the wisdom to pick their battles. Throwing money at a problem to appease a few in an unwinnable situation is unacceptable.

b. Continued the previous township board's practice of salting away taxpayers' funds (over 1 million dollars) to be used for the construction of a new township hall, even though these funds could have been used for such things as road improvements, park maintenance, police and fire protection.

I believe in a contingency fund, but one that is capped at a percentage of the budget. This fund should not be earmarked for any project.

c. Construction of a new township hall.

I think that sometimes leadership calls for restraint. These kinds of projects were common when money was flowing. Government should never be in a position where it has money to spend on extravagance.

d. Denial of bringing a major retailer to Bedford on the Whitman property.

I was the Chairperson of the Planning Commission when the Whitman issue came up. I and others on the Commission were convinced that there would be a strict but fair Planned Unit Development (PUD) that would be worked out with all concerned. We saw nothing.

One of the unintended consequences to this fiasco was that Bedford has retained the perception as an anti-business community. New leadership can go a long way to show entrepreneurs and small businesses that we have changed. The day I wrote this I had to go to Ohio to buy a pillow!

9. What are some new ideas that you would recommend if elected? What is your "Vision" for Bedford Township in the next 4 years?

My vision is a stronger Bedford. We must become a community with the leadership and the confidence to be a major influence at the county and state level. I intend to work collaboratively with all that are willing, other townships, cities, and the county to bring economic development to the forefront of Bedford. I have working relationships with the Regional Growth Partnership, the Monroe County Business Development Corporation and the Michigan Economic Develop Corporation.

Most of all my vision is to work with you, the citizens of Bedford to develop a plan. Not a plan laying in my office that I just came up with, but a plan based on consensus and our common goals for the overall good of the community.

10. How should the public hold you as an elected official accountable for your campaign promises and your votes?

I once worked at a service company owned by an individual that understood the concept of a “plan”.

He had posted the business plan on the bulletin board in the workers cafeteria and encouraged them to read it. If they felt he was varying from the plan we would discuss it at our monthly meeting. Sometimes the plan needed to be changed; sometimes the owner recognized that he was wandering away from his core responsibilities. In either case an open and honest discussion worked to keep management on track and empower the workers.

I will keep in my office my statements, writings, and interviews that detail my promises. I will have the master plan on my desk and be ready to listen.