

Trudy Hershberger

WHY I DESERVE YOUR VOTE TO THE BEDFORD TOWNSHIP BOARD

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?
 - a. Improving Fire Protection & support our Sheriff’s Department
 - b. Maintaining and improving infrastructure (roads, water, sewer)
 - c. Improving the commercial development and revitalization of the Temperance Overlay District & the surrounding area.
 - d. Promoting economic development
 - e. Continue to make bold and courageous decisions that benefit the entire township long term in spite of intense written and vocal pressure from special interest groups.

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

I believe my top five are important to the township because we must always FIRST think of the general welfare, protection and safety of all residents in Bedford. We can achieve this by continuing to improve and support our fire and police departments. By maintaining and improving the infrastructure we can promote the economic development of the township. We cannot turn a blind eye to the much needed revitalization in the Temperance Overlay District and the surrounding area. While working on the latest Master Plan update, most of these issues were addressed. This then brings me to the fifth priority of making those decisions that will benefit the entire township long term by working towards achieving all of these items.

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

The economic development in Bedford has been improving over the last few years. This is evident by looking at the numbers from the Monroe County Business Development Corp. We now need to concentrate on the Temperance area and more industrial land. We need to address the infrastructure to attract more business. We need to get a Downtown Development Authority into Temperance as we have in Lambertville.

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 and streamed live on the Bedford Township website?

If residents have concerns, I’m always available to talk. I have and will continue my open door policy. That is only one of the reasons I do not have an office, but sit out in public view with all other employees. I would refer to the answer I gave to question #4 regarding the livestreaming.

4) What is your position on using the Township Access TV Channel on Buckeye Cable and live streaming on the Township website 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 resident 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.

I’m not sure what subjects would be discussed, but I would be willing to listen to the residents if that were requested by a majority. Most of the examples stated in the above question are talked about at the end of the meetings by the board members during their comment time. Township boards and upcoming meetings are currently posted on the website and cable channel. There is also current information going out on the Facebook page. As for the livestreaming on the Township website; I addressed this to the board earlier last year, but after seeing the cost of updating our equipment to accommodate the livestreaming, it was denied.

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 believe all board members should receive as much information as possible in their board packets, which is currently being done. At the same time, I always do my homework before the meeting. If I have questions on an issue, I will contact the department or person with the information I need to get my questions answered. This way I go into the meetings prepared. I believe the board members have a lot of discussion on issues, but unfortunately not enough listening to other views. The board will hardly ever agree on everything, but we need to respect each other's differences and remember we're all on the board to do a job.

6) There may be some tough future decisions concerning cuts to current employee and trustee benefits. Are you willing to make these cuts if necessary?

This board has shown that we are willing to make cuts if necessary during the past budget approval process. The hardest benefit to adjust was the health care coverage. When the board couldn't come up with an agreeable percentage, I created a different way of spreading the cost. This three tier cost system was used in the fiscal year 16-17 budget that was approved.

7) What is your opinion of the current practice by the Bedford Township Supervisor of limiting the time for public commentary to 2 minutes concerning agenda items and 3 minutes for general comments at the end of each Bedford Township Board meeting?

I have looked into the public comment time limits and found most jurisdictions use 2 – 3 minutes (according to MTA (Michigan Township Assoc.)). Since it's a time for comments and not discussion, I feel this is enough time. I do believe a time limit should be set for board members comments as well. It's not fair to limit the public comment but allow the board members to speak for periods over 5 minutes.

8) What motivated you to seek a position on the Bedford Township Board? What do you see is your role as a member of the Bedford Township Board? Do you think that all board members should take the responsibility for placing topics on the meeting agenda?

I am running to retain my position as Township Clerk because I believe the residents of Bedford deserve someone who has the qualifications and experience to keep the clerk's department running as smoothly as it has for the last 16 years. I don't consider myself a politician but a resident of Bedford who loves what they do and wants the best for my community. As a Bedford Township Board member I will research and vote on issues and as the Clerk, I will document and publish board meeting minutes. I believe it is not the responsibility of all board members to add agenda items, but if a board member has an issue they would like addressed they have a right to ask for the topic to be added to the agenda.

9) How many Bedford Township board meetings have you attended in the past year? How many times have you watched the videos of Bedford Township board meetings during the past year? After attending or viewing past meetings, do you have any recommendations to improve the efficiency and decorum of future meetings?

I would go one step further with this question by stating that I have only missed a few meetings in the past 5 years. Going even further back (over the last 16 years), I have attended or watched on the Buckeye Government Channel live, 98% of the Township Board meetings. From 2000 until 2011 I was the Deputy Clerk and took the minutes for most of those meetings. In 2012 I attended the meetings as the Clerk. The biggest recommendation I would make to improve efficiency is asking all board members to research the agenda items and get your answers to questions. Don't come to the meeting expecting answers to questions that may be coming from a different department. This would streamline the processes of getting the township business done at the meeting without a lot of frustration over not having answers to be able to vote on an issue.

10) What are some new ideas that you would recommend if elected? What is your vision for Bedford Township in the next four years?

I see the next four years moving forward using the Master Plan update. It was updated and worked on by the people for the people of Bedford. I think this is the vision we should be looking at for the township as a whole, not just one person's view. The board should be looking at the vision the residents of Bedford requested.

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

The only promise I will make is that I will continue to do my best for the community. The public should always feel comfortable talking to their elected officials. I will continue to do what I believe is best for the entire community while holding on to my beliefs and integrity.