

Rick Steiner

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? (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 1 _____ Promoting economic development
- e _____ Reducing the size of Township government
- f _____ Full Disclosure of Township financial records (publish on Township web site)
- g 2 _____ Maintaining and improving infrastructure (roads, water, sewer)
- h _____ Improving the commercial development and revitalization of the Temperance Overlay District & the surrounding area.
- i 4 _____ Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for 5-10 years out.
- j _____ Practicing 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 3 _____ 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?

As I previously stated, I believe all of the items listed are of high priority and should all be of a high focus by the Township Board.

1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

I believe we need to work closely with the Monroe County Business Development Corporation to attract new businesses to Bedford by forward thinking and by creating an environment that is more compatible for shovel ready projects. We must give potential businesses a reason why they should come to Bedford and show how they will be successful by choosing Bedford. We must promote Bedford through better avenues of communication (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Township Website, etc.). We can not wait for businesses to find us, we must pursue them as well.

2. MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE

Commitment to new or improved roads by working with township government and engineers to continue utilizing the five year Pavement Asset Management Plan for Bedford's road infrastructure. We must also conduct additional reviews of our water distribution system to determine future maintenance, system upgrades, and capacity as the township is once again in a new home growth cycle. Of course there is no guarantee how the speed of township growth will continue, but we must be proactive and not reactive.

3. COURAGEOUS DECISIONS

As a current trustee of Bedford Township, I can say that I have always made decisions by performing thorough reviews of applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations regarding each situation before making voting decisions. My educated decisions are made as being applicable by law, not personal opinions. I have voted, and will always vote my conscience for the benefit of Bedford Township, our residents, and our businesses.

4. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

We definitely should complete a Capital Improvement plan for all aspects of the township services. Review and inventory of all physical structures, roads, water system, equipment, vehicles, etc. The current condition, projected life span, estimated repair or replacement costs for all items. Once again, we must measure this plan based on current growth trends and projections by using tools such as U.S. census projections, professional organizations who specialize in planning and economic growth and development. Continue looking for tools and resources that will guide us to make sound decisions for the continuous strength of the community.

5. IMPROVING TOWNSHIP WEBSITE AND COMMUNICATIONS

Improve citizen communication through work and support of the recently approved communications committee. Through the committees' commitment and recommendations, we need utilize as many tools as possible to communicate timely and effectively. We need speed of information distribution but we must maintain accurate, unbiased, and factual information.

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

- To this day, there remains a perception that Bedford Township is not business friendly. We always hear the bad things, but generally not the good things that Bedford has done right. Nevertheless, there is always room for improvement. We must never stay in "Status Quo" mode. We should continually ask businesses and residents what we are doing wrong but also ask what we do well or right.
- I have also communicated that we must continue using our resources to determine the right fit and create the proper environment for entrepreneurial investment and growth in Bedford.

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 web site?

- Town Hall Meetings can be a useful tool and promote healthy dialogue that can be used to benefit the township. However, the meetings must be well attended and productive. Attendance must be more than special interest groups, activists, etc.
- Town Hall Meetings could be conducted monthly or quarterly. I would recommend the meetings to take place soon after the second scheduled monthly board meeting.
- Ideas and agendas for the meetings should be shared by elected officials. Agenda items to be set by board members and by proposed items from the citizens. Planning and Zoning are among some of the top items.
- Meetings should be televised / streamed as long as the costs are in line with budgetary expenses.

4. What is your position on using the Township Access TV Channel on Buckeye Cable and live streaming on the Township web site 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.

- Once again, these meetings should be televised / streamed as long as the costs are in line with budgetary expenses. I do not believe that the show could be regularly scheduled after board meetings due to the fact that agendas vary on the number of agenda items, and would always be subjective based on the amount of agenda items deliberations and discussions, and also how long public comment takes due to the number of people that would like to speak.

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?

- Board members should be fully informed in advance of the meetings. Items to be placed on agendas could be uploaded to a secure site and utilized by the board members well in advance of upcoming meetings. The secure site process would allow board members more time for review, research, and request more data if necessary prior to the meetings.
- Agendas and board packets could also be placed on the site for board members to download instead of township personnel delivering board packet to the homes of trustees.
- I have proposed that board meeting agendas and documents be displayed during meetings by using a laptop computer and LCD projector. The clerk or deputy clerk would operate the computer so the public can follow the same information simultaneously with the board members. To date this has not been approved in budgets but I believe we should pursue this avenue for better communication.

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?

- If there is a proven reason to make cuts without jeopardizing the services and functions provided by each unit of township government, we need to look at options and alternatives. Before making decisions to do so, we must look at current benefits, proposed benefits, and overall impact. It's easy to say cut, but many times not all perceptions of departments and functions are based on facts. Much is based on hearsay.

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? Would you recommend any changes to this policy?**

- There must be guidelines in place to keep continuity and to run the meetings as a business meeting. I would consider changes to the policy but they must be well thought out before putting them into place. We certainly cannot and do not want to limit the freedom of speech of our citizens. Review of time limits with effective recommendations could direct us to implement new guidelines.

8. What motivated you to seek a position on the Bedford Township Board? What do you see as 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 am once again seeking a position as Township Trustee on the Bedford Township Board as my commitment to public service in Bedford Township which has been my hometown for over 45 years.

Between 2000 - 2004, I educated myself by serving on various boards and commissions in Bedford Township (Economic Development, which Law Enforcement Committee, Board of Zoning Appeals, Compensation Committee, Planning Commission, and Fire Commission). My strategy was to prepare myself to one day run for an elected position on our township board. My education and experience proved to the citizens that I was ready to become an elected leader when I was elected to the board in 2004. I served as trustee from 2004-2008 and 2012 to present.

The honesty, integrity and openness that I have put forth remains the bottom line for me today as it has for many years. I still keep the same commitment and have always been accessible if any wants to discuss issues that impact an individual or the entire township. I am here to work for one and for all of Bedford's 32,000 residents.

The trustees currently serving on the board already have the capability to place topics on the meeting agendas. Nevertheless, I believe trustees should get more involved with bringing issues forward to be placed on 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 at future meetings.

As a current trustee, I have attended most every meeting. I have had a couple of schedule conflicts but continued to receive meeting information to stay informed of what was taking place during my absence.

We definitely need to improve the efficiency and decorum of future meetings. I believe that by addressing fellow board members by title, we can improve the decorum of the meetings. It also shows respect and can greatly change the way our citizens perceive us as individuals, and as a board that is willing to work together. By creating a better atmosphere and decorum, this too will help improve the efficiency of the meetings

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

- Commitment to new or improved roads by working with township government and engineers to utilize a continuous 5 year Pavement Asset Management Plan for Bedford's road infrastructure.
- Maintain stability for the professional and superior services of the Bedford Fire Department and Monroe County Sheriff's Deputies through proper oversight and adequate funding.
- Improve citizen communication through work and support of the recently approved communications committee.
- Improve township business operations to work within the constraints of the General Fund and improve the bottom line of the township finances.
- Working with the Monroe County Business Development Corporation to attract new businesses to Bedford by forward thinking to create an environment that is more compatible for shovel ready projects.
- Be prepared for the projected 2020 growth plan and the opportunities that will be created with the new Gordy Howe Bridge in Detroit. There will be an increase in new commerce and business opportunities, especially for the automotive sector. Bedford must be ready to capitalize on the opportunities.

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

As an elected official, I should be measured and held accountable the same way as I am in the private sector. My functions as trustee include fiduciary responsibility, setting policies and procedures, vote on all issues brought before the board, and perform other duties as assigned by the board.

Township government must operate like a business that presents profit & loss statements, full disclosure to the shareholders (the tax payer), and pays out dividends (benefits and services).

“It is has been an honor and privilege to serve the residents and businesses of Bedford Township,” and I look forward to continuing my service to the residents over the next four years.