

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 1 ____ Promoting economic development
 - e 5 ____ 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 * ____ Reducing litigation against the Township
 - i ____ Up-dating Planning, zoning and land use
 - j 4 ____ 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 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 ____ 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?

Priorities for Township government should be Public Safety, Economic Development, and Infrastructure. As shown these are in the top 5. Though I would keep a and b as priorities I believe at this time our taxpayers have approved millages to protect the integrity of these. Many areas can be improved in spending such as contracted services, retirement for part-time Trustees, unnecessary office purchases, travel and conferences, memberships, etc. These areas and more would save the taxpayers thousands of dollars, which would free up dollars for public services (k). I have placed asterisks (*) by f, h, k, n because they go without saying. It is a shame they are even on this list out of necessity!

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

I believe the Board must concentrate on economic development in terms of actively seeking business to fill up our industrial parks, industrially zoned land, commercially zoned property as well as advocate for our current business owners and economic health and stability. We must market our community so that as the “doorway” into Michigan we entice Ohio residents to come north and support our tax base. I would like to have roundtable discussions with current business owners, taxpayers, state/county officials and potential businesses to get their input on how the government can support and strengthen them. If possible I would also like to speak with businesses that have said, “Bedford is difficult to work with”, and find out from there how we might change some of our negative practices.

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?

I am in favor of Town Hall meetings as long as they are constructive and produce solutions. I do not believe it is profitable to open the door to continual mass complaints from people who are not getting their special interests met. I believe those people should be heard, but on a personal level and at regular Board meetings. I also believe that the elected officials should be required to ANSWER the questions brought to them at Board Meetings. They act as though they are above the people they serve. Too often the Board Members become defensive of points addressed by the public. This should not be.

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.

First I believe the Board meetings should last longer in order to discuss the business that they vote on. I also think that the Board should have discussion about other pertinent business that may come to a vote at future meetings. The public has a right to know ALL the business their elected officials are considering. I would like to see a program such as you mention, but it should not just be the Supervisor or Clerk hosting it. The Supervisor and Clerk have daily duties, but at a Board meeting they are equal to each other Board member. Each member must take responsibility before the public. The full-time officials have no more power or accountability to the public than any other Board member.

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?

Basically I have given my view on this question in my answer above, but to the point I think they should discuss every agenda item before it is voted on. It currently appears they have discussed and made up their minds BEFORE the meeting begins! How can such important decisions such as raises, new web sites, special assessment districts, etc. be voted on WITHOUT having an informative discussion?

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

I am opposed to having attorneys at all meetings. Many times they never open their mouths and they are paid for the time they are there. A more efficient method would be to table items that the Board feels they need a legal opinion on until the next meeting, and then assign a Board member to follow up with the attorney. I feel the same way about Planners, Engineers, or other contracted "by the hour" professionals in attendance at a meeting.

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?

(7) Trustees are statutorily responsible to guarding the spending, setting policy, and making sure the full-time officials do not make decisions without the full Board participating. I do think Trustees should be able to place items on the agenda that have been brought to their attention by citizens.

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.

I did not agree with any of their decisions that led them in to lawsuits. I would have labored through many meetings until we worked out an amicable compromise in order to save tax dollars, promote the welfare of the relationship with business, and to build community pride instead of causing division among our citizens.

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 do believe in having a Fund Balance to reserve funds for emergencies. I also believe that the Township Hall needed some renovations and improvements. However, I think the Board did not show restraint, and since the "money was there" they were tempted to "go big".

c. Construction of a new township hall.

Though I believe the Township Hall needed renovation, I was not supportive of the grandiose construction that was completed. It is evident that they did not need that much space, extremely wide hallways which waste space and energy, and a meeting room on the second floor which is not convenient for the people who OWN the building – the taxpayers. In my opinion, a responsible Board would have reduced the size of government instead of building more space to house additional employees! Now that it is there, I would like to rent out the space and bring in revenue for the General Fund.

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

I would have supported a major retailer coming to Bedford Township as part of our economic development plan. I believe the Whitman decision you refer to was a zoning issue and zoning changes cannot be determined based on the proposed use. The zoning should have been approved as that property on a four-lane road is perfect for that zoning. I strongly support property rights. I do believe that Lewis Avenue was built to handle commercial use and I am in favor of building out that corridor for additional commercial use. I also support a Master Plan that is approved based on a well thought out plan for the community.

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

I have too many ideas to list here, but for starters: I would like a strong effort toward cooperation and consolidation of expenses with other governmental units to prevent

taxpayers from “paying double” for services. I would like Bedford to be neighborly to other south county governments in terms of economic development, public safety, services, and much more. It took Ida many years to get Bedford to agree to improve Rauch Road. Whiteford has tried unsuccessfully to work with Bedford to provide water/sewers for the development of the Industrial Park at Sterns and US 23. That development would enhance Bedford as well as Whiteford. The vision however, must be cooperative and cannot come from only one Board member. I would like to reduce the size of Bedford Township government; reduce the “perks” inside Government Center; end the extra pay for committee meetings (if we discussed business in public we would not need additional committees); end the convention trips unless there is a topic on the convention agenda that Bedford plans to utilize; go back to Board supporting SAD’s; return mosquito spraying, just to name a few!

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

An elected official is never going to please every voter. Someone is going to be upset that a vote did not go the way they wanted. But as long as a Board member has made decisions based on what is good for the community as a whole, then the electorate should understand that they are doing what they were elected to do. I think if a Board is not leading Bedford and moving forward then the voters should not keep putting them back into office.