

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL MEETING – SUPERVISOR VACANCY INTERVIEWS
MINUTES – JUNE 3, 2009

A special meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Township of Lower Makefield for the purpose of interviewing candidates for the Supervisor vacancy was held in the Municipal Building on June 3, 2009. Mr. Maloney called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m.

Those present:

Board of Supervisors	Matt Maloney, Chairman Ron Smith, Vice Chairman Greg Caiola, Secretary Pete Stainthorpe, Treasurer
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JASON SIMON

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Simon if he is familiar with the time commitment and duties involved in being a Supervisor, and Mr. Simon stated he is. Mr. Maloney asked if he is prepared for approximately two meetings per week, and Mr. Simon stated he is well aware of the responsibilities and is willing to meet that commitment. Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Simon if he has any plans to file and run for the position of Supervisor in the upcoming 2009 Election, and Mr. Simon stated he does not. Mr. Maloney asked if he has attended public meetings and watched them on television, and Mr. Simon stated he has attended many of the meeting over the years and considers himself to be well engrossed in what is happening in Lower Makefield.

Mr. Maloney stated the primary job would be to insure that there is a proper Budget for 2010, and he asked Mr. Simon what he has seen in recent Budgets he would have preferred to see not included. Mr. Simon stated he feels the concept of being fiscally-responsible is extremely important but does not feel they should just cut things across the board and come back with a flat percentage. He stated Township residents expect services to be delivered recognizing that these are difficult economic times. He stated he would consider the cost of professional services, specifically the Zoning Hearing Board spending \$25,000 on a Solicitor which he feels could be managed differently. He stated the Township spends approximately \$100,000 mowing the basins which he feels is a significant cost, and he feels this is something that they should consider.

Mr. Maloney asked if there are items he would have liked to have seen in recent Budgets which were not included. Mr. Simon stated Park & Recreation continues to need to be funded, and he feels they should do maintenance of the facilities to keep them at top-notch levels. He stated all of the organizations sponsor major events where people come in from out of town, and this results in revenue opportunities for the local businesses.

He feels they need to make sure that they are properly maintaining the recreation facilities, and he would like to look into this. Mr. Maloney asked what would be the first place he would look to cut expenditures, and Mr. Simon stated he would like to look at money being spent to be able to function properly but still provide services. He again noted the Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor expense. He stated he would not want to cut essential services such as police and fire. He stated he feels they should look at the operational aspects of how the Township is being run and where they can find cost savings in those arenas.

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Simon his position on the Frankford Hospital proposal. Mr. Simon stated while a hospital could be classified as an essential service, there is also a significant amount of debt with that type of project. He stated he feels Lower Bucks County does have an adequate amount of medical facilities available to the residents within a reasonable distance. He feels the Frankford Hospital project would cause a significant interruption to the infrastructure of the Township. He stated there will also be costs to the Municipality to support the project such as additional police coverage and additional resources. He stated he is opposed to the property being developed for that particular project. He stated the process they are going through is necessary based on the Zoning issues, but he does oppose the project.

Mr. Stainthorpe asked Mr. Simon what in his background makes him the best qualified candidate. Mr. Simon stated he has been involved with the Township in various roles for many years including Supervisor races and has been politically engaged for some time. He stated this has given him the ability to be close to the work that the Board of Supervisors does. He stated he is also currently the Vacancy Chair. He stated he has been very attuned to the issues that have faced the Township. He stated professionally he is a Vice President of Sales and Marketing for an interactive marketing company and manages significant budgets for his organization. He stated he has been exposed to multi-million dollar budget environments and this experience could be brought to the Board when they go through the budget process particularly in these economic times where he has had exposure to having to make difficult, but prudent decisions which he does on a daily basis.

Mr. Stainthorpe stated it was said at the last meeting that the Board should look first to people who do not want to run for election so as not to politicize it. He stated he has considered this matter further since that time. He stated there are six people being interviewed this evening and a number who they interviewed previously in December, and out of all of these people only one individual has actually financed a campaign, met voters, and discussed their concerns; and by the Board stating if you are going to run, you cannot serve, he feels they are denying out of 34,000 people in the Township consideration to the one individual who has indicated he wants to do this job for six years. He stated when they make their decision, he hopes Dan McLaughlin will still be considered. He stated if someone else indicates they want to run, he does not feel the Board should automatically rule them out.

FRED ALLAN

Mr. Maloney stated he knows that Mr. Allan is familiar with the time commitment and duties of a Township Supervisor, and Mr. Allan agreed. Mr. Maloney asked if he has any plan to file and run for this position, and Mr. Allan stated he does not. Mr. Maloney stated he knows that Mr. Allan has attended public meetings, and Mr. Allan stated he has adding that many times he has attended Park & Recreation Board meetings and was a prior Supervisor.

Mr. Maloney asked what items have been in recent Budgets that he would disagree with and would have preferred would have been excluded. Mr. Allan stated he does not feel there is anything that needs to be excluded as much as reviewed in depth to see if there are places where they could reduce some of the outside expenditures and bring them in a little closer to what would be a realistic number. He stated there are a number of line items they could look at to see if they are necessary. He stated the Township needs enough money to work; and if the residents want the quality of services the Township gives them, they need to pay for them. He stated the goal of the Supervisors is to try to come up with ways to fund things. He asked how many tax dollars go into Community Pride Day, and Mr. Caiola stated the majority of the cost comes in from the outside. Mr. Allan stated he would work on this to see if they could get some additional corporate sponsors to cut the costs even more. He stated they need to make sure the monies being spent are going in the right direction. He feels they should look at the Budget to see what is really necessary. Mr. Allan stated he has put three Budgets together for the Township so he understands what needs to be done.

Mr. Maloney asked if there is anything he would have liked to see added. Mr. Allan stated under the current economic situation, he does not feel the Township can take on any more obligations as far as services are concerned. He feels it would be difficult to tell the residents that they are going to add something when they consider the current economic climate. He stated Council Rock School teachers recently agreed to a cut in pay; and while he is not saying that the Township employees have to do this, he feels there are ways to cut costs. He stated while some Park & Recreation items need to be addressed, he is not sure that they would be able to do these items this year or next year.

Mr. Maloney asked, assuming that they reach a point where things need to be cut out of the Budget, what would be the first place he would look in order to shore up the financial situation. Mr. Allan stated he would need to have the Budget in front of him to make a recommendation.

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Allan his position in the Frankford Hospital proposal. Mr. Allan stated he would have to look at this closely once he has seen all the documentation and can consider what effect it would have on the Township. He stated he has made tough decisions like this in the past.

Mr. Maloney asked what in his background makes him feel especially qualified to take this appointment, and Mr. Allan stated he has been a Supervisor and has made difficult decisions. He thanked the Board for allowing him to interview for this position and for the time and energy the Board puts forth. He stated he was pleased to hear that they were opening this up to everyone and were looking for the best candidate regardless of their political affiliation. Mr. Allan stated Mr. Maloney indicated they wanted someone who would be able to get to work immediately, and he has already been a Township Supervisor and as a Supervisor he put together three Budgets, served as Supervisor Liaison for a number of Township Boards, attended Road Tours, put together long-range plans for the Township Parks, and met with Township residents. Mr. Allan stated together with the other volunteers of the McCaffrey Community Fund he has had the opportunity to raise money for people in need. He stated while a Supervisor he brought the Pool Board under the umbrella of Park & Rec and was instrumental in getting together a long-range plan for the Pool considering new attractions and making the Pool accessible to the handicapped and senior citizens. He stated he was able to save the Township money by working with a builder to get the snack bar built at Stoddard Complex which resulted in a savings of at least 30% in construction costs. Mr. Allan stated as Supervisor he spent time riding with the Police Officers, joined the Fire Department, and went with the road crews during snow removal. He stated he was also a Supervisor when the EMS group faced a difficult time and helped to get them stabilized. He stated when he was Supervisor he is most proud of having made a point of meeting every Township employee who he feels are the “backbone” of the Township and make it a safe and wonderful place in which to live and raise children. He stated he will not need a learning curve if selected to serve as Supervisor. Mr. Allan stated the recent Board has prided itself on being transparent and wanting to be inclusive, and he feels this is an opportunity to put politics aside. He stated this will result in an opportunity to “mend fences” and show everyone that no matter what their political party, they can be part of what makes the Township great. He asked that the Board speak to the Township employees who he feels will tell them that he is a “doer” who can get things done. He stated his goal is to help the community, look for ways to save money, and be the best Supervisor he can be over the next six months. He thanked the Board for their service to the community and the hours they devote. He also thanked the Board for the opportunity to interview for the position he would love to do.

LISA PELLEGRINO

Mr. Maloney asked Ms. Pellegrino if she is familiar with the commitment and duties of Supervisor, and Ms. Pellegrino stated she is familiar with them. She stated she has attended many Township meetings, and reads the summaries of the meetings on the Website. She does not plan to file and run for the office of Supervisor in November.

Mr. Maloney asked if Ms. Pellegrino could identify any items in past Budgets she would disagree with. Ms. Pellegrino stated she has not seen anything which she feels was frivolous. She stated they want to have public safety and quality of life. She stated she is concerned that the “cushion” in the Township’s bank account has eroded over twenty years, but she does feel that money was spent on things that benefit the community. Mr. Maloney asked if there are items she feels the Board should have been funding over the past few years that they did not, and Ms. Pellegrino stated she would like to see the bikepath finished but recognizes that this is a “want’ and not a “need.” She stated she is concerned about quality since while they may be getting the best price, they may not always be getting the best product which could result in additional costs in the long run.

Mr. Maloney asked Ms. Pellegrino where they could look to make cuts in 2010. Ms. Pellegrino stated she feels they should prioritize what needs to be done. She stated she works as an economist, and employment is a trailing indicator. She stated after the economy levels off, it will probably take two quarters before they see employment start to rise again which could result in less taxes being collected. She stated she is concerned that bids have come in higher than anticipated and the estimates they are using for the Budget are not as accurate as they could be.

Mr. Maloney asked Ms. Pellegrino her opinion of the proposed development of Frankford Hospital. Ms. Pellegrino stated while having a hospital close to the residents is appealing, she does feel the Zoning laws are to protect the overall community; and she feels Variances should not be granted unless they have determined there is a definite need. She stated she is concerned about the traffic issues. She also stated hospitals have to be on a primary and a secondary grid and she questions if all the surrounding developments will be taken off the secondary grid and lose their power every time there is a storm. She stated she would want to know from PECO what their plans are and whether the infrastructure is set up to accommodate a proposal of this size. She stated there is an aging sewer system and she questions if it will be able to accommodate the through put. She also expressed concern with the water system noting there is a million gallon tank behind Kohl’s which is a long way on a gravity-driven system, and she questions whether they will be able to get enough water or if the Township taxpayers will have to pay PAWC to build a pumping system or buy it from Newtown Artesian. She stated she could not make an educated judgment on this until she had answers to her questions.

Mr. Maloney asked Ms. Pellegrino what elements of her background make her particularly qualified to serve as Supervisor. Ms. Pellegrino stated she has lived in the Township for almost thirty years and has seen a number of issues resurface. She stated while she feels it is important to revisit issues, she could provide insight on things that have been done in the past which worked well and those which did not. She stated she is a Pennsbury Graduate and was a Valedictorian. She went to an Ivy League University to earn her Bachelor’s, earned her MBA, and has been working as a consultant for the last

fourteen years doing economic projections, budgeting, review of contracts, sending out bids and evaluating them for her clients; and all these skills are directly transferable to helping the Township.

Mr. Caiola stated during Budget time they have usually three to four meetings between September and November which are held in the afternoon starting at 4:30 p.m., and he asked if she would be able to attend these Budget meetings. Ms. Pellegrino stated she tele-commutes almost every day so she would be available.

DAVE MILLER

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Miller if he is familiar with the time commitment and duties associated with being a Supervisor. Mr. Miller stated he knows the meeting dates for the Supervisors meetings, and he also looked at the meeting dates for the Committees for which Ms. Appelton was liaison. Mr. Maloney asked if he has plans to file and run for the upcoming Municipal election, and Mr. Miller stated he does not. He stated he has attended Township meetings for forty years and is comfortable appearing before Committees and sitting on Committees.

Mr. Maloney stated the most important duty for the person appointed would be completion of the Budget for 2010, and he asked if he can identify an expenditure over the past few years which he feels should not have been included. Mr. Miller stated he would come in with no preconceived ideas. He stated he has not read the Budget and it would take time for him to read it line by line. He stated he would understand what they are dealing with because of the length of time he has been in the Township. He stated the last thing he would look at would be cutting payroll or cutting jobs. Mr. Maloney asked if he feels there are things they should have been funding over the past few years that they did not. Mr. Miller stated he was surprised recently with the Bond Issue for open space, and he would think seriously about floating that bond under the current conditions even though the voters approved it since they would be taking on additional debt. Mr. Maloney asked where he feels Budget cuts could be made in the future, and Mr. Miller stated he would have to read the Budget to answer this.

Mr. Maloney asked his opinion of the proposed Frankford Hospital development, and Mr. Miller stated he feels the biggest negative about the Hospital is that it would be paying little or no real estate tax. He stated this is a prime piece of property in the Township; and if anything else were to go on that location apart from a non-profit, church, etc. it would be a good income part of the tax base and for them to build there and “walk away with it for free,” he cannot see happening. He stated he is concerned about the amount of money the Township has spent to date opposing this project and they need to see what they are spending versus what they will gain and lose and at some point terms will have to be met.

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Miller what he feels in his background makes him specifically qualified for this role. Mr. Miller stated he has provided his resume. He stated he is a registered pharmacist and has owned two drug stores, the most recent one for twenty-five years. He stated he does have a lot of business experience. He stated he saw himself in the job description in the newspaper for the Supervisor vacancy. He stated he has lived in the Township for forty years; and while there has been a lot of change, most of it has been for the better. He stated if he were appointed to the position he would be a “fresh face” coming in with no alliances and not politicized and would have a new perspective on the issues facing the Township for the next six months.

RAY NAYLOR

Mr. Naylor stated the other candidates seem to have a real handle on what is happening in the Township. He stated he has lived in the Township for twenty years, but has not really followed what is going on with the Board. Mr. Maloney stated they cannot ignore the fact that Mr. Naylor has been a key element in the community for some time. Mr. Naylor stated he has worked with the Township when he could adding that he worked on the Solid Waste Committee in the early 1990's and they tried to determine a way that the community could deal with yard waste; and one of the things they suggested which came to be was the yard waste/mulching operation. He stated they also developed the recycling program during that year. He stated he also worked on Kids Kingdom and has occasionally come to Township meetings. He stated he reviewed Supervisor Minutes. He noted that Pennsylvania has recognized the Township for its recycling efforts and hopes that what he was involved with was a part of this. Mr. Maloney asked if he feels he understands what would be required to serve as Supervisor, and Mr. Naylor stated he has reviewed the items involved and reviewed the Committees Ms. Appelson served as Liaison. Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Naylor if he has plans to run for elected Office in this capacity, and Mr. Naylor stated he does not. He stated he saw himself in the job description that was in the newspaper. He stated he has lived in the Township with his wife for twenty years, raised children here, and is happy with the way the Township has been run. He stated he felt over the next six months he could contribute something that would be lasting and beneficial to the community.

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Naylor if he feels there are things they have spent money on over the past years that he would disagree with. Mr. Naylor stated he has been very happy with what has been happening in the Township. He stated possibly they could have done more with the Recreation Department, but overall he does not feel there were many things that were done which he feels were wrong. He stated there are wonderful opportunities to take part in activities in the Township. He stated possibly they may want to consider the number of people who are taking advantage of the Township facilities and also look at the age of the Township population as it relates to facilities in the Township.

Mr. Maloney asked his feelings about the Frankford Hospital proposal, and Mr. Naylor stated initially he felt having a hospital nearby would be a good thing, but the traffic in that area is tremendous. He stated he understands that there would not be very large tax ratables associated with that use. He stated he would like to know how they will impact the traffic flows and what the Township would be responsible for relating to the traffic. He stated he would need to review more information about this.

Mr. Maloney stated Township revenues continue to “dry up” in light of the economy and the expenses do not have the same effect. He stated he feels they will have to make difficult choices in the 2010 Budget, and asked Mr. Naylor if there is a place where he feels it is appropriate to start looking. Mr. Naylor stated if they are looking for ways to save money that would not harm people, they could look at attrition to see if there are people who are retiring that they might not have to replace and instead their duties could be taken over by another Department. He stated they should also look into whether the Township is eligible for any stimulus money.

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Naylor what he feels in his background particularly qualifies him for this role. Mr. Naylor stated he spent his working life in education and the last twelve years of his career worked at Makefield Elementary School and then Edgewood Elementary School and had to deal with numerous people. He stated as a group they always tried to put the stakeholders first. He stated his background is in site-based management and he tried to be a consensus builder trying to get everyone possible he could to make decisions trying to determine what is best for the community.

Mr. Smith thanked Mr. Naylor for the wonderful job he did for the children who came under his watch.

CHRIS DIXON

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Dixon if he is familiar with the time commitment and duties associated with being Supervisor, and Mr. Dixon stated he is not fully familiar although he assumes it would be approximately ten hours per week. Mr. Maloney stated at times it could be more than this. He stated they usually have two formal meetings a week including the Supervisor meetings and Liaison appointments but there is also additional time required as well getting prepared, attending other meetings and functions, etc. Mr. Maloney asked if he has plans to file to run for the position of Supervisor, and Mr. Dixon stated he does not. Mr. Maloney asked if he has attended Supervisor meetings in the past, and Mr. Dixon stated he has attended meetings as well as watched them on TV which is how he found out about the vacancy.

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Dixon if he feels there are things that were part of recent Budgets which he feels should not have been included. Mr. Dixon stated he agrees more with what the Board has done than he would disagree with them. He stated he agrees with their position with regard to the deer hunt and open space. Mr. Maloney asked if there are things he feels the Board should have been funding which they did not. Mr. Dixon stated he feels the areas which make the Township special and need to be continued are the historical aspects of the community and open space preservation. He stated he feels the Township is a wonderful place to live in, and he would like to see more coalescing of the community.

Mr. Maloney asked if there are areas where he feels they should consider cutting in the next Budget, and Mr. Dixon stated he would agree with the prior candidate who suggested they look into attrition to see if there are opportunities not to replace people. He stated he does not feel the Township spends a lot of money and feels they are fairly conservative and there is not a lot of waste.

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Dixon about his position on the Frankford Hospital proposal. Mr. Dixon stated he questions why they need this hospital since there are three hospitals in the area, although he recognizes that a hospital may want to be at this location for business reasons. He stated he does not see a benefit to the Township at that location.

Mr. Maloney asked Mr. Dixon what in his background makes him specifically qualified for this role. Mr. Dixon stated he has worked as an accountant and managed a consulting practice. He stated he is able to get things done and works well with other people. He feels he would be able to help in this short-term role and he is a “quick study.” He feels his financial background, background in project management, and his background in the community would be an asset to the Board and he would be able to help them quickly and then turn it over to the next person coming in.

The Board thanked everyone for coming in. There being no further business, the Board adjourned to Executive Session.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Caiola, Secretary