

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
INTERVIEWS OF CANDIDATES
MINUTES – MAY 3, 2006

A meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on May 3, 2006 for the purpose of interviewing candidates for the Citizens Budget Commission. Chairman Santarsiero called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Caiola called the roll.

Those present:

Board of Supervisors: Steve Santarsiero, Chairman
 Ron Smith, Vice Chairman
 Greg Caiola, Secretary
 Pete Stainthorpe, Supervisor

Others: Terry Fedorchak, Township Manager

Absent: Grace Godshalk, Supervisor

KENNETH MARTIN

Mr. Santarsiero asked Mr. Martin if there was anything he wanted to add beyond what was included in his letter. Mr. Martin stated he feels there may be people with more corporate fiscal experience than he has. He stated he has been involved in some activities that involved substantial sums of money, but he does not feel this would apply to the Budget. He feels the Citizens Budget Commission would be a transition between the Board and the Township. He stated he was in favor of a larger group of people being on this Commission because he feels there is a lot of area to cover. He stated he does not have a personal Agenda. He stated he did attend both Budget Sessions in the fall and was in agreement with the Budget. He stated he feels the citizens have an obligation to support the tax system. He stated he is a senior and is retired, but still feels he has a responsibility to pay taxes and support the School system to the end of life. He stated he does understand there is a strong feel for a cap for seniors because they have constraints on their disposable income. He stated he is a **Committeeman** for the Democratic Party. He stated he does not bring in any pre-conceived notions to the job. He would take the job seriously and when he does anything he works very hard at it and would cover all the bases. He stated he does believe in individual fiscal responsibility which is more in keeping with Republican values but has a difference of opinion as to how to solve problems. He stated he was a Union representative for Amtrak for five years and he had a contentious group who wanted more money who were underpaid and Reagan who was the President was hostile to labor. He stated the people who ran the Union before he did were outspending themselves by \$12,000 a year and he resolved all this. He stated he

also had some experience at Bucks County Community College and was the President of the Spanish Club where they handled sums of money. He stated they borrowed \$3,000 from the Cultural Affairs Committee and they did not feel they would get back the money and they not only paid them back but also brought in profit by bringing in speakers with some funding from the Government to cover it.

Mr. Caiola stated Mr. Martin indicated that he attended last year's Budget sessions and asked how he felt about the give and take of information and the responsiveness of Departments Heads and the Supervisors. Mr. Martin stated he was in agreement with what they did. He does agree with more Police presence. He stated as a taxpayer he had no objections. He stated he felt it was a creative Budget and thorough. He knows there is always a feeling about taxes going up but feels this is just reality. He sees the Commission as a buffer between the Board of Supervisors and people they may not be in touch with.

Mr. Smith stated there are some segments of the population such as the seniors who have suggested that the Township is spending too much money on youth and they should spend more on the seniors and asked Mr. Martin what he feels is their mission in terms of Budget purposes in terms of recreational needs of the Township. Mr. Martin stated as far as sports and swimming he feels it is very important to have a thorough, across the board program for youth and feels the seniors should feel this is part of their responsibility. Mr. Smith asked how he feels about the statement that in order to maintain the quality of services in the Township and what the residents expect, there is justification for raising taxes. Mr. Martin stated he does agree. He noted the value of his home has gone up far more than his taxes have. He stated the Pennsbury School District adds value to his home.

Mr. Stainthorpe asked about an earned income tax. Mr. Martin stated this would benefit him but he would feel guilty about it. He stated Newtown has this and he feels if Lower Makefield had it, it would not be popular.

Mr. Smith asked about a Business Privilege Tax. Mr. Martin stated he does not feel it would bring in the kind of income they need, although it may in the future.

GARY CRUZAN

Mr. Santarsiero asked Mr. Cruzan whether he had anything beyond what he sent in that he would like the Board to know about, but Mr. Cruzan stated he had nothing to add at this time. Mr. Santarsiero asked Mr. Cruzan why he was interested in the Budget Review Commission. Mr. Cruzan stated he feels he can make a real contribution. He stated everything he does in his own profession is involved in analyzing things and reviewing Budgets, and he feels this is a skill the Budget Commission would utilize. He stated he

has a Master's Degree in Urban Planning and they teach you to analyze everything. He stated he has also been involved in real estate all his life and it is all finance, budgets, feasibility, and analysis. He stated every client he works with is a very wealthy investor, and he assists them in re-investing their funds. He stated they would not work with him if he did not have the expertise as they are very wealthy people.

Mr. Stainthorpe asked where he would go first to find savings. Mr. Cruzan stated he feels they should look at everything. He stated he would like to try to save monies and increase revenues. He does not have a particular place he would start digging. He felt this Committee would go through every element over the year. He stated the Committee will only be as good as the people the Board puts on it, and he hopes it will be made up with serious, well-qualified people. He stated if the job is done right, it can be a great service to the Township.

Mr. Smith asked Mr. Cruzan if he saw through analysis of the Budget and cutting expenses, that the only way they could maintain the services of the Township and the quality that the people expect would be a tax increase, could he as a member of the Commission indicate that they need a tax increase. Mr. Cruzan stated he feels he could. He stated the biggest tax increases come from the School Budget, and he would also like to be involved in that as he feels some group needs to make an impact. He stated he is also concerned with the new Tax Bill the Governor is discussing. Mr. Cruzan stated he feels the Governor is almost guaranteeing that they will get an inflationary increase every year in School taxes; and if this is done, he feels people will not be able to pay it.

Mr. Caiola asked if Mr. Cruzan came to any of the Budget Sessions and asked if there was anything glaring they could have altered for the better through the process. Mr. Cruzan stated if he is on the Committee he will look at it much more seriously and would be looking to assist the Board and Mr. Fedorchak. He feels the group would have to discuss things and decide what their recommendations would be.

Mr. Smith stated he feels there is a need for an increase in recreation facilities in the Township. He asked Mr. Cruzan how he feels about the recreation needs in the Township and where this fits within a Budget. Mr. Cruzan stated his children are grown but were involved in the Township recreation activities, and he feels this is one of the greatest periods of a parent's life. Mr. Smith stated sometimes certain segments of the community such as the seniors feel their children are grown and they do not need more fields. Mr. Cruzan stated he feels they need to make projections. He stated the Country is going through a population change. He feels they need to look ahead and see how many more children will be coming into the community to see if in ten years they may be over-built with recreation facilities. Mr. Caiola stated the Schools do try to do this. Mr. Santarsiero stated even if this is going on in the larger society, he feels in Lower Makefield there will always be a fair number of younger families. Mr. Cruzan stated it would be interesting to see what the School Districts have in terms of their projections.

Mr. Smith asked if Mr. Cruzan had any interest in any other Board in the Township. Mr. Cruzan stated he has had a lot of experience that could be valuable to the Township. Mr. Caiola stated they are looking for good people to fill vacancies on the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Cruzan stated he feels what the Township is doing as far as reviewing the Ordinances may help minimize a lot of the smaller Zoning Variances. He stated he would like to be considered as a resource to the Township whether he sits on a Board or not.

ETHAN SHILLER

Mr. Santarsiero asked if there was anything further Mr. Shiller would like to add, and Mr. Shiller stated he would like them to focus on the fact that he runs his own company. He stated he understands financials from a P & L Statement, whether it is for a specific area, and Balance Sheets, etc. All of this would apply to this Commission.

Mr. Stainthorpe asked where he would look to find savings or efficiencies. Mr. Shiller stated he feels there are some cost savings that could occur through some of the suggestions that are occurring now. He stated, while he has not looked at the numbers, the sale of the sewage system may be something that is feasible. He also feels there are small areas that are very visible publicly that people would like such as \$5 that people are supposed to pay for a yard sale which in the long-term will not impact the Township, but they will get a lot more PR this way as being able to remove as this is something common. Mr. Stainthorpe asked about an Earned Income Tax. Mr. Shiller stated he disagrees with any tax increase emotionally although he recognizes he has to accept this. He stated he is realistic when he looks at numbers. He stated the value of his home has doubled. He stated he assumes because of the services he wants or are necessary for the demographics of the area, this will drive the type of tax that might be necessary, how much might be necessary, and what area. He stated they will have a tax increase no matter what because of the "son of Act 72" that is coming since they could not impose Act 72 on the School Board. He stated he did speak against this at the School Board meeting. He stated they are now going through a different process to implement something similar. He feels he could have an impact on at least giving people a clear analysis of what is affecting the Township.

Mr. Smith asked what he feels about the recreational mission of the Township and how it impacts the Budget. Mr. Shiller stated he agrees with the recreation which he feels is a long-term positive for the community. He stated the demographics are on the youthful couple size. He stated the School District does predict an increase in this age level and this is why they had to construct Afton Elementary. He stated more recreation, such as the Golf Course, is bringing value to the overall community and this will help people make a decision to move here as well as the School District.

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Mr. Smith asked if there are any other Boards he would be interested in serving on, and Mr. Shiller stated he would not be interested in any other Board as he applied for this Board based on his specific knowledge and expertise.

There being no further Interviews to conduct this evening, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Caiola". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "C".

Greg Caiola, Secretary

