

AUG. 2 PRIMARY

10 vie for 4 seatson Bedford Twp.board of trustees

Voting next week is partisan

BY JAY SKEBBA BLADE STAFF WRITER

TEMPERANCE — The Aug. 2 primary election ballot in Bedford Township will feature 10 candidates squaring off for four township trustee seats.

Nancy Tienvieri and Rick Steiner are running for re-election, while current trustees Paul Pirrone and Larry O'Dell are running for township supervisor, which disqualifies them from simultaneously seeking re-election to their trustee seats.

Bedford Township trustees are elected to four-year terms.

The four Republicans with the most votes in the primary move on to the November election. Greg Robinson, the lone Democrat in the race, also will be on the fall ballot.

Next week's election is a partisan primary, meaning voters may only vote for the Republican or Democratic side of the ticket.

Michelle Bork

One of the biggest issues Ms. Bork, 47, wants to address is sprucing up downtown.

"I really think there needs to be a revitalization of that area," she said. "A place where the community can come together to shop, eat, celebrate."

Ms. Bork also wants the township to be more welcoming of new residents and businesses.

The Disney travel agent is a member of Bedford Citizens for Fiscal Responsibility, a political action committee.

TC Clements

Thomas Clements, Jr., who goes by TC, is a former deputy police chief and owns a travel agency, Premier Cruise Planners.

Mr. Clements, 47, has never held a post in government, but he is an elected delegate for the Monroe County Republican Party.

Originally from Florida, he now lives in Temperance and says he has the integrity and character for the trustee position.

There's been significant infighting on the board, something he plans to try to fix. The board has failed to set goals and explain those goals to the public, leaving initiatives unfinished and decisions made in what seems to be arbitrary terms, he said.

"I've always had the ability to sit on a board and bring consensus," Mr. Clements said.

James Nyhan

Mr. Nyhan owned Forest View Lanes for 25 years before retiring to care for his autistic son. He also has served as township park commissioner.

The 53-year-old wants to see more unity in the community.

"We need to bring a sense of balance, and we need to bring this township together," he said. "You lead by example. You get these leaders to the table, get them talking, and move our township forward."

Greg Robinson

Mr. Robinson, a retired Bedford Public Schools teacher believes grant money is key to Bedford Township's success.

"I'd like to get more money into the township for roads, seniors, and drug prevention for our teens," Mr. Robinson said. "I am the guy who walks the walk. I'll do more than what it is expected of me."

Mr. Robinson, 54, plans to start a digital dropbox for residents to voice their concerns.

Michael Sprott

Mr. Sprott, 65, plans to use his experience as a real estate broker to be an effective trustee.

Mr. Sprott wants businesses to be able to attend consolidated meetings with the planning board, board of reviews, and board of trustees present, as opposed to separate meetings, so businesses can open sooner.

"As a trustee, most of the stuff that comes before the board has to do with either zoning rights or property rights," he said. "I have a lot of experience dealing with issues that face the township board concerning small business and homeowners."

Bob Stammer

Mr. Stammer, 56, aims to attract businesses to Bedford Township, revitalize the downtown area, and make ordinances business-friendly.

He points to his experience as Monroe County road commissioner since 2010 as a big reason why he can move the township forward.

"I know the hard work it takes to get things done," Mr. Stammer said. "A lot of the things I pushed for are now in place at the road commission. I've made change happen there, and I think I can bring that same experience and determination to the township."

Rick Steiner

Mr. Steiner, 56, served as a township trustee from 2004-2008, before being elected again in 2012.

One of his proudest accomplishments as trustee is taking part in the roads plan that paved millions of dollars worth of new streets in the township. He wants to attract businesses to the community.

“With the new bridge coming in Detroit, we need to be prepared to help grow Bedford strategically,” Mr. Steiner said. “We have to get that done and have some shovel-ready projects available.”

Nancy Tienvieri

Ms. Tienvieri said she believes that one of the biggest issues in Bedford Township is improving communicating with residents.

“The blue newsletter they send out four times a year may appeal to the seniors, which I think is important, but none of the younger people read it,” Ms. Tienvieri said. “We need to find a way to communicate what’s happening in the township so that the public is aware of what government is doing and so government is aware of the public’s needs.”

Ms. Tienvieri, 67, said she would like to see paths for biking, walking, or skating.

She said she’s proud of her efforts to bring a weekly recycling bin to the township for residents.

George Welling

Mr. Welling, 65, serves on the township’s board of zoning appeals and formerly served on the planning commission.

Mr. Welling, who is semiretired, said his biggest goal is bringing businesses to Bedford Township.

In addition, he said he wants to make board meetings less confrontational.

“With the fragile egos, feelings get hurt, it carries over to the next meeting, and gets worse,” Mr. Welling said. “I think we’ve run into that, and it’s causing an impasse. We need to be more goal-oriented.”

Candidate Brent Cook did not respond to a request seeking comment.

Staff writer Nolan Rosenkrans contributed to this report.

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