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LETTERS: Vote 'YES' to expand Upper Providence Board of Supervisors

Thursday, November 3, 2016

In response to a previous letter to the editor by Ron Riker, I will give you firsthand knowledge as to why Upper Providence Township needs to increase the board of supervisors from three to five members.

Up until last year, board member Mr. Barker was unable to vote on the budget. That's right, for five of his last six years and many budgets before sitting on the board of supervisors he could not and did not vote on a single budget item. This is the single most important task of a sitting board member. And why couldn't he do this? Because he, with the help of his fellow board members at the time, hired his wife to be the township recreation director. He therefore had to recuse himself from voting on the budget every time, because he would monetarily benefit personally from his vote.

Five years ago, in comes a fresh face, Lisa Mossie, with an open mind and a campaign run on open transparency. In less than two short years, she aligns herself with Mr. Barker, and for the next four years your township was being run by two of the three supervisors, not the three who were elected by the people.

During a budget meeting that Mr. Barker could not be a part of, Ms. Mossie tried to increase Mrs. Barker's salary by \$10,000 to which I said "There is no way I can justify this kind of increase." She then attacks me with "You won't do this because she is a woman." To which I say, "How dare you go there with me." For my almost 40 years as a businessman in this township, I have hired more women than men. This scenario would not have happened with a five-member board.

You are right when you say that a citizen can be a part of the process by speaking and being heard at a board meeting. And you are right when you say more supervisors will not mean you will have more of a voice. But it will give you more ears to fill with the issues that you bring forth, and it will give you a more diversified and broader based board and hopefully those extra board seats will be filled with more caring individuals and not with those seeking to further their own cause in life as we have now.

And you are right when you say more doesn't always mean better, but in this case it will limit the ability for just two people to decide the future fate of our township.

And let's address your last comment about the increased cost to the township residents. I don't know where this \$72,000 figure came from but I think it's off by quite a bit, but let's use it anyway. First of all this dollar amount only applies if the supervisor elects to accept the medical insurance and stipend. With 23,000 residents in Upper Providence, that comes out to about \$3.13 per person per year. I doubt you will find too many people who would complain about a little more representation for that much money.

Mr. Riker, here is the one thing all you naysayers have missed. We proposed this so that you, the residents, get to decide how many people you want to represent Upper Providence Township. This small group of hard-working individuals known as "Upper Providence First" worked to get you that vote. We asked the board of supervisors to give this opportunity to you, but they refused to give you the choice to decide your own fate. They think they know better than you. Do they?

Please vote Tuesday, Nov. 8!

— John Pearson is a former two-term Upper Providence supervisor who was defeated for re-election in 2015.

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