

Middlesex Library
1300 Mountain Avenue

January 22, 2009

A Special meeting of the Council was held at the above place on the above date commencing at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor
Council President:

Bob Schueler
Michael Class
Debra DeVuyst
Bob Edwards
Bob Gorr
Michael Venuto (late)

Attorney: Edward Johnson

Council President Schueler opened the meeting with the Sunshine Law Statement saying the meeting had been advertised in the Special Meeting Notice of January 16, 2009.

Each individual nominated for the Mayoral seat presented a statement to Council and then proceeded to answer questions prepared by the council members.

Statement of John Fuhrmann

Good evening Middlesex Borough Council members.

Why do I seek the Mayor's chair?

Because of concern.

When a sitting Mayor bolts and criticizes the council on his way out the door, one can only conclude that clearly, something is out of order and major cause of concern.

For forty-four years Middlesex has been home. As my resume illustrates, some of those years were spent in public service. Along with time in residence, and taxes I have as major participatory investment in our community. So it troubles me in large measure to see governmental discord tear at our borough's fabric.

It is my hope to help remedy that state of affairs.

The question becomes HOW?

Fir what are the mayor's responsibilities? He is the municipal corporation's chief executive officer. Accordingly, he bears responsibility for the borough's every day function. He is required to see that the laws are enforced, he is an ex-officio member (non-voting) of all appointive bodies, he has appointing power with the council's consent and some appointments without said consent. He cannot vote on matters before the

council except in case of a tie. He can however veto council's action subject to a councilmatic override.

With the council's input he sets the agenda.

Because his responsibilities are considerable he can get cranky when things don't necessarily go his way but that is the way of the system. So he must sometimes rely on his powers of persuasion to achieve his goals. He'll win some, he'll lose some.

The council has the legislative power. It also has the power of the purse. It is the body that gets things done. But sometimes the Mayor's agenda and the council's goals are at odds and this is where the trouble starts and I haven't even introduced the political component.

I believe the mayor cannot and must not look upon the council as an adversary although with the political component in place that can, to some extent be the case. Nonetheless, with communication and transparency as prerequisites, the mayor must recognize and under the distribution of power, the political realities of the time and set a tone of mutual respect and bipartisan cooperation if the municipality is to be properly served. And I trust the council would respond in kind.

So that is HOW I would ameliorate the mayor council relationship.

Now let me take just a moment to outline the issues that I think require immediate attention.

1. Completing a realistic budget. I think Tuesday evening's workshop was a good first step. I compliment Council President Schueler on his conduct of the meeting and the eagerness of the council to proceed in a timely and professional fashion.
2. Establishing negotiation committees to sit down with the police and department of public works union representatives and hammer out realistic agreements. This will be especially challenging given our current economic predicament. Accordingly, I expect the unions to take into account the dire economic times and be practical in their approach to our negotiators.
3. We must address the radio concerns voiced by our fire and police departments. This is a matter of public safety which is government's primary responsibility.
4. There are personnel concerns in the building, planning and zoning areas that need immediate attention as well.

And I am certain there are other pressing matters that we also must address.

Deeply rooted in Middlesex Borough I offer my services as your mayor. I see my tenure as a bridge to a time not too far distant when confidence in municipal government is restored and others can take the mayor's position and deliver solid, professional direction to the council and the town at large.

Statement of Bob Schueler

Council Members and Members of the Public

Middlesex Borough needs a Mayor who possesses the leadership skills to move the Borough forward. It is a cooperative effort with the council to obtain a consensus on many difficult decisions that will affect our borough in the coming months.

We have to break down the barriers of "That's the way we've always done it" and build a path to success with a better way of doing things. A municipality does one main thing, it delivers services. We need to get beyond the paradigm of the past and create a more efficient way to deliver those services. The current economic situation makes this even MORE IMPORTANT.

It will not be easy, in fact it will be difficult, because there are no simple solutions. NO MAGIC BUTTON. If elected, I pledge to work with the council in creating a workable budget that considers the services the residents want and the cost to provide those services.

I suggest a written Vision Statement to help us maintain focus on our goals. I will demand accountability from the governing body and the borough employees; I will work to share services whenever possible, both with surrounding communities and within our own. I will maintain a posture of controlling spending, especially given the anticipated reduction of funds from Trenton.

I contend that I possess that leadership and I have the vision to move Middlesex forward.

Thank you.

Statement of Sean Kaplan

My objective to run for the mayoral seat is to work closely with the governing body to help alleviate the tax burden to the residents as a whole and how to do that is we have to work in conjunction with our committees, to work with them, to utilize them to take the time out to believe in them to bring forth information that hasn't been done before.

I vow if I were to become Mayor to make time to listen to the residents. They are the eyes and ears of our town and we all campaigned out there and we all know, we run, we get elected, we have to listen to the people, it is very important that we spend time with them, because if it wasn't for them we wouldn't be in the positions that we hold, we wouldn't be able to do things the way that we do. Let me prove to you that you made the right choice and nominate myself, Sean Kaplan, as Mayor of Middlesex Borough. Thank you.

After Statements were given to the Council a five minute recess was taken. The meeting was reconvened, at which time the Borough Clerk requested that the council fill out a paper ballot for their selection of Mayor. After tabulation of each vote, the Borough Clerk announced that by unanimous vote of Council, John Fuhrmann had been elected as the Mayor of Middlesex Borough. John Fuhrmann requested that he be sworn in as Mayor at the January 27, 2009 Meeting.

Council President Schueler opened the public portion of the meeting.

Mike Hompesch stated that he had not spoke at a meeting since the elimination of the Administrator's position, at which time he was extremely disappointed. Mr. Hompesch congratulated Mr. Fuhrmann and stated that he felt that the Council had elected an excellent candidate.

Seeing that there was no further public participation, Council President Schueler closed the public portion of the meeting.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned by Councilman Edwards and seconded by Councilman Venuto and carried by unanimous vote of Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Anello, RMC
Borough Clerk