

MILLER AND BIGLEY PLEDGE NEW OPENNESS IN TOWN HALL

Rick Miller and Ginny Bigley, candidates for Lawrence Township Council, pledge to restore openness and transparency to Town Hall if they are elected on November 3rd.

“Local government is closest to the people. It should also be the most open in all its dealings,” Councilman Rick Miller said. “The current majority took control of the town council in 1995. It has been growing less and less transparent about the way it does things ever since.”

“As a member of the school board and chair of its Community Relations Committee I have tried hard to get our community more informed about and involved in what we do,” Ms. Bigley continued. “I want to bring that same approach to Town Hall.”

Miller and Bigley asserted that there is no clearer example of the current council majority’s failure to promote open process than their attempt to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of then-Mayor Mark Holmes late last year.

“When Mark Holmes resigned, the current majority wanted to interview his possible replacements behind closed doors for just 15 minutes each,” Miller recalled. “I called for an open process, with interviews conducted in public, so the people could hear from the candidates firsthand.”

“That’s what we do when filling a vacancy on the school board,” Bigley added. “I was shocked that the current majority fought Rick on what seemed to be a simple request for an open process.”

“It took the current council majority almost three weeks before they finally relented and agreed to the open process I insisted on – interviews conducted in public, not in secret,” Miller stated. “I still can’t believe it took them so long.”

“One of the first things Rick and I will do if we are elected is make sure that doesn’t happen again,” Bigley said. “We will introduce an ordinance requiring possible replacement candidates to submit a resume, provide a statement explaining why they want to serve, and be interviewed in an open, public meeting.”

Miller and Bigley also cite another recent example of behind-the-scenes maneuvering. “Just this past summer, Mayor Pam Mount recruited and appointed a township committee before seeking council authorization,” Miller asserted. “When she finally put on the agenda a resolution establishing the committee and appointing its members, it had already met several times. I appreciate those who are serving on this committee as

volunteers, but it's time to put an end to this sort of back room maneuvering and do things the right way.”

“It's time for a change for the better at Town Hall,” Bigley concluded. “Fourteen years of one-party rule is enough. We need to let the sunshine back into our local government. No more business as usual.”