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Scheduling Millage Votes

One often wonders what is going on in the heads of those sitting on city council? A charter amendment was passed by the voters of Troy that stated if you wanted to raise the current budgeted city millage as authorized by the charter you had to have a vote of the people to authorize the proposed increase. Now they all know that the recent election law changes limited elections to 4 specified times each year. They also know that each year there is one election date that is scheduled each and every year, that being the November date. So do you think these wonder heads would put two and two together and think about how to use this fact to reduce the impact this charter amendment has on the budget process? Not in your wildest dreams. So today we have management and the rubber stampers on city council wanting to spend \$75,000 plus to hold a special election to vote on a city millage increase.

The solution to this wasteful expenditure is very simple that I can't believe those on city council have not seen it. You schedule to have a ballot question each November election that would address a millage increase vote. Now Victor, do you mean that you support a millage increase every year. NO. What I said was that you schedule to have on each November ballot a millage increase vote. Now prior to the ballots being printed, the city council would have to determine the amount, if any. If there is no increase you do not place on the ballot a millage increase question.

This city always talks about being ahead of the game. Why is it that we still plan our budgets one year at a time? Should we not be planning our budgets like Oakland County, which has gone from a two year to a three year line item budget? Once again Troy talks about being ahead of the game when in reality we are behind the times. [\[More on this later on when I plan on a blog entry comparing us to Sterling Heights.\]](#) By going to a two year or three year budgeting process, the council would have a good idea of the millage they want and need by June for the following year. If an increase is needed, they would determine the amount and it will be on the November Ballot. If none is needed, it isn't put on the ballot. If it fails, it won't have an impact on the current budget but management and council will know what they will have for available for next years budget. The process repeats and they can place a new millage ballot request the following November election cycle. You avoid the expense of special elections and it would assist in the budgeting process.

I will bet you that city council will not see or do this because the idea didn't come from management. If Troy truly believes it is the City of Tomorrow Today why does it still act like the City of Yesteryear Today? We are behind the times when it comes to budgeting. We are not at the forefront; we are back in the middle of the pack with all the other one-year budgeters.

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Rubber Stampers vs. Political Agendas

It finally has happened. Not one candidate for city council has piqued my interest or garnered my support. Having said that, I will vote for three candidates that least offends my senses and will make some effort to hold management accountable. I will be up front; I do not like management rubber stampers sitting at the city council table. We have several sitting there today. If you have followed the goings on at city council you know who they are. Some are 100% rubber stampers, some are less, a few you would say are in No way rubber stampers. I also dislike individuals that push a political agenda to cater to their base instead of what is best for the city. The above views and dislikes are tempered when the individual is up front about why they vote this way and not try and hide it with deceptive statements.

So whom will I vote for? If you have read my blog posts you know that I am not a fan favorite of Wade Flemming. However, he has shown that he will not swallow all that garbage concerning our budget problems from our retread city caretaker. Notice I said caretaker and not manager. A manager will provide council with what he plans on doing and why. A caretaker just puts out a bunch of options and tells you to tell him what to do. He did this during his last stint as city caretaker, excuse me, city manager and has continued where he left off. Have you ever heard him tell the city council that he wants to do this and why he wants to do it that way OR have you only heard him say these are the options you can choose from. Tell me what you want to do and I will do it. For this we pay him a 6-figure salary.

Back to who I plan on voting for. So Wade, even though I think you are a little wishy washy, you do try and hold management accountable occasionally, especially when it comes to budget issues. I will not vote for a rubber stamper like Mayor Schilling. So you now have my vote.

So whom else will I vote for? You have two slates of three candidates. They run as a slate and more than likely will vote as a slate if elected. The slate of Slater, Molinar and McGinnis has shown by their comments that they will no doubt be management rubber stampers. I dislike rubber stampers but that is a hurdle I can ignore if the individual can show some effort of accountability. Councilwoman Beltramini is such an example. The slate of Johnson, Tietz and Flemming will not be rubber stampers but may push a political philosophy if elected. I don't like political philosophies dictating actions that impact a whole community but then isn't that what politics is all about, even though we set this city's elections as non-partisan (for those that watched the LOW voters candidate forum, some candidates thought we had a bi-partisan form). Again, I can live with those that push a political philosophy as long as they are willing to adjust when it has a negative impact on the city. Former councilman Lambert is an example.

I was able to watch the last hour of the LOW voters council candidate forum. My take on the candidates is that McGinnis showed a lack of knowledge as to what was going on in the city, Molinar was answering questions as if he was still a county commissioner, Slater just did not

impress, Johnson spoke and looked like a deer on a highway looking at the oncoming car lights, Tietz has a tax agenda that will dictate his position on issues and Flemming, well Wade was just being Wade.

I do not vote for candidates based on what slate they are on. This year is no exception. I have decided to vote for Tietz in addition to Wade but my finale vote is still up in the air between Deer lights and No impression. I am leaning towards Deer lights since No impression is more likely to push rubber-stamping while Deer lights didn't seem as if pushing a political philosophy was on her agenda.

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