

Mayoral candidate Grubb explains 2004 incident

The Bethlehem Gadfly Candidates for election, Election March 11, 2021

 *Latest in a series of posts on candidates for election* 

Dana Grubb is a candidate for mayor of our city.

Dear Gadfly,

I've been hesitant to dive into the details and drag others into the issue, but after learning that a **Republican candidate** has announced for Mayor of Bethlehem, one who was involved in a confrontation in another state in the past himself, and that parallels are now being drawn by some groups between his incident and an incident in my own past, it is time for me to clear the air. I was not present for whatever happened to the Republican candidate and therefore cannot comment on it.

In 2004, I was acting on some citizen complaints about a coworker of mine who was accused of unethical and potentially illegal behavior. As an administrator to whom these complaints were directed, I had a responsibility to report them to both the Director of Human Resources and the City Solicitor. I did. The city government was transitioning into the new Callahan administration, and follow up on these complaints was either ignored or covered up. However, I felt such serious allegations needed to be pursued in order to discover the truth: the citizens of Bethlehem deserve no less. Outgoing City Solicitor Joseph 'Jay' Leeson had also advised me to continue.

Later in 2004, I was assaulted and punched in the face by this coworker, which resulted in my nose being fractured. I never retaliated, and the incident was over within seconds. Actions taken by others who witnessed all or part of the incident had nothing to do with the incident itself; comments about other workers being afraid and locking themselves in their offices to escape involvement were no doubt prompted by witnessing something that never should have happened in City Hall, but in which I was not the instigator—and in fact was the person who was assaulted.

My coworker and I were both held accountable and retired from city service.

Newspaper accounts in the Lehigh Valley regarding this matter were skewed and sensationalized by a City Hall beat reporter. I had previously brought complaints about him, which I had received, to the attention of my superior who handled it with the reporter. He stopped the behavior that had engendered the complaints, but apparently remained irate about my intervention, and therefore took this opportunity to have his revenge.

Others with absolutely no understanding or knowledge of this back story are attempting to drag my name through the mud by bringing up this incident, to benefit the Mayoral candidate of their choice. None of them were present the morning of the incident between me and my coworker, nor did they work in city hall. In answering queries I've had about this occurrence, I have always said that we were both held accountable, have learned from the experience, and have moved on. My resolve to institute a zero-tolerance policy for intimidation and bullying has only been strengthened by what I learned from this experience. As someone who was attacked for acting on principle, I have a better understanding of the various ways bullying and intimidation may be accomplished, as well as a better understanding of a victim's situation.

After this incident and my retirement, I was approached by the Federal Bureau of Investigation to be an informant and provide as much information and knowledge about possible corruption in Bethlehem city government and the development community in general. I did that for over two years. I recently learned that the investigation into the Allentown Mayor's conviction on pay-to-play charges had provided evidence that the same thing had been happening in Bethlehem.

I did not, do not, and will not accept unethical or illegal behavior from anyone involved in Bethlehem's governance. People who know me and have worked with me are aware of that, and many have endorsed my candidacy for Mayor because they are certain that I will stand by my principles, even if it makes me unpopular in certain sectors. My integrity is not for sale to anyone and that may be why those engaged in such behaviors are so eager to point the finger at me. If people applauded

those who stand up against wrong doing in any form, it would help to foster a much needed culture of ethics in city government.

Dana