

Where is Ms. Karner in all of this?

The Bethlehem Gadfly City government, Ethics, Serious Issues December 3, 2019

🦋 *Latest in a series of posts on Ethics and City Government* 🦋

On November 6 Gadfly was in his usual 3 o'clock position in the cheap seats at City Council when in the course of a routine discussion about funding a proposal to study the Southside, Councilman Callahan turned to Department of Community and Economic Development head Alicia Miller Karner, who was sitting in the 11 o'clock position of sparsely filled Town Hall, and unexpectedly said:

"Miss Karner, did you or did you not call the Board and put pressure on them [members of the Bethlehem Parking Authority Board], did you not ask two people the day of the vote to renegotiate a lower bidded contract?"

Gadfly gasped audibly.

Gadfly is an old dawg (and a mixed metaphorist).

He was watching the Army-McCarthy hearings on tv in 1954 [at the moment](#) at which lawyer Joseph Welch famously nailed the infamous Senator Joe McCarthy with

"Have you no sense of decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency?"

Gadfly gasped, his mind spontaneously went to the Welch moment, and he may even have mouthed Welch's words.

It was that striking a moment for Gadfly, who is basically still experiencing his first rodeo in Town Hall.

Relive the moment with him.

City Council meeting, November 6, 2019, begin min. 1:26:40

Councilman Callahan: “Who will be making up the committee? . . . I’d like to be on that committee . . . I’m worried that there are some influences being put there that have been in the past month with some pressure being put on other entities during voting on RFPs . . . I have a big concern where this is going with Ms. Karner at the helm of this . . . She had reached out to people on the Parking Authority Board the day of a vote which I thought was highly unethical to put pressure on them to accept a lower bid. There are people in Allentown who went to jail for doing that . . . Miss Karner, did you or did you not call the Board and put pressure on them, did you not ask two people the day of the vote to renegotiate a lower bid contract?”

Gadfly has been asking you “what if” questions. What if you were the city employee? What if you were Councilman Callahan? What if you were the Mayor?

What if you were Alicia Miller Karner in Town Hall the night of November 6 at approximately 8:26PM?

These pictures kind of tell the story. AMK is the woman in the audience on the left side of these pictures.

AMK before Callahan addressed her:



AMK as BGC started to direct his comments to her:



A relaxed AMK coiled into lineman stance ready to do battle.

But a time-out was called before she could engage.

And she is the quiet one in this “contentious spectacle” — to quote the previous post by follower Barbara Diamond.

Or should Gadfly say, the “quieted one.”

She has no forum, no soapbox, no microphone.

The Mayor defended her; she has not been able to defend herself.

Yet, “guilty” or not, AMK’s professional career could be seriously damaged or ended.

The Councilman and the Mayor will survive whatever happens.

Guilty or not, AMK was done wrong here.

to be continued . . .