

Let's start to think seriously about the possibility of unethical behavior by a member of City administration

The Bethlehem Gadfly City government, Ethics, Serious Issues December 1, 2019

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

Early Sunday morning as Gadfly writes.

Followers may still be in holiday haze. And the Eagles play a crucial game (aren't they all?) today.

Not a good day to get serious perhaps.

Gadfly apologizes for the interruption.

But City Council meets Tuesday. When another shoe might drop. So Gadfly would like to try to get his head and wings around the suggestion by Councilman Callahan of possible ethics violations by the head of the Department of Community and Economic Development before then.

To refresh yourself on this issue [click Ethics](#) on the Gadfly righthand sidebar.

Remember that Councilman Callahan has suggested that the Director of Community and Economic Development Alicia Miller Karner may have engaged in unethical behavior(s) that Mayor Donchez has been unwilling to investigate.

(Gadfly is being careful here. Councilman Callahan is asking for an investigation. He has not said he has definitive proof. He has asked the Mayor to investigate and take action if it is warranted.)

This is a serious issue.

Gadfly has said in an earlier post that the reputations of Councilman Callahan, Mayor Donchez, and Director of Community and Economic Development Karner are out on a limb.

Gadfly thinks especially of AMK. Even the barest suggestion of unethical behavior, much less a formal charge or confirmation of such, could be potentially personally and professionally devastating. It might, for instance, mean the end of a career.

But he should have added that the reputation of Bethlehem itself is out on a limb.

That's the main reason we should be paying attention.

And he's not trying to be sensationalistic or to overstate the case.

When in a time in which we have seen officials go to jail in ugly corruption cases in nearby Allentown and Reading a City Council member takes the microphone and goes before the cameras (Gadfly's!) to suggest local corruption, we'd better straighten up and take notice.

Gadfly has also said in an earlier post that there seem to be three issues here. Let's separate them out.

- possible unethical behavior by AMK regarding a Bethlehem Parking Authority decision on the Polk Street Garage
- possible unethical behavior by AMK stalling permit approvals in order to justify staff additions in her department
- breaches of decorum by BGC at City Council meetings

Gadfly spent last Tuesday laying a foundation for thought about this controversy with a series of posts, and a few of you have posted

reactions, while others have emailed briefer comments (more on those later).

Gadfly is a slow thinker. Some of you have complained about that in the past. He has what he has self-described as a conveyor belt kind of mind (he grew up in the factory era, his grandkids are in the warehouse era!). He like to order things, process them, and then take a position.

So he's going to start the conveyor belt now and share thoughts with you over a series of posts between now and Tuesday as he organizes events in chronological order and starts to form his views.

As usual, Gadfly invites you to think along with him — modifying, correcting, expanding his thinking as he goes.