

# Councilman Callahan: “I would prefer not to be here”

The Bethlehem Gadfly City government, Ethics, Serious Issues December 2, 2019

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



*photo April Gamiz/The Morning Call*

If you are going to stand in front of the Bethlehem world as Councilman Callahan did a week ago and mark a City administrator for possible career-damaging wrongdoing and, in effect, charge the Mayor with dereliction of duty, you’d better have a good story.

Agreed?

Read through the extensive timeline on the previous post with Gadfly.

Then put it aside.

Reflect and reconstruct from memory the story from Councilman Callahan’s position.

Boil it down.

See it through his eyes.

Here's what Gadfly gets.

- I was told about potentially unethical behavior by the head of DCED
- I heard that from employees past and present
- I heard the same thing from outsiders
- I didn't know if the stories were true
- But as a Councilman I felt a responsibility to do something
- At first I wasn't sure what to do
- I talked with a few fellow Councilmen
- But I basically sat on the information for a couple months
- Finally, I talked with the Mayor, assuming he would handle it
- I simply wanted the truth, if there was nothing to the stories, so be it
- But I heard nothing for a period of time
- I tried to get the Mayor and Council in executive session to air the matter
- The Mayor refused, as did Council, following the lead of one member
- Who has a deal for the Mayor's endorsement in the next mayoral election
- I felt that I was being stonewalled
- Finally, I wrote the Mayor asking for an investigation by "his guys"
- My purpose was to let the Mayor handle it
- I simply wanted the truth by their calling members of the dept in and asking them
- I wasn't trying to get anybody fired
- If wrongdoing, the penalty might be a letter in the file or furlough, etc.

- I wanted accountability
- Again, I heard nothing for a period of time
- All the while the matter was private, confidential
- But, again, I felt I was getting stonewalled
- I was angry, and I did legitimately directly question the DCED head in public
- Finally, the Mayor wrote me that he had not investigated
- And would not do so unless I provided my proof/evidence
- Simultaneously, the Mayor attacked me in a public statement
- What was I to do?
- I went public with my information
- I didn't want to do that, but the Mayor left me no choice
- I was a wrestler, I have a gym teacher's voice, I am intense
- My attitude toward life changed dramatically with the tragic death of my wife
- That's my personality, and I can't change
- That explains my "tone" that seems to offend some people
- After the Mayor attacked me, I had no choice but to do a press conference
- When I announced a press conference, the Mayor wanted to meet: I said no
- I would have preferred not to do a press conference
- What I want is for the Mayor to do his job, to do an investigation
- Let the chips from that investigation fall where they may
- I may run for Mayor
- I hope to spend the next ten years working for the good of the City

Is Gadfly's rendition fair?

Has Councilman Callahan made his case?

*to be continued . . .*