

Councilwoman Van Wirt: “the time has come”

The Bethlehem Gadfly City government January 15, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts on city government* 

Congratulations to Michael Colon on being elected City Council vice president!

A post about the election of the new City Council vice president should be about Colon, who was nominated by Councilman Callahan.

But it's not.

Unsuccessful candidate Paige Van Wirt's short but passionate “stump speech” sucked the oxygen out of the room.

Let's listen again to just her part of the previous video.

<https://youtu.be/5mwhbs3vJcU>

Van Wirt (nominated by Councilwoman Negron) linked her candidacy to Negron's unsuccessful candidacy for president, forty perplexing years after the last (and only) female Council president:

“We lost an opportunity tonight that would have meant a lot to a lot of people in this community, a lot of women in this community, a lot of people from the Southside, a lot of Puerto Rican people in this community.”

The rhetorical drumbeat of “people . . . people . . . people.”

You can recognize here Van Wirt's often articulated populist agenda.

Semper ad populum, she wrote recently on her Facebook page (a phrase she used during the primary election too): Always for the People.

Van Wirt also linked her candidacy unabashedly, unambiguously, and vigorously to a feminist agenda:

“I would accept this role as vice president because I do think the time has come for leadership of women on City Council and, I’ll even say, a female mayor of Bethlehem.”

“The time has come” for “a female mayor of Bethlehem.”

Gadfly is not sure Van Wirt’s talking about herself; it may be Negron.

But Gadfly can’t be the only one who heard a salvo fired, who saw a gauntlet thrown.

Gadfly has been consciously posting slowly on last week’s Council meeting, affording you time to reflect on this eventful event. As always, he invites comments from all perspectives.