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Gray again absents himself; Smithgall responds

NewsLanc posed two questions to incumbent mayor Rick Gray and former mayor Charlie Smithgall, with answer to the first published last week.

Despite several reminders, Gray chose to ignore the requests.

QUESTION #2) *What achievements do you seek to accomplish if elected to another term?*

Smithgall responded:

- 1. Revitalize the East Side of Lancaster Square with residential and commercial properties.*
- 2. Improve Neighborhoods via my Homestead Lancaster plan*

3. Improve Public Safety – By restoring neighborhood policing, and having enough staff available to answer all calls in a timely manner.

4. Have Balanced Budgets – By creating an ad-hoc committee to totally review the city budget (all expenditures and revenues), remove all unnecessary expenses, and go after any potential income sources that are not being tapped.

5. Repair Streets and Infrastructure – By starting a systematic plan to repair streets on a prioritized need basis and be proactive on city infrastructure by routine preventative maintenance programs on all city systems.

6. Re-establish Lancaster Council of Neighborhoods

Gray stuns Smithgall by last minute accusation

Mayor Rick Gray startled Charlie Smithgall and members of the audience when, during his closing statement at Wednesday's debate, he accused former mayor of having received \$300,000 from the county commissioners towards Smithgall's private shooting range.

Visibly shaken, Smithgall demanded time to respond from moderator Barbara Rhoda who reluctantly allowed him fifteen seconds.

Struggling for words, Smithgall called Gray's statement "*a load of c—p*", denied receiving money from the county, and added that he has long allowed the county to use his firing range, free of charge.

As a long time attorney, Gray knows better than to introduce an accusation during the closing summation, made worse by Gray speaking last, thus not allowing Smithgall an opportunity to respond.

Gray had pretty good evening until the very end, painting Smithgall as being eight years behind the times and out of touch. Yet what he did raises questions about veracity, sense of fair play, and fitness to serve. To some who have long known him, this is not the Rick Gray of eight years ago.

Patriot-News publisher leaving to become president of Lancaster Newspapers

LANCASTER INTELLIGENCER

JOURNAL NEW ERA: *“Lancaster Newspapers Inc. announced Thursday it is hiring the president and publisher of the Pulitzer Prize-winning Patriot-News of Harrisburg, John A. Kirkpatrick III, to be its next president.”*

EDITOR: Welcome and congratulations to John Kirkpatrick III. We suggested some time ago that the Lancaster Newspapers, Inc. engage a leader from outside of the county to bring a fresh perspective, greater objectivity, greater know how, and appropriate innovation.

Why election reports need to be saved longer than five years

By Bill Keisling

Two recent major national news stories coming out of Pennsylvania — the Sandusky / PSU / Tom Corbett scandal and the Harrisburg debt / Corbett bailout stories — demonstrate the

woeful inadequacy of our state’s campaign finance reporting laws.

In both cases, these stories have roots going back decades.

Yet, under current law, the state only keeps hard copies campaign finance records going back a mere five years...

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