



Something to be proud of...

Somewhere from the commissioners down, word went out to poll workers to encourage voters to use paper ballots and only make use of the electronic voting machines when a specific request is made or they would be helpful to the physically disadvantaged.

The paper ballots are scanned and tallied, but remain available should there be any glitch or reasonable concern about the accuracy of the voter count.

Something to be ashamed of...

Despite the League of Women Voters and virtually all newspapers throughout the country taking a clear position against the reporting of exit polls prior to the close of the local election day, the *New Era* once again ignored criticism and reported online by noon and in its afternoon edition that “60 percent of the 186 voters surveyed this morning said they voted against restructuring county government” [Home Rule].”

Armstrong slaps down Penn Square Partners

An Oct. 31 *Intelligencer Journal* report carried the good news that the \$3 million in additional state aid for the Convention Center will not be allowed to be split with the greedy Lancaster Newspapers and The High Group, who are investors in the Marriott Hotel.

Among other one sided and predatory provisions in the contract between the Convention Center Authority (LCCCA) and Penn Square Partners

(PSP), there is a provision requiring the Authority share any additional state funds along with income from naming rights with PSP.

Apparently Senator Gibson Armstrong does not want scorn heaped on him as he leaves the Senate and decided that 'enough is enough' when it comes to carrying the pail for High and the Lancaster Newspapers.

LETTER: Is Chamber spending \$100,000 for "Yes" votes legal?

“Is it legal for the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which represents the interests of business, to spend a reported \$100,000 in an attempt to get people to vote in favor of replacing the charter of Lancaster County government?”

“If the Lancaster Chamber was spending this amount of money to promote a candidate, there would be serious questions raised. Why should this issue be treated any differently?”

Editor’s note: Chamber President Tom Baldrige told *NewsLanc* that legal counsel’s approval had been obtained re election laws but did not indicate that the 501(c)6 tax deductible status had been explored.

A plea sent by Project Manager to Library Board

October 23, 2008

To: Gary Weaver, Vice President, Lancaster Public Library

From: Robert Edwin Field, Project Manager

...I would like for the record to remind you and the others of the following:

1) Earlier this year, the board unanimously approved moving ahead with the renovation and expansion of the library, a project that through the diligent efforts of Penncrest Construction, Debra, Vitetta, Karen, myself and others has come in on budget, a figure approximately 15% less than you had estimated would be the cost. If you want to suggest that the pricing professionally developed by Penncrest through solicitation of suppliers and contractors over the past six weeks is somehow unreliable, I think you should be prepared to defend an action for libel.

2) Upon the assumption of \$3,000,000 in State grants, the board decided to proceed with the design of the project. Subsequently when the board was advised by Mayor Rick Gray that \$2,500,000 of the \$3,000,000 would not be forthcoming, the board decided to continue with the planning of the project. Furthermore, the balance of \$500,000, the Keystone Grant, would also be lost because the renovation and expansion could no longer be assured of funding.

3) The library has over \$3,300,000 on hand according to the most recently report and has received a bequest for about \$500,000 which counsel advises us should be collectible.

4) According to consultants Todd Lindsley and Pat Shotwell, major donors had committed to contributing at least \$2,500,000 towards the expansion and renovation of the library.

5)[Library President] Karen and I had proposed and, through the unstinting efforts of Representative Mike Sturla and Mayor Rick Gray, the State has agreed to provide the \$500,000 grant towards the renovation of the existing facility. The total cost based upon analysis of information on hand is estimated to come to about \$2,300,000.

With \$500,000 from the Grant, \$500,000 from Karen and me, only \$1,300,000 remains to be covered. It is likely that much of that amount would be funded by those promising \$2,500,000, and this was before we even commence a public fund raising campaign. And if there were a shortfall of several hundred thousand dollars, the library could readily pay the difference from its endowment fund.

I realize that the nation may be entering a recession, but there is so little money yet to be raised (\$1,300,000) and such excellent prospect from major donors, county and conceivably a later state grant, that I see no serious concern to cause the cancellation of this project.

Among the many benefits of the \$2,300,000 renovation would be: Major repairs to the HVAC system, installation of two modern rest rooms, installation of a fire sprinkler system throughout, installation of a ramp for the physically challenged, and a security and communication system.

In addition, the first floor would be fully renovated with new ceilings, lighting fixtures, floor coverings, new service desks and new furniture throughout. The same would apply to about half of the second floor with some improvements to the rest...

I encourage the Board to regain control of its nerves and to meet on Tuesday morning or some other time this coming week to reconsider its actions. I believe the Lancaster community will also find the boards actions unwarranted and regrettable...

I end with the observation that it is the very people who did the least to contribute to the progress of the past year who are undermining the work of its President, Project Manager, State Representative and Mayor. Perhaps had board members devoted more time and effort to the project, they would be better advised and act more rationally.

Editor's note: Robert Edwin Field is NewsLanc's Publisher and is married to Karen Haley Field.

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