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## Smithgall: Streetcar study “a waste of time, effort and money”

According to the *Intelligencer New Era*, former mayor and Republican candidate Charlie Smithgall described the proposed streetcar scheme to a church group as “a waste of time, effort and money.” The *Intell* further reports “And, if he is elected Nov. 3, Smithgall said he will pull the brake on a \$150,000 study planned to determine if a \$14.1 million trolley line is feasible.”

In defense of his intention to spend a \$150,000 for a study, Mayor Rick Gray responded “*Much has changed since 2001. Cities across the country have adopted trolley systems as a quick,*

*efficient way to move people between restaurants, shops and businesses.*”

*NewsLanc* has researched and reported on these supposed success stories and found them to be either rapid transit systems running on special easements or failed systems that lacked riders, gushed losses and were heavily subsidized.

The last time Gray asked for a feasibility study, then regarding the convention center project, the County Commissioners spent around \$150,000 to provide it for him. But the mayor ignored its findings!

## Improving SD of L athletics on all levels

Jon Mitchell’s role as athletic director not only demands that he oversee all sports programs at McCaskey, it requires thoughtful coordination of every school-sponsored athletic program within the School District of Lancaster. From this vantage point, Mitchell is confident that a holistic approach is the surest route to substantial reform.

In observing McCaskey’s poor performance in recent years, Mitchell asks: “*Why do we tend to be competitive at some of our younger ages and then we are not as competitive at the high school?...Is it because we don’t have enough continuity throughout our whole program, where...we don’t have feeders at all...?*”

Mitchell cited the District’s swimming program as an example of the need for such pre-high

school programs and clubs to prepare young athletes for the varsity level. With no middle school swimming team and few nearby swimming clubs, Mitchell said, “*We have kids coming out for our [high school] swim team that do not know how to swim.*”

Mitchell has also been encouraging varsity-level coaches to more frequently visit and engage with their corresponding pre-high school programs. For head football coach David Given, this meant hosting a special football camp for middle school students.

The varsity coaches are now being provided with learning opportunities, as well. According to Mitchell, this summer’s professional One On One soccer camp “*provided instruction for both our kids and our coaches.*” [Continued...]

Mitchell draws satisfaction from students' recognition of his unwavering commitment to all facets of the program: *"The thing that I'm probably most proud of so far—and the kids*

*understand this as well—is that every sport is important to me, and I'll never be an athletic director who only looks at football and basketball."*

## COMMENTARY: *"Capitalistic Cronyism"*

In recent days, we have encountered an apt term that helps explain the offenses that have repeatedly occurred here in Lancaster and throughout the nation, resulting with the top one percent of the population ever growing richer over the past two decades while the middle class remains the same or declines. It is called *"Capitalistic Cronyism"*, the working among a group of the already very wealthy to further enrich themselves at the expense of the rest of society.

We need look no further locally than the building of the Convention Center project against the wishes of almost 80% of the population, and the ramming through of the relocation of the Norfolk

Southern railroad yard without proper consideration of alternative sites and on a dump that added tens of millions to the cost.

**Now we see the apparent determination of Lancaster General Hospital, a public foundation, to waste its vast profits resulting from market dominance on an unneeded and unwanted new hospital in West Earl Township, in ruinous competition with the healthy Ephrata Community Hospital.**

Since we have identified the disease, let's see what we can do to eradicate it so that Lancaster and the nation's business can be conducted on a level playing field.

## INTELLIGENCER NEW ERA:

The last two paragraphs in an article headed **"'Drugs 101' aims to alert Manheim Township parents"** state:

*"To combat student drug abuse, Manheim Township School District plans to expand its drug and alcohol counseling and education programs.*

*"It's also considering implementing stepped-up searches of student lockers by drug-sniffing dogs and adopting a mandatory drug-testing program, an idea supported by superintendent Gene Freeman."*

**WATCHDOG:** Studies show that the majority of youngsters experiment with marijuana the same as they experiment with beer. However, traces of marijuana are detectable for two weeks.

**The youngster who tests positive is no different than many of his or her classmates. But the one caught will become grist for the drug warrior mill: shamed, singled out, and ostracized. Manheim Township needs a smarter superintendent, not drug tests.**

For factual information based on government and peer review studies, visit [www.DrugWarFacts.org](http://www.DrugWarFacts.org).

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