

Kevin Milliken Comments
Press Conference
10-12-09

Good afternoon. Thanks for coming.

The November election in Toledo is shaping up to be one of the most important in our city's history.

I am hoping this becomes a campaign of ideas, issues, and ideology-- not slogans, symbols, and sound bites.

Tops among the issues facing our community-- and there are many-- is public safety.

Toledo's budget problems have dropped our police force below 600. That is simply unacceptable.

There are 15 brave men and women still laid off. Nearly two dozen more retirees have not been replaced.

Our homicide rate stands at 20-- the total for all of 2008, with a quarter of the year left to go.

The city police administration now admits they don't know how many property crimes have occurred...because reports are not being entered into a database.

It is the good, hard-working people who live in neighborhoods like this one in West Toledo who are concerned for their safety and that of their families...business owners like the ones here along Sylvania Avenue that are concerned about whether it's safe to stay open, and everyone concerned about the safety and security of students such as the ones who attend DeVeaux Junior High School here across the street.

It is for those reasons-- and others-- that the Toledo Police Patrolman's Association endorsed my candidacy for Toledo City Council.

I am committed to not only restoring Toledo's police ranks to the 634 officers our city had last February...but increasing those numbers if the right amount of budget cuts can be found.

Not only do we need a new police class as early as possible...we will need a second police class sometime in 2010 to stem the tide of future layoffs, so those numbers don't dwindle any further.

That is why my top three priorities are police...fire...and smooth streets...above ALL ELSE...until long-term budget solutions can be found and implemented.

Once a councilman, I will advocate what I call the 3-C plan to restructure city government so the proper priorities are maintained.

COOPERATE
COLLABORATE
CONSOLIDATE

COOPERATE-- form a voluntary purchasing cooperative among local governments, similar to what is going on in Northeast and Southwest Ohio. Whether it's paper clips and pens...or salt and snow plows...let's use a collective buying power to obtain a better price and the savings that would result.

COLLABORATE-- the city parks and rec department and the Toledo Area Metroparks spend 20 million taxpayer dollars per year. Two sets of mowers, maintenance people, and managers. Some cost savings can be found there with a shared management and maintenance plan.

CONSOLIDATE-- duplicate operations...some examples...the city and county each have building inspection departments, information technology departments, and others. Some of those could be consolidated...as has been done with the health department and plan commissions?

These are just a handful of suggestions that could be part of a more comprehensive, long-term look at restructuring city government in ways that make good sense, common sense, and no-nonsense.

There could be multiple millions of savings...if we take a strategic change of course in the way city government is run. There is no better opportunity with a new administration taking office.

I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.