



BOB SCOLNIK

Keep Bob on the job!



Reelect Bob to the Muskegon County Commission, District 4

The rest of the story ...

Dear Citizens of Norton Shores,

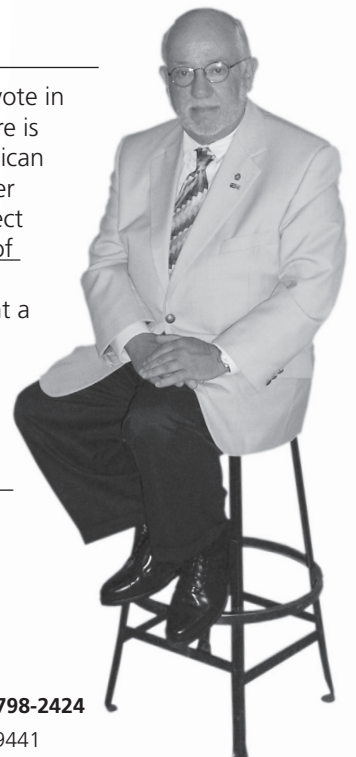
Unfortunately our election process has become one of mud-slinging, lies and misrepresentations. I've always found this tactic to be offensive and I've never used it in my campaigns. Instead I've stressed what I've done for the community and the voters and I've talked about the specific ways I've been helping my community. I see this as a way to help you make an informed decision when you vote and I think my record shows my commitment to making things better in our County. This year I've been attacked in a way that both misrepresents my record and attempts to misrepresent Bob Scolnik as a person. My opponent is trying to trick you and it's an easy thing to do unless you have all of the facts. And that is exactly what I'd like to do with this short letter. Here are some facts and as Paul Harvey used to say on his radio show, "The Rest of the Story".

- In 2002 the County had a General Fund reserve of \$7.2 Million. In 2011, after the "Great Recession" and falling home prices, our General Fund reserve was \$8.2 Million. In spite of the economic challenges, we managed the county very well and the reserve fund increased. The major credit rating agency, Standard & Poor's, has given us an "AA Stable" credit rating...their second highest score that says we have a "very strong capacity to meet our financial commitments."
- The County pension fund has over \$173 million in assets and is over 80% funded. The pension system is managed by MERS... the Michigan Employee Retirement System...and their standard for excellence is an 80% funding level. In 2001, the fund had \$118 million in assets and in my 9 years as a Commissioner, it has increased to \$173 million, an increase of \$55 million. In the year prior to my first election, \$0 was put into the retirement system. Currently, about \$5 million per year is being paid to the system. Ottawa County, with one of the healthiest economies in the state, has a retirement system that is only 82% funded. Muskegon County expects to be at that level in the next year.
- There was no state standard to track the retiree health benefit obligations until 2005. That was 3 years after I was elected. Since that time, we have put away almost \$26 million for this obligation...about 28% of the estimated obligation (by comparison, Ottawa County is only at 32%) although there is no legal requirement to prefund this amount. We are continuing to build the fund and are committed to completely fund this obligation over time.
- Over the years that I have been a Commissioner, we've gotten County employees to understand our financial condition and the wishes of the voters. For the last three years there were no salary increases (except for small raises in 3 of our 10 unions that were in an old contract) for county employees. Also, the employee contribution to their health benefits more than doubled and employees are participating in over \$1.6 million in givebacks. Dramatic changes HAVE been made! We've eliminated the defined benefit pension plan and all new hires will have a 401K type plan. This will make a huge difference over time.

- In my 9 years as your Commissioner, we've voted to eliminate 147 County jobs through efficiencies and consolidations and we are only hiring employees to replace those who are considered absolutely necessary (jail guards, youth home etc) where people have retired or quit. The number of county employees has been steadily reduced.
- Finally, I've voted to cut over \$13 million out of our budget over my years on the commission. Our income is down and we've reduced expenses. I've helped make the tough choices to keep the county on firm financial footing.
- The vast majority of county votes are routine. For example, to apply for a grant or accept a grant, to accept a bid, to approve an appointment or to set the fee for an inspection. We always have committee meetings to discuss business items and frequently have public work sessions to go over agenda items and work out the details. By the time we vote at Full Board meetings, most items are settled. All meetings are open and public and many, many questions are asked on controversial items.
- Also, there are only 4 Republicans on the County Commission out of 11 Commissioners. So Republicans only represent 36% of the votes. To think one person can make enormous decisions all alone is foolish.
- Finally, my Republican credentials are excellent:
 1. Chairman of the Muskegon GOP for two terms
 2. Muskegon GOP Volunteer of the year
 3. "Number One" Michigan Republican – two years
 4. Republican Precinct Delegate for 12 years
 5. Voting Delegate to the Republican National Convention in 2004
 6. Led the Muskegon Republicans from 0 Commissioners to 4 in 2002

Finally, it is very important that you vote in the August 7th primary election. There is very little competition on the Republican ballot (and voters can only vote either Republican or Democrat) and I suspect most people will not vote. Because of a low voter turnout, very few votes could swing this election. If you want a reasonable, main stream and proven Republican to represent you on the Muskegon County Commission I ask for your vote on August 7th. Please!

Cordially,
Bob Scolnik



Find me on Twitter: **@MonaLakeBob**

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