

Rossi drops out of race

Written by Ken Mastro
Thursday, 23 July 2009 10:44

P.J. Rossi has withdrawn his candidacy from the Town Board, leaving the Democrats in a search to fill the vacancy.

As the Planning Board chairman, Mr. Rossi, despite being a registered Republican and prominent member of the Lewisboro Republican Town Committee, had been a major name on the Democratic ticket, running alongside Democrats Edward Brancati and Maureen Maguire for the Town Board seats, with Mr. Brancati seeking re-election as town supervisor.

“Due to personal reasons I have decided not to pursue the position of Town Board in this upcoming election,” said Mr. Rossi, who released this statement but would not respond to specific Ledger questions. “I know this conclusion is disappointing to some, but my family must take priority over these matters. This was a tough, but a necessary decision that I have thoughtfully made with the counsel of those close to me. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has spent time in supporting my campaign.”

Alan Cole, Lewisboro Democratic Committee co-chairman, said the party’s committee on vacancies “is in the process of selecting a replacement candidate” but details about that decision have yet to be finalized. He said more information should be available next week.

“We regret that we are losing P.J. as one of our candidates, but we believe the person who will replace him on the ballot will bring as much to the campaign and to the town, so we don’t think P.J.’s decision will have a major impact on the outcome of the election,” said Mr. Cole.

Mr. Brancati said he also regrets no longer having Mr. Rossi on the Democratic ticket but understands his reasons for withdrawing as a candidate.

“Clearly, I am disappointed with P.J.’s decision because I think he would have been a tremendous asset to the Town Board and would have worked to not only bring his many skills and talents to help overcome the challenges that the town faces, but also to do what is best for the people of Lewisboro rather than seek to serve a personal agenda,” Mr. Brancati said. “At the same time, I certainly understand his reasons and support his commitment to his family.”

Rossi drops out of race

Written by Ken Mastro
Thursday, 23 July 2009 10:44

In addition to Mr. Brancati and Ms. Maguire, the Democratic slate includes Joann Vasi for receiver of taxes and Marc Seedorf for town justice. Ms. Vasi and Mr. Seedorf are both registered Republicans and have received the endorsements of the Republican Party. The other Republican candidates are Charles Duffy, a registered Conservative, for the town supervisor position, and Peter DeLucia and Frank Kelly for the Town Board. Mr. DeLucia is up for re-election, while Republican Al Perruzza is not seeking a second term on the Town Board.

The last two months have been difficult ones for the Democrats. The Republican candidates received the nod of both the local Conservative and Independence parties, and the Town Board with a Democratic majority continues to struggle with a budget deficit that is expected to last into 2011 and will likely require borrowing and a substantial tax increase to fix. In the last local election in 2007, the Independence Party backed the Democratic candidates for the three Town Board seats, including town supervisor.

Wayne Coluccini, Lewisboro Republican Town Committee chairman, said although Mr. Rossi had joined the Democratic ticket, he would be pleased to have Mr. Rossi's support for the Republican slate of candidates.

"Naturally, [Mr. Rossi's decision to withdraw] came as a surprise," Mr. Coluccini said. "It's no secret that I disagreed with Mr. Rossi's decision to go to the Democrats, but I wish him well with his decision. P.J. was a qualified candidate. The effect on the race will come down to the qualifications of his replacement and what the voters think. I can't speak for the [Lewisboro Republican Town] Committee, but I would welcome his support for our candidates."