

Blooming Grove Democratic Committee

P. O. Box 95, Blooming Grove, New York 10914
B.G. Democratic Committee meets 1st Wednesday of each month at 08:00 PM, Senior Center,
Website: www.ocbgdems.com, Phone #: 845-782-0622

Newsletter: June 2011

Volume 2011 No. 2

Your Vote Will Bring Change

In the news recently it has been reported that 70% of the voting public has little confidence in our government and the politicians who represent us.

We need to elect politicians who will work to restore the Public Sector Mission to one that is responsible for creating a community environment by building parks, providing public transportation, building and maintaining our infrastructure while keeping our taxes down. When this is done, businesses will be encouraged to move into our town and the residents will be able to enjoy the community that they work and live in.

All levels of government in New York State need to change but the politicians are not interested. We have not given our elected officials an incentive to make changes. We continue to elect the same politicians year after year, regardless of what they do.

If we are to regain our confidence in the government we cannot continue to allow our elected representatives to ignore their responsibility as stewards of our tax dollars, while growing the size of government and catering to the special interest groups. We must hold elected officials accountable.

To do this we must vote.

In order to bring change to Blooming Grove we must vote. Here is what the BG voter turnout was in 2010.

- *Democrats: 1,907 out of 3,845, or 50%*
- *Unaffiliated: 966 out of 2,544, or 38%*

Our Candidates

We are proud to introduce our candidates and our Platform.

It is time for a change from the Politics as usual and we are supporting 3 candidates who are committed to that change.

Ralph Bisquert, Candidate for Town Supervisor

Ralph Bisquert, Democratic candidate for Town Supervisor in Blooming Grove, is a champion of open government, citizen involvement and public service.

Ralph is fiscally conservative and believes that town government can be streamlined to reduce cost and be more effective for the residents of the Town of Blooming Grove.

With his more than 35 years of experience in the infrastructure construction field throughout the New York and Westchester areas and managing a construction company in all facets with over a 200 labor force, he brings managerial experience and

expertise in infrastructure. Blooming Grove sorely needs these skills to address all the sewer and water issues affecting the various districts.

Ralph, his wife Valerie and their two daughters moved to the Town of Blooming Grove in 1979.

Joseph Haller, Candidate for Town Council

Joseph Haller, Democratic candidate for Blooming Grove Town Council, is a champion of open government, citizen involvement and public service. He is very proud to say that he is not running as a politician, but as a public servant.

As a member of Concerned Citizens of Blooming Grove, Joseph worked to hold town government accountable.

He believes that all the information, policies, procedures and decisions made in Town Hall should be readily available via the Town website. Joseph is fiscally conservative and will explore alternatives to the way things have always been done in Town Hall, financially and organizationally. With his experience as a business owner, Joseph will bring his managerial and business knowledge to the Town Council.

Joseph and his wife Laura moved to Orange County in 1977 and in 1983 built their home in the town of Blooming Grove, where they raised three sons. While raising his children, he coached Little League and PTA Basketball in Monroe-Woodbury schools.

Kenneth Tocyloski, Candidate for Town Council

Kenneth Tocyloski is a Democratic candidate for Town Council, and he believes that all levels of government should have the ability to run as an organization that is lean, do more for less and be fiscally responsible.

Ken was a member of the community board for Camp LaGuardia and the grass roots' team, Concerned Citizens for a Safe Neighborhood. Ken worked to improve the quality of life for our town by working for the closure of Camp LaGuardia. Ken was dubbed by the Chronicle in December of 2006 as Camp LaGuardia's most vociferous opponent.

Ken has 25 years experience in the Biotech and Pharmaceutical industry; and he brings his analytical skills to solve problems and the ability to work with cross-functional teams to get the job done on time.

Ken and his wife Valerie moved to Orange County in 1995 and settled into their home in Blooming Grove around the summer of 2002. They have two daughters

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Democratic Platform for Change

Our Democratic platform focuses on reorganizing our town government, modifying our budget process, developing long term plans for our infrastructure, and introducing full transparency on all town government actions.

Our Committee and our Candidates support this platform and the Democratic Committee will monitor and report on its implementation.

Reorganize the Town Government Structure:

Elected Positions need to be reviewed.

[N.Y.S. Commission on Local Efficiency and Competitiveness](#), in their Commission Brief on "[Conversion of Elected Local Offices](#)" has made their recommendations on what offices should be changed from elected to appointed. Their recommendations support our proposal for change detailed below.

The question that needs to be asked is "What responsibilities does this position have that make it necessary for it to be independent and act without oversight?"

Town Supervisor/Board: Each of these positions should be answerable to the voters. The Supervisor is responsible for managing our day to day business and the Town Board members provide oversight and approval on all financial matters.

Highway Superintendent: This position requires management, planning and engineering skills. There is no need for it to be an elected position.

Therefore, we should change this position to a Department of Public Works with responsibility for the Town's infrastructure (buildings, roads, etc.). The Superintendent of Public Works should report to the Supervisor. The Town Supervisor should appoint this person and the Town Board approve the appointment.

Receiver of Taxes: This position collects county taxes and maintains records on the taxes that are paid. It must follow the law covering this activity and there is no need for it to be an elected position. Therefore, this position should be filled as a civil service/appointed position.

Town Clerk: This position is primarily an administrative position. It is responsible for typing minutes, collecting licensing fees, logging and distributing mail and managing the records retention process for all town documents. A process need to be defined to ensure that the town minutes are typed unedited.

The Town Supervisor should appoint this person and the Town Board approve the appointment.

Create a Long Term Plan in support of the Town Infrastructure

In order to prepare for the future and minimize the need for sudden indebtedness to maintain our infrastructure we need to develop four plans; a Facilities, Equipment and two Infrastructure Maintenance Plans. These plans will allow us to foresee our maintenance needs and prepare for them. This is especially true of the Water and Sewer Districts that are supported by the town.

Create Facilities Maintenance Plans that identify the End of Useful Life (EUL) for all government building components (e.g., roof, windows, access ways, sidewalks, building infrastructure and equipment) and create a forecast and plan for maintenance and its estimate cost.

Create an Equipment Maintenance Plan that identifies the EUL for all equipment (e.g., cars, machinery) and reevaluates the benefits of government-owned versus rented and move to the more cost effective option.

Create a Road/Bridge Maintenance Plan that identifies the EUL for all sections of Roads and Bridges and create a forecast, cost estimate and plan for maintenance costs.

Create a Special District Maintenance Plan for each special district. This plan will identify the EUL for the infrastructure of each Special District and provide a plan for the cost of its maintenance and replacement.

Open Government

We need to make changes to how our government uses communications and how it stores information that the public may want access to. We need a more proactive *transparency where all data is made available on the Internet and all responses to FOIL requests are given with a URL that will give the requestor the information that they want at no cost to them.*

Information that should be available online:

1. All contracts with the Town Of Blooming Grove
2. All bids provided to the Town.
3. All personnel, appointed, or elected and their salaries/stipends.
4. All Budgets and Current Fund Balances
5. All Bonds
6. Capital Plans
7. All Documentation that is used by the town in conducting its business.

Our Next Newsletter

We will present our plan for reorganizing the town budget and how it is presented to the public. Our goals will be to provide narratives that explain what we are doing and why we are doing it and what it will cost or save.