
From: Brandon D. Minde [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2019 6:53 PM
To: blewis@livingstonnj.org
Cc: emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org; aanthony@livingstonnj.org; rfernandez@livingstonnj.org; sklein@livingstonnj.org; mvieira@livingstonnj.org
Subject: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Dear Town Manager Lewis,

As you know, I'm a candidate for the open Town Council seat that will be filled via special election on Nov. 5. I write to express my concern with the inappropriate way that my opponent, interim-councilman Vieira, is now using the Township itself, including town resources and tax-dollars, to promote his campaign. With one month until the election, we are now in the middle of campaign season and while council members individually may choose to be partisan, the Township itself must remain neutral for all taxpayers. Let me provide two examples just from today.

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Respectfully,

Brandon D. Minde, Esq.

From: Barry Lewis <blewis@livingstonnj.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2019 2:30 PM
To: Brandon D. Minde
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Subject: Re: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Dear Mr. Minde:

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Thank you,

Barry R. Lewis, Jr.

Township Manager

Township of Livingston NJ

357 S. Livingston Avenue

Livingston, New Jersey 07039

(973)992-5000 Ext. 5301

blewis@livingstonnj.org

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From: Shawn Klein <sklein@livingstonnj.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2019 3:46 PM
To: Barry Lewis
Subject: Re: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Excellent letter Barry

Shawn R. Klein, MD
Councilman, Township of Livingston

On Oct 3, 2019, at 2:29 PM, Barry Lewis <blewis@livingstonnj.org> wrote:

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Barry R. Lewis, Jr.

Township Manager
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Respectfully,

Brandon D. Minde, Esq.

From: Brandon D. Minde [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2019 4:28 PM
To: Shawn Klein
Cc: emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org; aanthony@livingstonnj.org; rfernandez@livingstonnj.org; mvieira@livingstonnj.org; blewis@livingstonnj.org
Subject: RE: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Shawn

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Brandon



Brandon D. Minde, Esq.
Certified by the Supreme Court of New Jersey
as a Criminal Trial Attorney

Dughi, Hewit & Domalewski, PC
340 North Avenue
Cranford, NJ 07016
Office: 908.272.0200
[REDACTED]
<http://www.dughihewit.com/>

From: Shawn Klein [<mailto:sklein@livingstonnj.org>]
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2019 7:24 AM
To: Brandon D. Minde [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of DHD. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thanks for writing.

I agree with you that we need to be careful about govt and politics staying separate.

Shawn R. Klein, MD
Councilman, Township of Livingston

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To: Brandon D. Minde
Cc: emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org; aanthony@livingstonnj.org; rfernandez@livingstonnj.org; mvieira@livingstonnj.org; blewis@livingstonnj.org
Subject: Re: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Brandon, to be clear: As said, I do think it is important to keep them separate and I do not think anyone would disagree.

Along those lines, I found Barry's response to be very reassuring and was happy to note, as expected, that everyone was acting in good faith. I am sure you were happy to see that as well.

Shawn R. Klein, MD
Councilman, Township of Livingston

On Oct 3, 2019, at 4:28 PM, Brandon D. Minde [REDACTED] wrote:

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Brandon

<image001.jpg>

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From: Liliana Branquinho <lbranquinho@livingstonnj.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2019 2:45 PM
To: Barry Lewis
Cc: Jennifer Walker
Subject: Re: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Thank you so much, Barry...

Liliana Branquinho, CDP

Township of Livingston
Senior & Adult Enrichment
and Special Events Supervisor
204 Hillside Avenue
Livingston, NJ 07039
973-535-7925 Ext. 260

[Lbranquinho@Livingstonnj.org](mailto:lbranquinho@Livingstonnj.org)
www.livingstonnj.org/SYLS

On Thu, Oct 3, 2019 at 2:34 PM Barry Lewis <blewis@livingstonnj.org> wrote:
Jen and Liliana,

See below, FYI

Thanks,

Barry R. Lewis, Jr.

Township Manager
Township of Livingston NJ
357 S. Livingston Avenue
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(973)992-5000 Ext. 5301
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For the sake of all taxpayers and residents, regardless of party, who believe in election fairness and respect for the system, this inappropriate behavior must stop.

I look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Brandon D. Minde, Esq.

From: Jenn [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2019 2:48 PM
To: Barry Lewis
Subject: Re: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Thanks so much, I will absolutely reiterate this with all of my staff.

Thanks again,

On Thu, Oct 3, 2019, 2:34 PM Barry Lewis <blewis@livingstonnj.org> wrote:
Jen and Liliana,

See below, FYI

Thanks,

Barry R. Lewis, Jr.
Township Manager
Township of Livingston NJ
357 S. Livingston Avenue
Livingston, New Jersey 07039

(973)992-5000 Ext. 5301
blewis@livingstonnj.org

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Barry Lewis <blewis@livingstonnj.org>
Date: Thu, Oct 3, 2019 at 2:29 PM
Subject: Re: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars
To: Brandon D. Minde [REDACTED]
Cc: emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org <emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org>, aanthony@livingstonnj.org <aanthony@livingstonnj.org>, rfernandez@livingstonnj.org <rfernandez@livingstonnj.org>, sklein@livingstonnj.org <sklein@livingstonnj.org>, mvieira@livingstonnj.org <mvieira@livingstonnj.org>

Dear Mr. Minde:

Thank you for your email raising your concerns. Below I will try to provide the best and most complete response that I can to those concerns.

2019 Livingston Business Directory

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First, the Business Improvement District (BID) is an autonomous statutory entity which, while initially created by the Township (and whose budget is approved by the Township Council), operates independently from the Township government. As such, the day to day activities of the BID are not run by me (or the Township Council) for input or approval. As noted, I first became aware of the publication of the Directory from your email. In researching the issue, I have now learned that the while the BID "sponsors" the Directory, for the past 18+ years the Directory has been entirely produced by the West Essex Tribune. The Tribune is responsible for soliciting all advertisements and retains all monies received for those advertisements as their compensation for publishing and printing the Directory. The BID only bears the cost of mailing the Directory to the residents.

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Township Facebook Post

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In closing, I again appreciate your bringing these issues to my attention as we can only grow and improve as an organization by addressing any shortcomings if they are first brought to our attention. On behalf of the Township I apologize for any appearance of favoritism or endorsement that may have been created and reiterate my commitment to ensuring that the Township and all of our Departments and staff fully recognize

the we must all remain neutral on any and all political issues whenever we are acting in our capacities as officials and employees of the Township.

Thank you,

Barry R. Lewis, Jr.

Township Manager
Township of Livingston NJ
357 S. Livingston Avenue
Livingston, New Jersey 07039

(973)992-5000 Ext. 5301
blewis@livingstonnj.org

On Wed, Oct 2, 2019 at 6:52 PM Brandon D. Minde [REDACTED] wrote:

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As you know, I'm a candidate for the open Town Council seat that will be filled via special election on Nov. 5. I write to express my concern with the inappropriate way that my opponent, interim-councilman Vieira, is now using the Township itself, including town resources and tax-dollars, to promote his campaign. With one month until the election, we are now in the middle of campaign season and while council members individually may choose to be partisan, the Township itself must remain neutral for all taxpayers. Let me provide two examples just from today.

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Brandon D. Minde, Esq.

Official email of the Township of Livingston NJ
For Official Business Use Only

From: Barry Lewis <blewis@livingstonnj.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2019 2:34 PM
To: Beth Lippman
Subject: Fwd: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Beth,

FYI

Barry R. Lewis, Jr.

Township Manager
Township of Livingston NJ
357 S. Livingston Avenue
Livingston, New Jersey 07039

(973)992-5000 Ext. 5301
blewis@livingstonnj.org

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Date: Thu, Oct 3, 2019 at 2:29 PM
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To: Brandon D. Minde [REDACTED]
Cc: emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org <emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org>, aanthony@livingstonnj.org <aanthony@livingstonnj.org>, rfernandez@livingstonnj.org <rfernandez@livingstonnj.org>, sklein@livingstonnj.org <sklein@livingstonnj.org>, mvieira@livingstonnj.org <mvieira@livingstonnj.org>

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Barry R. Lewis, Jr.
Township Manager

Township of Livingston NJ
357 S. Livingston Avenue
Livingston, New Jersey 07039

(973)992-5000 Ext. 5301
blewis@livingstonnj.org

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Respectfully,

From: Leveraging Office Politics [REDACTED] on
behalf of Leveraging Office Politics [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2019 11:29 AM
To: kboffa@livingstonnj.org
Subject: Playing Politics: The Psychology of the Workplace

<="">

Live Webinar

Leveraging Office Politics : Survive an Emotionally Toxic Workplace.

October 09, 2019 | 3:00 PM ET | 2:00 PM CT | 12:00 AM PT | 90 Minutes |

Presented By :**Michael Healey**

SHRM & HRCI Credit : 1.5

Register Now

There are workplace conditions that have significant impact, including, hampered productivity - curtailed creativity - hobbled team cohesion - strained relationships and staff turnover.

Once drama gets started, its virulent and insidious, its tentacles reach into every area of organizational life. It can be found in team, staff and exec. meetings, in the lunchroom, at one-on-one meetings, intra-departmentally, with customers and vendors - literally everywhere.

It's ubiquitous - you can find it everywhere you look - and it can be found all across the spectrum from painfully obvious to almost gradual. And it exists in all organizations, every sector and every level of the organization.

Step one is recognizing where drama lives and all the forms it takes. Drama can only thrive where there is agreement from 2 or more people for the drama to continue. When people know how to decline invitations to participate, the drama dies.

Learning Objectives:

- Putting up with constant, or even occasional drama is overwhelming, annoying and sometimes, when it burns hot, scary.
- Having to attend meetings where you know drama erupts frequently is anxiety provoking - you try to find reasons to not go, come late or leave early.
- You feel out-of-control - you can't always predict when it is going to happen, and nothing you do seems to put a damper on the situation.

- Drama has a huge negative impact on the organization and the people who work there and it's important to learn how to create a drama free workplace....[Read More](#).

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This message was sent to kboffa@livingstonnj.org by [REDACTED]
1055 West, 7th Street, Los Angeles, California, 90017



[Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage Subscription](#) | [Forward Email](#) | [Report Abuse](#)



From: Ed Meinhardt, Mayor <emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2019 7:23 PM
To: mvieira@livingstonnj.org
Subject: Fwd: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Ed Meinhardt
Councilman Livingston NJ

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Brandon D. Minde" [REDACTED]
Date: October 2, 2019 at 6:52:49 PM EDT
To: "blewis@livingstonnj.org" <blewis@livingstonnj.org>
Cc: "emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org" <emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org>, "aanthony@livingstonnj.org" <aanthony@livingstonnj.org>, "rfernandez@livingstonnj.org" <rfernandez@livingstonnj.org>, "sklein@livingstonnj.org" <sklein@livingstonnj.org>, "mvieira@livingstonnj.org" <mvieira@livingstonnj.org>
Subject: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

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For the sake of all taxpayers and residents, regardless of party, who believe in election fairness and respect for the system, this inappropriate behavior must stop.

I look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Brandon D. Minde, Esq.

From: Jarrid H. Kantor [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2019 8:46 AM
To: Michael Vieira
Cc: Jarrid H. Kantor
Subject: Re: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

I deal with this issue all time. Have Barry call me if he wants to discuss.

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 3, 2019, at 1:43 AM, Michael Vieira <mvieira@livingstonnj.org> wrote:

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Brandon D. Minde" [REDACTED]
Date: October 2, 2019 at 6:52:49 PM EDT
To: "blewis@livingstonnj.org" <blewis@livingstonnj.org>
Cc: "emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org" <emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org>, "aanthony@livingstonnj.org" <aanthony@livingstonnj.org>, "rfernandez@livingstonnj.org" <rfernandez@livingstonnj.org>, "sklein@livingstonnj.org" <sklein@livingstonnj.org>, "mvieira@livingstonnj.org" <mvieira@livingstonnj.org>
Subject: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

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Respectfully,

Brandon D. Minde, Esq.

Official email of the Township of Livingston NJ
For Official Business Use Only

From: Michael Vieira <mvieira@livingstonnj.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2019 11:15 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Brandon D. Minde" [REDACTED]
Date: October 2, 2019 at 6:52:49 PM EDT
To: "blewis@livingstonnj.org" <blewis@livingstonnj.org>
Cc: "emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org" <emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org>, "aanthony@livingstonnj.org" <aanthony@livingstonnj.org>, "rfernandez@livingstonnj.org" <rfernandez@livingstonnj.org>, "sklein@livingstonnj.org" <sklein@livingstonnj.org>, "mvieira@livingstonnj.org" <mvieira@livingstonnj.org>
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From: Michael Vieira <mvieira@livingstonnj.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 02, 2019 8:37 PM
To: Patricia Sebold
Subject: Fwd: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Sent from my iPhone

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To: "blewis@livingstonnj.org" <blewis@livingstonnj.org>
Cc: "emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org" <emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org>, "aanthony@livingstonnj.org" <aanthony@livingstonnj.org>, "rfernandez@livingstonnj.org" <rfernandez@livingstonnj.org>, "sklein@livingstonnj.org" <sklein@livingstonnj.org>, "mvieira@livingstonnj.org" <mvieira@livingstonnj.org>
Subject: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Dear Town Manager Lewis,

As you know, I'm a candidate for the open Town Council seat that will be filled via special election on Nov. 5. I write to express my concern with the inappropriate way that my opponent, interim-councilman Vieira, is now using the Township itself, including town resources and tax-dollars, to promote his campaign. With one month until the election, we are now in the middle of campaign season and while council members individually may choose to be partisan, the Township itself must remain neutral for all taxpayers. Let me provide two examples just from today.

First, today every resident received the 2019 Livingston Business Directory from the Livingston Business Improvement District. I am surprised the back of the Livingston Business Directory is a full advertisement for interim-councilman Vieira's election campaign. It is entirely inappropriate to have political campaign advertising on the Livingston Business Directory; nevertheless, if the decision is made to accept political advertising then both candidates should be given the opportunity to do so. At no time was I approached by the Livingston BID or any town representative to be given an equal opportunity to advertise in the directory. The Livingston BID should not be used to play politics, as was done here.

Second, today my Facebook feed contained a post from Livingston Township Facebook page thanking Councilman Vieira for arranging transportation with the Essex County Special Bus Transportation for the Livingston Oak Leaf club to enjoy a nice day down the shore. I understand this promotion was also accessible from the Town website. This is another example of Town resources being misappropriated for the benefit of a council candidate in the middle of a campaign. There must be a sense of neutrality and fairness in how the Township infrastructure, technology and resources are permitted to be used during election season.

Last year we had a very clean campaign with councilmen Meinhardt, Fernandez and Klein. None of this nonsense occurred. We all ran our campaigns and the chips fell as they did. This behavior, however, wreaks of one-sided machine politics and is not what Livingston is about.

Mr. Lewis, I know you as an honorable and respected man, and ask you in your capacity as the Township manager: 1) were you aware that the Livingston Business Directory and the Township website / Facebook page were being used for these partisan, political purposes? 2) How is it appropriate to afford the appointed interim councilman these one-sided benefits during an election campaign without doing the same for all candidates? 3) What steps will you take to ensure that our wonderful Town of Livingston will not continue to be used for political purposes by interim-councilman Vieira over the next month as we head to Election Day?

For the sake of all taxpayers and residents, regardless of party, who believe in election fairness and respect for the system, this inappropriate behavior must stop.

I look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Brandon D. Minde, Esq.

From: Michael Vieira <mvieira@livingstonnj.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2019 7:56 PM
To: Patricia Sebold
Subject: Fwd: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Barry Lewis <blewis@livingstonnj.org>
Date: October 3, 2019 at 2:29:44 PM EDT
To: "Brandon D. Minde" [REDACTED]
Cc: "emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org" <emeinhardt@livingstonnj.org>, "aanthony@livingstonnj.org" <aanthony@livingstonnj.org>, "rfernandez@livingstonnj.org" <rfernandez@livingstonnj.org>, "sklein@livingstonnj.org" <sklein@livingstonnj.org>, "mvieira@livingstonnj.org" <mvieira@livingstonnj.org>
Subject: Re: Playing Politics with Town Resources and Tax-Dollars

Dear Mr. Minde:

Thank you for your email raising your concerns. Below I will try to provide the best and most complete response that I can to those concerns.

2019 Livingston Business Directory

Initially, I must confess that prior to your email I was not even aware that a Business Directory was published by the Business Improvement District. However, in light of your expressed concern, I have now researched the Business Directory and the issue you have raised.

First, the Business Improvement District (BID) is an autonomous statutory entity which, while initially created by the Township (and whose budget is approved by the Township Council), operates independently from the Township government. As such, the day to day activities of the BID are not run by me (or the Township Council) for input or approval. As noted, I first became aware of the publication of the Directory from your email. In researching the issue, I have now learned that while the BID "sponsors" the Directory, for the past 18+ years the Directory has been entirely produced by the West Essex Tribune. The Tribune is responsible for soliciting all advertisements and retains all monies received for those advertisements as their compensation for publishing and printing the Directory. The BID only bears the cost of mailing the Directory to the residents.

Up to this point in time, the BID has never established any policies or rules governing advertisers in the Directory, and those issues have been solely determined by the Tribune. For the 18 years until this year there have been no issues or concerns as to the advertisements; but there also have never been any political advertisements placed in the Directory to the best of anyone's recollection.

The Livingston Business Improvement District has always steadfastly remained politically neutral and worked well with all elected officials regardless of political affiliation. Having spoken to the BID Director, I know that the BID is concerned with anything that might create the impression that the BID was endorsing any political candidate. To that end, I understand that the BID intends to send a letter to the Tribune for publication reiterating its politically neutral policy and making clear that any advertisement in the Directory is not to be construed as an endorsement. At the same time, I also understand that the Tribune has recognized its role in (unintentionally) creating the appearance of favoritism or endorsement. I have been assured that, to the extent that the Business Directory publication continues in the future, the BID is committed to establishing rules and guidelines prohibiting political advertisements.

Township Facebook Post

You have also expressed concern over a recent posting on the Township's Facebook page relating to the transportation for a recent trip by a senior women's club. I learned of that posting after the fact from others expressing similar concerns. Since the issue was brought to my attention I have reviewed the circumstances surrounding that post. Initially, I have confirmed that the referenced Councilman did not request, was not involved in and had no foreknowledge of the post. A long time and valued staff member, who is assiduously non-political, made the post to express the sentiment contained, without being sensitive to the "political" environment and the fact that the post could be interpreted as supporting a candidate in a contested election. The post has since been revised to delete any reference to any individual. I have discussed the issue with the SYLS leadership who sincerely regret any appearance of favoritism that may have been created by the post, albeit unintentionally. After speaking with the SYLS leadership, I am confident that they will be acutely aware in the future of the potential political implications of social media postings and committed to avoiding even the appearance of favoritism or endorsement. In addition, I will be more formally confirming and reiterating those policies to all Departments and staff who are involved in any way with the Township's social media and official communications.

In closing, I again appreciate your bringing these issues to my attention as we can only grow and improve as an organization by addressing any shortcomings if they are first brought to our attention. On behalf of the Township I apologize for any appearance of favoritism or endorsement that may have been created and reiterate my commitment to ensuring that the Township and all of our Departments and staff fully recognize that we must all remain neutral on any and all political issues whenever we are acting in our capacities as officials and employees of the Township.

Thank you,

Barry R. Lewis, Jr.

Township Manager
Township of Livingston NJ
357 S. Livingston Avenue
Livingston, New Jersey 07039

(973)992-5000 Ext. 5301

On Wed, Oct 2, 2019 at 6:52 PM Brandon D. Minde [REDACTED] wrote:

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