Oh, Melanie, Melanie, Melanie stop baring false witness. There are 10 commandments – not nine.

The Leneghan, Denutte, Gemperline, Beck and the rest of their group have again turned the election ugly by circulating falsehoods, innuendos, slurs and half-truths.

In an October 27th letter to this paper, Leneghan made many assertions:

Meeting Attendance: Ohio law requires that the Fiscal Officer attend one trustee meeting per calendar quarter. The Fiscal Officer has no obligation to attend any more than four. However, the Fiscal Office has been represented at 18 of the 20 meetings this year by me or the Assistant Fiscal Officer. Leneghan is been at 17 meetings.

Fire Levy: The financial scenarios presented to the Board of Trustees in 2012 were accurate. They didn’t fit Leneghan’s position that staff and service reductions were needed. She got her wish – the levy failed. Full-time staff was reduced by 10, all part-time positions were eliminated and the Assistant Captain moved to a line position. Early this year Leneghan demanded that a review of the fire department be done by Chip Comstock, an attorney she knew from the Youngstown area. In his draft report, he stated that the department was under staffed, under financed and there needed to be an Assistant Captain. Since that report was submitted, Mr. Comstock has mysteriously stopped being available and has not submitted a final report.

Fire Equipment: A very much needed new EMS truck will be delivered in a few weeks. This and other equipment purchases were made possible because over $300,000 in back property taxes collected over the past year.

Fire Staff Wages Increases: The fire union wages increasing by about 27% over the last four years is half the story. There other half is that employees pay all of the 12.5% employee contribution to the Police & Fire Retirement System; 20% of insurance premiums and up to $2,000 of the health insurance deductible. Costs the township was paying. The net of this is that the employee cost to the township/taxpayers is a 2.5-3.0% increase per year.

Fire Union Endorsement: The Liberty Township Fire Union has endorsed me because they trust me. They trust my financial forecasts. For the Fiscal Officer not to be part of the contract discussion is absurd. The trustees hold the power of the purse. No offer is ever made that wouldn’t be discussed and approved by the trustees. Only the trustees vote to approve a contract. Where’s the conflict?

Board of Trustees’ Secretary: Nothing in Ohio law requires the Fiscal Officer to be the secretary of the BOT. Ohio law does require the Fiscal Officer to keep the records of the BOT – not create them.

Township Logo: The logo is public domain. I used it in 2007 and 2011. No cease-and-desist letter was sent to me.

Leneghan, Denutte, Gemperline and Beck this is a cease-and-desist letter to stop your falsehoods, slurs, half-truths and innuendos.

Mark Gerber, Ph.D.

Liberty Township Fiscal Officer