

Lewiston-Porter: BOE candidates discuss goals for district

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“What everyone cares about is the proposed property tax rate,” Lewis said.

For Lewiston property owners with an assessed value of \$150,000, the proposed rate would be \$27.51 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, an increase of 54 cents over the 2022-23 rate of \$26.97. Estimated taxes for 2023-24 on a \$150,000 assessed property with the Basic Enhanced STAR exemption would be \$3,644.33, an increase of \$71.93.

For Porter property owners (including Youngstown), again with an assessed value of \$150,000, the proposed rate is \$23.91 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, an increase of 47 cents over the current rate of \$23.44. Estimated taxes for 2023-24 on a \$150,000 assessed property, again with the Basic enhanced STAR exemption, would be \$3,113.08, an increase of \$61.19. Lewis said changes in the Basic STAR, as well as variances in the equalization rates, can impact increases and decreases for both towns.

He provided a true tax rate comparison at 100% equalization rate of \$14.58 per \$1,000, an increase of 28 cents for both towns. At present, properties in both Lewiston and Porter fall under varying tax assessments, with many below the 100% threshold, thus the difference.

“It needs to be incredibly clear that these are estimates,” he said. “And they are subject to the towns assessing their property, not the

school district.”

“It’s just a point of clarification, because oftentimes a community truly doesn’t recognize that a district doesn’t say how they’re taxed. It’s a function of the towns,” Lewis said.

As noted earlier, the May 8 session will also feature an opportunity for residents to meet candidates vying for seats on the BOE.

Mullen, who brings more than a decade of service in various roles with Lewiston-Porter, said her many experiences have been “helpful in understanding the priorities our families, schools and community.”

“I am dedicated to helping ensure each child in this district can reach their full potential by utilizing resources thoughtfully,” Mullen said. “I enjoy listening and working with our community, while being involved in the process of making responsible and pragmatic fiscal decisions for all of our taxpayers.”

Waugaman, a retired supervisor special agent with Homeland Security investigations, is a Gulf War-era infantry U.S. Marine veteran and member of Veterans of Foreign Wars Downriver Post 7487. He holds bachelors and masters-level

degrees in criminal justice and criminal justice administration from Niagara University.

A 25-year district resident, he and his wife have three children who are Lewiston-Porter graduates, and their youngest child attends the Lew-Port Primary Education Center. Waugaman is a frequent visitor to BOE sessions, and an active community member at Lewiston-Porter District Safety Committee meetings.

“Based on my life experience, military service, education and law enforcement career, I believe my leadership traits, skills and qualifications are well matched with the role and responsibilities of the Board of Education,” he said. “The referenced education, traits and experience and skills are why I believe I qualify to serve. ...

“I have a vested interest in the

continuing success of the Lewiston-Porter CSD.”

Palermo is a member of the Youngstown Police Department and a retired detective with the Niagara Falls Police Department. He has two children currently attending Lew-Port and a son who graduated in 2021.

“I believe my law enforcement experience is a valuable asset to offer the Lewiston-Porter community,” he said. “Being in law enforcement requires you to be a critical thinker. I am able to listen to all sides of an issue and make an effective decision that would be

in the best interest of the school board, administration, faculty, staff, students and parent. I also possess communication, social and problem-solving skills that I believe would be very useful as a Board of Education member.”

The annual budget vote and election will be held from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday, May 16, in the Community Resource Center. Absentee ballot applications are available by contacting District Clerk Marisa Barile at 716-286-7266 or mbarile@lew-port.com.

For more information, visit www.lew-port.com.

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