

Mrs. C. Lynn Smith-Barnes

611 Pitt Lane
Forest Heights, MD 20745
Phone (301) 7499741
WARD1HANDINHAND@AOL.COM

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

In 2003 when I ran for election I made no promises, my grandfather taught me never make a promise you cannot keep. When I do make promises I will to the BEST of my ability try to keep it.

In politics it is at times mandatory that you keep on top of things in the Legislative circle/field if you are truly for the benefit and the betterment of your Town. We have six council members, two for each of the 3 WARDS of the six three of them are retired (one in each WARD including mine).

I applaud these council members for the time and effort that they put into research along with the Mayor (who is not retired) for this Town and share with their fellow council members in a joint effort of improving our financial status and other problem solving issues.

There is no "I" in the word TEAM we all know that, any information for the betterment of our Township should be shared so that a plan of action could be put into place. The Town is like a new home you need an architect to do your planning and you gather your builders to start building, this is the structure of this council today. Even when you are adding on you still get an architect for the plan and again your builders.

These council members are doing their best, especially our Mayor have attended many legislative function (both in and outside of Maryland) to remind the outside world that we "Forest Heights not to be confused with Capitol Heights" are two different Municipalities, and that we are here. This council has spoken to the Architect and started building some time ago, just look around you.

You the Town residents are encouraged to be participants in both the architectural design and the building of your Town through your VOICE.

*Sincerely,
Councilwoman for WARD1
C. Lynn Smith-Barnes*

My name is C. Lynn Smith-Barnes and I'm running for Town Council – Ward I. Having attended all of the town meetings and work sessions as your current Ward I Council member over the past two years:

(Opponent) Stated during a council meeting that we, the citizens, do not have the right to be heard at meetings because we elected her to speak for us.

(Barnes) **I never said that. No record of the statement ever being made by me. Yes, I was elected by you, but you still have the right to be heard. I have on numerous occasions asked the WARD 1 residents to attend all meetings to voice their opinions. My question to you with all due respect Ms. Hoskins, when did I say this?**

(Opponent) Engaged in "Bait and Switch tactics."

o Conducted a **public hearing** on raising our taxes by one amount **during a council workshop** and then voted to raise our taxes by a higher amount at the Town meeting.

(Barnes) **The real property tax revenues presented at the June 7, 2004 Public Hearing on the FY2005 (current) budget were identical to the amount included in the Budget Resolution 8-04 approved by the Town Council on June 16, 2004. There was some minor confusion over the footnote on the Budget Resolution which stated the new tax rate was \$0.466, but the actual tax rate of \$0.470 was correctly used in the determination of the \$499,752 of real property tax revenues. The error in the footnote would typically result in a \$5 difference in a home owners tax bill – about the price of a McDonald's happy meal.**

o Claimed taxes were being increased in order to fix our streets and then later told us the tax increase was going to be used for another purpose.

(Barnes) **Not true based on the record from Resolution 4-04 which clearly states under funded town services were part of the justification for the increase. Research on the meeting that 4-04 was approved with respect to any discussion on the town services issues.**

(Opponent) Had our neighbor, Joyce Beck, removed from town meetings because Ms. Beck provided our citizens key information that the current administration did not want us to know.

(Barnes) **Joyce Beck was out of order on 3 occasions. Under Robert's Rules of Order a member may only address the chair (two occasions), and on another occasion Councilwoman Beck insisted on making a speech during a vote when Robert's Rules clearly state that only a Yea or Nay is permitted at that time. Speeches should be made during the discussion period when a motion is on the floor, but before a vote is called for. In order for a deliberative body to function it must follow the rules of order.**

(Opponent) Raised utility taxes and told us that the increase would not impact our utility bills.

(Barnes) **The Council raised utility taxes from .58 to .94 with a minuscule impact on the town residents. The utilities, PEPCO, Washington Gas and Verizon Telephone companies pay these taxes from their general revenues, and not from the revenues collected only from the Town of Forest Heights. As a consequence, almost all of the tax revenue raised through that tax increase comes from the utility customers outside of the town. Isn't it nice that the people in Fort Washington help the citizens of Forest Heights.**

(Opponent) Paid a \$1,500 monthly consulting fee to a consultant to speak on our behalf in Annapolis regardless of whether funds were secured for the town.

(Barnes) **The Town did hire a Lobbyist (not consultant). Council members and Town residents interviewed Mr. Proctor after he gave a presentation on his firm's capabilities and he was endorsed by the Mayor of a neighboring Town. He came back and gave a presentation at a Town meeting, upon which the Council agreed that we needed his services.**

The investment in his services has paid off. He has brought to the town at this time \$175,000 in State funds. In addition, he was instrumental in the passage of a new \$29 million grant program by the State Legislature, of which the Town expects to receive a substantial amount of additional monies for road construction.

(Opponent) Voted to hire a treasurer that, according to the mayor, will not provide the administration with financial reports.

(Barnes) **It is not a case of the Treasurer not being willing to provide the information, but the Treasurer is trying to recover from years of fiscal mismanagement and accounting shambles under the prior administration. For example, for an eight month period during the prior administration, the Town did not have a Treasurer. Following McGinnis's resignation the Town had a series of Treasurers.**

To quote the Mayor and you are welcome to check the records, the Mayor had continued to inform the council and residents "that the Treasurer gives me a monthly report." Council members, Town Administrator, and the Mayor were involved in the first interview for the Treasurers' position selections were made and the second interview took place at a Town meeting with the entire council interview to included I believe 3 or 4 applicants.

(Opponent) Denied us our rights to be heard on legislative and fiscal matters.

(Barnes) **The public has always been heard since the appointment of Mayor Noble during the public period at town meetings and other meetings. Ms. Hoskins, again with all due respect, since I have been on the Council how many meetings have you attended. Remember I can always go back and check the sign-in sheet which was signed by the residents who attended any meetings or sessions.**

(Opponent) Voted to hire a town administrator for a salary ranging from \$62,000 to \$72,000 per year (they won't reveal the actual salary) who refuses to answer the phone when called.

(Barnes) **The Town Administrator's salary is public information and was discussed at an information meeting on upon her transfer from Contractor to Employer her salary was disclosed to the public both times. Furthermore, the \$62,000 to \$72,000 includes the salary of an assistant in the Clerk's office. For the record, the Town Administrator's salary is \$62,000 .**

(Opponent) While other neighborhoods have prospered with property value increases, our town lags behind because it is not administered well.

(Barnes) **Research on property values is likely to show no significant difference between increases in Town values versus those in Birchwood city and other nearby communities. In fact recent sales of properties in Forest Heights have shown a rapid increase, such as theweb page for the state information on property . Pick a house that you knew was for sale and log in to see the approximate price according to state records. (http://sdatcert3.resiusa.org/rp_rewrite/)**

(Opponent) Crimes go unchecked.

(Barnes) **The FHPD report at every meeting about the crimes solved/and take in the Town. For example, Cpl Waithe reported at the April 20th Town meeting that he had recovered a series of weapons from a young man who had entered the Town, made the arrest, and still took the time to attend the meeting and give the town our Police report and returned back to the station to continue his arrest procedures.**

(Opponent) People drive our streets with a blatant disregard for speed limits and stop signs thus, endangering our children.

(Barnes) **The Town has installed speed bumps to deter speeding. When the streets are redone a new type will be put in.**

(Opponent) Public services are lacking.

(Barnes) **The Town has increased staffing at the Municipal Building to provide better public services.**

(Opponent) Our streets and common areas are unkempt.

(Barnes) **The Towns Public Works department patrols the streets daily and removes litter from the streets and the easements. There are problems with some residents and visitors to the Town who dump trash or toss trash from their vehicles on our public ways, and the FHPD will issue a citation.**

(Opponent) Houses are allowed to fall in disrepair affecting the values of those who own property.

(Barnes) **The code enforcement officer is issuing citations -- ask those who have received them. In the case of abandoned houses, it may take some time to track down the bank or absentee landowner to issue the citations.**

(Opponent) Our local businesses are not neighbor friendly.

(Barnes) **The local businesses generously contribute to functions sponsored by the town in the form of food and beverages. The town cannot regulate the customer relations of businesses.**

(Opponent) Meanwhile our representative does nothing to address these concerns.

(Barnes) **We have and are working diligently with these concerns by going through the neighborhood and bringing these problems to the attention of the Town administration, police department and code enforcement.**

THIS INFORMATION IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE FROM BEING THERE ALL THE TIME
-- NOT JUST SOME OF THE TIME

I ask that you continue to trust my judgment across the board for you and myself with the help of Councilman Wiggers.

Yes, if you believe the "Government to be, of the people, by the people, and for the people," vote your conscious on Wednesday, May 11th.