

Robert Dannhauser For Lebanon Township Committee



I'm Bob Dannhauser and I'm running for a seat on the Lebanon Township Committee.

The pandemic has upended an already tough fiscal situation in the state, and I don't see how local municipalities are going to escape feeling the coming financial pain. We're especially vulnerable in Lebanon Township since half of our municipal budget is funded by the state's allocation for the Energy Tax Receipts program. I expect it to be a strong temptation in Trenton to help address the gaping holes the pandemic has blasted in the state's finances. We'll need to be smart here to minimize the effect on the Township's taxpayers, and I think my training and experience in finance could be useful to that effort.

Being smart financially in our township means being careful stewards of every last dollar of taxpayer money. Our current Committee created a new position for a part-time Administrator in 2019, and I'm unconvinced that the position is necessary or advisable for our small town. We've had a year's experience now and it is time to reconsider whether we have the right person in the job, and whether continued funding of the position is the best use of funds.

Beyond the immediate financial issues, I think it is important for the Township to start thinking strategically about how we're structured to provide services. The quality of our roads, police, and emergency services is high, but there is a price tag associated with local control of everything. There are good arguments to be made on both sides of the debate over regionalization, and it is – and should be – a long process to hear and digest the arguments on both sides. I know that we'll be better off beginning the discussion sooner than later.

My husband Dave and I have been residents of the Township since 2003; we live in the Teetertown section of town and wake up every day to spectacular beauty and terrific neighbors. I ran for the Township Committee in 2004 and lost – but managed to draw support from independents and even some Republicans in town. I was an EMT and officer of the Lebanon Township rescue squad, and after a few years transferred over to the Califon squad where I continued until the demands of my day job in finance and investing became impossible to juggle. At the end of 2019, I semi-retired; I now consult with a research firm that advises investors on sustainable investment strategies. I have a MBA in finance from Cornell and a MPH in Health Policy from the old UMDNJ, and have earned a few professional credentials in financial analysis and investing.