

Filling Vacancies on the Town Board

Statement by Susan Siegel

December 19, 2014

My overriding goal is getting the Town Board up to full strength at the earliest possible date so that we can begin to tackle long delayed issues.

To achieve that goal, I've indicated on more than one occasion that I'm prepared to cooperate with my fellow board members and agree to a compromise solution for filling one or both vacancies.

In a suggestion that would have resulted in having a five member board as early as January 7, on December 2, I suggested that two board members be appointed for the balance of 2015, with an election in November, 2015 to fill the unexpired two years of Councilman Murphy's seat. My suggestion, meant as a compromise, was that Supervisor Grace select one candidate and Councilman Patel and I select the other.

Supervisor Grace has rejected the suggestion, despite the fact that he is on record as favoring appointments over election to fill vacancies, and despite the fact that he had earlier entertained the two appointment option and had even made known "his" choices.

With the two appointment option apparently off the table, on Thursday, I informally suggested to the supervisor an alternate compromise: appointing one person to fill the remaining year of the "Bianco" seat and holding a special election for the remaining three years of the Murphy seat. This option would avoid the need for one person to run in two elections within nine months, a factor that would likely discourage potential candidates from running in a March special election.

I also suggested that the sole criteria for selecting the person for this appointment should be someone who was not interested in running for an elected office in 2015 but who was willing to give one year of his or her time to serve their community. I added that ideally, the person should have some prior knowledge of the workings of town government.

It is my sincere hope that the supervisor will consider this second compromise offer.

Let's stop posturing and grandstanding. Let's start thinking about the town and not politics. Let's start working together in a spirit of cooperation and compromise.