



**Press Release – For Immediate Release – August 8, 2014**

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### **LTMUA Officials Fund Campaign to Oppose Proposed Merger with Township**

Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority (LTMUA) officials say they are indirectly funding both the formation of a coalition and a website opposing the proposed merger of the LTMUA with Lower Township with ratepayer money.

Members of Lower Township Council and Township Manager Mike Voll came to the Aug. 6 reorganization meeting expressing concerns to the new chairman regarding the diversion of LTMUA ratepayer funds to underwrite a misleading public campaign in opposition to the townships' efforts to save \$1 million per year and improve the administration of water and sewer for township residents. The issue was raised in public comments by Deputy Mayor Norris Clark who questioned whether the LTMUA board accepted responsibility for literature and a website containing misleading and false statements concerning the proposed merger with the township.

In response, LTMUA solicitor Jeff Barnes said that the LTMUA was indirectly funding the formation of a coalition and a website opposing the merger.

LTMUA Chairman O'Conner stated that he did not agree with all the statements of the website. Vice Chairman Tom Frisoli responded, "I'll buy that," when asked whether he thought the LTMUA was funding a website with misleading information about the township.

Noted Manager Voll, "Attorney Jeff Barnes, and Chairman Brian O'Connor are misappropriating rate payer funds by having hired law firm to conduct a false public relations campaign, when they know they could not spend the funds directly in such a way."

"The LTMUA board should be focused on properly maintaining our water and sewer system, not using ratepayer money to fund a false campaign in opposition to the Governor's recommendation that Lower Township Council consolidate these municipal authorities to save taxpayers substantial administrative costs," added Clark. "Let the LTMUA develop public plans to properly maintain our water and sewer system, and leave the debate about the merits of merging the LTMUA with the township to the elected officials where it belongs."

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