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HENRY PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY TRUST FUND

Mayoral Candidate Details Citizen-Based Approach to Maximize Asset's Future

Fort Wayne, Indiana – Mayoral candidate Tom Henry today outlined his approach for determining the future of the Community Trust Fund, one of the City of Fort Wayne's most significant financial assets. He called for the full involvement of the public throughout 2008 to decide on the best use for the projected, approximate \$40 million fund.

“Like the strength and wisdom of our people and the beauty of our parks, the Community Trust Fund is one of Fort Wayne's treasures,” stated Henry. “The maturation of the fund in 2009 will create an opportunity for real community discussion about our wants and needs, and the future of this extraordinary resource. The fund belongs to the people of Fort Wayne. When Mayor, I will ensure that every citizen has the chance be part of choosing what we do with it.”

Henry proposes a proactive, citizen-participation process including the following steps:

- Citywide brainstorming sessions throughout 2008 supported by broad outreach and guided by inclusive ground rules;
- Prioritization and determination of option costs and feasibility by City staff, professional experts as needed, and a steering group representative of the community;
- Release of interim results in 2009;
- Public input sessions to further refine direction in 2009; and
- Preparation and presentation of the administration's recommendations for action late in 2009.

Created in 1974, the trust fund was enacted by the Fort Wayne City Council when the City-owned electric utility, City Light & Power, was leased to Indiana Michigan Power. Each year since then \$270,000 of lease revenues have been placed into the trust fund account. The fund will reach its maturity in 2009. Prior to the lease's expiration, any expenditure of funds would require a vote of city residents. Those restrictions will vanish when the lease expires.

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HENRY *for* MAYOR

“With financial challenges all around, we must plan now to make the best use of this extraordinary windfall and not succumb to flashy, quick-fix ideas that do not produce real returns,” observed Henry. “I believe this is a decision that we must make together as a community. It demands the same sort of careful, farsighted consideration that guided the formation of the original trust fund. Enhancing our long-term quality of life and economic health will be two of my core expectations for any outcome. Making Fort Wayne a place full of good jobs, strong neighborhoods and opportunity for every citizen will be my mission as Mayor.”

In addition to community meetings, Henry will be committed to using every tool available to the City to gather in the ideas and suggestions of the public. Dialogue with neighborhood, business, civic and social service groups; open forums; digital mechanisms; City surveys and collaborative marketing with other organizations are examples of methods that may be employed.

Tom Henry is a Democratic candidate for Mayor of Fort Wayne. He is a successful business owner, a five-term Fort Wayne City Councilman and a nonprofit leader with deep roots in the community.

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