



GRETCHEN **HICKEY**
FOR MAYOR

"COACH" JORGE **ALVAREZ**
FOR COUNCIL PRESIDENT

D E M O C R A T S F O R L I N D E N

May 7, 2018

Mayor Derek Armstead
City of Linden
301 North Wood Avenue
Linden, NJ 07036

Dear Mayor Armstead:

I am writing this letter as a Linden resident and representative of the Hickey for Mayor/Alvarez for Council President Campaign. It has come to my attention you and Councilwoman Michele Yamakaitis will be hosting two Town Hall Meetings on the evenings of May 10, 2017 and May 17, 2017 in the City Council Chambers. I raise my deep concerns that these events are not town hall meetings but are in fact nothing more than taxpayer-funded and resourced campaign events.

It is my understanding that both of the above meeting dates have been added to the city public property schedule, and require use of city resources. These events do not appear on the City website, nor was public notification provided in accordance to the Open Public Meetings Act. Furthermore, it is my understanding that unlike the John T. Gregorio Recreational Center and various other parks facilities in the City of Linden, which are available for rental fee with contract, the Council Chambers/Municipal Court is not available for rental by members of the public.

Worse still, based on your campaign literature, it appears that these meetings are not even a veiled attempt to confuse a government meeting with a campaign event. Instead, it is a clear violation of ethical standards as well as a clear misappropriation of city dollars. Please see the attached campaign solicitation your campaign is distributing ahead of the June 5, 2018 Democratic Primary. The tag on the solicitation is "Paid for by the Committee to Elect Armstead Mayor." Quite frankly, these meetings as campaign election-related activities. Unfortunately, Linden taxpayers are footing the bill.

On the behalf of the campaign and Linden residents, stop this blatant abuse of public resources. Stop using city personnel, facilities, and vehicles for campaigning. I have copied the City Attorney, Municipal Clerk, and Members of the City Council so they are aware of this improper and unethical use of public resources.

The taxpayers of Linden deserve better.

Sincerely,

Ryan M. Vasquez
Campaign Manager