

Press Release

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PLUMSTED ADMINISTRATION REFUSES OPRA REQUEST LAW SUIT FILED

PLUMSTED, NJ, OCTOBER 9, 2009: Plumsted resident and candidate for Plumsted Township Committee— Mitch Geier—filed suit on October 8 in an attempt to require Plumsted Township to release public records he has requested through New Jersey’s Open Public Records Act (OPRA) and which have been denied by the Plumsted Township Clerk, Dorothy Hendrickson.

Plumsted Township has a history of refusing, or inappropriately redacting, information requested by Mr. Geier through OPRA, which is the name of the New Jersey “sunshine law” and the federal “Freedom of information act” guaranteeing government transparency and citizens’ access to the state’s public records. The filing is strictly to obtain the public records required by law and which were refused by the Township and involves no request for monetary damages.

“This is a clear violation of the law,” states Mr. Geier. “Our democracy is based on transparency of government. This Plumsted Township administration maintains a tight control of the town and one of their tactics for maintaining power is withholding information that citizens and taxpayers have a right to access. Their continued acts of corruption and abuse of power, is why I filed suit asking for the records to be made immediately available.”

Mr. Geier filed a similar suit for release of public records in 2004. That court decision required Plumsted Township to provide Geier with the public records requested. In both cases, Mr. Geier funded his own legal fees and has asked only the release of public records and not for any monetary compensation.

“We are confident that we will prevail on this issue as we did in 2004,” notes Geier’s attorney Elias Schneider. “In the last case, the court called the Township’s legal argument for not providing public records as ‘disingenuous’. This township administration is a repeat OPRA law violator while casting my client as someone who is ‘out for taxpayer dollars.’ In fact, my client has always only asked for the Township to abide by the law and has never asked for a penny from either suit.”

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