

January 19, 2022

Mayor Menna and Residents of Red Bank,

Please accept this letter as notice of my resignation as Councilman effective immediately.

I am saddened that it has come to this. I have truly enjoyed serving the Borough of Red Bank, the local businesses and, most of all, its great residents over the past five years. I am proud of my service. I attended every meeting and event committed to representing resident interests and needs. I did everything I could to make Red Bank the best place it could be.

I tried to set an example for others that hard work and civility can get things done in this town. I also thought it was very important to be open-minded and work with anyone who wanted to help Red Bank, regardless of their party affiliation.

During my tenure, I worked on many projects, but I truly enjoyed my time working on Bellhaven. I am extremely proud of the collaborative efforts that it took to bring Bellhaven into existence. That particular project is an example of how local government should work.

However, I believe we have strayed far from this collaborative mindset and seem more focused on political gains and people trying to keep their perceived political power. I am not sure where we went wrong but this divisiveness needs to stop, and the best interests of Red Bank need to be put first. The best interests of Red Bank should be the only interests that matter.

Despite recently getting married and making extraordinary arrangements with my new wife to fulfill my full term in Red Bank through the end of this year, a few misinformed individuals have alleged that I no longer live in Red Bank. This is simply not true. However, I cannot allow my family to be subjected to this toxic rhetoric and behavior.

Unfortunately, the impact of my resignation at this time will trigger an action by the local Democratic Chair wherein he will set forth *three handpicked suggestions* to replace me for the rest of the year. Those three candidates will then be voted on by the sitting Council, which he is part of and now has a three-to-two advantage. Rather than working together and bringing people together, the Democratic Chair is likely to use this situation to make town politics and council even more divisive.

I had hoped to serve my town for my full term, through 2022. My goal was/is to make Red Bank a better town for our residents, businesses and visitors. I voted for the Charter Study Commission to be on the ballot last November for the same reason.

The Charter Study Commission is so important to the town's future. We have lost our way by putting too much power in the hands of a few individuals. We need to correct our path: a change in the form of government and the type of elections would be a good start. Based on what I have seen over the past five years, that is the only way for us to put the interests of all of Red Bank over the interests of a few.

I want to thank all of the residents of this great town for the opportunity to serve them over the past five years. It was truly an honor.

Respectfully,

Erik K. Yngstrom