

~ My Story ~

My name is Trevor Elkins and I am the Democratic candidate for Mayor of the Village of Newburgh Heights. Like most of you I attended public schools, roll up my sleeves to support my family, and work 10 to 14 hours a day because I want the best for our Village. I am a fighter that has battled my way through some tough challenges and learned from those life experiences. I am not a perfect candidate, but I am open and transparent about my strengths & weaknesses, successes & failures; something rarely found in politics today. You as residents deserve to know the whole story and I invite you to read below and feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions.

I have experienced what so many people in Newburgh Heights have over the past few years. Despite being the number one producer for my personnel firm and helping lead the company to Weatherhead 100 status, I was downsized in 2009 because of the horrible economy. Like many of you I suddenly found myself living on a fraction of my previous income, juggling car payments, credit card bills, taxes, medical insurance costs, housing expenses, and basic living needs. To stay above water I was forced to liquidate all of my savings & retirement accounts. Even then, making it until I was appointed as the Assistant Clerk (Assistant C.F.O.) in Cuyahoga Heights was a struggle. I continue to fight through it and fortunately my family and I are beginning to gain ground again.

My success has been forged from real world experience. Although I am completing my formal education at Ursuline College by working toward a B.A. in Humanities; life has been my best professor by teaching me the lessons I've remembered. I've been challenged throughout my lifetime and have always dusted myself off, usually with the help of great friends & supportive family, learned a valuable lesson and kept on charging ahead ready for the next test.

Born in Jamestown, New York, before I was a year old my parents moved to Cleveland's Slavic Village neighborhood for employment. By the time I was 4 my parents had divorced and my Mother took me and my siblings to raise us in the Finger Lakes Region of New York. Growing up in a tight knit community outside of Rochester with 3 of my 4 brothers (Rod, Terry, Brian, Otis) and 3 of my 4 sisters (Jesslyn, Stephanie, Danita, Clara); I learned a great deal about community, living in a large family, and what it means to be supportive of each other. As you can imagine, even on a good salary, finances

can be tight in a family so large. Mom always worked two jobs and my Stepfather put in plenty of overtime as a machinist at Xerox.

At age 15 life tossed our family another curveball. My Stepfather chose to move on in his life and the fabric of the family began to unravel. Being the oldest male in the household by this time, as my older brother had enlisted in the Air Force, much of the responsibility of maintaining order fell on my shoulders. Hardly equipped for such a daunting task, I did the best I could, kept my nose to my books, and tried to maintain a typical small town American boyhood.

Only a month before my 16th birthday my Dad, whom I was close with, called me from Cleveland. The news wasn't positive. He had been involved in an altercation. A court battle ensued and before I knew it, he would spend the next 5 years of my young adult life in prison. This bitter lesson was a challenge to reconcile however, it taught me not to take the people in my life for granted.

About a year later, my Mother made the decision to return to Cleveland. I was just finishing my junior year of High School. I was given the choice of returning with her or staying where I had grown up. In one of the defining moments of my early life, I clung to my roots and elected to stay alone in New York. With the help of guidance counselors, school administrators, an Uncle, and the parents of some friends I rearranged my class schedule so that I could work 3rd shift at a local factory, attend school in the mornings, and still graduate. It took me an extra year because I was two classes short at the end of my traditional senior year, but I persevered and did it. I graduated toward the top of my class, didn't quit, and overcame a giant hurdle.

In 1992, my friend John Baynes was making a spirited bid for State Assemblyman. I joined the campaign and worked 14 hour days for John and the idea of something bigger than myself. Watching John Baynes inspired me. It was at this point that I realized I was truly a Democrat and that I was definitely committed to a life in public service. Although we came up short, I was able to take away lessons about public advocacy that I continue to hold today.

The next spring, I made a run myself for the Palmyra-Macedon Board of Education and won at the age of 21! At one point, United States Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan told me that he believed I was the 3rd youngest

person in the history of the State of New York ever elected to a public school board, although I've never been able to formally verify this point.

Over the next two years I worked part time jobs and attended college while serving on the school board. Finally, in 1995 I was struggling financially and all of my family had returned to Cleveland. It was time to return myself so I packed up my belongings and just before Christmas moved home to Ohio.

I wandered through my twenties trying to find myself after returning to Cleveland. Like most young people, I made some mistakes. In 1998 I acted foolishly and received a DUI. Still struggling to find my way in life, a few years later my relationship fell apart and left me with substantial debt. Despite finding a good career in the staffing industry, I was unable to distance myself from the financial mistakes and struggles of my twenties. I consulted with a number of financial professionals. The advice was the same over and over again. Cut ties with your past debt, some as old as a dozen years, file bankruptcy, and move on. After holding out against their advice and with the urging of those close to me at the time, I finally did so in 2005. This was one of the most gut wrenching choices I've ever had to make and one I am not particularly proud of, ultimately I followed the experts' advice in order to turn the page on a difficult, yet educational chapter in my life.

Having lived in Newburgh Heights since 1998 by this time, and having come to know the community when I ran for State Representative in the 2004 Democratic Primary, I was encouraged to run for Council in 2005. I obliged and defeated 4 incumbents by receiving the most votes that year for an at-large seat on our Village Council. While on Council I worked with a team of residents and professionals to write a successful sewer separation grant that had been previously rejected. Since, I've participated in the writing of numerous successful grant applications, as well as, administered the grant process.

Just 2 years later the voters of Newburgh Heights rewarded my hard work on Council by electing me Clerk-Treasurer in 2007 as I outmaneuvered a 12 year incumbent to win the seat. The Clerk-Treasurer position is the elected chief financial officer of our approximately \$2.5 million annual budget.

Despite the daunting economy, overwhelming economic challenges, and political attacks by certain elected officials & employees in the Village, I helped Council avoid what looked like a certain State takeover and develop

sound financial planning methods for our future stability. The Auditor of State has given my work as the chief financial officer good grades, as has the IRS and BWC.

Our neighbors in Cuyahoga Heights took notice of my successful experience and asked me to act as a consultant to assist them in 2010. Less than a year later I was appointed as their Assistant Clerk because of the highly proficient service I had provided their Village as a consultant.

This past fall, my fiancé and I purchased a home together on East 43rd Street. No, my name is not formally on the deed. This is because when I was downsized from my personnel industry position in 2009 my credit scores took a substantial hit as I struggled to manage the bills I already had before losing the position. Ultimately, it made more sense for us to structure our loan as it is currently structured. I assure you though, this home is ours together and I am more than confident in stating publicly I am a homeowner in the Village. We plan to marry in December and are looking forward to raising our daughters here in the Village.

Throughout my time as a public servant in Newburgh Heights, I've been an advocate for children as a member of the Kiwanis and a volunteer fast pitch softball coach. I've also fought for the protection and humane treatment of animals as a member of the Humane Society, ASPCA, and by adopting a rescue dog and cat.

I am the only candidate in this race for Mayor with actual municipal finance experience. I am the only candidate in this race to serve in both legislative and executive elective offices; giving me the skills necessary to continue to improve the quality of life in the Village without a long learning curve that could set the Village back decades. Am I perfect? No, but I am the best candidate for Mayor of Newburgh Heights because my formal schooling, municipal finance background, legislative experience, and real world education has taught me the lessons necessary to advocate for Newburgh Heights on a larger stage while understanding the needs our residents. Please vote for me on November 8th, 2011 for Mayor of Newburgh Heights.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor K. Elkins', with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

Trevor K. Elkins