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AKRON

Gaughan argues for smaller boards in Akron and Newstead

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Regionalism advocate Kevin P. Gaughan presented his case for reducing the number of elected officials during Monday's Akron Village Board meeting.

Gaughan's 26th stop in efforts to bring his message to the 45 governments in Erie County also drew the five-member Newstead Town Board to the village meeting.

He asked Akron and Newstead — as he has other villages and towns — to reduce their five-member boards by two members by attrition. Only The Village of Lancaster to date has pledged to do so.

Akron Mayor Carl Patterson and Newstead Supervisor David Cummings told Gaughan that their communities work hard at consolidating services in an effort to stem costs. They noted the proposed joint public works complex as a recent example.

Citing the familiar statistics of the area's population and job losses and creation of state control boards for both Buffalo and the county, Gaughan said: "This is a crisis and a community in peril."

To effect change, he said, requires reducing the amount of government. While praising the work done by elected officials, Gaughan argued, "They are working under the millstone of a government structure that hasn't been reformed since the Civil War."

Patterson conceded that "in order for us to continue to be vibrant we have to do things differently . . . and we've worked diligently" in looking at ways to share services with Newstead "to better manage our costs."

Cummings echoed that senti-men.

In other business, Patterson said that residents can bring their questions about a proposal for a new joint public



works complex on Buell Street to the board's next meeting at 7:30 p. m. May 5.

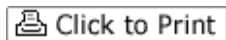
A member of the Shared Facilities Committee, Patterson said he's aware that many residents have questions about the panel's recommending a new build instead of buying the former National Caisson site on Indian Falls Road and converting it into a public works complex.

Peter Henley, owner of that site, who was at Monday's meeting, stated that his asking price for the 8.5-acre site in his Four Corners Business Park is \$2 million.

Patterson also asked local businessman Greg Papke to return to the May 5 meeting with the questions he has raised about cost figures for the project in the report prepared by town engineers Wendel Duchscherer.

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