

Be it Remembered that the Common Council of the City of Plymouth, Indiana, met in regular session on February 23, 2015. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers of the City Building, 124 N. Michigan Street, Plymouth, Indiana. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Senter led the Pledge of Allegiance and Councilman Delp offered prayer.

Mayor Senter presided for Council Members Delp, Culp, Ecker and Smith. City Engineer Gaul, City Attorney Surrisi and Clerk-Treasurer Xaver were also present. Councilman Grobe was absent.

Councilmen Delp and Ecker moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the last regular meeting of February 9, 2015, and to dispense with reading them since they have been reviewed and found to be correct. The motion carried.

Mayor Senter presented his State of the City Address:

STATE OF THE CITY
February 23, 2015

To:

Members of the Common Council
Madam Clerk Treasurer Jeanine Xaver
Members of the media
The Citizens of Plymouth

Good evening and thank you for this opportunity to address the Common Council tonight on the status of this wonderful city in which we live and work. Ladies and gentlemen, Plymouth, Indiana is a POSITIVE PLACE TO BE...A POSITIVE PLACE TO WORK...A POSITIVE PLACE TO HAVE FUN...A POSITIVE PLACE TO RAISE A FAMILY...WITH A POSITIVE EDUCATIONAL FORCE...POSITIVE EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENT...A POSITIVE FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH!

I begin tonight by acknowledging Clerk-Treasurer Jeanine Xaver as she is completing her fifth month in her new position. I appreciate so much her openness and her honest opinions as we go forward. We all know that she has big shoes to fill. Big shoes worn by Toni Hutchings that left us in great shape when she departed in September. And so far the new clerk-treasurer is doing a splendid job. Thank you, Jeanine, for your conscientious leadership!

- POSITIVE FINANCIAL STABILITY

I want to thank the Common Council for your input, your thoughts and your diligent decisions that are making this city go! I love it when you call me after getting your packet with questions about the agenda and upcoming decisions to be made. You don't always agree with the resolution or ordinance before you, but you are always respectful of the process!

- POSITIVE LEGISLATION!

The Mayor's Youth Council is planning their second major Earth Day / Arbor Day celebration here in Plymouth. But I am going to let the president of that tremendous organization tell you about that in a few minutes. Karly Gruett will be giving the State of the MYC momentarily!

- POSITIVE YOUTH!

In June of 2011 at the Yellow River Festival the Mayor's Youth Council named the downtown park RIVER PARK SQUARE. A little over three years later in a festival atmosphere The City cut the ribbon for the park that was several years in the making. I have heard nothing but positive feedback since it opened and we should all be proud of what we have here so close to our downtown.

I walked up to the park on a July Saturday morning when the market was booming and the flowers were blooming and the kids were splashing and the colors were dashing and I literally teared up! It is exactly what we all had hoped for and more!

We could not have done it without the assistance of the Plymouth Park Board and Superintendent Mike Hite, the Redevelopment Commission, the Common Council, the Plan Commission and of course the Troyer Group, Michiana Contracting and all of its sub-contractors! Thank you all for a spectacular addition to our city!

Right behind River Park Square the City was recently awarded \$445,504 for a second phase of the Greenways Trail from Founders Park to Garro Street. This will include a new footbridge across the Mighty Yellow just east of Garro Street. Design work is currently underway and construction will begin next summer. It's another step to beautifying our downtown area.

In just a few months The City will be adding a great new addition to one of our overlooked parks. The all-inclusive playground will make Packard Woods forgotten no more! I would like to thank the Freedom Park Committee for their tireless work and never giving up on their dream to include all children that want and need the freedom to play.

- POSITIVE PARKS!

The City is working well with the Marshall County Economic Development Corporation and its new director Jerry Chavez. Job retention is just as important as job creation. Just two years ago this month Whitley Products closed its doors, then reopened, then closed again for good and was purchased by Aggressive Manufacturing Innovations. They will be manufacturing tubes for both heavy equipment and passenger vehicles promising 250 jobs by 2016.

Mr. Chavez is working very hard in promoting the shell building...AKA the Commerce Building to several manufacturing companies. Very soon, Pioneer Drive will be booming with that as well as INDOTs sub-district and Love's Travel Center coming to The City.

The MCEDC is further entrenched in Marshall County by offering quarterly COUNTY DEVELOPMENT FOR THE FUTURE meetings involving Lapaz, Bremen, Bourbon, Argos, Culver, MC and Plymouth. In these luncheon meetings, egos and turf wars are left at the door and a regional concept of economic development is positively discussed. The executive director of the St. Joseph County Chamber of Commerce was at our most recent meeting last Wednesday. Jeff Rea, who is also the former mayor of Mishawaka, stated during our meeting that he had never seen such constructive energy with so many government entities involved in one meeting. That says a lot about our continued effort in REGIONAL economic development.

- POSITIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT!

That same rapport and partnership has led to one of the most significant economic attracting benefits that this county will ever see. The Metronet is up and running in 19 businesses and will soon be making its mark on The City's offices as well. The Metronet will enable The City to unify internet and telephone connections across all departments, and provide even more efficient services to Plymouth's citizens, all while saving more than \$18,000 annually in communications costs. As predicted there are several businesses that stood on the sidelines and now want to be a part of the Metronet. We will do our best to assist them and welcome them to the future. Thanks again to the Marshall County Council, the commissioners and St. Joseph County government for making that happen!

- POSITIVE BROAD BAND

The Plymouth Municipal Airport has seen many changes since David Lattimer took over in July of 2010. We had buildings that were in awful shape...siding that was discolored and flapping in the wind...garage

doors that would barely open...airplanes that shivered in the cold ...sidewalks cracked and pitted...an office area styled for the 70s...a pilot's lounge that was indescribable! After nearly \$500,000 worth of locally funded improvements that has all changed.

And in October it was announced that the airport received a \$2.2 million dollar grant from the FAA to rehabilitate and widen the runway beginning in late spring! We stand here this evening thanking the Federal Aviation Administration for FINALLY listening to what we have been saying all along: PLYMOUTH IS THE PLACE TO BE!

- POSITIVE AVIATION!

I was very pleased that last year we were able to add \$300,000 dollars to our street repair and sidewalk fund and I would like to announce tonight that soon the common council will be presented with appropriating another 300K dollars to that fund for this year as well. And with that, I would like to add that a significant part of that funding to go to our long forgotten alleys in The City!

- POSITIVE PAVEMENT

Unveiled at last year's ribbon cutting for River Park Square was the new logo that will assist us in branding The City for years to come. A committee of nine along with seven focus groups was committed to this cause over a five month period.

I asked the council during budget hearings to add \$100,000 for new entrance signage. This will be phased over a few years because 100K won't go that far. Goal #1 is the county's roundabout at Michigan Rd and 7A Road north of The City. That road will be soon known as Veteran's Parkway thanks to the county council and commissioners.

With twelve entrances into Plymouth, we have our work cut out for us! We would like to get the service clubs as well as the high school booster clubs involved in this. Signage is a part of our comprehensive plan that we completed in 2012.

- POSITIVE PROMOTION

But, I must say that not everything is positive. We still have decrepit homes and buildings that need either torn down or fixed up to make this city a brighter spot on the map. We have attained a few of our goals with the installation of Project Bright Spot, but we have a ways to go.

The near Westside of Plymouth is still a major goal of this administration and that of the comprehensive plan. The railroad yards from Adams to LaPorte Streets and Walnut to 2nd Streets are in dire need of transformation. Dilapidated buildings, broken infrastructure, brownfields and a neighborhood that has lost its character. Working with our new Brownfield grant and the railroad companies this CAN be fixed and repaired!

- POSITIVE CHANGES

In closing, I want to thank the 100 plus employees of Plymouth. They all do an outstanding job and I hear nothing but praise while I am out and about in The City. I commend each and every one of you for a job well done and I know you will keep up the great work!

- POSITIVE EMPLOYEES!

I introduced Sean Surrisi to the council three years ago during the State of The City and I must say he has gone beyond what I expected. Sean has proven to be a great writer, counselor, mediator, investigator, troubleshooter that has kept all of us out of hot water more than a few times.

- POSITIVE GUIDANCE!

Operating a city of 10,000 plus depends on great teamwork and I want to thank the department heads for going above and beyond and for enthusiastically going out of their way to make the city a positive place to live and work. Some of them probably average 60 hour work weeks...some are on call keeping us safe in the wee hours of the morning...some are great organizers...all of them have one thing in common:

- POSITIVE LEADERSHIP!

Author George Will once said, "The future has a way of arriving unannounced!" Ladies and gentlemen, the future is knocking on the door of Plymouth Indiana and together, with a positive attitude, we will answer it!

- PLYMOUTH POSITIVE!

Mayor Senter introduced the members of the Mayor's Youth Council.

Karly Gruett, President of the Mayor's Youth Council, read her State of the Youth Council address.

Mayor Senter offered the privilege of the floor to the audience. No one accepted.

Councilmen Ecker and Delp moved and seconded to accept the following communications: Minutes of the Board of Public Works and Safety meeting of February 9, 2015; Minutes of the Board of Urban Forestry Committee meeting of February 18, 2015; minutes of the Redevelopment Commission meeting of January 20, 2015; the Clerk-Treasurer's Reconciliation Report for January 31, 2015; and the list for the Cancellation of Outstanding Unpaid Warrants. The motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, Culp and Delp moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried; the meeting was declared adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

S/Jeanine M. Xaver
Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED

S/Mark Senter, Mayor