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Working Toward Success

There have been many reminders in the news that safe, reliable water is of critical importance to a community and to its citizens.

When I ran for mayor my #1 goal was that Waukesha obtains permission to use and return Great Lakes water under the terms of the Great Lakes Compact.

It was my position while I was running and it is my unwavering position today that it is vital for Waukesha's future that it obtains Great Lakes water in order for all of us to have a long term, safe, sustainable and reliable water supply.

During the last year the City has made substantial progress in its quest to obtain Great Lakes water. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources concluded that borrowing and returning Great Lakes water is Waukesha's only reasonable water supply alternative.

The DNR then forwarded our application on to the other Great Lakes states and provinces for review. The Regional Body and Compact Council met in Waukesha, toured the city and surrounding area and conducted a public hearing.

Dan Duchniak and I have been working diligently to make sure that all of the Governor's representatives fully understand the City's Application.



Dan and I traveled to many of the Great Lakes states to personally meet with and answer questions from the Great Lakes state's representatives.

The Regional Body and Compact Council have not yet reached any conclusions and there will still be considerable discussion over Waukesha's application. There is no question that each state will carefully consider our application under the terms set forth in the Compact.

It is my opinion that there appears to be understanding that the DNR conducted an extensive and thorough review of the application, that Waukesha's continued use of the deep aquifer is not sustainable and that there is no other water supply alternative for Waukesha.

Each state recognizes that Waukesha's application will set precedence for any future request for a diversion. The Regional Body and the Compact Council therefore will vet our application thoroughly and will create a high bar for approving diversions.

The Regional Body and Compact Council meet this Thursday and Friday to make a determination of facts. If the Regional Body and Compact Council are able to make a determination on all "facts" required under the Compact then the Regional Body and Compact Council will meet again for a final decision by the end of May.

The quality of our application, the thorough review by the DNR and the careful and non-political review by the Great Lake states makes me confident that our application will receive an unbiased and fact based review by the Compact Council. It is my belief that Waukesha will receive

an approval from all Great Lakes Governors for Waukesha to borrow and return Great Lakes water.

This result will be a major step for the city of Waukesha to achieve success for its present citizens, their children and their children's children.

Our water application and the decision by the Compact Council is the overriding issue for Waukesha in 2016. There are other ways though that Waukesha is working toward success in 2016.

Kevin Lahner started working as the Administrator for Waukesha in 2015. Now that he has an entire year of experience, he has earned the full support of the Directors and members of the Common Council. Kevin has and will be bringing many new ideas and processes to our organization.

For example, his leadership to develop a "pay for performance" program will energize our employees and pay dividends to both the employees of the city and to its citizens for years to come.

Kevin will also be modernizing and making our budget process more transparent and easier to understand. He will work to insure that the public can closely monitor the development of the budget and also bring the public into the budgeting process.

I have confidence in our City Administrator. I see him working for Waukesha for a long time and I know that his leadership will play a big part in Waukesha working toward success in 2016 and beyond.

The City of Waukesha also works toward success by providing entertainment and activities for its citizens. I am pleased to announce that the Les Paul Performance Center in Cutler Park will continue to be a beautiful gathering spot for our citizens again in 2016. Some of the activities to take place at the Les Paul Performance Center include;

Monday Night at the Movies - every Monday night mid-June through mid-August.

Tribute Tuesday Concerts (with BBQ)

- June 14 – David Bowie Tribute
- July 12 – Kenny Rogers Tribute
- August 9 – Elvis Tribute
- September 13 – Journey Tribute

Civic Band Concerts – Thursdays, mid-June through mid-August

The Parks Department will also continue running the popular Carl Zach Cycling Classic; an international Bike Race that will roll into town on Sunday, June 19. Many thanks to Couri Insurance for generously sponsoring the race for many, many years.

We will celebrate July 4th with the annual parade and the fireworks show. The theme for the 4th of July activities this year is “Here’s to 90 Years.” The Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department turns 90 years young this year! Woodman’s Market is our sponsor for the fireworks show. We thank Woodman’s for helping Waukesha succeed in 2016.

There are many things happening in all city departments that will help Waukesha succeed in 2016. I am not able to run through all of the ways each department is helping Waukesha succeed, but some include;

- 1) An Inspection Department that is working diligently on property inspections. This will result in increased compliance with our codes. While property inspection issues are never ending, I have personally seen that the increased inspections and follow ups are making a difference in the look of our neighborhoods and the livability of all of Waukesha. The Planning Department is proactively working with the common council to define its vision for the future and seeking out development that matches that vision.
- 2) There is a major investment in road repair and other major capital improvement projects. I am not sure this even needs to be mentioned, considering how difficult it is to get into City Hall. The Common Council deserves the thanks for the investment in road repairs and other infrastructure improvements. Putting money aside for these repairs is a balancing act each year during budget time. Our Common Council has consistently made the decision that the repairs of our roads cannot be put off to next year or to future years. Our Engineering Department deserves our thanks for managing these projects so that the disturbance is kept to a minimum and the work is completed as quickly as possible.

- 3) The Library continually provides a myriad of new (and recurring) programs for our residents. Besides entertainment, our award winning library provides education to the young toddler all the way up to the gray haired old men. Andy Reiland keeps hinting that we will all enjoy this years Waukesha Reads book. I think he should stop hinting pretty soon and tell us the name of the book.
- 4) Our Police Department will further its four priorities of Safety, Communication, Teamwork, and Accountability. This year it will have 100% deployment of squad cameras, which support the priorities of Accountability and Safety. The PD also plans to increase its outreach and educational hours by 20% to further the priorities of Communication and Teamwork.
- 5) The big change in the Fire Department in 2016 will be to start on the construction of a new fire station and to appoint a Fire Chief. With a new fire station, the city will provide better response times to the southern portions of the city.

Waukesha is heading toward success. I am not saying that all issues and problems will be solved in 2016. What I do see though is that through the efforts of the Common Council, the Department Heads, our employees and our City Administrator, Waukesha is on a path to continually be a better place to live, work and play.

Thank you for all your help and thank you for allowing me to be your Mayor.

