

State of the City Speech 01/05/2015

In 2014, my first year in office as Mayor of Johnstown, I have personally committed myself to making this city a better place for all our citizens. Thanks to the determination and cooperation of the entire Common Council and all the staff working together here at City Hall, there is much progress to report.

I believe that 2015 will be a breakthrough year for us. Everything however, is predicated on our ability of making basic decisions and adhering closely to our budget. If we continue on this track there will be a huge impact on the City moving forward.

Early last year we began the process of reevaluating both residential and industrial properties. The project is on track for completion this year and in the end will bring a sense of fairness to all. An early and direct consequence of this decision was the State increasing our Bond rating to double A minus, therefore allowing the city in the future, to borrow money at a much cheaper interest rate.

We have also started changing both the computer and telephone systems in the various municipal departments, bringing our city into the 21st century. Completion of this project will be accomplished this year and will bring us better communication and efficiency.

As far as our budget for 2015, after much hard work and thanks to our City Treasurer, we came to a successful result. There were no cuts in service and no layoffs.

In addition, our tax rate remained steady at \$17.98 per thousand.

Recently, at the end of 2014, our Common Council came to the conclusion that the City Charter needs revision.

The last time the Charter was revised was about 15 years ago. Therefore, as Mayor I have commissioned a Charter Review Board, comprised of citizens of Johnstown, which has been charged with the job of clarifying the authority and scope of each department of the city.

Another goal of mine is to reorganize the entire city government so that it is more streamlined and efficient.

As a result, we have hired a new City Engineer and Deputy City Engineer. Both have been told to find efficient ways of operation and savings for the city.

At this time, I would like to report that both these competent individuals have successfully begun the process.

In conclusion, for all of us serving this city, we need to focus on the hopes and aspirations of all our citizens and work toward achieving them. Personally, I also commit myself to reversing the employment trends by pursuing the relocation of various industries and manufacturers to Johnstown.

Finally the State of the City is sound and improving.

Thank you.