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November 8, 2019

With the election complete, I wanted to say thank you to the City of Clearwater for your votes and trust you have placed in me as I have the privilege to serve as your Mayor for another term. Thank You!

I'm excited to welcome the two new members to our governing body, Justin Shore and Chad Pike. I look forward to you joining our team! I also want to acknowledge and thank Laura Papish and Tex Titterington for their outstanding service to the community as members of the Clearwater City Council. Your dedication and commitment to the community is greatly appreciated!

Although I've been impressed with the positive feedback, I've received over that past few weeks during this election period, I also have heard criticism and feel it necessary to do a better job to address the concerns I've heard. First and foremost is the lack of consistent communication and what has been viewed as not being transparent. Although we have open meetings and the minutes are available to all covering what is discussed, it isn't a normal routine for folks to review them. So, beginning with this update, I will commit to doing a better job of reporting out what we are doing and working on in the City. Likewise, please feel free to contact myself, or anyone on the Governing Body or City Staff with questions or concerns.

Let me start with these few topics:

Chief of Police. As you might know, Bill Hisle has resigned as our Chief of Police. We thank him for his leadership and direction of our police department and wish he and Julie the very best in their new adventures. I waited until the election was over to appoint a search committee to begin the process to find a replacement. We will be appointing that committee at the upcoming council meeting on November 12, 2019. We have no specific timeline but will work through the process as efficiently as possible. On that same topic, we have experienced turnover recently of our newly recruited officers. We will be working with our new Police Chief to ensure we are providing a competitive compensation package, benefits, and working conditions.

Ambulance Service. There continues to be need for a better explanation of our emergency response capabilities in Clearwater. Over the past many years Clearwater maintained an EMS service that included EMT's, AEMT's, Paramedics and a ground ambulance transport service. We continue to maintain the volunteer EMT's, AEMT's and Paramedics that respond to each 911 call when they are available. What we don't do is transport. Sedgwick County has assumed responsibility for that. Our local Fire Department is staffed with these volunteers and they perform the same tasks as before: respond, provide immediate medical treatment, stabilize, and prepare for transport if needed. A "response time" is critical, and we continue to provide the very best we can. While that initial triage/treatment is happening the county ambulance will have been dispatched. If the local medical provider on sight determines an ambulance isn't needed, they can call them off...otherwise, the ambulance is on its way. Beginning in January the county has committed to placing an ambulance service in Clearwater. We believe that service will be from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week. That ambulance will also be available to support county calls but will be stationed here.

2020 Census. More to come, but the 2020 Census is just around the corner and the accurate count will help ensure Clearwater receives the federal, state, and county funding based on our

population. Most will be done on-line but if there isn't a response there will be door to door canvassing. Why the census matters: 1) Ensure fair representation at all levels of government. 2) Directly impacts the funding we will receive for the next 10 years. 3) Provides the most reliable and complete data for research, decision making, and planning for both the public and private sectors.

Exit to Park Glen/Park Glen Estates. With the continued development in PGE we are looking at the need to have a second exit. When the development was platted, an exit was designed for future planning. The City has begun the initial planning and is working through the details with our City Engineer in coordination with the school district as the road will cross both properties. Once a plan is developed, we will add the discussion to a future agenda for the public to attend and provide comments and input.

#### Attracting new commercial/residential growth

- Commercial. We continue to work with interested groups for development within the Industrial Park. Lauer Motors has recently purchased property and is in the process of building and opening an auto sales/repair business. We are in conversations with others interested in opportunities to build there as well.
- Incentives. Currently, the City has limited incentives in place to attract new building within the City. These programs will expire at the end of the year and the council will be discussing what is best for the future to achieve positive growth.
- Blighted housing initiative. City staff along with the City Council is working on a program to spur revitalization of and private reinvestment to reduce housing blight in Clearwater. The strategy is to revitalize neighborhoods with identified substandard housing. Look for more information on this initiative in 2020.

#### Board and Commission Openings

There are openings on the following Boards/ Commissions. If you are interested or would like some more information you can reach out to City Hall (620-584-2311) or contact me directly.

Park Advisory Board - 1 Opening  
Planning Commission - 1 Opening  
Public Building Commission - 1 Opening  
Senior Center Advisory Board - 1 Opening

I will update these topics and add more as needed, but at least monthly going forward. Don't hesitate to contact anyone on the council or city staff with questions, feedback, or ideas.

Burt Ussery  
Mayor

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