

Mayor's April Report

Dear Residents :

As you read this, Opening Day (April 9) for the Lake County Captains is just days away. If you have not purchased your \$1 tickets for the game, please call or stop in to City Hall to see if there are any left.

Last month I gave the State of the City address. For those who could not be there, here are a few of the key points. For the fourth year in a row we achieved a balanced budget for 2008 and ended up with a \$194,000 surplus. In 2009 we are looking to keep services and employees at their current levels. We need general fund revenues to be between \$13.7 and \$14 million to cover expected expenses to run the city. Most of our general fund revenue comes from the 2% city income tax and 2% business net profits tax. Needless to say we are dependent on the economy to get better in order to keep revenues at 2008 levels.

I have been and continue to be a strong advocate for Recreation programs and activities to be brought back to our city. I will continue to push for the opening of the Houston Fisher pool and to once again have a recreation department with one or two employees. I believe that to attract younger families and to keep our housing values up we need recreation in this city. We are currently working on the pool and do not know at this point if we can do the necessary repairs to make it safe to open in 2009. If not, we will work on it all summer and fall with a goal to open the pool in 2010. We have a \$150,000 state grant for repairs and Council has also set aside \$194,000 from the city's inheritance tax for the pool. We plan on staying well within that budget.

Also for 2009 we have two big projects scheduled, depending on when the grant money is released. One project is to completely replace the concrete on South Lakeshore Drive and the other is to replace the Quentin Road pump station. Both projects are well over \$1 million each and both will receive grants of 30%-40% of the cost.

One final thought. It is a more difficult task being a city Mayor when budgets and funds are tight. I am the one who must say NO and inform the departments that they can't have what they are asking for. It is much easier when finances are good and all departments get the personnel and equipment that they want. I also know that our residents want us to live within our means as they do at home. So when you hear complaints from city departments please keep in mind that as Mayor I must balance both the residents' tax dollars and the various departments' needs and still stay within our budget.