

STATE OF MAINE

COUNTY OF YORK

CITY OF SACO

The following are minutes of the Dec. 3, 2007 Inauguration.

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – On Monday, December 3, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. a Council Meeting was held at the Thornton Academy, Harry P. Garland II Auditorium. Mayor Johnston called the meeting to order and determined that the Councilors present constituted a quorum. Councilors present: David Tripp, Leslie Smith, Jr., Ronald Morton, Roland Michaud, Arthur Tardif, Eric Cote and Christopher Jacques.

Mr. Roland R. Michaud, City Administrator and Lucette S. Pellerin, City Clerk also attended the meeting.

II. STAR SPANGLED BANNER – DON LAUZIER

III. AGENDA ITEMS:

A. GREETING – Thornton Academy Headmaster

Mr. Carl Stasio welcomed the dignitaries and public in attendance to the installation of the Mayor, City Council and Board of Education.

Mr. Stasio made the following remarks pertaining to public service. “Consider how much we take for granted all those people who work behind the scenes. Our Administrators in public service have done so much for Saco, we are all very appreciative”.

The Head Master also spoke of the development of Island Point and the positive environmental and economic impacts the \$100 million project will have on Saco.

He also stated “We have a vibrant Main Street that is great to walk along. This is no accident that these developments have begun. Mark worked tirelessly and skillfully for these projects”.

Mr. Stasio stated that Mayor elect Roland Michaud is an equally honorable person, with long experience at city hall to assure a progressive agenda for the City of Saco.

B. REMARKS - Mayor Mark D. Johnston

Mayor Johnston commended the Councilors and their families for their generous service and dedication to our community.

Mark stated “I have left because I am happy with what we accomplished. We have moved our community, to where we can be proud of”.

C. Oath of Office Administered by the City Clerk to:

At this time Mayor Johnston requested that Lucette S. Pellerin, City Clerk administer the oath of office to the following elected officials:

Mayor – Roland L. Michaud

City Council:

Ward One: Margaret E. Mills
Ward Two: Leslie E. Smith, Jr.
Ward Three: Ronald Morton
Ward Four: Sandra L. Bastille
Ward Five: Arthur J. Tardif
Ward Six: Eric B. Cote
Ward Seven: Marston Lovell

Board of Education:

Ward Two: Daniel C. Cabral
Ward Six: Lorraine Whelan

D. Mayor Roland Michaud – Presentation to outgoing Councilors and Mayor

Mayor Michaud presented three awards as an expression of appreciation for their public service. The recipients of the awards were:

Christopher Jacques, former Ward 7 Councilor
David Tripp, former Ward 1 Councilor
Mark D. Johnston, former Mayor

E. Remarks by Mayor Roland Michaud

Let me begin by thanking Mr. Stasio and Thornton Academy for allowing us to use these fine facilities for tonight's inauguration. It is perhaps symbolic that we should have this event in a place of learning, as I am sure that I will need to be a learner for the next two years.

Thank you also to Don Lauzier for his musical rendition of the Star Spangled Banner, and a very special thank to my niece, Emily Theobald and her parents Tom and Valerie who drove all the way from Reading Mass to be here with us this evening as well to Camille Curtis Saucier who gracefully agreed to be her musical accompaniment. Unfortunately, due to the inclement weather, the remaining musical events will not be held this evening. Nonetheless, I would like to thank the Thornton Wind Ensemble directed by Jennifer Witherell-Stebbins, the Thornton Academy Chamber Singers directed by Cathy Murray, the Thornton Academy Wind Chamber

Orchestra directed by Ann Wilkinson and the Saco Bay Select Children's choir directed by Camille Curtis-Saucier for having volunteered to be a part of the program.

Merci to all of those individuals who assisted me in the campaign by going door to door for signatures, distributing pamphlets, posting signs, writing letters and, of course by voting. Most of all I would like to thank my family for their patience and understanding of why I was on the phone most evenings and gone on weekends. Two who deserve the greatest thanks are two women who are very close to me. One, my wife Hilda, who encouraged me and was always there with ideas to improve my campaign and Hope, my 20 month old granddaughter, who agreed to grace my pamphlet and ads and was there to remind me why I entered the race in the first place. Whenever I get to hold the "squeezer" as I call her, I realize how precious she is and how we need to work together to make this a better world for her and all children who are entrusted to our care.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I didn't thank all of those individuals who voted for me on Election Day. Thank you very much for your vote of confidence and support. I would also like to thank all the voters who came out that day. The fact that you took the time to exercise one of the most important freedoms we have, the freedom to vote, shows your commitment to our community.

This evening is somewhat auspicious as it is the first time in almost a generation that we will have a mayor whose name doesn't begin with the letter "J". Mayor Jansen began the tradition followed by Mayor Johnston, then Mayor Johnson then back to Mayor Johnston. As the only mayors I have served under for the last 14 years have been two of the "J" mayors, I thought it appropriate to take a moment to review some of their accomplishments.

Let me begin by taking you back to my first election when Mayor Johnston introduced me to the, then residents, of upper city hall. Our feathered friends, the pigeons, had taken up residence in what is now our council chamber. Walking through the building now it is hard to imagine that we had these residents in the council chambers just a short time ago. City hall is now a totally renovated, critical part of our downtown.

The approved open space bond enabled us to purchase strategic properties in the community for current and future recreational and open space needs. A new rec center at 80 Franklin St. now provides increased recreational opportunities for all of us.

And how about our waste pick up system? Thanks to Councilor Cote's determination and the Council's action we now have an effective waste pick up and recycling process that made our recent change in disposal sites much less costly.

We built a new police station that will meet the community's needs for years to come. Again, its location in the downtown serves as reminder that we are committed to keeping the downtown as

the center of our community. Two new industrial parks have been built adding more than 300 jobs to the local economy and 16 expanded or new businesses increasing our tax base.

We have dealt with the chronic flooding problems in the Spring St. area and have improved streets and sidewalks on Green, Temple, Dyer, Pleasant, and numerous other downtown streets. Probably the most visible street improvement we have made are the changes on Main St. Eliminating the overhead wires and improving the sidewalks and street lighting has helped make our Main St. one of the most beautiful and welcoming Main streets in the state. And the good news is that we should see the new lights extended to the intersection Main and Elm by the end of next year.

Voters also overwhelmingly endorsed the idea of a trail bond because they recognized the value of these networks and all of the great work that has been done by volunteers in creating and maintaining trails such as the River walk and Eastern Trail.

We renovated the Middle school and recently completed a new entrance and exit to improve traffic flow. Young school was partially addressed by removing a dysfunctional building and replacing it, temporarily, with modular units until we can find a permanent solution. We found a permanent home at 80 Beach Street for our Superintendent and have seen increases in local financial support for the school system as a whole. Lastly, we implemented long-term agreements with Thornton Academy enabling both the city and the Academy to better plan for the future.

Another long-standing problem that was resolved related to our waste disposal contract. We signed a long-term agreement with Ecomaine rather than continuing to take our trash to MERC. By moving away from MERC we have spoken as a community that the facility needs to become a thing of the past. While, it may have once made sense to locate it in the center of our communities, that logic no longer applies. We need to work hand in hand with our neighbor to insure that this last remnant of a bygone era becomes a memory rather than a hindrance to future growth

Finally the exciting and long awaited development is now underway on Saco Island. We will soon be building a new train station that will incorporate innovative, cost effective features such as geothermal heating and wind power. The Island Point developers will be investing upwards of 100 million dollars in improvements to make Island Point a valued addition to the community. This project will be a catalyst that will positively reshape our downtown. For over a generation, we waited for the right time and the right parties to come together and now they have. I want to thank Kevin Matson and Bob Martin along with their team for having vision and confidence in Saco as a good place to invest for the future.

As we can all attest, life's challenges never truly end. A constant theme I heard on the campaign trail was the need to keep property taxes in check. It's clear that the economy is challenging all

of us. The cost of energy is soaring. Health care costs are continuing to rise and more people are losing access to health insurance. It's understandable why taxpayers are feeling under siege. We, as a community, must learn to live within the budget constraints of Maine's LD1 requirements as well as those contained in the State's Essential Programs and Services funding formula, a formula that addresses the cost of operating our schools.

Another area where we will be challenged is in the school reorganization process. As a member of the 2020 committee, predecessor to the Regional School Unit Planning Committee, I recognize the value of working with neighboring communities to provide centralized services whenever possible to reduce cost. As a parent, I always felt that communities as close to each other as we are to Old

Orchard Beach, Dayton, Scarborough and Biddeford, should be working together to provide more and better services to our children. While I may live in Saco, the political lines ended when it came to my child's educational needs. My concern lies with the fact that, in all discussions that I have heard to date, the only issue being discussed has been about saving money. We must not forget that the real issue is how we can provide a better education in a more cost effective and efficient manner.

Lastly, we are approaching a time where a solution to the Camp Ellis erosion problem can become a reality. When I ran for office 14 years ago, I pledged to work towards finding an effective and equitable solution to the problem. It has not been an easy 14 years. However, we have gone from the Corps of Engineers walking away from us to having an approved authorization for Federal funding in the amount of 26.9 million dollars. My hope is that it will not take another 14 years to reach the next milestone on Camp Ellis, namely, appropriation of these funds.

Some of you may ask why we are spending this money to solve a problem that cannot be solved. I too wondered about the futility of fighting Mother Nature. However, the last 14 years have made me realize that the issue is not mother nature taking her toll, but man interfering with the natural environment. The Corp's own studies reveal that the major player in the erosion process is the man made jetty. A jetty that was built to facilitate use of the river is causing people to lose their homes and properties.

We will soon have the opportunity to lend a helping hand to our neighbors to correct this long-standing problem. We will, at the same time, be enhancing our beach community, providing all of our citizens with expanded recreational opportunities and insuring we don't continue to lose property taxes being generated by these homes and properties. I am confident that the scientists working on mitigation of this problem have developed a viable solution.

A recent article in the local press quoted our outgoing mayor as saying we face many challenges. I prefer to believe that we face many opportunities. One of them is the opportunity to work with

our neighboring communities. The challenges being placed upon us by reducing revenues and increasing demands will be a catalyst for us to actively pursue cooperative working relationships.

Certainly, the Island Point project as well as the need to address and finally resolve the MERC issue will draw us closer to Biddeford. We will also be working with them to jointly develop a Mill District Plan, one that recognizes the value these properties have to our communities. While a river may separate us, we can continue to build bridges of understanding and cooperation.

Is there a larger regional project than Camp Ellis and its erosion problem? Saco Bay is really a one bay community with a number of artificial political boundaries that are meaningless to Mother Nature. We will need to continue working with all bay communities to achieve a successful outcome.

As Mayor and Chair of the Board of Education, I look forward to developing mutually respectful and productive relationships with each member of the City Council and the Board of Education. I also look forward the council working cooperatively with the Board of Education to jointly face the challenges of an uncertain future.

In My 14 years on the Council I have come to know many of the City's employees. We are indeed fortunate to have such competent and dedicated individuals who care about Saco and strive every day to provide the best possible service. It is their efforts that help make Saco the great community that it is.

The opportunity that challenges bring is the opportunity to work together in a spirit that recognizes diversity of opinion but never deviates from the primary belief that one of our most important responsibilities is to leave our children a community that is better than the one we found and is one that they can live in and be proud of.

Let me close by asking each of you to come and join in the process. As you travel throughout the community, realize that this is your community, that you are a part of it and that you can and should participate in deciding its future

Ultimately good government depends on all us being a part of the process.

Thank you.

F. Music Interlude:

Thornton Academy Wind Ensemble, Jennifer Witherell –Stebbins, Director

Members of the Thornton Academy Chamber Singers, Catherine Murray, Director,
Camille Saucier-Curtis, Accompanist

Saco Bay Select Children's Choir, Camille Saucier-Curtis, Director, Steve Boutet,
Accompanist

Due to the inclement weather today Thornton Academy did not hold classes and the student were not able to participate in the music interlude.

Emily Theobald, Flutist, Camille Saucier-Curtis, Accompanist

Ms. Emily Theobald, grandniece of Mayor Michaud performed two musical pieces for the audience.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor and Council adjourned at 8:20 p.m. to the Atrium at Thornton Academy.

ATTEST: _____

Lucette S. Pellerin, City Clerk