

STATE OF MAINE

COUNTY OF YORK

CITY OF SACO

Due to a winter snow storm Thornton Academy closed at noon, so the inauguration ceremony was held at City Hall. The scheduled performance by the Thornton Academy String Quartet, Saco Middle School Orchestra, and Opening remarks by Rene Menard, Thornton Academy Headmaster were cancelled for the evening.

I. MUSICAL PRELUDE

II. OPENING REMARKS BY RENE MENARD, THORNTON ACADEMY HEADMASTER

III. CALL TO ORDER – On Monday, December 2, 2019, at 6:30 p.m. a Council Meeting was held in the City Hall Auditorium.

IV. RECOGNITION OF MEMBERS PRESENT – Mayor Marston Lovell recognized the members of the Council and determined that the Councilors present constituted a quorum. Councilors present: Marshall Archer, William Doyle, Alan Minthorn, Lynn Copeland, and Nathan Johnston. Councilors Roger Gay and Micah Smart were absent this evening. City Administrator Kevin Sutherland, incoming City Administrator Bryan Kaenrath, and City Clerk Michele Hughes were also present this evening.

V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

VI. REMARKS BY MAYOR MARSTON LOVELL

Mayor Lovell had no remarks this evening.

VII. GIFT PRESENTATIONS BY WILLIAM P. DOYLE

Councilor Doyle thanked Mayor Lovell for his valued service to the community and hoped that he would continue to be a part of the community moving forward. He presented Mayor Lovell with a plaque with a gavel. The audience gave Mayor Lovell a standing ovation. Mayor Lovell joked that he never got to use the gavel because they had such a well behaved citizenry and council. He noted that this is a continuation of his life of service with 24 years in the military, half a dozen years on the council, a term as County Commissioner, and a term as Mayor. He expected that we would find some other service to do because it was what he has been doing his whole life. He thanked Councilor Doyle for the gesture.

Councilor Doyle noted that there were presentations for the outgoing councilors who were not present this evening and they would receive them at another time.

VIII. MUSICAL INTERLUDE

IX. AGENDA ITEMS:

OATH OF OFFICE ADMINISTERED BY MICHELE HUGHES, CITY CLERK

City Clerk Michele Hughes administered the Oath of Office to Mayor William P. Doyle.

She also administered the Oath of Office to the City Councilors as follows:

- Ward 1 – Marshall F. Archer – 2 Year Term
- Ward 2 – James D. Purdy – 4 Year Term
- Ward 3 – Joseph S. Gunn -2 Year Term
- Ward 4 – Lynn H. Copeland – 3 Year Term
- Ward 5 – Alan R. Minthorn – 3 Year Term
- Ward 6 – Jodi L. MacPhail – 2 Year Term
- Ward 7 – Nathan D. Johnston – 4 Year Term

X. REMARKS BY MAYOR WILLIAM P. DOYLE

Welcome Saco neighbors, distinguished guests, and invited visitors. I want to thank each and everyone of you for joining us on this snowy evening.

While some details of the inauguration had to be changed due to uncontrollable weather, we are here tonight for what I consider to be a celebration of democracy, committed to the service of our wonderful community.

We have many distinguished guests here tonight. But there are two unsung supporters who have challenged and pushed me to succeed every day. First, my partner, my rock, and my confidant, you know her as Amber. She avoids the spotlight and politics. But shares in the sacrifices of public service. Second, is my stepson, my buddy, and our future, you know him as Darian. He pushed our household to adapt to the ever changing world of acronyms, technology, and the abundance of information. I'm grateful for their support, understanding, encouragement, and love.

Public service comes with many inherent demands from the long nights, numerous meetings, challenging issues in need of resolution. Hopefully if we are performing at our highest level, while we may disagree from time to time hopefully, we do so civilly without being disagreeable.

A favorite quote of mine is from our 26th President Theodore Roosevelt. Who in his speech citizenship in a republic which you may know as an arena spoke the following words more than a century ago that I share with you now. "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

The following members of our community have answered that call to public service and have dedicated their time and talents to the betterment of the City of Saco. We thank you Mayor Marston Lovell for your service to the City of Saco and County of York in the role of former County Commissioner. We also owe our gratitude to those councilors who will continue to serve the City of Saco, but also those councilors who have decided to move on such as councilors Roger Gay and Micah Smart. We thank you for putting yourselves forward in the area. For those whom I have the privilege of serving moving forward, I look forward to working with you each and every day. To those who are for at least the moment leaving the arena we wish you well in your future endeavors and hope you will stay involved in the community.

In connection with public service we have many dignitaries in the audience who are also owed gratitude for their service. Please excuse me for any omissions as it is unintentional. Senator Justin Chenette, Representative Donna Bailey, former Representative Don Pilon, former Mayor Mark Johnston, Sheriff Bill King, Biddeford Mayor Alan Casavant, School Board members Steve Shiman, Beth Johnston, Stan Mozden, and Art Tardif. Thank you all very much for all your service.

Following my remarks, we hope you will join us for a small reception here at the City Hall Auditorium. Food for this occasion has been graciously donated by Chris Rizeakos and family of the Golden Rooster, and Alejandra Herrera and Carlos Guzman of Quiero Café who are expecting a child in 2 weeks. So, they are going to be busy moving forward. Both located here in our Historic Downtown. Please join us in thanking these wonderful family businesses for their donations here tonight and their support of many community events.

As important, if not more so than any of us who serve in elected positions, I will take the liberty of saying we as I think all of us who serve on the council or school board share this view. We owe our city team of dedicated employees at the City of Saco a huge thanks for their day in, day out service to our community. Our city team members range from leaders in their respective fields to new members with diverse backgrounds and experiences all working to solve the challenges of today and tomorrow. Often these team members go above and beyond by volunteering for community events and working diligently to advance Saco's interest locally, regionally, at the state level, and at some cases nationally. We are truly fortunate to have a team of some of the finest public servants working in municipal government and I thank you.

My journey to this evening began many years ago at Thornton Academy while running for student council. Many of my then classmates who are some in the audience today and teachers supporting my endeavor and then made a then younger man think he could be Mayor and more.

Fast forward some years, I made a bid for City Council. After winning the election and being sworn in I happened to tell a good friend that someday I would like to be Mayor. Albeit quicker than I anticipated I stand before you tonight humbled by the distinct honor and privilege that has been entrusted in me by the community. To paraphrase President Kennedy, you'll see that I'm fond of doing that from time to time, "The torch has been passed to a new generation of leaders that has come of age in this the 21st Century". A time of tremendous opportunity and great challenges. It is with great pleasure that I'm able to address you as your servant and newly sworn in Mayor of this our great City of Saco, Maine.

Over the last several years we have seen a significant commercial and industrial investment and job creation in our business parks. We have seen a renewal and reinvigoration of business activity along our Main Street corridor from Saco Island all the way to the Northern boundary of our community. We are grateful and appreciative of these investments. For it is these investments that have allowed us to stabilize the tax rate for our residents while making some much needed investments in our future.

At the same time, we have seen a robust growth in our residential development due to our stellar school systems, city services and natural amenities. With this increased growth come both opportunities and challenges.

We need to ensure that we nurture a business environment that is both friendly and sustainable, at the same time while welcoming thoughtful new residential development. We need to do so smartly. Meaning we need to examine every development, redevelopment, and regrowth opportunity from a perspective that is specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. We must strive to maintain a healthy balance. Sounds easy but I think many of you know it is not.

We all want to maintain the character of our "Saco", and no one likes change. However, we must evolve to provide the infrastructure and amenities that residents and businesses need and expect in the 21st Century. We must work to continue a thoughtful expansion of our business and industrial park space. While all the while doing what we can to maintain the things that we love about our Saco. This will not be an easy task but working together I'm confident that we can and will do this.

Everyone says that we are a great place to come and visit or live, work or play. We must bring action to these words. To achieve these goals, initiatives, and policies from the City Council and City Hall have to focus on the smart growth principals I mentioned a moment ago. This will require the City Council to work in collaboration with our residents and our city staff to develop a set of strategic goals. These goals will be the road map for an updates strategic plan for our great City of Saco. The strategic goals and plan will need to be regularly to ensure they remain relevant and when necessary thoughtful adjustments are considered and if appropriate implemented. The strategic goal setting will give the council and community the ability to plan for years into the future which will help us to better forecast and control budgetary investments and expenditures. There is much more I could say about the strategic planning process but I will spare you the agony of a prolonged speech.

Saco continues to see healthy valuation increases coming from new construction and increased values of our existing homes driving a strong tight real estate market. Our current strong financial positioning offers us higher bond ratings and lower borrowing rates. To continue strengthening this position we should thoughtfully consider a new bond and finance investments for appropriate projects that will help our long term growth and viability to provide services that meet the community goals we have established together.

As we begin our new term and bring on a new City Administrator and reaffirm the need for an independent assessment of our financials financial condition as one of the first actions of this council. The citizens of our community have a right to such transparency and accountability. It seems a most appropriate time for such an undertaking to ensure that we all start our new tenure with the assurance that our house is in order. Hopefully, there will be no issues. However, should there be let us get them out into the open and deal with them.

As much of an optimist that I 'am, our economy has robust for several years now and we must be prudent to ensure that we are restoring our savings for the day that may come when the pace of economic activity plateaus or possibly slows. A related concern facing many of our businesses is the workforce shortage. Many employers are being challenged with open positions for workers that are simply not present or do not have the needed skills or training. We need to work with our businesses and schools at all levels, others in our region, the state and federal delegation to focus on the workforce development challenge. These factors will be front and center while funding or partially funding a new school. While we wait on the status of potential school construction funds from the State of Maine our current schools continue to age and require more and more costly maintenance and related financial investment. At some point our community will need to address the condition of the facility of the site where we meet our children's educational needs. Our community must move forward with open and honest conversation about the potential site placement and an assessment of space needs both of which are critical components of thoughtful long-term planning. Student achievement creates opportunity, it is not just a motto, it is an educational prediction incorporated in Saco's values.

Now, I know many of you thought I wasn't going to mention the unmentionable but I must. Growth of any kind inherently includes traffic challenges. Our community has one if not the busiest interchanges along Interstate 95. As the City of Saco moves forward with the portions of the Exit 36 Traffic Study, we as a community will be challenged, frustrated, and forced to seek alternative routes from time to time. We must resolve to see the challenge through to the end for the greater good of the community.

Our transportation transit needs go beyond the challenges of Exit 36 and Route 112 though. Specifically, as we see further development. The cities increased growth utilization increases the frequency with which our roads need repair and replacement. As the city looks to the future, we must prepare now for upcoming infrastructure needs related to roads and parking.

Our comprehensive plan and future zoning changes and vision discuss residential density, a walkable community and a strong downtown. These ideas will promote a healthy downtown economy but strained current parking options. We can and must do better for the citizens of Saco by thoughtfully and proactively planning for our future. The future is ours to chart and we are all in this together.

Our community will need to use all the partnerships public or private both existing and those to be formed to tackle our current and future challenges. It will require the building of new and strengthening of existing bridges to address the long-term needs of the city such as Camp Ellis erosion, transportation and transit, and education. The City of Saco cannot do it alone but together we can do it. We must work together. It requires your help and participation on committees, School Board, and the City Council.

Collaboration is essential to the direction and viability of our community. Every community member brings a unique set of ideas, value, and perspective to the debate. If you are interested in a committee or know someone who may be interested, please fill out the online interest form at sacomaine.org or contact the City Administration. The more thoughts and information that go into the tank the more likely we will get a result that is in the best interest in the majority of our fellow residents.

In closing, the next 4 years beckons great promise for the City of Saco. From Camp Ellis to school construction to smart growth development we have the ability to achieve many positive results. Our city will move forward in meet the challenges of tomorrow with a focus and plan for success while continuing the ongoing mission of serving our great community.

I leave you tonight with two quotes. First, from President John F. Kennedy's inaugural address "So let us begin anew. Remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness and sincerity is always the subject of proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate." The following from Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis said, "One man can make the difference and every man should try." Let's make that every person.

I ask all of you and all in this community to join us and together we will make that difference for the children of this community from whom we for a short time are borrowing this community and world before we turn it over to them.

Let's be sure we turn it over to the next generation in better condition than we received it.

Thank you very much for coming tonight.

Mayor Doyle received a standing ovation for the audience.

XI. ADJOURNMENT TO THE ATRIUM

Councilor Minthorn moved, Councilor Archer seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m. The motion passed with unanimous consent.

Attest: _____
Michele L. Hughes, City Clerk