

On Wednesday, February 22, 2017, at 8:30 a.m. the Dayton City Commission met in regular session in the Commission Chambers of City Hall.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Whaley called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Mims gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Whaley led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken and Mayor Whaley, Commissioners Williams, Joseph, Mims and Shaw were present. The Clerk of Commission, Ms. Rashella Lavender, and the City Manager, Ms. Shelley Dickstein, were also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Mims made the motion to approve the minutes from the February 15, 2017, meeting. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. The previous meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mayor Whaley asked the Clerk of Commission, Ms. Lavender, what is the nature and order of business for this meeting.

Ms. Lavender said, "Mayor Whaley, the sole order of business today is to present the Annual State of the City Address. Each year, at the direction of the Mayor, a Dayton City Commission meeting is set aside for the purpose of reporting the state of the city, highlighting some of the accomplishments of the year past, and remarking on initiatives for the year ahead. The format of the address is at the discretion of the Mayor. A State of the City Address has been offered since at least the 1980's and there have been a number of formats used. I am informed that you will present your remarks and will then adjourn the meeting from the podium."

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

"Good Morning.

Members of the City Commission, City Manager Dickstein, distinguished guests, members of the city staff, friends and neighbors.

The Dayton Development Coalition held its annual meeting a couple of weeks ago with more than 800 people crowded into the Schuster Center. At that meeting I was privileged to serve as a member of a speakers' panel discussing regional development efforts and the status of the Dayton-area economy.

The panel's moderator was local filmmaker Steven Bognar, whose film "The Last Truck" earned an Academy Award nomination. "The Last Truck" tells the heartbreaking story of how the closing of the General Motors Assembly Plant in Moraine affected the workers and their families and the shattering impact it had on our community.

Imagine my delight when Steven Bognar opened his remarks in front of that standing-room-only crowd in the Schuster Center by declaring, "Dayton is roaring back."

What a difference a few short years can make!

Four years ago, we had leaders in the community saying publicly that "Dayton is a dying city."

And, they were right to be concerned --- Dayton had seen some dark days even before the Great Recession swept across our nation leaving communities like ours battered and distressed.

Many of our friends and family members had lost their jobs. Many more were fearful that they could lose their jobs.

We had a record number of foreclosures. We saw both residential and commercial property values drop dramatically.

Our neighborhoods were scarred by vacant and abandoned homes. Our business districts were lined with empty storefronts and deserted commercial buildings.

We did not have the resources we needed to tend to our streets and parks.

And, several long-time community anchors and major employers had packed up and left town.

Four years ago, Dayton stood in the shadows of a long period of decline.

But, make no mistake about it, Dayton is roaring back!

On just about every front we see positive signs of growth and renewal.

- Forty-three new businesses opened in downtown Dayton in the past year, bringing activity and new jobs to our city. This includes new restaurants like Table 33 and Old Scratch Pizza; new retail and service businesses like Luna Gifts & Botanicals and KJ Naturals; and, new professional offices like Keller Williams Home Town Realty and the law firm of Bricker & Eckler.
- More than \$250 million is being invested in four major capital projects that are nearing completion. The construction of a new patient care tower at Dayton Children's Hospital, the renovation of the Marriott Hotel at the University of Dayton, the expansion and renovation of Sinclair's Health Sciences Center, and the expansion of the Dayton Metro Main Library located downtown are all on track to be finished in 2017.
- Major infrastructure improvements also are underway including the replacement of the Webster Street Bridge over the Mad River and the Helena Street Bridge over the Great Miami River. Both will be completed by the end of the year.
- CareSource, one of our great community partners, continues to expand its footprint in Dayton, renovating and moving into space in the Kettering Tower. As one of our most important downtown anchors, CareSource also will begin construction on a six-story office building later this year. That new building will be constructed on the site of the former Patterson Co-Op High School and will house about 800 employees. Additionally, CareSource announced just this past week that it plans to purchase the Ballpark Village building across from Fifth Third Field and will occupy additional space there as well.
- Our work to create a framework to guide development efforts in important West Dayton neighborhoods got a tremendous boost last summer when HUD announced our community would receive a Choice Neighborhoods grant. This \$1.5 million grant will be used to develop a blueprint to remake the DeSoto Bass and Hilltop Homes housing projects and the surrounding neighborhood into a mixed-income area. This will create more economic opportunities for nearby residents and our citizens.
- The housing market in and around downtown is hot, maybe the hottest it's ever been. With a total occupancy rate of 97%, developers like Jason Woodard are working overtime to meet the demand. There are more than 1,300 market rate housing units in downtown today and another 630 units are expected to be available in the near future. One thing that is important to recognize is that much of this housing upswing is being driven by millennials and young professionals. As of last December, more than half of the homebuyers in Dayton during the previous ten-month period were under the age of 35. According to an analysis by Realtor.com, that's the highest share of the market by that age group in the nation.

The surge we are witnessing is being fed by people like Franklin Gehres and Carla Maragano, two 31-year-old attorneys who purchased a home in the St. Anne's Hill neighborhood at the end of last summer. Another example is Mohamed Al-Hamdani and his wife Carin, who are looking to close on their purchase of a home in the Wright Dunbar neighborhood. They hope to move there with their two young boys within the next month.

But, another demographic that is driving the housing market is empty-nesters and those looking to downsize --- people like Mike and Frieda Brigner, who recently sold their home in Dayton's DeWeese neighborhood to move downtown into First Place Apartments. Now they're within walking distance for

work and downtown amenities. As developer Charles Simms told the Dayton Business Journal, “It’s the live, work, play sentiment” that really fuels our market.

- And, speaking of amenities --- isn’t the completion of Chaminade Julianne’s new Roger Glass Stadium a wonderful addition to the city’s landscape? CJ’s new complex, along with the expected opening of the Five Rivers Metropark’s River Run project and the soon-to-be-built Levitt Pavilion outdoor music venue promises to bring exciting new vibrancy to our downtown.

With all of these signs of growth and renewal, our city continues to face a number of serious challenges. Issues such as neighborhood blight, drug addiction, and workforce development require serious focus and attention.

For a number of years, we have steadily and strategically been removing vacant and abandoned structures in our neighborhoods. In fact, about 40% of these eyesores have been demolished. We expect to remove several hundred more structures in 2017.

The national opiate crisis has hit our community hard, with devastating effects on families and our neighborhoods. Every day Dayton EMS and police officers are saving lives through the use of Narcan. But, much more needs to be done. During the coming year we must work with other community partners including law enforcement and social service agencies to develop comprehensive strategies to address this epidemic.

Our Investing in Manufacturing Community Partnership was renewed in 2016 allowing us to support and expand manufacturing in a 27-county area. More than 5,500 new manufacturing jobs have been generated since the creation of this partnership. Promoting regional manufacturing jobs and workforce development is important for our region’s continued economic growth.

In last year’s State of the City address I spoke of the need for courage and determination to meet the challenges that confront our city. I asked if we were prepared to act boldly to address these challenges.

Last November, the people of this city went to the polls and answered that question with a resounding “YES!”

I have said it before: The people of Dayton have a long history of being willing and able to rise to the occasion and confront adversity head on. In placing Issue 9 on the ballot last November, Commissioners Williams, Joseph, Mims, Shaw and I --- along with City Manager Dickstein and our team here at City Hall --- put before the people of Dayton a bold initiative to push our city forward.

We are so grateful for the widespread support we received for this initiative. Once again, the people of this city have answered the call for sacrifice and courageous action.

The passage of Issue 9 places Dayton on solid financial footing for many years to come. It allows us to address serious issues affecting the quality of life in all of our neighborhoods.

We will be able to improve the appearance of our neighborhoods. We will be better able to address the maintenance of vacant and abandoned properties with more frequent mowing. We will enhance the appearance of our parks and thoroughfares, mowing our 62 parks monthly and our 72 boulevards weekly.

We will be able to maintain and enhance our public safety service levels, adding twenty new police officers to our force over the next eight years.

And, we will be able to increase residential street re-surfacing four-fold, with all roads in good condition at the end of 8 years.

Most important --- the passage of Issue 9 allows us to provide universal access to high-quality, accountable preschool for Dayton’s 1,900 four-year-olds.

When I was sworn in as Mayor three years ago, I declared that Dayton must become a “City of Learners” --- a city that invests in the education of its children --- a city where all its children have the chance to succeed.

Providing universal access to preschool is a giant step in our quest to be a City of Learners. It is a giant step in our hope of changing the world for the children of Dayton.

The members of our Preschool Promise Board are fully engaged and hard at work. Under the leadership of board chair Debbie Feldman, CEO of Dayton Children's Hospital, and Robyn Lightcap, Director of ReadySetSoar, the board is developing policies to direct their work and will soon launch a comprehensive education campaign.

Enrollment for the start of the 2017-18 school year is set to begin in April but, of course, enrolling in preschool is NOT enough. Our Preschool Promise Board is committed to providing access to high-quality preschool --- HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL.

The Board is working with various partners and is prepared to assist and coach preschool providers who are willing to become "high-quality." This is the only way we can reach the objective that every 4-year-old in our city comes to kindergarten ready to learn.

Each of the Issue 9 program goals represents a meaningful investment in our city's future. The people of Dayton have placed a great deal of trust and confidence in the leadership at City Hall, and we will honor and respect that trust. We are committed to protecting your investment.

Under the "Your Dollars, Your Neighborhood, ALL Dayton!" brand, we will monitor and track our performance. The City Manager will prepare and maintain a separate Issue 9 Supplemental Budget to provide total accountability and transparency. And, the Commission will receive Quarterly Updates on the city's activity and progress. Meeting our Issue 9 goals is a major priority for me and my colleagues on the City Commission. We will not fail.

If you have seen Steven Bognar's documentary "The Last Truck" you know how moving it is to hear former workers at the Moraine Assembly Plant talk about the devastation of losing their jobs. I can relate to their pain.

My dad worked at a GM plant in Indiana that sent trucks to Moraine for final assembly. When the Moraine Plant shut down, my dad's job was cut and he was forced to take an early retirement.

Losing those jobs and seeing that plant shut down was painful. It was certainly a low point for the entire Dayton region. Having lived through that pain, however, should make us appreciate the renewal and signs of growth we are witnessing now even more.

The chair of the Dayton Development Coalition, Anne Eiting Klamar, told the audience at the Coalition's recent meeting that "It's an exciting time to be in Dayton, Ohio." I couldn't agree more.

It's an exciting opportunity we have been given to be in a position to focus on issues that matter. It's an exciting opportunity we have been given to be able to get things done. It's an exciting opportunity we have been given to make a real difference in the lives of people and families.

It's exciting, because Dayton is roaring back!

Thank you!"

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:49 a.m.

Mayor Nan Whaley

Attest: _____
Clerk of Commission