

Farewell Address

Tonight, marks the end of my time as an elected official for the City of Worthing. Over the past few months I've had some time to reflect on my time with the City and consider many of the ups and downs that we have had as a community.

One of my fondest memories happened as the result of a natural disaster. After the ice storm in April 2013, I got to witness and be a part of the clean-up effort that took place in the aftermath. During times of hardship, I think the true human spirit and the character of a community is shown in the response. Dozens of volunteers showed up on a Saturday morning and worked throughout the day clearing downed trees and limbs from streets, sidewalks, and even on the properties of those individuals who weren't physically able or didn't have the tools to clear their land. Some people donated equipment including payloaders, skid steers, trucks, trailers, chainsaws, etc. The ability of our community to come together when we needed to the most demonstrated how much can get done when we are all moving the same direction.

I was also around when the city experienced over 11 inches of rain in less than 24 hours. The resulting flooding caused an immense amount of damage to both private and public property. Again, neighbors helped neighbors in any way they could. The fire department helped pump water out of flooded areas; elected officials and city staff worked around the clock to ensure our lagoon system kept up. Private individuals donated time and equipment to help minimize the damage as much as possible. And these are just two of the many times I've seen our community come together to do great things in the midst of hardship.

Now, I know that things have not been all sunshine, lollipops and roses. There have been disagreements in the past about decisions we have made as a city, actions we have taken, and directions we have gone. In government, there will always be disagreements, and there should be. My hope is that in all of the disagreements, all sides have felt that they were listened to and heard, even if things did not turn out in their favor.

On the positive side of things, I've been privileged to be a part of so many worthy projects:

- The first buildings going up in the Industrial Park
- Two phases of the safe routes to school project
- The first phase of the walking trail at the Rec Complex
- Several other improvements to the Rec Complex including new playground equipment, picnic shelter, and updated volleyball court
- New equipment and other improvements at the Beck Family Park
- Infrastructure improvements and paved streets all around the school
- The asphalt overlay improvement project that was done on main street
- The Mary street project that was completed last year
- The acquisition of the Civic Center and various improvements to this facility
- The purchase of a new fire truck by the Worthing Fire Department

I could go on and on about the good things we have done during my tenure with the City.

And I say we on purpose. None of these things were done by me or a commissioner or a staff person individually. All of these things that have required a great deal of teamwork and collaboration.

And now on to the thank yous:

First and foremost, thank you to God. His faithful, steadfast, and guiding hand has helped me through the struggles and the mountain top experiences this path has taken me on.

Next, to my family: my wife Maggie and daughters Savannah, and Emery. Thank you for all of your support during this journey. Thank you for giving up your time, so I could invest it in a cause larger than all of us. Thank you for always being there when things weren't going to well, and for celebrating the victories, both big and small along the way. Without you I would not be the person I am today.

To the city staff, both past and present, that I have been so lucky to have worked with: thank you for the bottom of my heart for what you have contributed. Your tireless, and often thankless, efforts have kept this city working day in and day out.

To our Firemen and Police officers, thank you for keeping our small town the safe place that we have come accustomed to. To the professionals we work with on an almost daily basis: Jon Fischer and Jon Brown with Stockwell Engineers, and Larry Nelson and Brenda Ask, our attorneys; thank you for keeping us out of court and always moving in the right direction. To Kelly Bultina, Debbie Schmidt, and Wendy Sweeter with the Lennox Independent; thank you for taking an interest in Worthing and covering so many events and news stories that are important to our community.

I want to especially thank the commission members with whom I've served: Scott Hillard, Darren Van Houten, Troy Larson, Todd Gannon, Carrie McDannel, Eric Bunkers, Ryan Schleiman, Shari Lund, and Crystal Jacobson. Each of you hold a special place in my mind for to work we've done together. Your vision and efforts are the reason this City is where it is today. And to my predecessor, George Zahn. Thank you for teaching me about the history of the City and for being there to answer the many questions I had along the way. Your institutional knowledge is unsurpassed and invaluable.

To the citizens of Worthing, thank you for electing me both as a Commissioner and as your Mayor. Thank you for the faith you put in me, and joining me as we worked to improve our City. I'm sure that I left out many more people that should be thanked, but know that I am grateful for each one of you that has played a role in moving the city forward. I am incredibly proud of the work we have done and the direction in which the City of Worthing is currently headed.

To the newly elected commission:

Please know that I am always available if you have questions. But also keep in mind, that I will not offer unsolicited advice. I refuse to play Monday Morning Quarterback with the decisions that are made in this room by the Mayor and the Commission. I have too much respect for each of you who have been voted in the people to govern as you see fit.

I wish you nothing but success as you continue to work for betterment of Worthing.

Finally, thank you, thank you, thank you. It has been my great honor and privilege to have served you these last 8 years.