

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
DATE: MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2014

PORTSMOUTH, NH
TIME: 7:00PM [or thereafter]

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lister called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Lister, Assistant Mayor Splaine, Councilors Shaheen, Kennedy, Lown, Dwyer, Morgan, Spear and Thorsen

III. INVOCATION BY REVEREND DAWN SHIPPEE, THE NORTH CHURCH

Reverend Shippee of The North Church conducted the Invocation.

POSTING OF THE COLORS

Members of the Portsmouth Police and Fire Departments Honor Guard held a procession and posted the colors.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Madison and Cameron Zadravec of New Franklin School, led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

Wendell Purrington sang the Star Spangled Banner.

PORTSMOUTH POET LAUREATE – KIMBERLY CLOUTIER GREEN

Ms. Green read the poem *The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost.

MUSICAL SELECTION

Patrick Dorrow sang *You'll Never Walk Alone* by Rodgers and Hammerstein.

OATH OF OFFICE

City Clerk Barnaby administered the Oath of Office to the following officials who were elected at the November 5, 2013 Municipal Election.

A. FIRE COMMISSION

Commissioner Richard Gamester
Commissioner Jennifer Mosher-Matthews

B. POLICE COMMISSION

Commissioner Brenna Cavanaugh
Commissioner Gerald Howe was unable to attend due to a prior commitment.

C. SCHOOL BOARD

Nancy Novelline Clayburgh, Leslie Stevens, Helene Mullaney, Thomas Martin and Jeffrey Landry

D. CITY COUNCIL

Councilors Stefany Shaheen, Esther Kennedy, Brad Lown, M. Christine Dwyer, Zelita Morgan, Eric Spear and Jack Thorsen

1. Assistant Mayor James Splaine
2. Mayor Robert J. Lister

V. ADDRESS BY MAYOR ROBERT J. LISTER

Thank you very much, good evening and Happy New Year.

Welcome family, friends, neighbors, former City Mayors, Eileen Dondero Foley (watching this at home) Peter Weeks and Eric Spear, former City Councilors, School Board Members, Police and Fire Commissioners, City Manager John Bohenko, City Clerk Kelli Barnaby, City staff, Department Heads, and all special guests.

I would like to thank the Portsmouth Symphony, Reverend Dawn Shippee of the North Church, the Fire and Police Departments Honor Guard, Madison and Cameron Zdravec, students from New Franklin School, vocalist Wendell Purrington, Poet Laureate Kimberly Cloutier Green, the very talented Patrick Dorrow and everyone who made this evening of celebration possible. I am so grateful to all of you for sharing your talents with the community.

I am very appreciative to the residents of Portsmouth for electing me to be the 66th Mayor since 1850 for the great City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. It is a privilege to stand before you this evening to address you and present and congratulate the newly elected City Council.

Assistant Mayor Jim Splaine
Councilor Stefany Shaheen
Councilor Esther Kennedy
Councilor Brad Lown
Councilor Chris Dwyer
Councilor Eric Spear who I would like to recognize for his most recent service as former Mayor
Councilor Zelita Morgan
Councilor Jack Thorsen

I would like to acknowledge Mr. John Bohenko, the City Manager who, for the past 17 years has worked with many City Council members and a very competent City staff resulting in a long list of accomplishments always with the best interest of the City and residents in mind. The City has received many accolades and awards and we have been on the cutting edge of many initiatives as a result of his experience and longevity.

Tonight is a night not for formal City business but a time to celebrate the past, present and future, the new City Council's collective leadership, the new School Board and Police and Fire Commissions, enjoy families and focus on how we will move forward in this new year.

As a result of the last Municipal Election, we all learned from many residents when knocking on doors during the campaign that the City is at a crossroads. We will be entering into an in depth dialogue to determine the balance between smart growth, development and the preservation of the historical character of the downtown and the neighborhoods while maintaining the quality of life we enjoy and how to keep all this affordable for residents.

The community has some high expectations for the new Council and it is very clear to us that they want us to communicate and collaborate. We will need to find ways to innovate, create and evaluate, and build on our resources, guided by a vision and a new Master Plan as we face making some tough decisions. We are moving forward, for without action a vision is just daydreaming.

Moving forward will take the efforts of not one person but everyone working together. I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge all those residents who volunteer to serve on City Committees, Boards and Commissions. They choose to take time out of their busy lives to be involved in City government and preserve our quality of life in Portsmouth. I urge other residents to get involved by applying to fill any vacancies on these Committees.

John F. Kennedy once said, "A nation's strength lies in the well being of its people". I believe we can apply this concept to our community. We must be aware of the needs of educating our youth through what my friend Wendell Purrington calls the 3 A's; Academics, Arts and Athletics. Our seniors need a place to gather and become involved, working families sometimes need support, and an active City Neighborhood Association is necessary. We should support the quality of our Police, Fire and Public Services who keep us all safe through their continued vigilance, and very soon, we face the task of collective bargaining with Municipal employees. As we proceed, we need to make sure that through this process we provide services to the residents that are affordable with fair wages for Municipal employees. There are other important decisions to be made as well, they include: developing an affordable budget, keeping the tax rate down, maintaining the infrastructure of the City, providing for safe neighborhoods and attracting businesses.

I would like to extend a special thank you to all the branches of the Military whose presence, past, present and future, have had a significant impact and benefit on this history of Portsmouth. Thank you all for your service!

Growing up in Lawrence, Massachusetts in a large family in a Mill City always undergoing constant change due to a changing diverse population, I learned two very important lessons. The value of a strong work ethic where hard work pays many dividends and it is always best when people work together for a common goal. Change was constant where I grew up and I believe it caused the City leadership to think before reacting.

I first came to Portsmouth when I was in the seventh grade in 1961 to stay with an uncle who lived here and worked at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. What I saw with him and his friends was a great example of a diverse workforce working together for a purpose. Many other people, (in particular, those who would be on these submarines) were depending on them to make the right decisions, work collaboratively, and act in a timely fashion. Coming back in 1968-1974 for an assignment at the then Pease Air Force Base with the New Hampshire National Guard, I noticed great changes in the City. Moving here in 1976 for a teaching job at Portsmouth High School, again I saw change. I mention this only because I have seen the character of more than one City change over time and the benefits of an involved citizenry and the importance of acting with a vision, evidence of a strong work ethic and I observed how important it is to work together, it doesn't matter whether you are in the Lawrence textile mills, the Navy Yard or in a small business downtown Portsmouth with only a few employees.

Although my parents are not here this evening, I have many family members and friends in attendance joining the many residents tonight who share the same work ethic and desire to "Do the Right Thing" for Portsmouth.

When I am asked the questions, "So what's so special about Portsmouth"? I am quick to respond...the people who live here, and I am convinced that this is a major reason why others want to visit and even live here.

Portsmouth has a proud history of hard working people and a bright future ahead! Already we are beginning preparation for the 400th Anniversary in the Year 2023.

I would like to close by thanking my wife and best friend Cindy who on more than one occasion has reminded me to "Get Real" and...to be brief with presentations. Also, my sons Joshua and Nathaniel, their wives Sarah and Mari and grandchildren Kaia and Oliver for their continued support.

Thank you again to all my family members who are here this evening and for everyone watching this celebration at home on television.

We all have a great deal to be thankful for and I look forward to serving the residents of Portsmouth.

Thank you, God Bless you all and God Bless the great City of Portsmouth and this great Country we live in.

VI. BENEDICTION BY REVEREND DAWN SHIPPEE, NORTH CHURCH

Reverend Shippee performed the Benediction.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:45 p.m., Councilor Lown moved to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Kennedy and voted.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelli L. Barnaby". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelli L. Barnaby, CMC/CNHMC
City Clerk