

**KETTERING CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 27, 2015**

The Council of the City of Kettering, Ohio, met in regular session on Tuesday, January 27, 2015, at 7:30 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Kettering Government Center South Building, 3600 Shroyer Road. Mayor Don Patterson presided and the Clerk of Council, Connie S. Gaw, recorded. This meeting was telecast live on the cable access channel.

Council Members Present: Patterson, Duke, Klepacz, Lautar, Schrimpf, Scott, and Wanamaker

Council Members Absent:

Total Members Present: Seven (7)

Mayor Patterson led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and then gave the invocation. He introduced the cable TV operators, Josh Strehle and Earl Jones and welcomed pages Emma Nichols and Taylor Schafer from Fairmont High School. He thanked them for their assistance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 7, 2015 – Council Special Workshop Minutes

January 13, 2015 – Council Meeting & Council Workshop Minutes

Mrs. Schrimpf reported that she reviewed the above minutes and moved the minutes be approved. Mr. Lautar seconded the motion and there being seven (7) yea votes, and no (0) nay votes for the January 7, 2015 Council Special Workshop Minutes and the January 13, 2015 Council Meeting and Workshop Minutes, the motion was declared carried by roll call vote.

MAYORS STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Mayor Patterson gave the 2014 State of the City Address. (See pages 9 – 14 of these minutes for text)

PROCLAMATIONS, SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS, AWARDS, SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS, APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing – Rezoning of Property located at 100 Cushing Avenue from R-2 Single Family Residential

Mayor Patterson opened the public hearing and asked that any person that intends to speak to City Council about this matter should stand and take an oath. Those that planned to speak took the oath.

Ron Hundt, City Planner gave the presentation this evening. He showed a site plan and explained the property to be rezoned is adjacent to the James Free site and currently Zoned R2. With the amended application in 2014 staff does not believe this is spot zoning. The commitment made by the applicant in this case to consolidate this lot with their main property at 3100 Far Hills will allow this property not to be used independently for commercial activity. It would have to be done in conjunction with the parent lot. If it were zoned separately without any such condition we would be introducing commercial activity on a residential street which is not something neither Planning Commission nor staff would recommend. In staffs opinion this does not present a precedent for approval of other rezoning applications. The original application that was introduced in 2013 has had many amendments since then. Staff fully recommends the rezoning be approved for the amended 2014 application. This was decided on by Planning Commission on December 1, 2014 with a 4-1 vote to approve.

Mayor Patterson then asked the applicant to come forward.

Robert Curry came forward and indicated that he was speaking on behalf of James Free Jewelers this evening. This story began back in 2008 when James Free decided to renovate its building from a mismatch of buildings to a more cohesive appearance. This was at a time when the area was not seeing significant investments being done. He showed a photograph of the redeveloped site. Other businesses began investing and what we now have is a revitalized business area. There is limited amount of parking in this area with many customers having to park on the street. Parking is critical for James Free to continue at this location. In 2013 City Staff held a neighborhood meeting for citizens in this area to express their concerns. The project was put on hold while City Staff completed a parking study of this area. This application allows for a solution to the parking problem. They are requesting that Council rezone this property from residential to business. He presented a site plan that showed the current parking area and also the additional parking proposed. The buffer areas add up to 40% of

the lot. A border will be established for an attractive transition into the neighborhood. It will increase their parking spaces from 33 to 48. This is a modest request. There is significant change to the neighborhood conditions and traffic volume in this area. All the renovations have brought additional traffic to this area. Planning Commission has found that all criteria were met for approval. They know there is always neighborhood concern when a business moves further back into the residential area. The greatest concern is that neighbors are worried about hurting property values.

Kelly Freid explained that she was part of an advisory group that did an impact study for James Free Jeweler's. This study was presented to Planning Commission on December 1, 2014. In this study she compared similar developments in other communities. The area most like this request was in Oakwood. She analyzed property values of the Oakwood site from 2008 through 2011. Single family market values did decrease, but this was because of the recession. There was no difference in decrease for areas closest to the parking lot and other homes located further into the neighborhood. She feels property values did not decrease because of the parking lot. Their conclusion was to expand the parking area by approximately 10 spaces would not negatively influence property values in the James Free area. This business is considered an urban area along a major thoroughfare.

Mayor Patterson indicated that he would like to see a copy of this report and asked that staff supply all of City Council with a copy.

Mr. Duke asked if Ms. Fried had any opportunity to study any similar areas in Kettering.

Ms. Freid replied that she wishes she could, but there were not any similar sites in Kettering. The Oakwood site was the most comparable to the James Free site.

Mr. Scott asked why this was considered an urban location and not suburban.

Ms. Fried replied that this location is deemed to be a walkable community site or "urban" area. A suburban neighborhood would be a subdivision built on the outskirts of a community.

Mr. Curry stated that the residents voiced a concern about this setting precedence for the expansion of parking lot uses in that area. Mr. Hundt already indicated that this would not. James Free is willing to record a restrictive covenant that would prohibit them from expanding its property to the east. Planning Commission did not make this part of their requirements because this restriction needs to be voluntary. This is something James Free has offered to do in this case to set a firm line to the east.

Mayor Patterson asked Mr. Curry if he was saying this restrictive covenant would not permit any further encroachment into the neighborhood from the east.

Mr. Curry said yes, by James Free. Another issue of the neighborhood was the buffering. The execution is key to the success of this project. As part of the application James Free consulted a landscape architect on how to do a really great job that would make it more than City standards for buffering. The applicant is open to working with the City to make sure this buffering is done well. There are different opinions on what is a positive landscape plan. James Free is dedicated to make it the highest quality landscaping for all four seasons. The rezoning is part one of a two-step process. If the rezoning is approved they will then go through the PUD process where the landscape plans will be addressed in more detail. James Free believes with this application they have strived for the proper balance between business interests and residential concerns.

Mr. Laudar asked about the restrictive covenant to the east. Is there a sunset on that or is it perpetual.

Mr. Curry replied that it would be a perpetual covenant.

Mr. Hundt replied that when City Staff did the parking analysis for all businesses along Far Hills, it was found that parking was inadequate for all of the businesses, not just James Free.

Mr. Duke stated that James Free always does a great job on the exterior of their building. The case tonight is that more parking spaces are needed for the viability of James Free. How often is the current lot filled that customers need to park on the street? He drives by often and rarely ever sees this lot completely full.

Mr. Curry replied that sure sales are concentrated during certain time periods but if you don't have those parking spaces available you are at a huge disadvantage. It not an everyday issue but from an issue of how it ties into sales it is critical.

Mr. Duke asked if the valet service was most widely used at Christmas time and if so where are those cars parked.

Mr. Curry replied that he does not have an answer to that but during special sales they get permission to park across the street at St. Albert's.

Mayor Patterson asked if Council were so inclined to go along with Planning Commission, was James Free married to this specific plan, and would they be open to the addition of a wall, a fence or heavier landscaping.

Mr. Curry replied they are not committed to what was presented and are willing to work with staff to get something that can be agreed upon by both parties.

Mr. Scott stated that business at James Free has really taken off. How have they dealt with the lack of parking thus far and where do the employees park.

Mr. Curry replied that most employees park on the street. Some are using the driveway on the Cushing property that has already been acquired by James Free. This is not an ideal situation. The business has increased to the point where they just need more parking. During the peak seasons the employees have to park way out into the neighborhoods and walk.

Mr. Duke stated that he can see that James Free is very successful. He asked how many employees they had when they first opened and how many do they have now.

Mr. Michael, owner of James Free Jewelers stated that they had 20 employees when they opened and they now have 32. Every time they have an open house the church has been kind enough to let them park across the street. The church has indicated they may not be able to do this in the future due to some legal issues and questions brought forth by the archdiocese in Cincinnati.

Mayor Patterson asked if there were any public comments.

David Dominic 105 Rockhill Ave. – His first concern about this project is neighborhood property values. The study done in Oakwood indicated that property values decreased from 2008 – 2011 due to a recession. That property was in Oakwood, it was a municipal lot and not an expansion of a business lot. Ms. Freid characterized the neighborhood adjacent to James Free as an urban area which is a real surprise to him. They are offering a restrictive covenant to the east, but are not saying anything about expansion to the north or south. He passed a document out to Council that he and other neighbors prepared. He asked that the public hearing remain open until the reading of this ordinance. He hopes that Council will not approve this request.

Laura Hutchens, 209 Cushing Ave. - She has lived in Kettering for the past 18 years and teaches just across the street. She is here tonight as a united group to oppose this rezoning. They have consulted with attorneys, talked with Ohio State about Urban Planning, talked with Councilmember Duke and also read through a lot of City information from the Planning Department. They are asking that Council deny this request for 3 reasons. The first is that the need for parking has not really been established with any kind of data. They have asked for data and have not received it. Staff indicated from the original 2013 staff report that additional parking was not needed at this location. The principal change was the removal of the addition to the building. The neighborhood does not see a big change between the first proposal and the amended one in terms of use for the space.

Mr. Hundt replied the two lots will be consolidated into one lot. No additional building will be built on the rezoned lot. The amended request is what is being considered here this evening. This request is not considered spot zoning because it is adjacent to James Free and will be rolled into the PUD.

Mrs. Hutchens noted they have been watching this property for over a year and at no point except for those special days have they seen the lot completely full. James Free is asking for a huge change in their neighborhood and they feel if they get this they need to have data to support the need for this parking. Point two is that any plan that increases parking in a neighborhood, they feel should be part of a more comprehensive solution. The original staff report indicated that parking issues should be addressed as a comprehensive solution for the whole area, not just a spot one. The report said if parking is truly needed a plan should be investigated to find options available to the business owners that would not require the rezoning. One such option would be the remote parking of employees at nearby commercial properties. They have already talked about employees parking on the left side of Far Hills. Oakwood has put in City lots and crosswalks to allow people on both sides of the street to enjoy the shopping there. The City of Oakwood has taken control of managing how parking takes place in that area. They feel that this might be a good solution for James Free in that area. The third reason is the neighbors have concerns that by allowing this rezoning it will take away some of the control that the City might have over future requests for that particular property. There are big concerns is that this is not James Free's end game. Again, if you look at the original documentation there is expressed desire to expand not only the parking but the physical building structure itself. This may be something they might ask for again if those 2 properties are made into one parcel.

Mr. Hundt replied for them to expand the building they would need more parking than the additional spaces they are asking for this evening and also need more distance.

Mr. Duke commented that the elephant in the room would be Mrs. Dominic's property on Rockhill. This property is to the south of the James Free site and right behind Hanson's Audio. From talking with the neighbors this is a big concern that they have. While James Free will have a covenant not to

expand to the east neighbor's don't know what will happen to the south. He thinks this is the issue that neighbors are trying to get out there.

Ms. Hutchens indicated that based on everything they have read and the history of this parking, it does not seem to be held up by any data. There has been expressed desire by James Free to expand beyond the boundaries of what they currently have. We are talking about a large commercial operation right next door to our homes.

Mr. Lautar stated that based upon the comments made about their analysis over the past year and you have watched the property and when there are empty parking spots. He wondered if James Free could identify those special days when they need additional parking and what gross sales that occur on those special days.

Ms. Hutchens replied that she can't speak on James Free's behalf but personally they really looked hard over the Christmas holiday this year because they are trying to be conscientious neighbors in this neighborhood. Parking was not an issue and those 11 spaces being requested are not enough spaces to cover just a couple of special sales days each year. This is a huge change and neighbors don't feel it is necessary.

Mayor Patterson said that earlier James Free's owner indicated that they use the property behind James Free for employee parking. On driving by the Mayor said he noticed at least 6 cars in this driveway. It was also indicated previously that employees often park across the street, so if he were a neighbor, he might also draw the conclusion that more parking is not necessary because the employees are parking elsewhere.

Ms. Hutchens replied that all they want is data from James Free about the actual parking that is needed and how this particular application will resolve this need. That is what they are looking for.

Mr. Scott asked wouldn't it be fair to say you have a lot of people parking on your street and walking to James Free or Hanson's.

Ms. Hutchens replied yes, we do have people that park on her street and walk to the shops.

Mr. Scott asked if this was an annoyance.

Ms. Hutchens replied that they met on Saturday and the conclusion that the neighbors came to was they are willing to put up with on street parking to not have the expansion into their neighborhood right next to their homes.

Mayor Patterson noted there were several people in the audience shaking their heads that they did not agree with Ms. Hutchens.

Ms. Hutchens replied that, that is fine but one last thing it that Council realize they would like this application to be denied. Take a step backward in this process and reexamine some of the core issues brought up in the paperwork that they provided to Council this evening. They are asking that Council not approve this request.

Mr. Klepacz stated that this is currently a "he said, "she said" issue. James Free is saying there is a parking problem and the neighbors are saying there is not. You say you are requesting additional data, so Mr. Hundt does City staff feel there is a parking issue in this area.

Mr. Hundt replied there is a parking problem in this general area. A lot of it has to do with the residential neighborhood in the fact that the homes have single driveways and there is a lot of on street parking. One neighbor admitted they have five vehicles in their family so a lot of those vehicles either park on the street or in some cases on business properties. The nature of the area does have an urban feel because of the narrow small lots. These homes were built for only one car and now each home has two or more automobiles, which conflicts with the commercial activity that also occurs there. The street is fairly narrow and there is parking restrictions that only allow parking on one side of the street. There is a commitment by staff to evaluate additional parking needs but we still have this rezoning to look at tonight.

Mrs. Schrimpf asked Ms. Hutchens that she indicated that she has a group of neighbors that discussed this, but on one hand you have a group of neighbors that don't like parking on the street and your group doesn't want this rezoning. Is there even a consensus between you that staff and even the applicant can come up with that you would agree on.

Ms. Hutchens replied that they are not City Planners. The neighbors did some brainstorming at their meeting on Saturday and brought up some ideas that the Planning Department had brought forward that were not feasible, due to expense, etc. So, what they are asking for is that staff takes a look at this and see what solutions we could come up with. Oakwood is an example of this being done in a

productive, positive way. So maybe we look at what they are doing over there. They are just asking for Council to stop and take a look and see what other options are available.

Mrs. Schrimpf directed to Mr. Hamer that there has been a lot of questions tonight, but that's not what we are supposed to be looking at. Is this not mudding the waters a little bit? We are supposed to be looking at the recent application.

Mr. Hamer replied that Ms. Schrimpf is correct. The amended application is before City Council and is what the focus needs to be on and what the requirements are to grant or deny this rezoning request. Quite frankly, City staff held two neighborhood meetings where the public was invited to come and give their opinion on these parking situations. That is not one but two meetings. Several ideas were discussed and put forward but unfortunately at the time those were found to not be viable. So it's not as if staff just ignored the whole situation. But, the focus should be on the current application because the applicant needs to have an answer to his request.

Mr. Dominic stated there is one critical point that did not come out. The third point they asked that Council deny this application and that rezoning would give the City little control over future developments on this property. There is strong concern that approving this single zoning request represents the first step in a process that will impact a large portion of a vibrant neighborhood. Approving the expansion of a parking lot may seem like a small change but the change in zoning means the owner can at any time in the future apply to expand the existing building so long as the plans abide by the restrictions such as height and set back in the zoning code. This would be a question of permits, not just a parking lot you would be approving. You would be neglecting your duties as Council to overlook development at the crucial boundary between neighborhoods and businesses. In 2013 the Planning Department recognized this critical point. We suggest these larger questions are the ones you were elected to consider. You are our voice and we look to you to find a balance. We strongly contend that approving this rezoning request at this time does not create this balance.

Mr. Scott asked if there are any other examples where this type of request has been made.

Mr. Hundt replied that he is not aware of any at this time.

Mr. Scott asked if planning has looked at a global solution.

Mr. Hundt replied, yes two neighborhood meetings were held, meetings where this was discussed. The input staff got was that there is a parking problem exacerbated by successful businesses. The solutions we looked at were expensive or dangerous in terms of traffic safety. They are willing to keep the door open for ideas and happy to reevaluate the situation with the neighbors. The rezoning of James Free still needs to be looked at and considered this evening.

Mayor Patterson expressed that both parties have brought up Oakwood. He feels Oakwood doesn't hold any validity for anything. Oakwood was able to do something in a concentrated business area because of an opportunity to buy residential properties and put in a general parking area to help parking issues. They have a five block area that is a concentrated business section. We have had this conversation before and don't look at Oakwood as the same type of thing. He asked Mr. Hundt to work with the neighborhood to marry the 2013 application with the amended 2014 report. There is still a lot of confusion and questions on this. It seems to be a theme that keeps coming up. He asked Mr. Dominic that as a business owner, dollars are important to him. Why do they think that a business owner would spend thousands of dollars on something they don't need?

Mr. Dominic replied there concern is what will be done with the lot when it is combined. It's not just the parking but the possibility of expansion. Nothing is to stop them from coming back in the future for more development on this property.

Christine Horch, 3032 Hillside Ave. – She does not live in this particular neighborhood but she does live in Kettering. As a citizen she is concerned on how planning is moving forward. She is in agreement with the neighbors in this neighborhood. She wonders why James Free would not put restrictions on expanding to the north and south of their property. This may alleviate some of the issues and concerns about this request.

Steve Spirk, 112 Cushing Ave. – He has lived in this neighborhood for 41 years. The original application proposed said 10 parking spots, not 11. They said they would put a covenant in the restrictions to not build any further to the east. What they are not telling you is later they could go back to court and say they signed this document under duress from the neighbors. There are five employees that park on Cushing. For special events they park at St. Albert's. The 10 or 11 parking spaces requested is not going to cover all of the parking that they will need. He would rather have customers and employees park on the street than lower their property values by building this parking lot.

Sue Hundt, 108 Rockhill Ave. – She feels this project will have a negative effect to the surrounding residential properties. Many questions have not been answered. The analysis that was done is not relevant to this area. They blew off the property value decreases as a national housing crisis due to the recession. The neighborhood is in distrust of any future development of this property. The property was bought by James Free long before the neighbors even knew what was going on. They now have an amended proposal which has changed greatly from the original proposal submitted. She feels he bought this property to expand his business, not for just a parking lot.

Mayor Patterson thanked everyone for speaking this evening. He then closed the public hearing and explained that City Council will take this matter under advisement. Any vote will take place at a future City Council meeting.

ORDINANCES IN SECOND READING

RESOLUTIONS

A RESOLUTION
NO: 9569-15
BY: MR. DUKE AND MR. KLEPACZ

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO USE COMPETITIVE BARGAINING AND NEGOTIATED QUOTES TO CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF A REPLACEMENT PHONE SYSTEM

Mr. Duke read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mr. Klepacz seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, Nay; Mr. Duke, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Scott; Yea; Mr. Lautar, Yea; Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being seven (7) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted.

A RESOLUTION
NO: 9570-15
BY: MR. KLEPACZ AND MRS. SCHRIMPF

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO FILE A GRANT APPLICATION WITH THE OHIO ARTS COUNCIL FOR GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT OF ROSEWOOD ARTS CENTRE FOR THE GRANT PERIOD JULY 1, 2015 AND JUNE 30, 2016

Mr. Klepacz read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mrs. Schrimpf seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mr. Lautar, Yea; Mr. Scott, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Duke, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, yea; Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; and Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being seven (7) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted.

A RESOLUTION
NO: 9571-15
BY: MRS. SCHRIMPF AND MR. LAUTAR

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO RENEW CONTRACTS FOR MOWING OF CITY OWNED PROPERTIES

Mrs. Schrimpf read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mr. Lautar seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, Nay; Mr. Duke, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Scott; Yea; Mr. Lautar, Yea; Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being seven (7) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted

A RESOLUTION
NO: 9572-15
BY: MR. LAUTAR AND MR. SCOTT

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS AND TO CONTRACT FOR THE BRADDOCK STREET & LAPLATA DRIVE – CURB, SIDEWALK, & DRIVE APPROACH REPAIR PROJECT (CITY PROJECT NO. 05-115A)

Mr. Lautar read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mr. Scott seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mr. Lautar, Yea; Mr. Scott, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Duke, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, yea; Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; and Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being seven (7) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted.

A RESOLUTION
NO: 9573-15
BY: MR. SCOTT AND MR. WANAMAKER

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS AND TO CONTRACT FOR THE BIGGER & RAHN TRAFFIC SIGNATL REBUILD PROJECT (CITY PROJECT NUMBER 02-122K)

Mr. Scott read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mr. Wanamaker seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, Nay; Mr. Duke, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Scott; Yea; Mr. Lautar, Yea; Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being seven (7) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted.

A RESOLUTION
NO: 9574-15
BY: MR. WANAMAKER AND MR. DUKE

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO PURCHASE THE REAL PROPERTY COMMONLY KNOWN AS 3613 WILMINGTON PIKE

Mr. Wanamaker read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mr. Duke seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mr. Lautar, Yea; Mr. Scott, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Duke, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, yea; Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; and Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being seven (7) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted.

A RESOLUTION
NO: 9575-15
BY: MR. DUKE AND MR. KLEPACZ

TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 9473-14 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ADVERTISE FOR BIDS AND TO CONTRACT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW FIRE STATIONS ON FAR HILLS AVENUE AND EAST DAVID ROAD

Mr. Duke read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mr. Klepacz seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, Nay; Mr. Duke, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Scott; Yea; Mr. Lautar, Yea; Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being seven (7) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted.

A RESOLUTION
NO: 9576-15
BY: MR. KLEPACZ AND MRS. SCHRIMPF

TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF KETTERING, STATE OF OHIO, DURING THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2015

Mr. Klepacz read the above resolution and moved for approval. Mrs. Schrimpf seconded the motion.

The following votes were recorded: Mr. Lautar, Yea; Mr. Scott, Yea; Mr. Wanamaker, Yea; Mr. Duke, Yea; Mr. Klepacz, yea; Mrs. Schrimpf, Yea; and Mayor Patterson, Yea. There being seven (7) Yea votes, and no (0) Nay votes, the motion was declared carried and the resolution duly adopted.

ORDINANCES IN FIRST READING

CERTIFICATIONS AND PETITIONS

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Bergstresser, Assistant City Manager updated Council on upcoming and community events.

- No report this evening.

OTHER BUSINESS NOT ON WRITTEN AGENDA

Communications and Reports

Audience Participation (5 Minute Limit per Speaker)

David Coleman, 328 Rockhill Ave. – He has invested a lot of time and effort into making his property look good over the past 35 years. Whatever happens with the parking issue on Cushing will soon happen on Rockhill. Mr. Hanson will more than likely try to buy and build a parking lot on the property behind him. His company is a nuisance to the neighborhood with the big box trucks that go up and down the street all the time. He just wanted to be on record with his statement.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mrs. Schrimpf asked that she be excused for the remainder of the meeting.

Mr. Duke reported:

- Congratulated the Mayor on a great State of the City Address.
- He thanked Chief O'Dell for speaking at the Optimist Club a few weeks ago.

Mr. Klepacz reported:

- He attended a ribbon cutting recently at Sumera Sushi on Far Hills Ave.
- On January 14, 2015 he attended a ground breaking for Pri-Med at Kettering Business Park.

Mr. Lautar reported:

- No report this evening.

Mr. Scott reported:

- No report this evening.

Mr. Wanamaker reported:

- No report this evening.

Mayor Patterson reported:

- On January 26, 2015 he attended the Dayton Development Coalition Annual Meeting.

They're being no further business to come before this meeting of the Kettering City Council; Mayor Patterson adjourned the City Council Meeting at 10:47 p.m.

ATTEST:

DONALD E. PATTERSON, MAYOR

Connie S. Gaw
Clerk of Council

2014 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Welcome. On behalf of your Kettering City Council, I am honored to share the 2014 State of the City. We are proud of our thriving community where we meet the needs of our residents and employers with high quality services and progressive approaches to redevelopment.

Kettering's successes this year demonstrate we are THE community of choice to live, work, and play. 2014 proved to be a year of accolades and honors for the City of Kettering.

Money Magazine recognized Kettering, Ohio one of the 2014 Best Places to Live in America. Money biennially ranks the 100 best small cities, looking at factors such as great jobs, strong economies, affordable homes, and excellent schools. Only seven Ohio cities made the top 100 and we are proud that Kettering is the only city in the Dayton region recognized on the list.

The City of Kettering Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Arts Department brought home the gold this year! The Gold Medal Award is the highest honor that is given by the National Recreation and Parks Association, and the win this year makes Kettering one of only three cities in the country to have ever won the award three or more times. Kettering is a leader in the region, and in the nation, because of our world class leisure amenities and our dedicated Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department team that works tirelessly to improve quality of life for our community.

The City of Kettering was awarded the 2014 John A. Sasso National Community Development Week Award for the outstanding efforts of the Community Development Division of our Planning and Development Department. Recipients were selected based on the quality of local partnerships, leveraging of program dollars, the sustainability of projects funded with Community Development Block Grants and the value and need for CDBG funding in the community.

Kettering, Ohio was ranked #5 out of the 10 Best Places to Live in Ohio by a nationwide economic research company. Kettering also received recognition as one of the Best Places to Raise a Family in the Dayton region. This honor is particularly special for us because the rankings were determined by an online poll open to residents throughout the region.

Kettering was named winner of three 2014 Best of Dayton awards in the categories of Best Fitness Center (Kettering Recreation Complex), Best Live Music (Frazee Pavilion), Best Place to Have a Wedding (Polen Farm).

Kettering was also one of only two Ohio communities named to the list of 100 Best Cities for Young Families. The analysis completed by a nationwide residential services company looked at safety, housing cost, school quality and child friendliness.

2014 Best Places to Live in America.

Gold Medal Award Winners.

A Top Ten Best Place to Live in Ohio.

Community Development Award Winners.

Best Place to Raise a Family.

Best of Dayton.

Best City for Young Families.

We are proud that this list of honors is synonymous with Kettering, Ohio.

Recognition for these awards goes to you, our residents, employers and stakeholders who continually support our efforts to be the Community of Choice to Live, Work and Play!

Kettering is a great place to live and a wonderful community to call home. We are the community of choice with residential properties for every family size, life stage and budget. Kettering helps to protect your property investment by providing services that ensure our neighborhoods remain strong and vibrant.

Our Property Maintenance Code Enforcement team enforces the standards established by our Property Maintenance Task Force to enhance and protect both residential and business properties. We do this because we firmly believe that high quality property maintenance directly impacts the perception of our community, which in turn impacts the value of your property. Our enforcement team responded to more than 3200 complaints, with many of these for tall grass and weeds. In cases where we could not gain voluntary compliance from the homeowner to address the overgrown vegetation, we took bold action to protect our neighborhoods. We contracted to have the grass and weeds cut and billed the expense to the homeowner. We identified 9 nuisance properties, 7 of which were demolished removing the negative impact on the neighborhood.

Just as Kettering is aggressively addressing violations of our property maintenance standards, we are enthusiastically celebrating our residents and businesses that go above and beyond to show the pride they have in their properties. Our Neighborhood Pride program is led by a group of 40 dedicated volunteers. This year more than 400 properties were nominated and the committee presented awards to 36 residences and 3 businesses that made significant improvements to their properties this year. Your property is your greatest investment and your greatest opportunity to show your Kettering pride. Curb appeal matters and we encourage residents and business owners alike to complete at least one project this year that will enhance your property. Even the smallest spruce up can make a big difference.

Our award winning Community Development Block Grant Program offers grant programs and comprehensive services to assist homeowners in Kettering. In 2014 Kettering won the US Housing and Urban Development Best Practices Award for our income based Home Renovation Program.

This year the program supported the renovation of 29 homes for eligible residents.

A partnership with the Montgomery County Land Bank provided nearly 100,000 dollars in Moving Ohio Forward grant funds to support the demolition of 13 blighted, delinquent properties in Kettering.

Our down-payment assistance program served seven first-time home buyers.

In partnership with the Homeownership Center, we assisted more than 200 Kettering homeowners at risk of losing their properties with foreclosure counseling.

Our Smoke Detector Grant Program provides an opportunity for income qualified Kettering homeowners living in targeted neighborhoods to receive funds to upgrade their fire detection systems. We are proud that we have stabilized neighborhoods by helping 99 Kettering residents pay off more than 1.8 million dollars in mortgage loans through the Ohio Housing Finance Agency Save the Dream Program.

Kettering has grown significantly over the past 60 years. We are now at a stage where the focus needs to be placed on reinvestment and redevelopment. Accordingly, our Planning and Development Department introduced A Cornerstone for Kettering, a comprehensive update to the Kettering Zoning Code. The zoning code is the primary tool the City has to shape and influence how our community develops over time. The goals of the new code are to preserve and enhance our existing neighborhoods, promote reinvestment in our community and streamline the zoning approval process for all applicants.

This year work began on Acorn Walk, a brand new development which offers a range of housing choices on a 26-acre site that was formerly part of the old DESC military facility. When complete, the development will be home to 40 new attached and detached single family homes and a new 13 acre Gentile Park named in honor of the original DESC facility – Gentile Air Force Station.

Essential to the vitality and welfare of our neighborhoods are our city services like leaf pick up and snow removal provided by our Public Safety Department. The extreme winter weather in 2014 certainly offered a challenge. Our crews protected the safety of our roadways spreading more than 5,700 tons of salt, 360 tons of sand grits, 11,350 gallons of brine and nearly 21,000 gallons of calcium chloride. Due to the demand placed on resources during the record winter of 2014, critical supplies such as salt are extremely limited in 2015. Kettering has developed a plan with alternative roadway treatments and updated salt conservation standards to ensure that we can meet the demands of this year's winter and preserve roadway safety.

Kettering is exceptionally proud of our police and fire departments.

The City of Kettering broke ground in 2014 on the first of four new fire stations. Construction on the station, located at 3484 Far Hills Avenue, is underway with anticipated completion by the end of 2015. In all, the City of Kettering will complete four new fire stations in coming years. The new stations were sought as a result of a strategic planning process which began in 2006 and resulted in a comprehensive modernization strategy for all aspects of the Kettering Fire Department. The traditional design of the new fire stations reflect our community and the modern facilities and technology will give us what we need to provide excellent emergency services to our residents and businesses.

The remaining three planned fire stations will be located at 4745 Hempstead Station Drive, on Woodman Drive near Delco Park and a yet undetermined location in West Kettering. The Kettering Fire Department operates a comprehensive all hazards mitigation response model and we look forward to the new fire stations supporting the advanced nature of our services.

For the last 30 years we have enjoyed the privilege of Chief Jim O'Dell's leadership of our Kettering Police Department. Chief O'Dell came to Kettering in 1985 after rising through the ranks from Patrol Officer to Assistant Chief with the City of Lakewood, Colorado Police Department. During Chief O'Dell's tenure, the police department's law enforcement practices, jail and communications center each received accreditation. He implemented our motorcycle and K-9 units. He was instrumental in forming the first regional SWAT team in Montgomery County and starting the nation's fourth Citizen Police Academy. Chief O'Dell recently announced his retirement effective April 1, 2015. On behalf of the City Council and all of the residents of Kettering, I thank Chief Jim O'Dell for his decades of service and outstanding leadership.

Our Kettering Police Department welcomed five new officers this year and we continue to recruit for more highly qualified law enforcement professionals. We enhanced our mission to protect public safety adding five new cruisers to our fleet, upgrading to new laptops and modems in all vehicles and adding new technology to assist in the investigation of crimes. We added a new loyal member to our KPD team – K-9 Nash. He joins K-9 Brix and K-9 Fuse who both placed in the top ten at the USPCA Regional Competition.

Known as Ohio's Finest, our police department proved they were deserving of that designation in 2014. Our jail attained re-accreditation demonstrating compliance with national standards for excellence. Officer Amy Pedro was honored as the Noon Optimist Officer of the Year. Kiwanis Officer of the Year honors went to Officer Kevin Stanford. Officer Jen Smithhart and Dispatcher Molly Davis received a Class 1 Commendation for their effort to save the life of a resident in distress. Our police department prides itself not only on ensuring the safety of our community, but on being compassionately engaged with residents. Several remarkable programs demonstrate this commitment to service.

In 2014 the Kettering Police Department introduced both a Social Media Safety class and an Active Shooter Response program free of charge for residents and organizations in the community. For more than a decade the Kettering Cops and Kids program has provided a week-long free summer camp to the youth of our community with our officers serving as counselors and positive adult role models.

The Kettering Safe Seniors Program helps identify, locate and assist our residents living with Alzheimer's, Dementia and related conditions in times of emergency. There are 125 participants enrolled and we encourage you to consider the program if you have a loved one or neighbor who could benefit.

The Kettering Mayor's Ball for Charity is a volunteer driven annual black tie, fundraising event that benefits a Kettering non-profit. The event was created by the Kettering Rotary Club and has raised more than 125,000 dollars since its inception. In 2014 the Mayor's Ball raised over 25,500 dollars for the Franklin Foundation, a non-profit that offers affordable housing opportunities for low income seniors with 4 facilities here in Kettering. We thank Reynolds and Reynolds for providing an elegant backdrop for the Ball each year and the very dedicated group of volunteers who plan the evening. In 2015 the Ball will benefit The Kettering Backpack Program. We hope you will join us on April 25th. There is something about living in Kettering that is hard to put in to words. It's the way we help more than 700 Kettering children have the Christmas they deserve through programs like the Fire Department Adopt-a-Family, Shop with Cops and the Kettering Giving Tree. It's the dedicated work of volunteers like Bill and Marynel Bradley who orchestrate the free Christmas Day at Polen Farm. It's the way local businesses Griffin & Co. and Orange Leaf Yogurt in our Town & Country shopping center led the Kettering Helping Kettering effort to support the residents impacted by a recent apartment fire. We choose to be a community that time and time again demonstrates exceptional acts of caring and service to our neighbors.

Nothing makes me more proud to be your Mayor.

YOU ARE CRUCIAL to the continued strength of our neighborhoods.

When the time comes to move your growing family into a new home or to right-size to a smaller property later in life, we ask you to stay here in Kettering. You certainly have friends and family who will be looking for a new home. Please share with them the choices available in our community and encourage them to join you here in Kettering.

Our distinct neighborhoods and bordering commercial centers provide vibrant life for our community. Our roadways and infrastructure are critical to maintaining the connection between where you live and where you shop, dine and work.

Even when it comes to transportation we are the community of choice. In recent years we have expanded our bikeway system to provide safe routes for leisure and commuting. In 2014 we completed the signing of 2 new local bikeway routes in Kettering, with more routes to come in the near future. We know you are out using our bike routes. The Kettering – Dayton connector section alone had more than 49,000 cycle trips in 2014!

Our Engineering department oversaw 6.8 million dollars in roadway improvements last year, with more than 20% of the funding for those projects or 1.5 million dollars coming from grants leveraged by our investment.

The intersection of Woodman Drive and East Dorothy Lane received a complete reconstruction and now features new pavement, curbs, sidewalks, street lighting and modern mast-arm traffic signals. The signals at Far Hills Avenue and Stroop Road are being upgraded, the streetlights in Research Park were replaced and improvements were made to Woodman Drive, Ackerman Boulevard and Rahn Road.

Projects completed as part of our residential resurfacing and curb, sidewalk and drive approach repair programs enhanced the infrastructure of many neighborhoods.

Our transportation enhancement program continued with significant upgrades to the aesthetic appeal of Shroyer and East Stroop Roads. The area surrounding Town & Country Shopping Center now boasts decorative pavers, street lights and improved sidewalks providing a quaint and yet modern street scape. This winter we installed LED snowflakes to bring a special holiday touch to our commercial downtown.

The Wilmington Pike corridor is the backbone of our community and its vitality is central to the strength of our commercial success. Since 2009 we have invested 10 million dollars in infrastructure improvements to this roadway, with the majority of funds coming from grants. The Wilmington Pike Improvement Committee, a group of business owners and community stakeholders, engaged in a strategic planning process to identify the most important challenges and promising opportunities for this essential corridor. Together with City staff they created a plan to regenerate investment and spur economic development.

You have likely noticed changes to several commercial properties along Wilmington Pike this year as a result of the Demolition and Façade & Site Improvement programs introduced as a result of the adopted Wilmington Pike plan. The purpose of the programs is to provide financial assistance to commercial and residential property owners in the Wilmington Pike Improvement Area to assist in the demolition of structures and clearance of sites for purposes of redevelopment or to complete exterior building façade or site improvements to bring buildings into conformance with the Kettering Zoning Code. It was exciting to see some vacant buildings come down in 2014 and some of our treasured small businesses along the corridor receive a face lift.

We continue to aggressively pursue private developers and commercial property owners to invest in the Wilmington Pike corridor and our efforts are paying off.

In 2014 El Rancho Grande Mexican restaurant redeveloped the site at 4319 Wilimington Pike and won a Neighborhood Pride Award for the results.

Grismer Tire recently announced that they will open their first Kettering location after refurbishing the former Burger King property at 4125 Wilmington Pike.

Hawk's Auto & Cycle transformed a vacant building on Wilmington Pike into a state of the art service center.

And late in 2014 building permits were issued for new Family Dollar store at the northern most end of the Wilmington Pike corridor.

Kettering is a great place to work and an ideal place to locate your business. We offer an environment where progressive companies thrive and succeed. We are the community of choice for commercial investment offering optimum sites and a skilled workforce whether you are a small

independently owned company or a large global corporation. We value each and every one of our businesses, regardless of size or industry, because we understand that the strength of our income tax base is critical to maintaining the wellbeing of our entire city.

Our thriving Miami Valley Research Park welcomed several new businesses this year.

The Berry Company relocated its Dayton area headquarters and more than 200 employees to Kettering this fall. Berry is a modern, advancing organization and the new 52,000 square foot open concept contemporary office space matches their innovative spirit. Too often we've seen companies of this size expand, grow and relocate outside of the area. Let the Berry Company be an example of the types of businesses we need to continue to grow and thrive.

The City of Kettering also proudly welcomed Lunarline, Inc. to their new location at 1900 Founders Drive in our Miami Valley Research Park. The Virginia based firm provides cyber security and online privacy services to the US Departments of Defense and Energy as well as to private enterprises. As Lunarline executives considered sites around the country it was clear that the Miami Valley Research Park provides the perfect campus for their high tech work. The state of the art commercial space combined with proximity to universities and an educated work force made Kettering an ideal home for Lunarline, Inc. We are extremely proud and honored that they decided to locate in Kettering.

Manufacturing is alive and well in Kettering. In 2014 we welcomed Signature Tooling, Inc. and their 30 employees to Kettering. The company, founded in 1999, moved in to a newly renovated space at 3155 Plainfield Road. The new 18,000 square foot facility will allow Signature Tooling, Inc. to add precision and inspection machines and expand their specialty rapid turnaround work. Aviation Ground Equipment is pursuing a 30,000 square foot addition to their building at 2510 Lance Drive that will allow them to expand their assembly of ground support equipment for aircraft used primarily by the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force.

A significant new retail development, Charlotte's Gardens on Far Hills Avenue, completed a 10,000 square foot expansion in 2014 and is now home to Firehouse Subs, Sumera Sushi, Great Clips and AT&T Wireless.

Kettering welcomed Dunkin Donuts to a new location near the intersection of Wilmington Pike and Stroop Road.

Oberer Construction Managers purchased a 2.6 acre site at Kettering Business Park. Construction is underway on a new 7,200 square foot building that will be home to a new PriMed Physicians location. In addition to welcoming new businesses, several of our existing loyal businesses chose to expand and stay here in Kettering. Waker Plumbing added 4000 square feet; 5/3 Bank built a state of the art customer focused branch at the former L'Auberge site; and the Carlyle House on Far Hills Avenue received zoning approval for a new building addition to be completed in 2015.

2014 marked the 50th Anniversary of the Charles F. Kettering Memorial Hospital. Not only is Kettering Health Network our largest employer, but their ongoing commitment to the Kettering community is pervasive. They are an anchor and a vital partner. We were proud to join with them to celebrate their 50 years of exceptional healthcare and exceptional leadership by hosting the Rock-N-Boom celebration this summer at Delco Park. The event featured Blood, Sweat & Tears, Neil Sedaka and the best fireworks display Kettering has ever seen. It was truly a celebration fitting the Kettering Memorial Hospital and the entire Kettering community.

Our businesses are the lifeblood of our city. You have a choice each time you shop, go out to eat, use a service technician or craftsman for your home, and even when you buy gas for your car. We ask that in this coming year you make an effort to choose a store, a restaurant, a provider, a gas station here in Kettering. By doing so you are contributing to the wellbeing of our community and to the livelihood of your neighbors.

The employees of our Kettering businesses are not the only ones hard at work. Every day our nearly 1,000 city volunteers are dutifully giving of their time and talents to better our community.

Kettering is proud of the volunteer spirit that thrives here. In 2014 we celebrated the 35th anniversary of our volunteer program, one of the oldest local government volunteer programs in the nation.

Last year alone more than 1,000 volunteers contributed 38,891 hours of service valued at nearly 843,000 dollars.

Over the past 35 years our volunteers have saved the city more than 19 million dollars.

Our volunteers welcome guests at Frazee Pavilion, protect resources like the mulch and compost piles, facilitate our Neighborhood Pride awards, host Christmas at Polen Farm and so much more. In fact every department in the city has volunteer positions and with a watchful eye on the budget many departments are expanding roles or developing new positions for volunteers. We are truly blessed in our community to have so many volunteers give countless hours of service every year.

Our Cities of Service program is a local implementation of a national initiative to coordinate volunteers and community partners to address areas of greatest local need. The City of Kettering is one of only 32 cities across the nation that has completed a high-impact service plan. Cities of Service works with a different Kettering neighborhood each year and includes monthly education sessions, an organized neighborhood garage sale and a wrap-up block party all driven by city staff, neighbors and volunteers. In 2014 we enjoyed the conclusion of our time with the Indianola neighborhood and celebrated the beginning of a new partnership in the northern portion of the Southern Hills neighborhood.

Kettering is a great place to learn and is also the community of choice when it comes to schools.

We are proud of the strong relationship between the City of Kettering and the Kettering Board of Education. In 2014, Kettering's Beavertown Elementary was named a national School of Promise, a distinction given to schools who produce consistently strong standardized test results despite socio-economic and cultural hurdles.

Few communities enjoy the strong working relationship and collaborative programs between the city and schools that we have here in Kettering. The Kettering Preschool Promise Program is a great example. The goal of the Kettering Preschool Promise is to improve kindergarten readiness by offering eligible Kettering families free or subsidized preschool. Our program is the first pilot phase of a larger vision for a Montgomery County wide. Preschool Promise is made possible through a partnership between the Kettering City School District, The City of Kettering, Montgomery County, the City of Moraine and the Ready Set Soar / Learn to Earn Dayton initiative.

Kettering is the community of choice for recreation and a great place to play. Our Gold Medal winning Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department demonstrated why they are known as one of the strongest agencies in the nation in 2014.

Fraze Pavilion was ranked number 52 on Pollstar Magazine's top 100 worldwide amphitheaters for ticket sales. For the first time in the history of the venue, Fraze sold more than 100,000 tickets. Shows by Il Divo, Santana, Darius Rucker, Ringo Starr, and Alan Jackson and more led to the generation of more than 3 million dollars in revenue for the fourth straight season.

2014 was a year of exciting new partnerships at Fraze with the introduction of Gospelfest in partnership with Kettering Health Network, Throwback Thursdays sponsored by the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission and the Star Spangled Celebration – A collaboration with the Dayton Development Coalition, Wright Patterson Air Force Base and the Dayton Air Show that honored military service members and featured comedian Jeff Foxworthy.

By the numbers, you were busy this year enjoying our Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts programs and facilities! 54,000 visited our Adventure Reef outdoor water park. 2,000 patrons enrolled in our swimming programs. 17,000 patrons visited our Ice Arena. 1000 enrolled in instructional ice skating programs. 49,000 participated in group exercise programs. 3,350 youth enrolled in our youth sports programs. Rosewood Arts Centre offered more than 400 fine arts instruction programs in addition to special events such as our gallery exhibitions, Art on the Playground, two Kettering Children's Theatre productions, Art on the Commons, and the Rosewood Holiday Open House.

In an effort to better serve all of those who utilize our recreation facilities, our Kettering Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department introduced a new monthly payment option for our facility passes. This allows pass holders to break up the annual fee in to 12 affordable monthly payments. Our two affordable public fitness centers continue to be used extensively by our community. The Kettering Fitness and Wellness Center at Trent Arena underwent a renovation in 2014 that included new flooring and updated cardiovascular equipment. Our fitness centers boasted more than 230,000 patron visits in 2014.

Kettering is focused on health and wellness for all ages and several new programs gave youth and families the opportunity to get active. The Movin & Groovin program introduced various fitness activities and personal wellness concepts to more than 2500 youth in our summer day camps. The first ever Kettering Amazing Race gave families the opportunity to race around Indian Riffle Park completing 10 physically demanding challenges in a competition for prizes. A Children's Healthy Lifestyle Class focused on nutrition and lifestyle counseling was offered in partnership with Dayton Children's Hospital.

Our commitment to health also extends to our parks. Kettering residents and visitors can now enjoy a tobacco free environment in most of the park areas and facilities in the City of Kettering. Young Lungs at Play signs clearly identify areas around playgrounds, benches and athletic field bleachers. Park users are asked to voluntarily support this policy so that children can play in a healthy environment. Additionally, Keep the Air We Share Clean signs ask visitors to not smoke near the entrances to our recreation facilities.

Kettering remains committed to providing services for older adults who have loyally supported our community for decades. Our Kettering Senior Transportation Program provided more than 4300 affordable rides for medical appointments and errands critical to maintaining independence. Nearly 3000 tax returns were filed for seniors by volunteers.

The full spectrum of services provided by our Charles I. Lathrem Senior Center and our dedicated Senior Services Coordinator contribute to the mission of keeping Kettering seniors living a healthy, independent life in their homes. Help us accomplish this mission. If there is an older adult in your neighborhood, stop by every once in a while to see if they need help raking leaves, mowing the lawn or shoveling snow. Show them appreciation for supporting Kettering over the years and building the foundation of the strong and vital community we enjoy today.

The ability to provide quality of life opportunities like senior services, beautiful parks, public art, recreation facilities and great outdoor music is such a big part of who we are as a community. People locate here, stay here, and return here because of the range of world class amenities and services that make us unique – we are the community of choice.

Continuing this quality of life is our goal.

The City of Kettering is committed to outstanding stewardship of our resources. In 2014, we received the distinguished budget presentation award from the Government Finance Officers Association for the 30th consecutive year and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 32nd consecutive year. Fiscal responsibility and exceptional customer service will remain the priority of City Council and the entire City Administration. You can rely on this commitment despite the funding challenges that lie ahead.

State budget cuts have resulted in the loss of nearly 1 million dollars in income to our City. The new National Healthcare reform law has dramatically impacted our entire workforce. The elimination of the Estate Tax will cost the City approximately 3 million dollars per year and eliminate the once dedicated funding for our roadways, buildings and other infrastructure through our Capital Improvement

Program. The recently approved Ohio House Bill 5 will further reduce our revenue by at least 500,000 dollars per year.

We will confront and overcome these challenges as we always have – with a commitment to the highest level of services and the support and encouragement of the people of this great City.

Despite these challenges, I can assure you that 2015 will be another outstanding year for Kettering. We are thrilled to support the vision of Town & Country to complete a comprehensive modernization and welcome a new national anchor tenant. This revitalization will certainly spark further commercial investment and residential property value increases in the surrounding areas.

We will see the completion and construction of four modern fire stations that will reflect the image of our community and enhance our level of services.

We will continue our investment in critical roadway infrastructure with projects on West David Road, Far Hills Avenue, County Line Road, and Shroyer Road, as well as continued investment in our neighborhood street infrastructure.

We will enter in to a new contract for the provision of residential refuse and recycling services that will offer significant cost savings and a variety of service levels for our residents.

Construction is currently underway at Lincoln Park / Civic Commons and Frazee Pavilion. The upgrades to the park fountains and new spotlight tower will enhance the patron experience as Frazee opens for another season of the Summer's Best Music.

If city services, capital improvements and public safety are the body of this City then senior services, volunteerism, parks, recreation and cultural arts are the soul. But it is you – each of you who choose to live, work, and play here – that are the heart of Kettering.

May you and your families be healthy and prosperous in the New Year and on behalf of City Council and staff, thank you for choosing Kettering and allowing us to serve you. God bless!