

THE STATE OF THE CITY OF WILDWOOD
Mayor James R. Bowlin
April 24, 2017

OUR CHARTER REQUIRES THE MAYOR TO PROVIDE A REPORT ON THE STATE OF OUR CITY'S AFFAIRS EACH YEAR.

OUR CITY IS STRONG. OUR FINANCIAL STANDING IS SOUND, AND THERE ARE NO IMMEDIATE EXTERNAL THREATS TO ITS WELL-BEING. THANKS TO CAPT. TANNER AND HIS TEAM, OUR CRIME RATES WERE LOWER ACROSS THE BOARD THIS PAST YEAR. WE HAVE A STRONG AND DEDICATED COUNCIL, WITH TWO NEW MEMBERS JOINING US LATER TONIGHT, AND AN OUTSTANDING GROUP OF CITY TEAM MEMBERS.

OVER THE PAST YEAR, WE HAVE ACHIEVED MUCH. WE HAVE:

- HELD FIRM ON THREE ACRE MINIMUMS AS TO SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS PROPOSING SMALLER LOTS;
- IMPLEMENTED REQUIRED STRUCTURE TO OUR COUNCIL MEETINGS THAT LEVELED THE PLAYING FIELD THROUGH FOSTERING EQUAL PARTICIPATION BY ALL, AND WHICH UPHOLDS FAIRNESS IN OUR DECISION MAKING;
- BEGAN ANNUAL ETHICS AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST TRAINING FOR ALL ELECTED AND APPOINTED CITY OFFICIALS;
- APPROVED OF A PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT AND ZONING REVIEW COMMITTEE TO BETTER GUIDE OUR PLANNING DEPARTMENT AND DEVELOPERS FROM THE OUTSET, AND TO PROMOTE RESIDENT RELATONSHIPS;

- CREATED A NEW STANDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, WHICH IS CONSIDERING WAYS TO ENHANCE WILDWOOD'S ECONOMIC STANDING, CONSISTENT WITH THE MANY WILDWOOD VALUES WE HAVE ALL COME TO EMBRACE;
- OBTAINED AGREEMENT FROM THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY TO SUPPORT OUR APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL FUNDING TO CONDUCT GEOPHYSICAL SURVEYING OF THE CALLAHAN SUBSITE, SHOULD IT BE DELISTED;
- MOVED FORWARD WITH A NEW LOBBYING FIRM THAT HAS OUTSTANDING CREDENTIALS AND SPECIALIZES IN LOBBYING FOR MISSOURI CITIES; AND
- FINALLY, THE RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF \$1.5 MILLION IN HARD-TO-GET STATE FUNDING FOR BADLY NEEDED REPAIRS TO HIGHWAY 100 SHOWS JUST HOW FAR WE'VE COME IN SECURING AND GROWING KEY RELATIONSHIPS.

NONE OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS WERE BROUGHT ABOUT BY A SINGLE PERSON. RATHER, IT IS THROUGH OUR COLLECTIVE EFFORT FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS, CITIZENS, CITY TEAM MEMBERS AND ADVISORS THAT WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL.

WE CAN CONTINUE TO IMPROVE OUR ACCESSIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY TO THE PUBLIC. THE MONTHLY COFFEES WITH THE MAYOR, SPECIAL MEETINGS HELD FOR RESIDENT INPUT ON KEY ISSUES, TOWN HALLS AND SUBDIVISION MEETINGS – AND HOPEFULLY, THE LIVE STREAMING OF OUR COUNCIL MEETINGS – WILL SERVE AS A FOUNDATION GOING FORWARD TO OBTAIN AS MUCH INPUT AS POSSIBLE FROM WHAT I REFER TO AS OUR 35,517 BOSSES.

THREATS TO OUR CITY CAN COME BOTH EXTERNALLY, AND FROM WITHIN.

1. WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT THE VIEWS OF EACH CITIZEN CARRY EXACTLY THE SAME WEIGHT – NO MORE AND NO LESS; AND
2. WE SHOULD NOT FORGET THE GREAT AND MANY THINGS WE HAVE LEARNED, AND WILL CONTINUE TO LEARN, FROM OUR PAST, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME, ALWAYS BEING MINDFUL THAT WE REALLY HAVE ONLY ONE CHOICE AS TO HOW WE GOVERN – AND THAT IS FORWARD LOOKING, WITH A VIEW TO THE COMMON GOOD OF THE WHOLE OF OUR CITY.

WHILE WE ARE BLESSED WITH MANY AMONG US WHO HAVE OUTSTANDING POINTS AND ARGUMENTS FOR A VARIETY OF POSITIONS, LET US NEVER FORGET THAT, WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM HISTORY, IS THOSE POINTS WITH THE MOST VALIDITY USUALLY HAVE A WAY OF COMING TO FRUITION BASED ON THE STRENGTH OF THE POINT ITSELF, VERSUS THE STRENGTH OF ANYTHING ELSE. WE SHOULD PARTICULARLY RECOGNIZE THIS PRINCIPLE AS TO THOSE WHO CONSISTENTLY PURSUE A “MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY” APPROACH ON EVERY ISSUE, THEREBY BECOMING IRRETRIEVABLY LINKED TO THE POLITICS OF DIVISION.

WE ARE NOT EAST OF 109 OR WEST OF 109, TOWN CENTER OR RURAL, ARRIVED 30 YEARS AGO OR YESTERDAY, COMMITTED TO PARKS OR LOOKING TO ADD SOME GOOD BUSINESS. WE ARE ALL OF THE ABOVE – ONE WILDWOOD FAMILY.

THE FUTURE WE HAVE BEFORE US IS INVITING, BUT IT DEMANDS NOTHING LESS THAN HONORING THE OBLIGATION WE ACCEPTED FROM THE VOTERS OF WILDWOOD – ALL THE VOTERS – TO GOVERN FOR EACH ONE OF THEM EQUALLY, AND TO STRIVE EVERY DAY WITH EACH THING WE DO, TO DO IT IN A WAY THAT IS FOR OUR COLLECTIVE GOOD – NOT SELF – AND TO DO IT IN A WAY THAT IS CONSISTENT WITH

THE FINE REPUTATION OF OUR BEAUTIFUL CITY AND EACH AND EVERY ONE OF ITS
RESIDENTS.