

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

JANUARY 2, 2014

MAYOR WILLIAM J. AIELLO

Welcome to Father Edward Sheedy, my wife Patty, my family and friends, Boy Scouts Troop 621, members of the media, members of the Common Council, our Department Heads, and City Employees. Most of all, welcome to you in the audience here in the Council Chambers and those of you who are watching at home.

We also have a few honored guests, Senator Cathy Young, Representatives from Congressman Tom Reed's Office, Former Mayor Bill Quinlan and several of our Cattaraugus County Legislators are here as well.

First of all I want to tell you how honored I am to be here tonight as Mayor of the City of Olean, N.Y.

I look forward to serving- **and I emphasize the word "serve"** – as your Mayor over the course of the next four years.

I spent 32 years as an Olean Police Officer. I'm sure I have a lot to learn in this new position but in my years as an Olean Police Officer and as a Cattaraugus County Legislator, I've also learned a lot about serving the public.

I have no agenda, **political or otherwise**, except to make our city function at its best for everyone. I'm open to suggestions and I'd like to hear from the people. If we're doing something you think is right, I'd like to know. If we're doing something you think is wrong, I'd like to know. If you have suggestions for me, I beg you pass them along.

Olean has come a long way over the past several years. But we still have to keep pushing to move forward.

We have a lot of issues to address in 2014.

- 2014 Budget - The goal will be to keep our proposed tax rate flat or to repeat the past years decrease.
- Jobs - stopping the job loss and attracting new business and industry to this community
- \$18 million dollar project at the Sewage Treatment Plant to bring us in compliance with NYSDEC
- Union Contracts for the CSEA and Fire Dept.
- Infrastructure need throughout the City
- Leaks at the Water Filtration Plant
- Walkable Olean – North Union St project
- Economic Development
- Housing issues
- Continuing with Bradner Stadium Renovation
- Manufacturers Hanover Building
- Cattaraugus County Olean Airport – T-Hanger construction

I'd like to give a few highlights from each City Department:

**AUDITOR - Fred Saradin**

- We realized a property tax decrease of 2.03% - the lowest in 35 years
- Annual audit for the year ending 5/31/12 included no significant compliance finding
- All three major funds (General, Water, and Sewer) have fund balances that satisfy the NYS Comptroller's Office suggestions.
- For the first seven months of the 2013-2014 fiscal year, expenditures & revenues are within the adopted budget.
- It appears pension costs with decrease slightly in 2014,
- In general, the City is in good shape, financially.

## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS - Tom Windus**

- Day to day activities include plowing and salting all of the City streets.
- City owned sidewalks, and City parking lots
- Maintenance and operation (M&O) of our water and wastewater systems
- M&O of the City's fleet
- M&O of our facilities
- M&O of the City's airport.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT - Chief Terry Schnell**

- Has been working with Superintendent Colleen Taggerty and members of Olean City School District to improve school security.
- Established daily neighborhood walks in all the schools.
- Been working with other County agencies to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of our Disaster Preparedness Response.
- Have received over \$31,000.00 in forfeiture monies to continue our fight on the drug infestation in our City.
- The Dispatch Center has received a facelift and upgraded equipment.
- New camera/security assess system has been installed throughout the City Building and Police Department.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT - Chief Robert Bell**

- New Ambulance was received in December replacing an 11 year old ambulance
- Replaced an outdated 1979 emergency generator for Central Fire Station
- Our 24 year old Ladder truck has been refurbished at a reasonable cost.
- Communication equipment is being updated through grants
- New Airpacks, defibrillators, Advanced Life Support Training equipment and New Firefighter bail out systems have been implemented inside firefighters gear. These are systems built into the personal turnout gear which allows the firefighters to bail out of upper floors of buildings safely when needed.
- Codes Enforcement has issued a total of 192 building permits which generated \$19,949.50 in 2013
- Code Enforcement has handled 1066 complaints which include junk/debris, garbage, infestation problems, snow and grass complaints.
- Plumbing Inspector has been active in bringing apartment housing issues into compliance and updating plumber testing requirements for apprentices or Journeyman.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - Mary George**

- **Brownfield Opportunity Area Program** – With funding and support from the NYS Department of State we are working with local businesses, residents and community leaders to develop and implement revitalization strategies for vacant and underutilized properties in the Brownfield Opportunity Area.
- **Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan** – We have initiated discussions with several leaders and residents of area communities that have waterfront access (or border communities that do) to develop a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. The communities involved share similar challenges related to water uses, i.e., passive and active types of recreation, commercial and recreation uses, difficult access to the waterfront (dike restrictions), etc. With a Plan in place each community will be eligible to apply for funding opportunities for various projects under the Department of State's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.
- **Tiger Grant** – Walkable Olean – complete streets transformation project.

**ASSESSOR - Nancy Champlin**

- We have maintained 100% equalization rate since the revaluation was done in 2009
- We have seen an uptick in sales this year after 2-3 years of low sale activity
- Our Office has been extremely busy with calls from confused property owners over the decision to require reregistration for Basic Star Recipients.

**CITY CLERK - Alexander Utecht**

- We continue to see increase usage by our citizens with the convenience of paying water/sewer bill online or by bank draft from their checking or savings account.
- There was an increase in online usage for the September – November 2013 quarter of 45% from 152 payments to 220 payments when compared to September- November 2012.
- There was a 10% increase in those using the bank draft method of payment from around 300 in 2012 to 331 in 2013.
- We are making things more convenient for our citizens

**YOUTH AND RECREATION - John Anastasia**

- The Youth and Recreation Department continues to be a very viable and productive component of the City providing cost –effective and quality recreational opportunities enhances youth development and quality of lifestyle in our community, in a positive manner.
- Over the past year we enjoyed great success at the William O. Smith Recreation Center.
- Programing is currently very solid at the recreation center and physically the facility is in good condition.
- Our youth summer recreation programs continue to attract many children.
- The goal is for children to get the opportunity to exercise, have fun and enjoy themselves in a friendly, welcome environment.
- The St Johns Facility is entering our 19<sup>th</sup> season. Hundreds and hundreds of children have participated, benefitted and enjoyed this program since its inception in 1995.
- Youth Court is a wonderful component to the department. This is an excellent mentoring program for teenagers.
- Our Senior Citizens program continues to reach many older adults through offering a variety of activities. As with the youth programs, it is essential to offer our elderly population opportunities to spend their leisure time in a welcome environment.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Mayor David Carucci and Mayor Linda Witte – both of them were instrumental in getting the City back on it financial feet and they leave me a City in good, sound financial shape, well situated to move onward and upward. There's still a lot to do, but I sincerely appreciate what my predecessors have done. Thanks to both of you.

Also, many thanks to Senator Cathy Young and Assemblyman Joe Giglio, standing guard over Olean's interests in Albany, and to Congressman Tom Reed who has pledged his strong support in Washington.

I also wish to maintain and strengthen the rapport that the City has established with Empire State Development Corps head Sam Hoyt and U.S. Senators Gillibrand and Schumer and to thank them for their past efforts in our City's behalf.

Before I close, I'd like to offer a special heartfelt thanks to all of the people who, like me, call Olean home. All the people who've kept faith with the City, stayed the course, rolled with the punches, fought the good fight.....the people who are

here day in and day out, winter, spring, summer and fall, the people who, with billions of the world's square miles to choose from, chose these 6.2 square miles in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, to call home.

I understand that this is much too small a place to be divisive – we're all in this together. This is much too small a place to be dismissive of anyone.

There's something my grandfather always would say to our family and I'll pass it along to this, the Olean family, He used to say, "Just remember, all of us is all we've got."

Thank you everyone and God Bless America.