

Good Evening Sherwood!!

Let me start by recognizing my colleagues, your city council - councilors, will please stand for a moment and be recognized.

I appreciate all of the hard work and dedication of these fine citizen volunteers and it has been my privilege to work with them this past year. Thank you to staff and council for a great year and to your commitment to the year ahead.

I would like to take a moment to recognize all of the elected officials from throughout the region who are with us. Please stand and let's give them a round of applause.

It is my great honor, and privilege, to serve as your mayor and I thank you for the opportunity to **Shout out Sherwood** wherever I go.

So now, let me give you the State of the City.

I think that the enthusiasm of the intro song is perfect for my talk today, because today I am going to give you a recap of a year that was both invigorating and successful.

It was a year where we set great goals for ourselves and achieved results far in excess of what we ever imagined was possible, and I am dedicated to continuing that positive movement forward.

So let's talk about last year -

One of the phrases that you have heard me use is -

**"We are going to get stuff done"**. And get stuff done we did...

What I meant when I said this was that we aren't just going to talk endlessly on about topics, we are going to set goals and to see tangible results from our efforts. Here are a few of the major results from this past year that I am especially proud of as your Mayor.

After nearly a decade from first being envisioned, we opened the Sherwood Center for the Arts last February. This wonderful new addition to Old Town Sherwood has been well-received by the community with many different types of uses in its first year – from performing arts performances to private events such as weddings and charity dinners, to a growing list of arts classes for children and adults.

In March, we upgraded our children's play structure in Stella Olsen Park. I have heard from many parents over the past year that they love the new structure and most importantly, the kids in Sherwood have embraced the upgraded play structure that boasts year round covered play areas for protection from rain and sun alike (even though it is clad in Denver Broncos Blue and Orange colors).

This past fall, we opened our long awaited first dog park in Snyder Park. This is another long-term goal for the City that was first advocated for by former Mayor Bill Middleton. As expected, the park was an instant success with record breaking attendance at the grand opening event! Unfortunately with the record December rains and heavy usage (I know - rain in Oregon- who knew?), the turf at the park got destroyed and a temporary closure is happening. But we will replant the grass this spring and once the turf is reestablished, we will reopen the park. Fear not, I feel great confidence that in the State of Oregon we will be able to grow some grass.

Two of the projects I advocated for last year were our first city sponsored community garden and a bottle recycle program in all of our parks and city buildings. I am pleased to say that we were able to obtain outside funding through a Metro Community Enhancement Grant to pay for both of these great projects. The first phase of the garden project will be completed this spring on an underutilized city property between the Fire Station and Public Works facility. The project is winding its way through the land use approval process with the Planning Commission (yes, city projects are subject to the

same procedures as private development projects). Once approved, the irrigation system improvements will go in and then we will be coordinating a number of community work days where our wonderful volunteers can help build the various raised beds in the garden. I want to support projects that build community and promote the health and welfare of our citizens, and this project fits the bill. Intergenerational interaction through gardening and exposure to healthy produce makes our citizens healthier and our community stronger.

- I understand that the Sherwood TVFR has already requested two plots to grow produce for their firefighter meals and to share with the Helping Hands food bank.

On the recycling front, we have ordered and received the first recycling bins that will soon be installed at Snyder Park with future bins to arrive soon at high traffic areas such as Hopkins baseball/softball complex, Stella Olson and the Field House.

Also this summer in Old Town, a new public parking lot will be constructed by the Urban Renewal Agency adjacent to City Hall. The new paved lot will feature 18 additional parking spaces for the various businesses within our Old Town district. This project is another example of forward thinking and planning.

This year, Councilor Sally Robinson advocated for the removal of the large concrete monuments in downtown. With council support, three intersections in Old Town will be reconstructed along Main Street with the removal of the large concrete monuments at each intersection. These monuments have been controversial since they were originally built in 2005 with many drivers and pedestrians concerned about safety at the intersections. So we are going to finally improve these intersections this year!

Last year we applied for, and received, a WA County Visitors Association grant for \$38,000 for bike safety stations and bike racks and we are currently in the running for a

Metro Nature in the Neighborhood grant for \$58,000 for signage along the Cedar Creek Trail. We are looking at outside funding source opportunities to bring great amenities to the City of Sherwood without increasing the tax burden to our citizens.

In the year to come, I will be advocating to do an energy study in our buildings and parks. I was introduced to this concept at the League of Oregon Cities Conference this year and would like to see Sherwood take advantage of the opportunities to provide efficient, cost effective LED lighting in city parks and city buildings. Many other Oregon cities are utilizing companies that provide this service with positive outcomes.

The last project that I want to highlight for the coming year is another long-awaited improvement that had been on the shelf, which is Phase Two improvements to Woodhaven Park. This popular park will be enhanced with additional off-street parking, permanent restroom facilities, and a basketball court. And don't worry, the popular sand pit with Tonka trucks will remain as a prominent feature at the neighborhood park.

Another consistent phrase that I stated in my first year as your Mayor was that **"We are going to talk about stuff"**

As a City Council, we are not going to shy away from talking through difficult topics or issues. "Government as Usual" is really not my style.

I asked my son once, "Do you know what happens to problems if you ignore them?" He responded hopefully "They go away?" "No" I explained "They grow".

Here in Sherwood, we are going to talk about difficult issues and work together to identify solutions to those problems.

We are going to continue to look at different ways to provide government services at a reduced cost and/or increased efficiency.

As a very smart political science professor once told me -

Politics is the management of social conflict, not the resolution of it

So we managed social conflict, and we managed it well.

For example, the Council has been grappling with the various issues related to marijuana regulation in response to Measure 91 being approved in Oregon in 2014. Earlier in the year, we developed new regulations related to where medical marijuana dispensaries can be located in the city. In the upcoming November election, Sherwood citizens will get to vote on whether to ban recreational marijuana businesses within our city limits. If the citizens choose to ban the sale of recreational marijuana in the city, Sherwood will lose all state shared funding that could have been used for increased police patrol and substance abuse education and we will have to provide any additional services that are needed with additional taxation to our citizens. Whether we choose to ban the sale of recreational marijuana in our city or not, it is legal in the state of Oregon and we will need to have a plan as to how we will deal with it moving forward. The choice is yours, our citizens, to make. So be sure to vote this November and let your voice be heard.

Another topic of much discussion and debate this past year was chickens....Boy, oh boy, did we talk about chickens. A big thank you to Council President Jennifer Harris for bringing this long ignored issue forward. We had a healthy debate about the formation of an ordinance to allow residents to raise chickens and reviewed how many of our neighboring cities dealt with this issue. In the end, there was not council support for adding a chicken ordinance in Sherwood, but we had a healthy discussion surrounding this important issue.

Then we talked about water....With our first water rate increase in three years, the topic

of our high water rates and the impacts on residents and businesses generated a great deal of discussion this past summer and fall. I discovered an inconvenient truth - when we converted from well water to the Willamette water source, we failed to update our billing system and follow best practices by billing ourselves (city buildings, parks and facilities) and the school district for their use of water. We have notified our affected partners and beginning in the new fiscal year in July, all parties will be paying for their use of water, which will dramatically decrease the previously projected water rate increase to our residents in the future. The projected rate increase before was 4 and 5 percent each year until 2025. Just tonight in a work session with Council, we listened to a presentation of new projections that would be closer to 2.5% over the upcoming four years. This is certainly a step in the right direction. As long as I am fortunate enough to serve as your Mayor, I will continue to push for ways to reduce the need for significant increases in our water rates.

Next month, the results of our Police Staffing Study will be released. This outside independent review of our staffing levels in relation to our low crime rates will certainly contain recommendations that will generate further debate and discussion that may prove to be a challenging conversation. I want to reiterate that we will need to be creative and think outside the box when it comes to implementing any recommendations contained in the study. We will be considering all options available to us, including contracting all or part of our police services with Washington County, in order to provide the best services at the lowest cost. Many of our neighbors, such as Wilsonville and Happy Valley have chosen to contract with their county for police service, retaining their city police identity, but expanding officer advancement opportunities and providing the same great service at a lower cost. This is only one of many options available to us, and we will not be afraid to weigh all options before making a decision. That does not equate to "attacking a department", that is

considering all of our options and making a great decision for our citizens.

Another important discussion that will occur this year is planning for the end of the 20 year agreement with the YMCA to operate the Sherwood Recreational Center that is approaching in 2018. Just this past weekend at our City Council retreat, the Council identified the need to complete a feasibility study to determine the viability of the City assuming responsibility of operating our recreational facility in 2019. This is a critical question that needs to be answered before we move forward in any direction regarding the current model. All of council agreed that we want to provide the very best recreational facility to our residents, and the best way to do that is to know ALL of our options in operation of the facility.

And finally, we are going to talk about the future growth and development of our community. This important discussion will be triggered by our need to update the city's Comprehensive Plan. Our current plan was approved in 1991 and had a planning time horizon that ended in 2005! Last time I checked, we are now in 2016 and our community deserves an up-to-date Comprehensive Plan to utilize in responding to growth and development pressures in our community.

One of the best aspects of serving as your Mayor this past year has been the opportunity to **"Shout out Sherwood"**

This is pretty easy to do with all of the positive aspects of this great city. It certainly seems like each week, our city is ranked in various top 10 lists statewide or nationally. Whether it is "the smartest city", "the safest city", or "the happiest city", Sherwood is becoming well-known as a great place to live, work and play. And while this recognition is wonderful in so many ways, it is clear that we have been discovered and many community members are concerned about losing our small-town character.

As your mayor, I continue to remain actively involved with County, Regional, State and National leaders. Sherwood needs to remain at the table in order to position ourselves for outside funding and bring innovative ideas from around the state and nation to improve our city.

One of the more unique and fun ways that we shouted out Sherwood this past year was by our first-ever participation in the Grand Floral Parade in the Rose Festival. Our float, which featured our new Arts Center as its theme, even won first-place in the mini-float category of the parade. Thousands of spectators along the parade route as well as television viewers throughout the West Coast saw a strong Sherwood presence in the parade with our float, the fabulous marching band from Sherwood High School, and the award-winning acappella group The Mixoloydians.

Another important theme that I have stressed this year is the need to **“Open the doors to City Hall”**

I made a pledge to stop the repeated reappointment process of our board and commissioners and open up the opportunity for all of our citizens to serve. In just this past year alone, we have appointed 23 new citizens to our various advisory boards and commissions. These newcomers have brought fresh perspectives and new ideas to their respective positions and I will continue to seek new people to participate in our local government. In 2016, I will be seeking Council support to create two additional new opportunities for citizens to get involved at City Hall. The first new committee will be a Utility Review Board. This citizen committee will assist the Council and Staff in the various public utilities that we operate, including the water, sanitary and storm water utilities and Sherwood Broadband. The second committee that I am calling to be created is a Youth Advisory Board. I am consistently impressed by the talent and skills of our youth in the Sherwood community and creation of this board will enable the City

Council and Staff to better engage with this important segment of our population. These citizens are our future.

And finally, our first ever Citizens Academy will start in April. I want to thank Councilor Jennifer Kuiper for advocating for and spearheading this effort to create a series of classes for Sherwood citizens to enroll within and learn about the various operations of their city government. I am confident that this academy will be successful in many ways and hope to see it offered again in the future.

Before I conclude, I need to thank all of the people who make it possible for me to do this job. Thank you to all of the neighbors, friends, team parents, church family and family members who help me every day navigate carpools and meeting schedules so that I can serve as your mayor. I couldn't do this without you.

I want to give a special thank you to my two children, Alaina and Declan - who I do this with and for. Together we have planted trees at the One Tree for All program, cleaned up garbage at the Trashpolooza and Adopt a Road project and dusted shelves at the Sherwood Library. We have learned that - serving together is growing together - as a family and as a community. Thank you guys for your support and service.

I would like to conclude with one of my favorite quotes from an unknown author

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will NEVER forget the way you made them feel.”

It is my hope that here, in the City of Sherwood, you feel welcome, valued, appreciated and encouraged. I can't thank you enough for this opportunity to serve as your Mayor. I look forward to the year ahead, and will soon be filing to run in the next election to continue my service as your Mayor. There is so much more work to be done, and it would be my honor to continue, with your support, to

## **Move Sherwood Positively Forward**

Please join me in the lobby for a short reception - we are adjourned for a 15 minute break.