

Community Update with Mayor Nickels

11-01-2009

“Budget Listening Sessions Re-Scheduled”

I hope everyone had a fun and safe Halloween weekend; it looks like November once again came too quick for all of us.



I have just a few announcements for this week.

First, my listening sessions for the proposed 2010 Executive Budget have been re-scheduled to this Wednesday the 4th. The first session will start at 10:30, and the second one will be at 6:30. Both will be held at City Hall in the Council Chambers. Anyone from the public is invited to attend.

Please take an opportunity to visit Manitowoc.org and view my PowerPoint presentation for greater detail regarding the Executive Budget. The Finance Committee will meet tonight before the City Council meeting to discuss the budget for the first time. That meeting is open to the public and I encourage you to attend, or call your Alderman if you wish to comment on the budget.

The Herald Times Reporter had a great editorial in Sunday's paper titled "Holding the Line". The article points out the difficulties our local communities and school boards are facing while preparing budgets in this difficult economy. While all the entities did their best to maintain the tax rate, I am proud that the City of Manitowoc is the one entity that did not raise taxes at all, especially while maintaining the services we provide without any layoffs, and paying off more debt than we incur. I look forward to the continued discussions of the City budget before the Council votes on it in the near future.

Also, the City Council may be acting on overriding my veto of Ordinance 2009-581 which deals with residency requirements for Department Heads.

This ordinance does not achieve any of the goals desired; it does not guarantee that the Department Heads will spend money in the City, it does not guarantee that they will buy property or pay property taxes, it does not guarantee that they will be active in the community, and, it does not instill loyalty or commitment. Currently, Department Heads that live outside the City are involved in this community on a regular basis; they bank here, they get second mortgages here, they buy clothes, gifts, and groceries here, they donate time through organizations like Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and they donate their money in this community with charitable contributions on a yearly basis without actually living here.

The City Council always has the final decision on who they hire. If, for example, they have two finalists to choose from – one who lives in the City, and one who doesn't – they can decide to hire the one from the City if they so choose. This ordinance only deters people from applying, and it narrows the field of candidates to choose from, which is why I disagree with the Council's action.