

Community Update with Mayor Nickels

11-29-2009

“Manitowoc Continues to be Creative and Aggressive”



I hope everyone had a safe and Happy Thanksgiving this past week. The 21st annual Holiday Parade was a huge success, and a special thanks to Mike Andrastik, Jeremy Crees, and their team of volunteers for organizing the event this year.

Mainly Manitowoc, the Manitowoc City Center Association, and Bank First National are sponsoring Santa Claus over the next few Saturdays. You and your family can visit and have your picture taken with Santa at Santa's Downtown Depot, 912 S. 8th Street each Saturday afternoon from 1:00 till 3:00 until Christmas. Or, visit Santa at the following businesses Downtown: December 5th from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at Warrens Restaurant, or 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at Nutty Guys. December 12th from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Wisconsin Maritime Museum. Or, December 19th from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon at Talk to the Paw.

This upcoming Sunday, everyone is invited to attend the “Flicker of Hope” presented by Lakeshore Interfaith Hospitality Network. Luminary displays will take place between 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 6th. You are invited to attend the official lighting ceremony to take place outside the Capitol Civic Centre in downtown Manitowoc that evening. Refreshments and caroling will take place at the pre-lighting party in the Kadow Room. Tickets for this fundraising event are \$10.00 and available by calling the LIHN Office Center at (920) 686-1436. The Lakeshore Interfaith Hospitality Network is a local non-profit organization that provides shelter and case management to families with children who are at risk of losing their homes. They also provide outreach services to families whom the Manitowoc Public School District has identified as homeless. Stop down this Sunday if you have the opportunity.

Last Monday the City Council approved their version of the 2010 budget. I am very proud of the Council for keeping the 0% tax increase I had submitted in my Executive Budget. Also, for paying off more debt than we incur, and not laying off employees. I am concerned, however, about some of the cuts the City Council made during their deliberations. The budget I presented them was exactly what they asked for, yet they still felt the need to cut some more. An example is the Lincoln Park Pathways. It is my goal to start investing in our park system, because several areas desperately need the investment. The pathways were one of the first items to be cut to backfill an area the Council felt was more necessary. Year after year we allow our parks to decline because they are always on the back burner – unless of course it is an Aquatic Center. If we continue cutting the parks budget year after year and put all our focus on the Aquatic Center, than we will be in a position where we will be paying large amounts of money to rebuild our parks, rather than repair them on an annual basis.

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We need to have a vision for our future, we need to continue being creative and aggressive – which is why we have such a detailed comprehensive plan. Many of the decisions we are making are decisions for today, rather than for tomorrow. Continued cutbacks will only take us backwards – after we have worked so hard to move forward.



Overall this budget adheres to the goals we set in place. The citizens will not pay for the increased costs of government, and we will begin paying down our debt. This should not, however, come at a cost to our future generations and their success in our community. We must leave our children better off than we were.