

Message from the Mayor

Let's talk about rundown property versus condemned property and the area where you live. For most of us there is nothing more irritating than living next door to someone who does not maintain their house and the property surrounding it. I will say that fortunately, my neighbors are all very conscious of their property and I have to work hard to keep my place looking up to their standard. But I am also aware that in some areas the opposite is true. As most of you know, we have been razing some condemned properties around the city over the past few months. These were houses that have been on the condemned list, some for many years. Now, I have several people who want us to come tear down houses next to theirs that for lack of better words, looks like it needs torn down. Well, the problem is, they are not condemned, just rundown. These properties belong to people who intend to fix them back to make them livable for sale or rent. I know, you are saying that house has been like that forever. I feel your pain. We are constantly in the process of communicating with these property owners to see what kind of schedule they are on as to the repair of these houses. Most are sincere and have a plan to start (remember, that property is not turning over any money when it is empty), and over a period of time, they will get it looking better. Sometimes, we have to remind some people that they need to get busy and they go back to work. In a very few cases, we have extreme difficulty getting individuals committed. Can you imagine that? But that is our job and we address it daily. Just a few thoughts: We can't just tear a house down because it is in disrepair and I wish everybody would take responsibility to maintain your home to the best of your financial ability and keep junk out of your yard. Don't think that I don't realize money may be a problem, but it doesn't take any money to keep the trash picked up out of your yard. And by the way, renting a property means you are responsible for the outside as well as the inside.

I talked to a most delightful lady on the phone last week who asked me for some help. Did you know that we have a group of Senior Citizens that meet on the 4th Wednesday of every month at the Freed House? They have an add-a-dish lunch, play Dominoes and Rook, and just have some great conversation. What a pleasant way to spend a day. She asked me to invite any Senior Citizen would like to participate with them to feel free to stop by. Why don't you check it out and see how many of one of our cities greatest assets can get together for a meal and fellowship.

We had a fantastic meeting last Tuesday night with our Citizens for Action group. People from all areas of town (and some from out of town) attended. We discussed water drainage, mission work in the city for those who needed some help, things our police department does on a day to day basis, the Drug Task Force, suggestions on how to stop the purchasing of products to manufacture meth and Neighborhood Watch. Investigator Mark Reynolds from the Dyersburg Police Dept. came to talk with us about their Neighborhood Watch program and said he would help us if we wanted to start one. My thanks goes to all who attended. These are people who want to find solutions to our problems, not just complain about them. I also want to thank Chief Sanders and Marilyn Vaughn for their participation and their expertise. The next meeting is April 15 at 6:30p.m. at City Hall.

Do you take your garbage cans to the curb or do the sanitation workers come up to your house to get them? Some of our citizens have calculated how much time and money we could save by bringing our cans to the street. I'm not asking those who are elderly or handicapped to do this. One of the great rewards of having our own city garbage pick-up is that we still can offer that service. But, if you are able bodied and can get your can to the street, it would sure help the city out. I hate to tell you this, but there will come a time when operating our own trash pick-up will not be feasible any more and we will be at the mercy of whoever gets our garbage bid. We will still have street trucks and commercial dumpster pick-up but at some point in the future our weekly trash pick-up will change. We will hold out as long as we can.

One of the great things we do for our young people in Trenton is offer after school tutoring at the middle school. When Weed and Seed came to an end last year, we lost the funding for this program and thanks to the great folks at Trenton Housing Authority; they secured enough grant money to save the program. It is called the Lee Mac After School Program and my guess is that any extra help they could get would be appreciated. Maybe you could write a check, maybe buy some notebook paper or pencils. I know several young people who would be appreciative. They did not ask me to solicit help but I think this is a very worthwhile program. Charlotte Doaks runs that program and does a tremendous job along with her staff.

Along the same line, the Trenton Baseball League has been seeking donations to build an automated batting cage at Shady Acres Park. This will benefit all of Trenton's youth. The city poured a slab for the cage in 2004 and they have been trying to finish it. They have raised all but \$3100 towards the project. Anthony Slayton is coordinating this for the league and any amount of help you could give would certainly be appreciated.

This brings up my last point. I read the paper everyday and so many times I hear about ideas that people have to try to make things better. Whether it's ways to fight crime, make our schools better, take back our neighborhoods, or protect ourselves and our families, there are a myriad of suggestions some good and some not so good. But the one common thread that runs through all of it is the fact many people do not want to sacrifice anything to make things

better. They want it better but do not want their lives to change. I am not the brightest flashlight in the toolbox, but I am of the opinion that if you don't change, things will remain the same. We are going to be inconvenienced if we want less crime, better neighborhoods, and a better way of life. I have always heard you are either part of the problem or part of the solution. Where do you fall?

What's on your mind? Email me at trentonmayor@bellsouth.net and we will discuss it. What can you do to make Trenton better? We all have gifts. How can you put yours to work? I am encouraged everyday when I see what the people of Trenton are doing for each other. Have a great week and God Bless Trenton.