

Message from the Mayor #13

Alright, let's talk about the negative things first. The headline of The Gazette on Wednesday, February 20th was "Audit Reveals Problems" and I could understand that it probably grabbed some people's attention. It would have grabbed mine if I would have read it for the first time. Now let me tell you the story. The first thing that Jim Horne, who represented Alexander, Thompson and Arnold, the accounting firm that ran the audit, said was and I quote, "The City of Trenton is in sound financial shape". What he said is exactly true; the city is in sound financial shape.

The audit, which covered July 1st, 2006 to June 31st, 2007, had 4 findings. Two of these findings dealt with bookkeeping errors, one dealt with credit card invoices paid without receipts (these were meals), and the other dealt with segregation of duties in the bookkeeping department.

As far as the bookkeeping findings, we are providing our bookkeeping department with more training, which by the way, we have been doing since I took office in October, one month before they even started the audit. Also we have been professionally double checking the books at the end of each month to make sure they are balanced and reconciled. Our books are perfectly balanced and reconciled and closed out as of the last day of January, 2008.

We are always going to have a segregation of duties finding because in order to comply we would have to hire another bookkeeper. Our budget will not allow that and our bookkeeping department can now handle it.

The city is now working on a no receipt, no payment policy. This should bring a halt to the last finding. One last thing. We had four findings and if memory serves me correctly, the County audit showed ten findings.

While we are on negative things, let me talk about the Trenton Teapots and China. I want you to know that the Council and I never had any intentions of sending any teapots to China. In the council meeting it was discussed that if we decided to reproduce the teapots, pictures would be sent. Somehow, it got turned around. The Council voted several years ago never to let the teapots leave the city. I totally agree. As you might know by now, the Council voted unanimously not to reproduce the teapots. Many of you were very opposed to the idea and I am extremely appreciative for your input. We continue to do what the majority demands.

One thing I hear a lot from the youth of Trenton is how we have no movie theater, bowling alley or skating rink in the city. I sympathize with them and wish we did (hint, hint to all perspective investors). I was in Dyersburg recently and participated in a forum that included 10 students from Dyersburg and Dyer County High Schools. During the discussion, they all complained that all they had in Dyersburg was a movie theater, bowling alley and a skating rink. My guess is if I went to Jackson and Memphis, the youth there would probably be just as dissatisfied with their environment. While I wish we could have all the opportunities of the bigger cities, we must learn to utilize all the opportunities we do have through our schools, churches and civic groups. There are a lot of great programs in our city. Parents, if you haven't already, get your children involved in one.

The new website is 98% up and it is great! If you will, visit the site and see what you think. The website is www.trentontn.net. The great thing about the site is that the police website and the teapot website are right there together.

Speaking of the website, if you have a business and would like us to list you on the site or link you to our site, email me the name of your business, the address, telephone number, email address, and website address and we will put it on for you. Let's make this a true Trenton website. Suggestions would also be appreciated.

Someone wanted me to mention about smoking in businesses. It seems that some people are very conscious of smoke when they enter a business. I think this went along with my piece about making businesses attractive to customers. Smoking is a touchy issue these days and most people come down on one side of the fence or the other. I'm just passing along a request from a concerned citizen.

Now something very, very positive that is going to happen in June. The 1st Baptist Church is going on their mission trip to none other than Trenton.