

## Message from the Mayor #48 - July 24, 2009

One of the beauties of being mayor is having a City Council to decide what is best for the City of Trenton. They do a great job and in my experience in dealing with them, every decision they make is done after much thought and diligently listening to their constituents. Also, one of the beauties of having a mayor and City Council is that we always will not agree on every issue. That is what makes government work. None of us are the smartest people in the world but, on the other hand, we all care deeply about Trenton and the people who live here. That point we will never disagree on. So, as I write my article this week, please keep in mind that what comes after is my opinion. The City Council of Trenton is the deciding power when it comes to the ordinances that we will abide by and as mayor, I will adhere to their decisions and enforce whatever policies they think are to the benefit of our citizens. That being said and with all due respect, this is how I feel.

I oppose guns in city parks. I also oppose guns in daycare centers, school classrooms, zoos, school athletic events, or anywhere children are present. The key element here is children. I am opposed to someone exposing other people's children to something that is capable of taking their life. Too many things can go wrong, even if you are a responsible handgun permit holder, and the possibility of a child getting their hands on a deadly weapon is too great.

I have a valid Tennessee handgun carry permit and I own a handgun as well as other legal weapons. I am all for the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment right to possess firearms as long as they are legal. No one needs an AK47 or a rocket launcher to protect their home and property. I just don't think we should carry guns around other people's children. It is the equivalent, in my opinion, to subjecting someone to second hand cigarette smoke.

The argument centers around the fact that certified permit holders are all responsible gun handlers. Yes, it is true that I passed a TBI and FBI background check in order to get my permit and I paid the state to issue the permit, but the actual course I took to learn about all the aspects of firearm safety, maintenance and discharge took about six hours of my life to complete. Don't get me wrong, my instructor was a very efficient, qualified person who took his job seriously and did everything by the book. I passed the written test with a score of 100% with absolutely no help from the instructor and out of 50 rounds I shot at the target, I missed once. But am I an expert when it comes to firearms. Don't be ridiculous. I am as capable of making a mistake with a weapon as any other human being on this planet.

Here's something else that scares me. It has to do with the philosophy of a few permit holders. I received an email from a lady who didn't want us to ban handguns because she said that handgun permit carriers were, and I quote, "basically unpaid police". This statement came from a legally permitted handgun owner. Yikes!!! The last thing we need in Trenton parks are vigilante citizens determining what is or is not legal.

I guess the last argument is that there are guns in the park already and only the criminals have them. Well, you're right, but in the history of our city park, there has never been a gun incident reported. If the logic of the proponents of guns in parks rings true, there will be no more arguing over a controversial umpire call because everybody will be afraid someone will pull out a gun and shoot them. Only time will tell how all this will play out and in the meantime, I pray we never hear the words gun and park used in a sentence together ever again.

I have some good news to tell you about. We have received \$500,000 in recovery monies to do rehab on our sewer lines. As of right now, we will be putting in new sewer line on Lexington Street between 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. This makes a total of \$756, 899 we have received in grants in the last month. Say a little prayer because we have approximately \$1,000,000 in additional grants we will be hearing about in the next few months.

I hate gossip, don't you? Did you know the Bible says it's a sin to tell untruths about other people? I'm certainly not the definitive expert on the subject, but I feel God frowns on gossip. I have been guilty in my lifetime and I'll have to atone for it at a later date but in the second half of my life I have tried to only relate information that is backed

by the truth. Gossip (unsubstantiated information) not only hurts the primary people being gossiped about but their families. Try something: if you are prone to spread information that you have no idea is true or not, think about who it is going to hurt. See, I also think God is disappointed when we purposely hurt other people. You know, there is enough sad truth in the world now without adding gossip that is not true. These are just a couple of thoughts I have had recently upon hearing some lies told about people I know.

I want to extend a Trenton welcome to Pastor Dwayne Moore, his wife and their three children. Pastor Moore will be filling the pulpit at the Martin Tabernacle Church and from what the people at the church have told me, he is already doing God's work. I personally want to wish Godspeed and good luck to Pastor Moore.

The Gibson County Community Band cranks up again on August 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at Trenton Rosenwald Middle School. We have a blast just playing our instruments and enjoying the company of others who love music. If you have ever been in a band before whether it was in 2009, 1989, 1969, or 1949, we would love to have you come and join us. It costs \$25.00 a semester and I guarantee you will have fun. Call me if you need info.

All of you have heard the saying "the squeaky wheel gets the grease" and for the most part it is true. Did you know we allow citizens to address the City Council on any topic they choose for up to 3 minutes at every City Council meeting? What's on your mind? We meet at 5:30 p.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month. If you want to know what we discussed in a meeting, you can find all our minutes on the website. See you at the next meeting.

I have a bad habit of being very passionate about issues and causes I believe in. It's a bad habit I think I'll keep. I am passionate about doing as much shopping in Trenton as we can. I am passionate about maintaining residential and commercial property in the city. To be honest, I feel like those who won't abide by the ordinances to keep their properties up to standard are working against the city. They don't care if we cannot attract industry, retail opportunity, tourism or new residents. For the most part, they point their fingers at others and take no personal responsibility. Thank God these people are the minority. Better days are coming to Trenton. Too many people are at work for that to fail. Help us get there. We try hard and you know Trenton isn't perfect but we're working on it.