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OUR STATE OF EMERGENCY CONTINUES

Yes, we are beginning to open up, slowly and carefully, as dictated by the State. But Utica remains under our state of emergency, and I caution everyone to remain on guard against this terrible disease.

YOU CAN READ MORE ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE

Tune in tomorrow to the Common Council meeting on YouTube, where the meeting will be livestreamed. (The Council has moved forward with meeting in person, but per State orders we cannot yet allow the public to attend.) There are two separate meetings scheduled for Wednesday:

6pm: Pre-conference meeting of the Whole

7pm: Common Council Meeting.

JUST FOLLOW THIS LINK TO LIVESTREAM THESE MEETINGS FROM YOUTUBE

MY VOTES ON THE COUNCIL

June 3, 2020

I voted AYE to sell a URA property at 611 Spring Street for \$250. I voted AYE to make the Common Council the "Lead Agency" for a State Environmental Quality Review Act review on a parcel of City owned property to be developed into a parking lot that will serve the Bagg's Square neighborhood. I voted AYE to a number of transfers of funds within the budget that had been approved by The Board of Estimate and Apportionment. I voted AYE to appoint Joseph Marino as a marriage officer in the City of Utica. (It sounds like Joe has some fun summer activities planned...) I voted AYE to pass an amendment to modernize and improve the City's Electrical Ordinance. I moved and voted AYE to place in Committee my own legislation to enact a Neighborhood Notification and Meeting clause to the City Codes. (See more on this below.)

UPCOMING LEGISLATION (See more about these below)

I have three pieces of legislation currently before the Common Council:

- 1) Neighborhood Notification and Meeting Clause - this will require that residents who live near proposed large developments are informed in advance of those developments by way of a neighborhood meeting. The results of such a meeting will have to be included in any application for development in the City.
- 2) Police Transparency and Accountability Act of 2020 - this will require that certain personnel records of police officers be made readily available to the public through the City's website.
- 3) Amendment to the Common Council's Rules of Order - this will put in place a clear rule requiring that all proposed legislation be submitted to the Council at least five business days (excluding Sundays) before Regular Meetings.

IF YOU SUPPORT ANY OF THESE PIECES OF LEGISLATION, PLEASE LET THE COUNCIL KNOW. EMAIL ME. YOU CAN ALSO EMAIL THE CLERK, WHO WILL FORWARD YOUR EMAIL TO THE ENTIRE COUNCIL BY 2PM ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17TH: CITYCLERK@CITYOFUTICA.COM - MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTIFICATION AND MEETING CLAUSE

After the Kelberman development controversy, it became clear to many people throughout Utica that people were not being adequately informed about large developments in their neighborhoods. And since development is an ongoing fact of life (and that is a good thing...), then this is important to everyone throughout the City. So, this Ordinance is meant to ensure that people are made aware of large developments in their neighborhoods that affect the quality of their lives. It doesn't mean that we will always get what we want, since in a democracy different people want different things. But it does mean that we will get to participate in our government.

POLICE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2020

On June 12, Governor Cuomo signed into law the repeal of New York State Civil Rights Law Section 50-a. This was a shield law that prevented citizens from seeing the personnel records of police officers. Citizen can now use FOIL laws to see those records. Since I have always been committed to transparency in government, I crafted this law to go one step further and make these records available on the City website. I believe that residents of Utica should be able to easily and readily see certain records of the officers who have taken an oath to serve and protect us.

THE "THURSDAY" RULE

Those who regularly attend the Common Council meetings are probably familiar with

what is generally called the "Thursday Rule". This has been the rule that legislation submitted to the Council must be done so on the Thursday prior to the meeting. In January, the new Council adopted its Rules of Order. Among other changes, the Thursday Rule was relaxed, and a number of Departments were exempted from it. In recent meetings, important and complicated legislation has been submitted to the Council at a very late date. (In one case, some changes to an important contract came to us only an hour before the meeting began.) I made it clear at these meetings that I very much objected to this. In order to be a responsible legislator, I must insist that the Council be given several days to read through, study, and vet all legislation, especially when it is complicated. So I am now putting forward an amendment to our Rules of Order that would reinvoke the "Thursday Rule", whereby all legislation, no matter who submits it to the Council, must be received 5 business days (except Sunday), before our Regular Meetings. As long as our Regular Meetings continue on Wednesdays, this will mean that legislation must be received by Thursday, hence the nickname for the rule.

CONSTITUENT HOURS

Things are easing up, and we are freer to get together. I am looking forward to resuming my Constituent Hours as soon as I can work out the details. Stay tuned.

THE NEW STREETS LIGHTS ARE IN PROGRESS!

Because of Covid-19 and the restrictions that it created, the City was forced to delay the installation of our fancy, new, modern LED streetlights. But they are finally being installed. This is a great program developed by the Mayor and his team, and I really applaud them for it. We are going to have great new lights, and we will also be saving \$1.5 million dollars a year at the same time. As I write this, I am not sure where in the City they are being installed, but if you see the work being done, drop me a photo!

MAKE SURE TO BE COUNTED!

The Census is very important - it is the way we can make sure that our state and our region gets what it deserves, both in terms of representation and resources.

To fill out the Census online, just go here. It couldn't be much easier!

I WILL BE IN TOUCH AGAIN AS SOON AS I HAVE ANYTHING TO REPORT.

MEANWHILE, REMEMBER THAT AS A COMMUNITY, AS A CITY, AND AS A COUNTRY, WE HAVE WHAT WE NEED TO MAKE IT THROUGH THIS. BE KIND TO YOURSELF AND OTHERS. BE SAFE, AND REACH OUT ANYTIME.

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