



STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

MAYOR SAM TERESI

JANUARY 26, 2015

“Impressive Results... But the Best is Yet to Come”

Mr. President, Members of the City Council, Department Heads, Guests and my Fellow Jamestowners.

In accordance with Article IV, Chapter 31-C of the Jamestown City Charter, it is once again my pleasure to present to you the annual State of the City Address.

As has been customary during past years, I'd like to begin this evening with an overview of some of the efforts and impressive results that made 2014 yet another year of positive progress for our City and the entire Greater Jamestown region.

The items that I am about to highlight represent but a mere sampling of the accomplishments that were made possible through the collective efforts of the members of this legislative body, our outstanding Department Heads and managers, the best municipal workforce that one could ever imagine and a broader community of volunteers, business operators, property owners and non-profit organization leaders who truly care about and sacrifice on a daily basis to make this place all that it is capable of being.

As has also been our practice, a full account of the 2014 Annual Report, together with the complete transcript of this address may be found and viewed on the City's website...

(www.jamestownny.net).

- During 2014, as a team we continued the ongoing effort to make the operations of City Government more cost efficient.

For your review, a summary of 71 City Government Restructuring efforts that have been put in place since 1/1/2000, which are saving city taxpayers \$5,432,200 on a recurring, annual basis, is included in the attached packet.

- Also during 2014, efforts were launched with the State’s Financial Restructuring Board to identify and pursue additional opportunities to build upon the internal restructuring and inter municipal consolidation/collaboration initiatives implemented during recent years.
- In conjunction with the City’s Health Care Plan Third Party Administrator, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of WNY, we launched a new wellness initiative (“The Good Life Plan”) for both, employees and retirees enrolled in the City’s self-insurance program. This innovative and historic change in the way health care benefits are delivered is already showing progress toward streamlining the delivery of services and containing costs. Thus far, employees and retirees associated with the with the non-bargaining groups, the Kendall Club, Local 1772 and both units of the Jamestown City Administrative Association (JCAA) have accepted this voluntary, incentive based initiative. To date, the participation rate is in the 90% range.
- In November, a Task Force on Efficiency and Cost Reduction was established. Amongst the goals and objectives of this body, which is comprised of members from the City Council, Board of Public Utilities and various City Appointed Officers and staff members, are the following:
 - A) Identify methods to streamline and lower the cost of services provided through **BOTH** the General Fund and the City’s five (5) enterprise fund utility operations;
 - B) Find ways to further share services between the General Fund Operations and our five (5) utility enterprise funds;
 - C) In accordance with Article 9, Section 1(f) of the State Constitution, Section 94 of the State’s General Municipal Law and various sections of the City Charter, evaluate the potential and pursue options to develop a fixed methodology for utility profit distribution to the General Fund... if and when it is determined that such profit allocations are necessary and reasonable in the future.

The Joint Task Force which is being led by City Council Finance Committee Chairman, Tony Dolce, is scheduled to complete it’s work and report back it’s findings by April 1 of this year.

Once again, thank you Chairman Dolce for your willingness to take on this necessary task and I look forward with great anticipation to receiving the report of this body.

- During 2014 we continued our efforts to retool the Information and Technology (IT) Department and completed a variety of initiatives that have already improved performance and security, enhanced efficiency and reduced overall costs.
- Utilizing a \$400,000 grant from the State’s Local Government Efficiency Program, an implementation strategy was developed to merge the employment operations of the City’s

Police Department with the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office. With the assistance of the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) from Rochester, New York, the joint City/County Project Task Force has finalized a draft Inter Municipal Agreement (IMA) that will be presented in the near future, to City-County leaders for the next phase of discussion, negotiation and possible approval.

- Our financial team completed the refinancing of \$6 million in County IDA issued public parking facility construction bonds, which resulted in a savings of \$1,931,396 through 2030, or an average annual savings of \$113,612.
- The City's outstanding Fire Department responded to 4,573 calls for services (up from 3,887 in 2013) which included 139 structure fires (106 in 2013), 3,312 EMS calls (2,862 in 2013) and 267 ambulance transports (147 in 2013).
- The Fire Department also responded to 20 arson fires during the past year, (13 in 2013, 25 in 2012, 22 in 2011, 34 in 2009 and 37 in 2008). Fire and Police Department officials point to a more aggressive and collaborative inter-departmental investigation effort (resulting in arrests and prosecutions in a number of high profile cases) as the primary reason for this general downward trend in recent years.
- During 2014, with resources from Federal Grant funding, we
 - Replaced the City's 21 year old Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Station.
 - Acquired a new \$120,000 ambulance to replace an unreliable 20 year old unit.
 - And placed into service a new state of the art \$401,865, Class 1 Pumper Truck, allowing the Fire Department to decommission an antiquated 33 year old unit.
- During 2014, our hardworking and highly effective Police Department responded to 31,663 calls for service which included 4,531 vehicle and traffic matters, 1,336 domestic dispute calls, 1,464 animal complaints, 970 warrant checks, and 1,115 larceny complaints. During 2014, 3,094 total arrests, including 78 juvenile arrests, were made by JPD Officers.
- On the Drug Enforcement Front, our officers, in conjunction with Federal, State, County and other local agencies, executed a record 76 search warrants in the City, seized 5,110 bags of heroin, and over \$86,000 in cash. Additionally, Operation Horseback concluded with the indictments and arrests of 47 individuals involved with the trafficking of heroin in and around the City of Jamestown.
- On the other side of the Drug Problem equation, the City, primarily through efforts within the Police, Fire, Corporation Counsel, Development and Youth Services Departments, assisted and worked with a variety of other public, private and nonprofit partners in the Greater Jamestown Region on a myriad of drug prevention, counseling and treatment

initiatives. A list of the 27 partners that city staff assisted during the past year may be found on pages 3 and 4 of the attached 2014 Accomplishments Report.

- On the labor relations front, we established Collective Bargaining Agreements with the two Jamestown City Administrative Association (JCAA) units for the period covering 1/1/12 – 12/31/16. The agreements contained an average salary adjustment of 1.1%, increased employee contributions for health care benefits, and instituted a new, voluntary, incentive based Wellness Program for both active employees and retirees. Contract negotiations are continuing with the remaining two (2) Collective Bargaining Units (AFSCME, CSEA), that are paid out of the General Operating Fund. Both have been working with expired agreements since 12/31/11.
- During the past year, our DPW and Parks staff once again completed a record level of downtown and neighborhood street, sidewalk and storm water drainage improvement projects. In addition to nearly 90 resurfacing, nova chip and storm sewer improvement activities, comprehensive reconstruction efforts were completed along Camp St., Lakeview Ave., West Fifth St., Anderson St., Benedict Ave., Outlet Ave. and the Greater Jamestown Riverwalk.
- 2014 saw progress by our DPW and BPU teams on a variety of other public facility investments including the following.
 - Completion of Phase I of the Tracy Plaza Revitalization Project at a cost of \$1.2 million and the installation of \$200,000 worth of energy efficient, reflective glass windows at the Municipal Building.
 - Completion of a \$2 million conversion of Boiler #10 at the Carlson Generating Station from coal to natural gas to support future reliability needs.
 - We initiated the conversion of Boiler #9 at the Carlson Generating Station from coal to natural gas to support future production and reliability needs. The “new” Boiler #9 will also maintain a fuel oil component for further back up and reliability purposes.
 - New storage facilities were developed at the Steele Street campus of the Board of Public Utilities. This project also included various fencing and other security enhancements as well as landscaping improvements designed in conjunction with the Greater Jamestown Riverwalk.
 - Construction activity was largely completed on the \$3 million Chadakoin Electric Substation project, which will replace two older, less efficient and reliable units located on Second and Washington Streets and on Jones-Gifford Avenue near the McCrea Point Boatlanding. The sites of the decommissioned units will be repurposed for the expansion of the Greater Jamestown Riverwalk System at McCrea

Park and the development of the National Comedy Center Project in Downtown Jamestown.

- On the housing and neighborhood front, the Department of Development built and launched a new technology platform for Code Enforcement and Building Inspection records via a cloud based product called “MyGov”. The system is now operational for all new cases and complaints, and will be fully integrated when legacy information is installed into the new system, scheduled for Spring 2015. When fully operational, the public will have a web portal available to report housing code violations and the ability to receive updates and follow cases through the entire process.
- During 2014, the Department of Development Team also:
 - Initiated over 1,125 new Housing Code Enforcement cases and resolved most without City Court intervention.
 - Implemented the “48 Hour Rule”, in which every citizen code compliance complaint is logged, acknowledged, responded to and a resolution to the matter...with or without court action...is launched in no more than two (2) business days.
 - Reestablished and launched the highly effective Residential Quadrant Housing Sweep Program in the south west corner of the City.
 - Expanded the targeted Mini Sweep Housing Inspection Program into various neighborhoods.
 - Worked with the Jamestown City Court to establish a second weekly Housing Court session. This initiative has already made a positive impact on reducing the back log on the court calendar and expediting the resolution of many long standing housing violation matters.
 - The City also worked collaboratively with the Chautauqua County Land Bank Corporation to secure \$1.5 million in funding from the NYS Office of Attorney General. The grant will be used to address vacant and abandoned housing and to eliminate slums and blight in neighborhoods throughout the County. During 2014, the City of Jamestown executed a contract with the Land Bank to receive a third of this funding and target it for demolition of abandoned structures within the City.
 - During 2014 the City worked closely with the JRC on their very successful Neighborhood Cluster Rehabilitation Program and on the continued implementation of our “award winning” Downtown Urban Design Plan.

- On the Parks and Recreation front, we:
 - Completed design work, secured permits and initiated construction on Phase V (McCrea Point to Clifton Avenue) and Phase VI (Panzaella Park to McCrea Park) of the Greater Jamestown Riverwalk.
 - Secured \$1.6 million in funding through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) from the New York State Department of Transportation for the construction of two (2) pedestrian bridges in conjunction with the Greater Jamestown Riverwalk. The remainder of the funding for this \$2 million project will be provided through repaid Federal Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) resources.
 - And in collaboration with the Chautauqua County Health Network and a neighborhood watch group, completed the long planned renovation of Lillian Dickson Park on Falconer Street.

Success in the development arena was also front and center during this past year.

- 2014 saw the re-establishment of the previously dormant Greater Jamestown Zone Capital Corporation which provides low interest rate loans to companies locating or expanding within the boundaries of the former Greater Jamestown Empire Zone.
- 472 Building Permits were issued during 2014 for projects totaling over \$10 million. These permits, in turn, generated more than \$46,000 in fee revenue for the City.
- City Staff worked continuously with the new owners of the former Downtown Ramada site, the Hamister Hospitality Group of Buffalo, NY, to undertake a multi-million dollar renovation of the eight-story building for a full service Hilton Double Tree hotel and conference center.
- Planning and development efforts were advanced with representatives from the National Comedy Center to bring to fruition this world class attraction in Downtown Jamestown. Activities included:
 - Commencement of the Gateway Park Initiative.
 - Transfer of two key City owned parcels at the corner of Washington and West Second Streets... on which much of the project is slated to occur.
 - Collaboration with Comedy Center representatives to secure \$1.5 million in financial assistance through the New York State Consolidated Funding Application process CFA.
- In conjunction with the relocation of the Infinity Visual and Performing Arts Center to new and expanded space in the redeveloped Lynn Building (the former Federal Building) in

Downtown Jamestown, staff successfully negotiated a five (5) year lease and renovated the 9,000 sf commercial space in the Spring Street Parking Ramp for use by NY Law, Inc.

- Following the devastating January 2014 fire that severely damaged Lisciandros Restaurant and completely destroyed The Pub, City Development staff, in partnership with the Jamestown Renaissance Corporation (JRC), worked with the property and business owners to put together and fund a plan for the total restoration of the complex, including the installation of a full sprinkler system and various Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) amenities. DOD/JURA staff, along with the JRC are currently working with the property owner to design and fund a complete restoration of the building's façade.
- And last, but certainly not least, following the announcement that Jamestown's long time New York Penn League Baseball Franchise would be relocating to a new, state of the art facility in Morgantown, WV, city officials, in conjunction with a private and nonprofit community coalition, launched an effort to secure a new franchise. Those efforts yielded an agreement to relocate the Lorraine Ohio franchise in The Prospect League to begin play in Jamestown during May 2015, as the Jamestown Jammers. An innovative, non-exclusive, five (5) year (with renewal options), incentive based lease agreement has been signed with MKE Sports Entertainment, Inc. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin for the use of Historic Deithrick Park.

Again, I urge everyone to review in detail the contents of the 2014 summary report, which, like the State of the City Address, has already been uploaded and can be viewed on the City's website...jamestownny.net.

While 2014 was certainly a time of impressive results, I truly believe that 2015 has the potential, if we can continue to work in a collaborative team like approach, to take us as a community to even higher ground.

- While during the coming year, we must and we will focus our collective energies on both the problems and opportunities that are under our direct control, we nevertheless must remain mindful of the external factors that have a direct impact on our lives here in Jamestown.

As our state leaders have correctly noted, New York's high, out of control and punitive property tax, not only places a crushing burden on those residents and small businesses that are least able to pay, but it is also having a stifling impact on our ability to attract and retain new development and employment opportunities.

If in fact our state leaders are truly serious about REDUCING New York's high and unique property tax, it remains my long held contention that much more will be required than the policy gimmicks, political lip service and chest beating of past years. Quite simply, the following three things need to be done, can be done and must be done by our leaders in Albany.

A. AUTHORITY MUST BE GRANTED BY THE STATE TO LOWER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COST STRUCTURE .

If it is truly the objective in the “New New York” to cut property taxes, we must first eliminate, reduce or get under control the items on the cost side of the equation that are the true culprits driving the Empire State’s property taxes through the roof. And of course, I am again referring to regulations and unfunded mandates like the local share of Medicaid pushed down to our Counties; Binding Arbitration for Police and Professional Firefighters contracts; the Tri-Borough Amendment to the State’s Taylor Law; Sections 207 A & C of the General Municipal Law covering Fire and Police disability retirements; and the Real Property Tax Law itself. And, as it relates to the RPTL, it’s high time to starve and tame the “Exemption Beast” that is literally killing local budgets and creating classifications of “Winners and Losers” amongst our own citizens and tax payers.

Bottom line...REAL mandate and regulatory relief needs to happen and happen NOW so that local governments and school districts are granted the authority to LEGALLY REDUCE their cost structures and are able to knock down the barriers that stand in their way to put in place EVEN MORE efficiencies, collaborations and consolidations.

B. INCREASE STATE REVENUE SHARING

For a moment, let us take a step back and understand exactly where the concept of State Revenue Sharing came from and the valid reasons it was created in the first place.

The New York State Revenue Sharing Program (re branded several years ago as Aid and Incentives to Municipalities or “AIM”) was originally created as a device to achieve the following:

1. Diversify local government revenue streams away from the regressive property tax and thereby reduce the size and impact of that dreaded form of revenue
2. Create a more progressive and growth oriented form of revenue WITHOUT leading to every local government and school district in the state requesting permission to initiate their own income tax system. In other words, “we will share a portion of the State’s income tax receipts

every year so that local governments don't have to replicate what the State is already doing.”

3. Help pay for the series of new regulations and unfunded mandates on local governments that were coming out of Albany at the time. The rationale from the State in the late 1960's was as follows:

“We realize that local Medicaid costs, the Taylor Law (which granted the right for public employees to organize and collectively bargain contracts), along with other mandates in the future, will place a large and undue burden on local governments and school districts. In order to help you cover these mounting expenses (so that you don't have to tax people out of their homes and businesses) we will share, ever year, a legally specified portion of the State's gross income tax receipts.”

Well, from day one, this promise has never been kept and it is certainly not being adhered to today.

New York's Revenue Sharing Program, during past eras, when it was more adequately funded, was a proven means of moderating local property taxes. Unfortunately, during the past five years, an already insufficient allocation has been decreased by another 14% in real dollars.

Currently, the entire Revenue Sharing allocation to local governments not only fails to come close to offsetting the cost of services mandated by Albany, but the total appropriation (\$715 million) to all local governments, is actually 65% less than just the INCREASE in School Aid granted in 2014.

With the state now in a strong fiscal position and local governments exhibiting fiscal austerity through maximized efficiency and restructuring efforts, now is the time for the State Legislature, to increase Revenue Sharing (at least back to the 2009-2010 funding levels) and provide for the much talked about property tax relief.

C. SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE OR ENTIRELY DO AWAY WITH THE STATE'S RELIANCE ON THE REGRESSIVE PROPERTY TAX

STATE GOVERNMENT needs to change the method by which it chooses to pay for public services, away from the dreaded local Real Property Tax and to something else that is more progressive, fair and less hated by the residents, voters, businesses and property owners of the state... and for that matter, those from other places that are looking at New York.

If in fact the Real Property tax is so unpopular, destructive and puts the Empire State at such a competitive disadvantage with other places, wouldn't it then

make sense to do away with it ... or at least reduce our reliance on it as a form of revenue?!

Consider this. Just 20-25 minutes away from Jamestown's southern border lies the small city of Warren, Pennsylvania. And, as we all know, comparatively valued real estate in Warren is assessed measurable LOWER property taxes, due in large part to;

1. LESS STATE MANDATES
2. A CENTRALIZED COUNTY OPERATED SCHOOL SYSTEM and
3. A MORE DIVERSIFIED BASE OF REVENUES... WHICH INCLUDES A LOCAL, PROGRESSIVE INCOME TAX.

Personally, I couldn't agree more with our elected leaders in Albany that an antiquated 18th century form of taxation is holding back 21st century growth and development, not only in our City, but throughout the entire Empire State.

Its high time for New York to do away with (or at least significantly reduce) it's reliance on our regressive, punitive, outmoded and hated means of paying for government services. It truly is time for our elected state leaders to work WITH local governments and school districts to devise a new revenue generating system that is more progressive, fair, attractive and EFFECTIVE... just like other states have apparently managed to do.

- Growingly, residential choices are being made by families on the basis of the quality or the perceived quality, of local schools. And, as it should be, responsible parents want the best for their kids, and fortunately, right here in the City of Jamestown, we already have one of the premier public school systems that can be found... anywhere.

Consider for a moment the quality of the world class academic and recreational facilities offered by the Jamestown City School District. Or, perhaps the level and quality of advanced placement academic offerings, individual educational programs and special education opportunities for children of all backgrounds and capabilities. And, one would be hard pressed to find someone to challenge with a straight face the supremacy of the Jamestown Public School District's athletic, music, technical, cultural and diversity offerings... especially during this last year!

Out of fear of sounding overly bold and boastful, or having their position misconstrued as a criticism of others, there are some folks in our city who may be reluctant to state the obvious. Not me! Let me say it tonight as clearly as I can. Even with all of the challenges and impediments that lay before it, the Jamestown Public School District is simply OUTSTANDING! And, perhaps JPS is one of the best opportunities and values that loving and caring parents could ever provide their children.

As local government representatives and concerned residents, we need to remain vested in and supportive of the efforts of our colleagues on Martin Road to protect, build upon, celebrate and market the attributes of our outstanding public school system. Quite possibly, from a long-term standpoint this may represent the single most important thing that we can be doing to keep and attract both residents and new businesses into our City.

On the higher education front, we must support the development and expansion of two of our most potentially significant economic engines; Jamestown Business College (JBC) and Jamestown Community College (JCC). As one of the three regional sponsors of JCC, we, as a city government, must help advance efforts to once again blaze a new trail and expand the first and best Community College in the State, to provide on-site, higher educational degree opportunities. Not only for residents of our immediate area, but also for hundreds or even thousands of bright minds that are willing to journey here and become new, contributing members of our great community. And, when this does happen, it will clearly drive future private business investment, growth and new jobs throughout the Greater Jamestown Region.

Today, 21st century businesses trade in and often rise and fall on access to so-called “intellectual capital.” And, higher-level colleges and universities are not only suppliers of “intellectual capital”, but through what they also add to a community from a cultural, social, recreational and goods/services standpoint, serve as powerful magnets for the type of people that companies today must have to succeed in the global marketplace.

Make no mistake about it. Higher education is to today’s knowledge and information based economy, what railroads, electrification and interstate highways were... and then some... to the economies of the last two centuries.

Unfortunately, Greater Jamestown is the single largest urban area in the state and the only in the “TOP TEN,” WITHOUT at least one major 4 year university or college. And that needs to be rectified.

During the coming years, our collective voices need to be raised and our demands must be heard by those who have the ability to help us address these educational and economic development needs.

- New York State Route 60

What is now a major safety hazard and an embarrassing impediment to commerce and development, can, should and must be transformed into a safe, modern and attractive business thoroughfare...PERIOD!

If we aspire to grow our economy in the increasingly competitive 21st century, we must have a safe, efficient north-south traffic artery connecting our County’s two major urban areas. Furthermore, a Route 60 that has the capability of moving traffic in a modern, fast and safe fashion is absolutely essential if we are going to attract more commerce to our region from Pennsylvania and fully benefit from our proximity to both the growing Buffalo-Niagara region and Canadian Markets.

An improved North-South highway would provide much needed relief on other county and town roads that were not built or intended for the volume and type of traffic that is diverted from an insufficient Route 60.

In recognition of all of this, I am pleased to report that County Executive Vince Horrigan, City of Dunkirk Mayor, A.J. Dolce and I have met and agreed to lead an effort to transform what is now a poorly designed and maintained secondary road into Chautauqua County's Highway of Opportunity, Growth and Development. During the coming weeks, I look forward to joining with the County Executive and Mayor to convene a meeting of local officials that are directly and indirectly impacted by the current, inadequate situation.

- During 2015 we look forward to completing our efforts with the State's Financial Restructuring Board and identifying additional ideas to build upon the long and successful history in government restructuring and consolidation initiatives, which this city has been long viewed as a pioneer and leader.

To this end, the coming months will bring forth a final product for public review and legislative consideration as it relates to the ongoing Public Safety Consolidation/Collaboration initiative. It is clearly time to either move forward and implement a plan or move on... once and for all.

- On the Public Safety front, we will redouble our efforts to attack the illegal narcotics scourge in the Greater Jamestown area on both the supply and demand sides of the equation.

Working with our other law enforcement partners at the Federal, State, County and local agency levels, the members of our outstanding Police Department will continue to drive home the message to drug dealers that they are not wanted here and that we are going to do everything in our legal power to disrupt and drive them out.

On the demand side of the ledger, we will continue to support and enhance the efforts of our community partners who are legally charged with the authority and responsibility to provide the education, treatment and care for the victims of the illegal drug enterprise in our community.

- During the coming year, we will also redouble our investigative efforts and arrest, prosecute and put away those engaged in the sad and destructive arson trade... the negative impact of which cannot ever be overstated.

Our arson strategy during 2015 will also have an expanded emphasis on prevention and education programs involving our school system, community groups and churches.

Not only does every intentionally set fire in this city contribute to the depletion of the budget and the erosion of the tax base, but more importantly, arsons needlessly place in jeopardy the safety and lives of our first responders and the public at large.

- Our 2015 plan also includes an ambitious housing and neighborhood agenda built around;
 - Continuation of Quadrant and Mini Enforcement Sweep Efforts
 - Selective demolitions of abandoned properties
 - Assistance with the JRC Block Challenge Program
 - Operation of CDBG Funded rehabilitation initiatives
 - Expansion of the public security camera program, and
 - Development of a storm water mitigation plan in some of the most severe hot or “wet” spots in the city.
- And last but certainly not least, major development efforts will continue to command a significant portion of our attention during 2015, including:
 - Construction of Phases V-VIII of the Greater Jamestown Riverwalk.
 - Downtown Redevelopment Projects involving advancement of the National Comedy Center, the new Hilton Double Tree Hotel, the Lynn Building, the former M&T complex and the Reg Lenna District Master Plan.
 - Advancement of the Brownfields Redevelopment Initiative.
 - And, a long, overdue, update of the City’s Zoning Ordinance,

Well, I think if we all listen carefully enough, we can almost hear the din and drumbeat of disbelief and even outrage coming from the far reaches of the blogosphere tonight.

“WHAT?! You cannot be serious!!!

- A change in the State’s tax structure and the way it funds government services? Never going to happen!
- A high level, 4 year college in Jamestown?! Impossible!!
- A modern, efficient and safe “Main Street” for Chautauqua County linking north with south and south to the outside world?! Not in our lifetimes! And, who in their right minds will fund that, and who exactly would use it anyways?!

- An all-out attack on the drug trade, improving the neighborhoods and growing the local economy? That is so naïve and out of the question, I'm not even going to waste my breath responding!!”

Well, good! Because I think I will.

Let me remind everyone within the sound of our collective voices that the scrap heap of local history is littered with pessimistic dooms dayers and naysayers who have under estimated or entirely written off, time and time again, this resilient and amazing place. Let's take a moment to remember...

- A railroad running through this little backwoods of a nothing place?! Never!
- You want to do what?! Buy up all of the private electric companies, create a city owned utility and build a single, modern power plant to boot?! THAT'S ABSOLUTLEY INSANE!!
- A college in Jamestown... and worse yet, sponsored by the City? That would be a terrible mistake and a big step toward a destructive “welfare state!”
- Art Metal is closing, turn out the lights and everyone run for their lives! That big plant will remain empty forever and will wither into the ground.
- A modern interstate highway serving this place and a Riverwalk along that dirty, nothing of a little stream?! Who in their right minds will fund that and exactly who would use them anyways?!!

My friends, let us tonight and always, remember that the future is determined by and belongs to those who not only think and innovate but who dare to dream, to do and never accept the “impossible.”

Let us also, in the coming days and forever, remember that if we commit ourselves to working together in the interests of others, there is literally NOTHING that we can't accomplish. And just like those who successfully walked, innovated and built before us, we will be able to make the “impossible”, possible.

Thank you for listening tonight and I look forward to working with all of you during the coming year.