

Pursuant to Section 20 of the City Charter, a special meeting of the Keene City Council was held Friday, January 1, 2016, for the purpose of swearing in the Mayor and City Councilors-elect. The meeting was called to order at 12:00 Noon by the City Clerk, Patricia A. Little. The City Clerk announced that Kendall W. Lane was present to take the oath of office as Mayor of the City of Keene. The Honorable Howard B. Lane, Jr. administered the oath of office to the Mayor-elect. The Mayor directed the City Clerk to call a roll of the Councilors-elect. Carl B. Jacobs, Jay V. Kahn, Randy L. Filiault, Thomas F. Powers, III, Robert B. Sutherland, George S. Hansel, Gary P. Lamoureux, Steven L. Hooper, Bettina A. Chadbourne, David C. Richards. The Mayor administered the oath of office to the Councilors-elect. The Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll of the full City Council. Carl B. Jacobs, Robert J. O'Connor, Terry M. Clark, Jay V. Kahn, Randy L. Filiault, Thomas F. Powers, III, Robert B. Sutherland, George S. Hansel, Gary P. Lamoureux, Stephen L. Hooper, Bettina A. Chadbourne, Philip M. Jones, David C. Richards and Mitchell H. Greenwald were present. Janis O. Manwaring was absent. The Reverend Michael F. Hall gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Claire and William O'Connor.

INAUGURATION SPEECH

Mayor Lane began by welcoming all in attendance and thanking them for coming to this opening meeting that marks the beginning of the 2016-2017 session of the Keene City Council. He went on to thank recently retired City Manager John MacLean for his 20 years of service to the City of Keene. It was through his efforts as chief administrative official for the City that we were guided through flooding and recovery, various disturbances and recession, and were still able to reinvest in our sewage treatment plant, our water system and our roads and create a smooth running organization that has continued to move forward since his retirement in October.

The Mayor then went on to thank those members of the staff present, and particularly Patty Little, City Clerk, Tom Mullins, City Attorney, and Medard Kopczynski, Acting City Manager. He noted it is through their expert assistance and direction that the City runs smoothly and the policies of the City Council are accomplished.

He went on to congratulate all those who have been sworn in today and will be serving the City for the next 2 years. He acknowledged in particular the five new City Councilors: Steve Hooper, Bob Sutherland, George Hansel, Jay Kahn and Gary Lamoureux.

For almost 280 years people have come to Keene to establish a better life for themselves and their families. And despite all the changes that have taken place over that time, the City Council should look at our accomplishments and be proud of the results.

Most recently, the City has been working with Keene Ice to complete the ice arena at 380 Marlborough Street, which is now open to the public and is already enjoying a great deal of activity. The Cheshire Rail Trail continues to be expanded and improved. The Roundhouse T project between School and Island Streets has been completed. The section from Whitcomb's Mill Road to Hurricane Road has been completed. Soon, the section from Hurricane Road to Ammi Brown Road and Summit Road will be upgraded and South Bridge is scheduled for construction this year. We have also continued the process of reconstructing roads. Ralston Street area and Upper Washington Street reconstruction is substantially completed and the Winter Street and Summer Street reconstruction has been completed.

The College/City Commission has recently issued their first report and staff will be implementing many of the recommendations to improve the relationship between the residents of Keene and the students.

The Mayor's Committee on Drug Addiction Solutions has held several meetings and is working with both state and local groups to address the heroin addiction crisis.

These accomplishments, however, are merely a prelude to the challenges that we look forward to addressing over the next few years.

We are continuing our work on the implementation of the Comprehensive Master Plan. Over the next few years we will be working on the land use codes for the City of Keene to bring them into conformity with the Master Plan and to provide a platform for economic development. We must also continue our work to combat the heroin addiction crisis that has afflicted our City. This impacts the crime rate, the economic viability and the health and welfare of our fellow citizens. It is a public health epidemic that we must all work together to resolve.

And we must continue our efforts to provide the administrative stability this City has enjoyed for the past 38 years.

The Mayor stated that the principle issue facing the City is the need to support and expand our economic base. Since becoming Mayor he has revived the President's Court and they have had several luncheons with the business leadership in Keene to discuss issues of concern to them, including recruiting of the future employment base and the creation of desirable amenities to make the City a desirable place for families to live, work, play and stay.

But this is only a beginning. We must partner with our 3 colleges, River Valley Community College, Antioch New England University and Keene State College to support and develop our future workforce.

We must recognize that our workforce housing infrastructure is aging and by encouraging investment in affordable housing for our working families, it will better assist with corporate recruitment.

We need to create a high speed internet network that would support local businesses and allow people to conduct business on a remote basis. That is the direction of the economy in the 21st century.

We must continue to invest in our roads and bridges to allow goods and people to access the outside markets. We must continue to invest in the amenities which make the quality of life here in Keene desirable for families to live, work, play and stay. These steps will, in the long run, expand our tax base so Keene will have a stable tax rate and be an affordable place to live. This is how we will grow and prosper in the future.

Our goals are clear - to make Keene the best small City in America - to attract a 21st century workforce - to make Keene the first choice to raise a family - to obtain employment - to shop - to go to school.

We need to work to maintain a balance between the environmental quality, economic quality and the social equity in our community.

To achieve this and to maintain our quality of life is the challenge. Over the next 2 years we need to work together, not only as a City Council, but as a community made up of many people who care deeply about this City with a unified goal and a common purpose to chart the course for the future of our region and our community.

RESOLUTION R-2016-01: RELATING TO THE KEENE CITY COUNCIL'S RULES OF ORDER

Resolution R-2016-01 was read for the first time by title only. Councilor Richards moved for adoption of the Resolution. On roll call vote, 14 Councilors were present and voting in favor. Resolution R-2016-01 was declared adopted. Councilor Manwaring was absent.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The City Clerk read the Mayor's appointments to the City Council's Standing Committees. To the Municipal Services, Facilities and Infrastructure Committee: Janis O. Manwaring, Randy L. Filiault, Robert J. O'Connor, Stephen L. Hooper and Gary P. Lamoureux. To the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee: David C. Richards, Philip M. Jones, Bettina A. Chadbourne, George S. Hansel and Robert B. Sutherland. To the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee: Mitchell H. Greenwald, Carl B. Jacobs, Thomas F. Powers, Terry M. Clark and Jay V. Kahn. The appointments were filed into the record.

The Reverend Michael F. Hall gave the benediction. As being no further business, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 12:32 PM.

A true record, attest:

City Clerk