

From the Mayor...

November 6, 2015

As I reflect on the eve of the municipal election, I would like to share a few of my thoughts.

First, I am very grateful for the confidence the community has shown in me as I run unopposed in this year's municipal election. I am very humbled to have the opportunity to continue to move our community forward in the direction that we have in our first four years. In this next term, we will prepare for challenges greater than we have ever faced. We will also work harder to attain greater accomplishments than we have previously experienced.

Representing you for the next four years will involve at least two new common council members. I will be working with the new council to update the strategic plan that our current council formulated in 2012. What I expect from that exercise is a commitment from all of our elected officials to lead our City with common purpose and unified goals for the next four years.

Phase One (Argonne Road to Bronson Street) of the Market Street reconstruction project has been completed, awaiting just a few finishing touches. As a local project, I can't tell you how proud and thankful I am for the diligence and flexibility our city employees displayed as they oversaw the project. They paid close attention not only to the details of the project but also the property owners affected by the construction who had issues that affected their driveways and yards; they worked with the neighbors to solve their problems.

The patience of the neighbors enduring six months of disruption to their daily routines must also be commended! We hope the wait was worth it. Even before the first phase of the project had been completed, we were already seeing positive impacts on the neighborhood.

The engineering has begun on phase two (Bronson Street to Hickory Street). Due to the engineering and environmental requirements placed on federally funded projects, phase two will not progress as quickly as the current local phase of the project. Construction may not begin until the second half of 2017.

It has been a challenging time in the city as we rebound from the loss of a city leader. I recently had the opportunity to speak at a function where I reflected on the lessons learned from my first term as mayor. The most important of those lessons to me is a common problem that affects us all. It seems pretty easy to take for granted our friends, family, and co-workers, as well as their contributions and accomplishments. Most of us don't realize what we have until it is gone. Charlie Smith was a committed, passionate leader whose primary goal was to simply make Warsaw a

better place. That leadership will be missed. Our community will move ahead knowing that we are better off because of Charlie's contributions.

The well-deserved "Indian-summer" weather we have been experiencing these past few weeks has certainly helped improve the sadness we have felt. But we all know that my December column may not reflect that same sense of shirtsleeve warmth. One of the other lessons I've learned is one that my parents taught me: we all have to move ahead no matter what.