

## Mayor Laufenburger Closing Comments

December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018

(Remarks to conclude my last council meeting)

It's been a very long meeting. Thank you for your patience. Before we adjourn for the year, I have just a few closing comments.

I'd like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the citizens of Chanhassen for giving me the incredible privilege and honor of serving you for the last 11 years. As I consider my involvement during this time my heart swells with gratitude for the opportunity to have a front row seat as together, we have cheered for Chanhassen.

I want to say a special thank you to Debbie Turner Larson and Tim Erhart for inviting me and challenging me to consider public service as a path toward significance and reward.

Thank you to the members of the City Council with whom I served in elected leadership; those of you on the present council, plus Council Member Vicki Ernst and Mayor Tom Furlong. Each of you motivated me to look deeply into the issues that we tackled together. This taught me that the respectful expression of differing views on any issue will most often produce more constructive dialogue and stronger and better outcomes.

Next, I want to thank all those citizens who stepped forward to volunteer for commissions, advisory boards, task forces and programs or celebrations. Your willingness to sacrifice your time for the greater good of this community is a perfect illustration that civic engagement is at the foundation of the character and quality of life for which Chanhassen is best known.

To city manager, Todd Gerhardt, and the entire city staff and employees, my thanks for your commitment and dedication to serving this community with professional excellence. From the department heads and administrative staff, public works to building department, and so many more -- as I observe

your daily activities, I see a willingness to do what is needed to find the best outcome for the community.

To my wife, Ruth and our family, thank you for accepting that the choices and sacrifices which I made, were your sacrifices as well.

I offer a special thank you to my critics and my supporters, both locally and from around the world. Your interaction with me over these eleven years, whether on the street, at city hall, at your front door or through email or phone conversations, has taught me that every issue, every impact, every circumstance is unique for each of you.

There is one aspect of being mayor for which I am most grateful. I have had the privilege of publicly recognizing, appreciating and honoring many individuals in our community. Rotary Club Distinguished Service award winners.... District 112 Educators of the Year... Girl Scout Gold and Boy Scout Eagle achievers .... academic and athletic winners at both Minnetonka and Chanhassen schools.... Retiring Employees & Fire Fighters .... and many more. It has been **pure joy** for me to look for and find the good in all these people, young and old alike!

Four years ago, when I took the oath to become your Mayor, I shared my thoughts about the goodness of this community. How goodness resides in our Churches, our schools, civic organizations, veterans' groups; in our neighborhoods and most importantly in our families.

I also spoke about the character of the community; the quality of life we all enjoy and how it shows up at the best of times, and in the times of our greatest need.

I also talked about our vulnerability to the threat of a natural disaster or widespread medical catastrophe. And how a personal tragedy could affect a family, a neighborhood or an entire region.

We have been reminded that we are not insulated from circumstances like those that we hear about elsewhere. We are not immune to acts of

terrorism and violence, or to the manifestation of greed and lust for power that we see in other parts of the region.

Unfortunately, our tolerance for the subtle demonstrations of disrespect and the almost imperceptible erosions of the pillars of our character puts the strength of our community at risk.

For I believe that our character strength is revealed through actions of integrity, civility, moral courage, respect, fairness, generosity, and most importantly, .... character is shown in how we treat others.

So, to the current and future council and to the citizens of Chanhassen, here is my Christmas Wish list:

- That each of you will seek wise counsel.
- That your opinions will be respected and valued by others.
- That you will be treated fairly by your fellow citizens.
- That you will seek first to understand, and not to be understood.
- That you will seek first to be interested, and not so much, to be interesting.
- That you will seek first to encourage others, and not to be affirmed by others.
- That you will seek solutions when agreement is out of reach.
- That as a council, your differences will **REFINE** you, and not **DEFINE** you!

I hope that when you're done, you can confidently say you found goodness, joy and fulfillment in your service;

**Just as I have!**

Thank you.

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