

REMARKS OF JOHN DESTEFANO. JR.
STATE OF THE CITY
FEBRUARY 7, 2011

TEAMWORK

GOOD EVENING.

I WANT TO START WITH A WORD ABOUT TEAMWORK.

ENDING A WEEK AGO, AND AFTER 7 DAYS OF PRETTY BAD WEATHER, I SAW A LOT OF TEAMWORK. YOU SEE, THIS WASN'T A NORMAL JANUARY WINTER. 41" OF SNOW NEVER IS. YET AT THE START WE TREATED IT IN THE SAME STYLE OF BUSINESS AS WE ALWAYS TREAT WINTER. THIS STORM TAUGHT US TO ACT DIFFERENTLY, TO PRIORITIZE RECOVERY, TO MAKE CHOICES AND TO COMMUNICATE TO RESIDENTS.

AND WITH A LOT OF YOUR SUGGESTIONS, E-MAILS, AND CALLS, IT WAS GREAT TO SEE EVERYONE WORKING TOGETHER:

- RESIDENTS DIGGING EACH OTHER OUT;**
- ALDERMEN IN THE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER, AND**
- THE INCREDIBLE NUMBER OF HOURS OUR DRIVERS, INSPECTORS AND MANAGERS PUT IN TO JUST GRIND IT OUT AND HANDLE ALL THAT SNOW THAT FELL.**

IT WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THE KIND OF TEAMWORK WE WILL NEED IN THE YEAR AHEAD.

BUT BEFORE TURNING TO 2011, I WANT TO SAY A BRIEF WORD ABOUT LAST YEAR.

THE CITY HAS BEEN AND MUST CONTINUE TO BE FOCUSED ON THREE BIG GOALS:

- THE ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF OUR PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN;**
- THE TRANSFORMATION OF A BIGGER CITY CENTER INTO A ROBUST PROPERTY TAX AND JOB GENERATOR; AND**
- STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS.**

LET ME SAY A WORD ABOUT EACH, BEGINNING WITH SCHOOL CHANGE.

SCHOOL CHANGE

NOW SCHOOL CHANGE CAME ABOUT BECAUSE WE RECOGNIZED, TOGETHER, THAT WE COULD NO LONGER CONDUCT BUSINESS AS USUAL. THAT TO GIVE OUR KIDS A BETTER CHANCE, WE NEEDED A NEW ROAD MAP, AND, THAT WE WERE GOING TO NEED TO WORK TOGETHER ON THAT ROAD.

SO SCHOOL CHANGE WORKS THROUGH THREE SEPARATE, BUT COLLABORATIVE TRACKS:

- **THE TIERING, OR RANKING, OF SCHOOLS;**
 - **TALENT EVALUATION; AND**
 - **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.**
- 1. TIERING MEANS THAT ALL NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE NOW GRADED. THE GRADES ARE BASED ON:**
- **STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE;**
 - **COMPREHENSIVE SURVEYS BY PARENTS, STAFF AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS; AND,**
 - **SCHOOL CLIMATE CRITERIA.**

THE RANKING RESULTS IN DESIGNATIONS AS TIER 1, 2, 3, OR 3-TURNAROUND, SCHOOLS. UNDER OUR TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATORS CONTRACTS AND PURSUANT TO THE RANKINGS:

- **SCHOOL DAY AND YEAR HAVE BEEN LENGTHENED;**
 - **CONTRACT OPERATORS HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED; AND,**
 - **CURRICULUM AND MANAGEMENT HAS BEEN DECENTRALIZED.**
- 2. SECOND IS TALENT EVALUATION. TALENT EVALUATION IS DONE BY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR TEACHER'S AND ADMINISTRATOR'S UNIONS, WHICH HAVE INTRODUCED ONE OF AMERICA'S MOST AGGRESSIVE EVALUATION PROGRAMS.**

TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS AND CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF ARE ALL NOW GRADED:

- **STUDENT PERFORMANCE IS LINKED TO TEACHER EVALUATION;**
- **SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IS LINKED TO PRINCIPAL EVALUATION; AND**
- **DISTRICT PERFORMANCE IS LINKED TO CENTRAL OFFICE EVALUATION.**

THIS IS A CLEAR DEPARTURE FROM BUSINESS AS USUAL.

GOOD TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS WILL BE RECOGNIZED. AND, INEFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS WILL BE DISMISSED. TALENT EVALUATION IS STRUCTURED TO SEE THAT THE NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOL WORK FORCE IS ACCOUNTABLE, AND, THE BEST.

3. AND THIRD, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IS BEING PURSUED ON TWO TRACKS.

LAST JANUARY BOOST WAS ANNOUNCED. BOOST IS OUR SCHOOL WRAP AROUND SERVICES COORDINATED BY THE UNITED WAY. BOOST AIMS TO:

- **PULL TOGETHER AND COORDINATE ALL NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES FOR OUR KIDS, REGARDLESS OF WHO PROVIDES THEM;**
- **TO FILL GAPS IN THOSE SERVICES; AND,**
- **TO SEE THAT THEY ARE AS COMPREHENSIVE AS THEY MIGHT BE.**

THEN, IN NOVEMBER, NEW HAVEN PROMISE WAS LAUNCHED. PROMISE IS A SCALED SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM THAT WILL PAY THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY TUITION OF ANY NEW HAVEN HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE:

- **EARNING A 3.0 GPA; AND,**
- **MEETING A MINIMUM OF 90% ATTENDANCE AND 40 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE.**

IF OUR KIDS WORK HARD AND FOLLOW THE RULES, THEIR COLLEGE TUITION WILL BE PAID.

IN 2010 CMT AND CAPT GAINS WERE IMPRESSIVE, EACH WELL OUTPACING AVERAGE STATE GAINS AS WE PURSUE THE 3 GOALS OF NEW HAVEN SCHOOL CHANGE:

- **CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP TO THE STATE AVERAGE;**
- **CUTTING THE DROPOUT RATE IN HALF; AND,**
- **SEEING THAT ALL OUR KIDS ARE ACADEMICALLY READY AND FINANCIALLY ABLE TO GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE.**

WHATEVER ELSE WE DO AS A CITY, THERE IS NO MORE IMPORTANT PURSUIT THEN ACCOMPLISHING THESE 3 THINGS IN THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN.

IT IS NEW HAVEN'S MOST EFFECTIVE WEALTH CREATION AND VIOLENCE REDUCTION STRATEGY. AND IT IS SOMETHING WE DID AS A TEAM OF ELECTED OFFICIALS, STAFF, LABOR AND RESIDENTS – TO MAKE THINGS BETTER.

TAX AND JOB GENERATION

SECOND, TAX AND JOB GENERATION.

JUST LAST WEEK THE ASSESSOR RELEASED THE OCTOBER 1, 2010 GRAND LIST. NEW HAVEN POSTED THE HIGHEST REPORTED GRAND LIST GROWTH IN THE ENTIRE STATE OF CONNECTICUT.

- **THE GROSS TAXABLE GRAND LIST GREW BY \$229 MILLION, AN INCREASE OF 3.5%;**
- **THE NET TAXABLE GRAND LIST REFLECTED AN INCREASE OF \$149 MILLION, AN INCREASE OF 3.0%; AND**
- **THAT GROWTH WILL YIELD \$6.3 MILLION IN NEW TAXES IN NEXT YEARS BUDGET, AND, EVERY YEAR THEREAFTER. THIS IS WELCOME NEWS AS IT CONTRIBUTES TO REDUCING OUR BUDGET GAP NEXT YEAR TO \$42 MILLION.**

YALE IS NO LONGER OUR TOP TAXPAYER. THE UNIVERSITY HAS BEEN SURPASSED BY FOUR OTHER TAXPAYERS. IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT OUR TWO TOP TAXPAYERS, WINSTANLEY ENTERPRISES AND THE FUSCO CORPORATION, ARE REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT COMPANIES WHOSE PRINCIPAL TENANTS ARE KNOWLEDGE BASED LIFE SCIENCE, FINANCIAL SERVICES, EDUCATIONAL AND MEDICAL BUSINESSES.

THESE CLUSTERS ARE THE SWEET SPOT OF ECONOMIC GROWTH THAT IS PRODUCING MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN NEW TAXES EVERY YEAR TO PAY FOR PUBLIC SERVICES.

FORECLOSURES. AT 347, FORECLOSURES IN 2010 REMAINED BELOW THE RECORD OF 404 SET IN 2008. STILL TOO HIGH. BUT ENCOURAGINGLY LIS PENDENS FILINGS, THE FIRST STEP IN A FORECLOSURE ACTION, FELL BY 30% TO 772. THAT'S THE LOWEST NUMBER OF FILINGS SINCE 2006 AND THE FIRST TIME THEY HAVE FALLEN IN 4 YEARS.

THAT SAID, THERE REMAINS AN ECONOMIC DOWNSIDE TO THE CURRENT RECOVERY. IT IS BY AND LARGE A JOBLESS RECOVERY. AND THAT IS TRUE IN NEW HAVEN WHERE DECEMBER UNEMPLOYMENT STOOD AT 13%. AND WHILE DOWN FROM A JANUARY 2010 PEAK OF 13.6%, UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT REMAINS A SERIOUS ISSUE FOR OUR FAMILIES.

NEIGHBORHOODS

NEIGHBORHOODS SAW LOTS OF GOOD THINGS LAST YEAR:

- **FROM A BIGGER RECYCLING PROGRAM, TO MORE TREE PLANTINGS;**
- **FROM THE RE-OPENING OF EAST ROCK'S SOLDIERS AND SAILORS MONUMENT, TO HEALTHIER FOOD IN SCHOOL CAFETERIAS;**
- **FROM A NEW JOB TRAINING CENTER IN SCIENCE PARK, TO PEACE IN OUR TIME BETWEEN FAIR HAVEN HEIGHTS RESIDENTS AND AMTRAK; AND**
- **JUST IN THE LAST MONTH START BANK – ONE OF ONLY TWO BANKS CHARTERED IN THE ENTIRE UNITED STATES IN 2010 - OPENED WITH 2 BRANCHES. ONE ON GRAND AVENUE AND THE OTHER ON WHALLEY JUST DOWN THE STREET, WHERE BECAUSE OF INCREDIBLE NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP AND PERSISTENCE, SHAW'S WILL BE REPLACED BY STOP AND SHOP.**

TALK ABOUT TEAMWORK! REALLY, CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DWIGHT NEIGHBORHOOD AND THEIR PARTNERS. YOU DID GREAT!

CRIME RESULTS WERE A MIXED BAG:

- **FIRST AND MOST TROUBLING, HOMICIDES INCREASED BY 11, FROM 13 TO 24;**
- **HOWEVER SHOOTING VICTIMS DROPPED BY 25. FROM 149 TO 124;**
- **AUDITED CRIME STATS FOR THE FIRST 9 MONTHS OF 2010 SHOW A DECREASE OF 1.4% IN TOTAL PART I CRIMES; AND MOST ENCOURAGINGLY, A 9% DECREASE IN PART I VIOLENT CRIME;**
- **THE NARCOTICS UNITS IS NOW SEVERAL YEARS BACK AT WORK. ON NOVEMBER 16 AN 18 MONTH EFFORT WITH OUR FEDERAL PARTNERS RESULTED IN 37 ARRESTS FROM THE R-2 GANG, AND, A DRAMATIC RESULTING DROP IN VIOLENCE IN NEWHALLVILLE;**

2010 SUM UP

IN SUM:

- **NEW HAVEN SCHOOL CHANGE IS DEMONSTRATING A HUGE DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR KIDS. AND WHATEVER HARD CHOICES WE MAKE IN THE COMING MONTHS, SUPPORTING AND GROWING THE POSSIBILITIES OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH THE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT INVESTMENT WE MUST MAKE IN THE COMING YEARS;**
- **SECOND, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS FOCUSED AND IS YIELDING THE STATE'S MOST ROBUST RESULTS IN TWO SUCCESSIVE YEARS OF OUTSTANDING NET TAXABLE GRAND LIST GROWTH. THAT GROWTH BENEFITS ALL OUR FAMILIES, BY PROVIDING NEW TAX DOLLARS, WITHOUT RAISING THE MILL RATE, TO PAY FOR THE THINGS THAT WE MUST DO; AND FINALLY,**
- **NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES WILL REQUIRE MUCH ATTENTION AND THOUGHTFUL ACTION AS THE SIZE OF THE CITY WORKFORCE DECREASES, AND, AS WE SEE FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS TO THE CITY AND TO COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS SHRINK.**

BUDGET CHALLENGE

AND UNDERLYING ALL THESE CHALLENGES, SUCCESSES AND OPPORTUNITIES, IS THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM.

2011 WILL BE THE YEAR WHEN THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF THE 2008 AND 2009 RECESSION HIT AMERICA'S CITIES EVEN HARDER THAN BEFORE.

YOU SEE OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS CITIES ALL ACROSS AMERICA HAVE MITIGATED THE EFFECT OF THE RECESSION BY:

- **THE SPENDING DOWN OF RESERVES;**
- **THE AVAILABILITY OF STIMULUS RESOURCES;**
- **WHATEVER TAX INCREASES THEY COULD MANAGE;**
- **THE LESS CONTROVERSIAL SERVICE REDUCTIONS AND CHANGES TO DELIVERY OF SERVICES; AND,**
- **THE USE OF ONE TIME REVENUES.**

BY AND LARGE THE EASY CHOICES HAVE BEEN MADE ACROSS THE NATION AND HERE IN NEW HAVEN, ESPECIALLY IN OUR CASE, WITH THE USE OF ONE TIME REVENUES.

SO WITH THE EASY CHOICES MADE, THAT LEAVES US ONLY WITH THE HARD CHOICES, AND, THE BAD CHOICES.

AND WHAT ARE BAD CHOICES? BAD CHOICES CAN BE FOUND IN:

- **PRICHARD, ALABAMA. PRITCHARD IS A SMALL TOWN THAT HASN'T MADE A PENSION PAYMENT TO RETIREES SINCE SEPTEMBER 2009 WHEN THE TOWN SIMPLY RAN OUT OF MONEY. NOW THE TOWN IS TRYING TO FILE FOR BANKRUPTCY TO GET OUT OF ITS UNION CONTRACTS;**
- **IN PITTSBURGH WHERE THE CITY IS FACING STATE TAKEOVER OF ITS PENSIONS FOR 8,000 ACTIVE AND RETIRED EMPLOYEES. ITS PENSION ASSETS ARE RAPIDLY DECLINING AND PROPOSALS TO SELL PARKING GARAGES HAVE BEEN TURNED DOWN BY THEIR COUNCIL. IF THE CITY CAN'T COME UP WITH SOME SOLUTION TO MATCH PENSION OBLIGATIONS TO TAXPAYER RESOURCES, THE STATE WILL TAKE OVER AND DRIVE UP PROPERTY TAXES DRAMATICALLY;**
- **IN NEWARK, FACING STATE BUDGET CUTS, A MULTI-MILLION BUDGET GAP, AND, AFTER FAILING TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH ITS POLICE UNION, THE CITY LAID OFF 167 POLICE OFFICERS – 13% OF ITS FORCE IN EARLY DECEMBER; AND**
- **LAST MONTH CAMDEN LAID OFF 163 POLICE OFFICERS, 44% OF ITS FORCE; 66 FIREFIGHTERS, 28% OF THAT FORCE; AND IN TOTAL 335 PUBLIC EMPLOYEES. 1 OUT OF EVERY 6.**

THIS IS NO ORDINARY TIME. AND NOT SEEING THIS NEW REALITY AND DOING THE SAME THING OVER AND OVER AGAIN AND EXPECTING A DIFFERENT RESULT, IS NOT A CHOICE. RATHER IT IS THE CLASSIC DEFINITION OF - INSANITY.

RECOGNIZING THE NEED TO DEAL WITH THIS CHALLENGE WITH OPEN EYES, ON NOVEMBER 23 I PROVIDED THE BOARD AND THE PUBLIC WITH A BRIEFING SUMMARIZING A \$309 MILLION BUDGET GAP OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS.

SINCE THEN THAT GAP HAS FALLEN TO \$254 MILLION, LARGELY AS A RESULT OF INCREASED REVENUES FROM GRAND LIST GROWTH. SAID ANOTHER WAY, THAT GAP IS \$5.5 MILLION IN THE CURRENT YEAR, AND \$42 MILLION IN THE NEXT.

THE FACT IS THAT WE ARE A LONG WAY OFF FROM SUSTAINING THE SAME LEVEL OF SERVICES WE ARE CURRENTLY PROVIDING TO OUR RESIDENTS, IN THE SAME WAY WE THAT WE ARE PROVIDING THEM TODAY.

SO WHAT WE NEED TO DO NOW IS TO MAKE THE HARD, BUT RIGHT CHOICES.

AND I WILL TELL YOU AS CERTAIN AS I AM STANDING HERE TONIGHT, THAT THERE WILL BE A GROUP SOMEWHERE THAT WILL OPPOSE EVERY ONE OF THESE THINGS.

BUT WE WOULD BE DECEIVING OURSELVES, AND DEFRAUDING OUR CHILDREN, WERE WE TO PRETEND THAT THIS IS A TEMPORARY ECONOMIC SITUATION. WE ARE IN A DIFFERENT PLACE AND IT IS TIME:

- **TIME TO RESET OUR PRIORITIES;**
- **TIME TO CHANGE OUR EXPECTATIONS AND THE WAY WE DO THINGS; AND**
- **TIME TO MAKE HARD CHOICES SO THAT NEW HAVEN CAN COMPETE SUCCESSFULLY IN TODAY'S WORLD, RATHER THAN YESTERDAYS.**

HARD CHOICES

WE MUST DO THE FOLLOWING FIVE THINGS:

- 1. FIRST OUR PENSION PLANS ARE NOT SUSTAINABLE. THE SIMPLE FACT IS THAT AS CURRENTLY STRUCTURED THE CITY EMPLOYEES AND POLICE AND FIRE PENSION PLANS ARE GOING TO RUN OUT OF MONEY. THIS IS NOT A MATTER OF BLAME. IT IS NOT A MATTER OF RHETORIC. IT IS A MATTER OF FACT.**

THE PENSION VALUATIONS RELEASED LAST WEEK SHOW AN UNWORKABLE GAP BETWEEN ASSETS AND LIABILITIES. WE NEED TO:

- **REDUCE BENEFIT MULTIPLIERS AND POST RETIREMENT COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS;**
- **LIMIT EARLY RETIREMENT ELIGIBILITY, AND, INCREASE EARLY RETIREMENT PENALTIES;**
- **WE MUST CALCULATE PENSIONS ON BASE PAY – NOT OVERTIME EARNINGS AND SICK LEAVE BUYBACKS;**
- **WE NEED, WE MUST HAVE, REFORM.**

THE BILL HAS COME DUE ON THESE PLANS. DENIAL OF THE FACTS HERE WILL ONLY MAKE THINGS THAT MUCH WORSE FOR TAXPAYERS, PENSIONERS AND EMPLOYEES.

IT'S TIME FOR A NEW NORMAL IN OUR PENSION PLANS.

- 2. SECOND, OUR HEALTH CARE PLANS MUST PUT OUR CITY EMPLOYEES DIRECTLY INTO THE GAME TO MAKE SMART CHOICES AND TO SHARE IN THE COST OF THOSE CHOICES. OVER 8 YEARS EMPLOYEE HEALTH CARE COSTS ARE DOUBLING. THERE IS NO CHOICE. WE MUST MOVE FROM CO-INSURANCE, TO CO-OWNERSHIP OF THESE HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS.**

THE HIGH DEDUCTABLE HEALTHCARE PLAN ADOPTED BY THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS UNION AND RATIFIED BY THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN LAST MONTH SETS EXACTLY THE PATTERN FOR SETTLEMENT NEEDED WITH ALL BUT OUR LOWEST WAGE BARGAINING UNITS.

THE CITY MUST OFFER HEALTH CARE PLANS THAT RESEMBLE THOSE HELD BY THE PEOPLE PAYING THE BILLS, OUR TAXPAYERS.

- 3. THIRD, WE NEED TO LOOK HARD AT WHAT SERVICES CAN BE CURTAILED OR ELIMINATED. NOT BECAUSE SOME SERVICES ARE NOT IMPORTANT, BUT BECAUSE WE JUST CAN'T AFFORD TO DO IT ALL.**

THE BUDGET I SUBMIT TO THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN NEXT MONTH WILL DELIVER MOST ALL CITY AGENCIES AT OR BELOW CURRENT FUNDING LEVELS. RESIDENTS WILL BE IMPACTED.

AND THIS CANNOT WAIT UNTIL NEXT YEAR. BEFORE THIS MONTH ENDS, I WILL IMPLEMENT WORKFORCE REDUCTIONS ACROSS THE CITY AND BOARD OF EDUCATION.

- 4. FOURTH, AS WE LEARNED FROM THESE JANUARY SNOWSTORMS, WE NEED TO DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY:**
- IF WE CAN RECYCLE IT RATHER THAN BURN IT, TAXPAYERS SAVE \$118 A TON AND OUR KIDS HAVE BETTER AIR TO BREATHE;**
 - IF A PRIVATE OPERATOR CAN GET US OUT OF THE PARKING BUSINESS AND SAVE THE CITY MONEY, IT IS TIME TO DO IT;**
 - IF SERVICES ARE BEING PROVIDED, THEY OUGHT TO BE PAID FOR BY THOSE USING THEM. AND THAT INCLUDES ‘FAIR SHARE’ USER FEES FOR STORM WATER TREATMENT. WE DO IT NOW WITH BUILDING PERMITS, WASTE WATER AND LOTS OF OTHER THINGS. THE NON-PROFITS SHOULD BE TREATED THE SAME AS EVERYONE ELSE;**
 - IF A PUBLIC GOOD, LIKE THE COST OF CLEANING OF OUR SCHOOLS CAN BE REDUCED FROM \$15M TO \$8M A YEAR, AND IT IS NOT CENTRAL TO THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF OUR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS AND ALLOWS US TO CONTINUE OUR ALL IMPORTANT SCHOOL REFORM INITIATIVE, ITS TIME, PAST TIME, TO MAKE THAT CHANGE; AND**
 - IF MINIMUM MANNING CLAUSES, AND WORK RULES DO NOT ENABLE US TO EFFICIENTLY AND MORE INEXPENSIVELY DELIVER A SERVICE, WE NEED TO TAKE THESE CHANGES TO BINDING ARBITRATION, BECAUSE I DON’T KNOW WHO IS GOING TO PAY FOR US TO KEEP DOING THINGS OVER AND OVER AGAIN THE SAME WAY.**
- 5. AND FINALLY, WE NEED THE STATE TO BE PARTNERS ONCE AGAIN. AND WITH GOVERNOR MALLOY AT THE HELM, HE HAS A PARTNER IN US. NEW HAVEN PROVIDES FOR THE NEEDS, AND HAS THE JOBS AND SERVICES, THAT THE ENTIRE REGION TAKES ADVANTAGE OF.**

THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT HOLDS A LOT OF OUR CARDS IN THEIR HANDS. THEY IN LARGE MEASURE TELL US WHAT TO DO, AND, HOW TO PAY FOR IT. AND THE FACT IS THAT CONNECTICUT WILL NOT EXPERIENCE AN ECONOMIC RECOVERY WITHOUT A STRONG AND VIBRANT NEW HAVEN.

ALL WE SEEK IS COMMON SENSE:

- LOCAL OPTION TAXES, LIKE MOST EVERY OTHER STATE IN THE NATION;**
- A SHARE OF THE SALES TAX FOR HARTFORD, BRIDGEPORT AND NEW HAVEN TO DIVERSIFY OUR REVENUE BASE;**
- AUTHORITY OVER ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICTS;**

- **TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT CAMERAS AND THE FINES FROM VIOLATIONS; AND**
- **THE RIGHT TO BARGAIN AT THE TABLE FOR RESIDENCY FOR NEW HAVEN CITY EMPLOYEES.**

MOST OF THESE THINGS WON'T REQUIRE A NEW RED CENT FROM THE STATE. BUT IT WILL REQUIRE THEM TO LET US MANAGE OUR OWN AFFAIRS, NOT ACCOUNTABLE TO A STATE CAPITAL 40 MILES AWAY, BUT TO THE VOTERS RIGHT HERE IN NEW HAVEN WHO HAVE HIRED US TO DO A JOB.

THESE FIVE THINGS ARE NOT CHOICES. THESE ARE THINGS WE MUST DO TO AVOID DRAMATIC AND UNAFFORDABLE PROPERTY TAX INCREASES, WHILE PRESERVING CORE INITIATIVES AROUND:

- **THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF OUR KIDS;**
- **GROWING THE TAXABLE GRAND LIST AND JOBS;**
- **WHILE PROVIDING FOR OUR NEIGHBORHOODS, THAT, WHICH IS ESSENTIAL.**

CONCLUSION

SO WE HAVE A LOT TO DO. AND SOME GROUP IS GOING TO SAY NO TO EVERYTHING I'VE JUST TALKED ABOUT. AND IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT SAYING NO WILL LOOK LIKE, WELL I'VE TOLD YOU 4 PLACES TO GO.

WE WORK FOR THE PEOPLE OF NEW HAVEN. THEY DESERVE A FAIR SHAKE. AND TOO MANY THINGS ARE GOING RIGHT IN THE CITY, THAT HAVING MADE THE EASY CHOICES, WE NOW NEED TO AVOID THE BAD CHOICES, AND INSTEAD MAKE THE HARD BUT THE RIGHT CHOICES.

AND HOW WILL WE KNOW THE RIGHT CHOICES? WELL I'LL TELL YOU HOW I DO IT AND HOW IF WE ARE FOR NOTHING ELSE, I WOULD INSIST THAT WE SHOULD BE FOR THIS:

- **THESE YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN ARE REPRESENTATIVES FROM OUR NEW HAVEN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS. THEY ARE MEMBERS OF THE CLASSES OF 2011, 12, 13 AND 14.**

- **TO DATE, 1,850 OF THEM HAVE SIGNED PROMISE PLEDGES.**
- **252 OF THE SENIORS HAVE ALREADY COMPLETED THEIR PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS.**
- **ARE YOU NEW HAVEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS?**
- **ARE YOU GOING TO COLLEGE?**
- **ARE YOU WORKING HARD TO MAKE POSITIVE, GOOD CHOICES?**
- **CAN YOU DO ANYTHING?**

WE DON'T HAVE TO JUSTIFY OUR CHOICES TO EACH OTHER. WE HAVE TO JUSTIFY OUR CHOICES TO THEM.

- **WE MUST NOT BREAK STRIDE FROM OUR SCHOOL CHANGE INITIATIVE;**
- **WE CANNOT BACK AWAY FROM GROWING OUR JOB AND TAX BASE; AND,**
- **WE NEED TO PRODUCE GOOD NEIGHBORHOODS IF WE ARE GOING TO KEEP THE FAITH WITH THESE KIDS.**

AND IN MAKING THE CHOICES ABOUT STORM WATER AUTHORITY; OR THE PARKING AUTHORITY; ABOUT AFFORDABLE EMPLOYEE HEALTH CARE AND PENSION PLANS; A LEANER MORE PRODUCTIVE WORKFORCE; HOW WE CLEAN OUR SCHOOLS; ALL OF THESE THINGS, ALL OF THEM, ARE SUBORDINATE TO THESE KIDS.

LOOK AROUND THIS ROOM. WHEN WE LEAVE HERE TONIGHT AND THE LIGHTS ARE TURNED OUT, THE ONLY FACES LEFT WILL BE THE LIFELESS PORTRAITS OF LONG GONE MAYORS ON THE WALL.

THEY ARE NOT WHAT ANIMATE THIS CITY. IT IS THESE OTHER FACES. THESE FACES THAT WILL GO HOME TO EVERY SINGLE STREET IN OUR CITY. THESE KIDS WHO WE ARE ELECTED TO SERVE AND WHO IF GIVEN HALF A CHANCE WILL SHINE BRILLIANTLY.

THAT IS THE CHOICE WE HAVE IN FRONT OF US.

AND WHEN WE DO THAT, WHEN WE SERVE THESE KIDS, WE EMERGE BETTER, STRONGER, AND MORE COMPETITIVE THAN BEFORE.

NEW HAVEN CONTINUES TO IMPROVE. OUR PUBLIC SCHOOL REFORMS ARE THE TALK OF THE NATION.

OUR ECONOMIC BASE IS SOUND AND WILL CONTINUE TO GROW. OUR CORE SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE ARE SOLID.

IN THE END, THIS IS LESS A NUMBERS PROBLEM THEN IT IS A POLITICAL ONE.

THE JANUARY SNOW STORMS TAUGHT US A THING OR TWO ABOUT DOING BUSINESS AS USUAL, AND, WORKING AS A TEAM. THE ECONOMIC STORM WE NOW MUST WEATHER ALSO REQUIRES US TO WORK TOGETHER, TO CHANGE WHAT AND HOW WE DO THINGS. AND TO MAKE THE HARD CHOICES NOW, BECAUSE WE MUST.

- **LETS DO THIS;**
- **LETS DO IT RIGHT;**
- **LET US GO OUT AND EXPLAIN TO PEOPLE WHAT THE CHOICES ARE, AND, POINT OUT WHAT THEIR SELF INTEREST IS IN ONE ANOTHER; AND IN SO DOING,**
- **LET US GO ABOUT THE BUSINESS OF BEING A GREAT CITY.**

A CITY THAT LIVES UP TO THE BRILLIANCE OF THESE FACES OF PROMISE.

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