



January 28, 2020

CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS
State of the City Address
Saratoga Springs City Center
7:00 PM

7:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

SALUTE TO FLAG

MAYOR'S DEPARTMENT

1. State of the City Address

ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT

1. State of the City Address

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

1. State of the City

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

1. State of the City

PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

1. State of the City

SUPERVISORS

Matt Veitch

1. State of the City

Tara Gaston

1. State of the City

ADJOURN



January 28, 2020

CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS
State of the City Address
Saratoga Springs City Center
7:00 PM

PRESENT: Meg Kelly, Mayor
Michele Madigan, Commissioner of Finance
John Franck, Commissioner of Accounts
Anthony Scirocco, Commissioner of DPW
Robin Dalton, Commissioner of DPS

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa Shields, Deputy Mayor
Deirdre Ladd, Deputy Commissioner, Finance
Eileen Finneran, Deputy Commissioner, DPS

Vincent DeLeonardis

Matthew Veitch, Supervisor
Tara Gaston, Supervisor

EXCUSED: Maire Masterson, Deputy Commissioner, Accounts

RECORDING OF PROCEEDING

The proceedings of this meeting were taped for the benefit of the secretary. Because the minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings, the minutes are not a word-for-word transcript.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MAYOR'S DEPARTMENT

State of the City Address

Mayor Kelly stated throughout a year of challenges, the Council worked together as usual. She recognized the current and former officials that were present and thanked Ryan McMahon and the City Center for hosting the event. She thanked her deputy, Lisa Shields and executive assistant Lynn Bachner for their endless hours of work for the love of this City. She also thanked her family for their continued support.

Mayor Kelly stated last year they faced a lightning strike and moved out of City Hall into a gym. This year they are facing a more positive challenge to move back into City Hall.

Mayor Kelly listed the following as some of the accomplishments of 2019:

- The East Side Fire Station is closer to realization than any time in recent history.

- The Geyser Road Trail project, idling since 2008, is finally ready for groundbreaking.
- Code Blue has found a temporary home through strong working relationships among city, county and SOS leaders.
- The City Center Parking Structure and Flat Rock Centre are finally underway after over 30 years in the works.
- The City's Zoning Map has now been brought into compliance with the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, as required by law.
- The Council is now defined by civility. Disagreements are communicated respectfully and serve to inform, rather than to divide.

On January 21, 2020, Governor Cuomo announced the elimination of the VLT aid to the City. The City expected to receive \$2.3 million in aid. Our goal is to have this aid restored.

Highlights from the Mayor's Department include the following:

Recreation Department

Accomplishments of 2019:

- Recreation Master Plan has been completed.
- Increase in campers 3.2% and a 5.5% increase in the number of camper weeks sold.
- Successfully managed and operated programs at various local gyms ensuring the youth have a place to participate while the Recreation Center remains closed.

2020 Objectives:

- Reopen the Recreation Center while developing new program offerings.
- Implement new recreation management software including online registration for programs.
- Establish Master Plan working group to prioritize and implement the master plan recommendations.

Office of Planning and Economic Development

Accomplishments of 2019:

- Resolved the lawsuits relating to the Geyser Road Trail that had stalled the trail for years. This has allowed the project to move forward. The planning department led the work to secure the funding, complete the bidding process, and prepare the contract for its construction.
- Staff changes in the planning department were seamless and successful. Susan Barden was promoted to Principal Planner and is wonderfully assisting the Planning Board, thank you and congratulations Susan. Amanda Tucker joined our team as Senior Planner assisting the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Zoning Map was brought into alignment with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Uniform Development Ordinance (UDO) is updating the Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2015.
- Focused on improvement of efficiencies in the Land Use Board application and review process.

2020 Objectives:

- Continue development of the City's Unified Development Ordinance, with adoption occurring in 2020.
- Complete construction of the Geyser Road Trail.
- Continue digitizing of Land Use Board records.
- Plan to hire a Zoning Administrator and expect this additional resource will assist both the Planning and Building Departments.

Community Development

Accomplishments of 2019:

- Administered almost \$410,000 in Community Development Block Grant Funding from HUD.

- Assisted Code Blue in securing a temporary location for two years. Efforts are underway to establish a permanent location in the City.
- Facilitated the purchase of 2 workforce housing units through the City's Workforce Housing Program.
- Saratoga Springs Housing Authority broke ground on the Promenade affordable housing project at Stonequist.
- Two of the four Intrada buildings were completed, and citizens have already begun to move in.
- The Allendale Affordable Housing Project has received the majority of required land use board approvals and plans to break ground in 2020.
- Completed new construction reporting and established a Complete Count Committee at the encouragement of the US Census Bureau in preparation of the 2020 Census.
- Planned the first Partners in Hope Conference in partnership with the Saratoga-North Country Continuum of Care, Bethesda Church, and First Baptist Church of Saratoga. The event brought non-profit service providers together with local faith-based organizations in an effort to unite these organizations and enable efficient, effective, collective work to end housing instability and hunger in our County.

2020 Objectives:

- Conducted a public survey to inform Community Development goals and HUD funding priorities for the next 5 years. Public hearings on the Consolidated Plan will take place February – April of 2020.
- Continue to develop and explore funding opportunities for Saratoga Artscape, which is a public arts initiative along Railroad Run from the Beekman Street Arts District to the Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC).
- Staff and public officials will be participating in both the design and leadership teams during the first 100-day sprint cycle of the Saratoga Collaborative to End Homelessness spearheaded by Shelters of Saratoga and Presbyterian New England Congregational Church. During this sprint cycle, specific solutions will be designed, tested, and implemented. At the end of the sprint, the ongoing structure and membership of the Collaborative will be solidified.
- Draft and enact fair housing legislation to protect our citizens from unjust housing practices and provide them with mechanisms for recompense at a local level.
- Continue to pursue designation as HUD Entitled Urban County under the CDBG program in partnership with the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors. This designation will increase the level of block grant funding to the county by over \$1million.

Parks, Open Lands, Sustainability, and Historic Preservation

Accomplishments of 2019:

- Saratoga Springs received funding through the AARP Community Challenge 2019 as well as the Capital District Transportation Committee to create temporary 2-way bike lanes on Henry Street in the fall of 2019.
- Purchased two Chevy Bolt electric vehicles, with substantial rebates and discounts, one each for the City Building Department and the Parking Enforcement.
- Applied to be designated a Bronze Certified Climate Smart Community.
- Held a NightSeeing™ event to raise awareness of how various lighting affects the nighttime environments in Saratoga Springs and options the City can explore for street light conversion. This project is supported through a \$50,000 grant from NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities program.
- Co-chair of the Urban Sustainability Director's Network (USDN) Transportation Strategies Peer Learning Group and the USDN Small Cities peer exchange group.
- Through Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC)'s Smart Communities Program grant, the City is working to create a Municipal Smart City LED Street Light Conversion Best Practice Guide for the Capital Region.

2020 Objectives:

- Update the 2002 Open Space Resource Plan. Bids were entertained. A vendor has been chosen and the project is underway.

Building Department

Accomplishments of 2019:

- Created application check-in hours and prioritized complete plans for review, which have produced results.
- Issued 16% more permits and 16% more CO's compared with 2018.
- Inspectors performed 2,410 inspections last year; an annual increase of 9% over 2018.

2020 Objectives:

- Staff training on new building code and Zoning Ordinance.
- Certification process for master plumbers.
- Complete digitizing property files.

City Attorney's Office

Accomplishments of 2019:

- Assisted the mayor and City Council in finalizing the agreement with the City Center for the development of the parking garage.
- Assisted the mayor and the City Council in completing necessary acquisitions for the development of Geyser Road Trail.
- Assisted the mayor and the City Council in bringing the City's Zoning Map into compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

2020 Objectives:

- Assist the mayor and the City Council with the completion and adoption of the Unified Development Ordinance.
- Assist the mayor and the City Council in acquiring an easement for the development and construction of the third Fire/EMS Station.
- Assist the Mayor and City Council in updating and amending Code of Ethics.

Human Resources Office:

2020 Objectives:

- Establish a well-defined standardized process and salary setting for hiring, upgrades and promotional opportunities.
- Establish a Wellness Program that offers health information, lunch-n-learns, improved vending machine options, support groups, organized physical activity at work, biometric screenings and an internet web portal.
- Develop a more defined new hire orientation process to include sexual harassment training at hire.
- More defined exit process.
- Update the Human Resource Personnel and Procedures Handbook as well as the IT Policy and get employees to sign off on them annually through DocuSign capabilities.
- Bring Human Resource related duties that are being conducted by other departments (DPS, DPW) into the Office of Human Resources (i.e., worker's compensation).

Office of the City Historian

Accomplishments/Projects of 2019:

- "Echoes from the mill: Tales from between the Lions," a Powerpoint presentation for Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation House Tour.
- Skidmore College Anthropology 201 - Ethnographic Research Methods.
- Saratoga County History Roundtable (SCHR).

2020 Objectives:

- Convention Hall 1893 – 1965 Program:
- Collaborative community project with Skidmore, and members of the Saratoga County History Roundtable Oral History Team.
- Digitized Oral Interviews.

Mayor Kelly commended all the volunteers for the City's successes and plans. Our form of government relies on their input, expertise and efforts. Volunteers and community engagement is outstanding in Saratoga Springs. We sincerely thank you for taking your time to reach out, speak up, advise and serve!

ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT

State of the City Address

Commissioner Franck stated it is a privilege to serve as your Commissioner of Accounts since 2006. This is his 8th term and his 15th State of the City Address. He thanked Mayor Kelly for her graciousness in giving him the opportunity to share the City's Accounts Department community initiatives. He thanked his wife for all her support.

Enhanced Information for the Community:

Commissioner Franck stated the City Clerk's Department, Risk and Safety, and the City Safety Committee have worked with NYS officials to review and update information for the City's licensing and permitting processes. Information is now on the City's Accounts Department website providing useful information on the following:

- Licensing of security guards through the New York Department of State.
- Demonstration Permits have been revamped to include important information of community groups and individuals wanting to demonstrate on City property.
- Fireworks Application and Permit Process has been updated to mirror the NFPA requirements and the NYS Penal Law.
- Risk and Safety in partnership with Public Works and Public Safety has worked with the local Chamber of Commerce and the NYS Film Commission to develop a new Film Permitting Process that allows the City to actively compete with other NYS communities for commercial film opportunities.

Safety Committee

Commissioner Franck also advised that the City Safety Committee is working with Bikeatoga, the City's Complete Street Committee, the Police Department and the PBA to offer a Bike Safety Program to the community. The Safety Committee continues to support safety programming provided by the Police Department and the PBA for their public outreach efforts to provide safety gear for bike rodeos and other educational opportunities.

Contract Management Technology

The Accounts Department continues to invest in technology that increases government transparency and operational efficiencies. The City's Laserfiche Program serves as the foundation for departmental contract management that provides up to date information on the current status of the City's contracts and vendor insurance.

City Clerk Licensing and Approval Process

In 2020, the City Clerk's Office will be working towards a paperless streamlined permitting process. Efforts are underway in the Accounts Department to provide applicants the opportunity to submit applications and their attachments online.

Safety Committee Emergency Management Planning

The Safety Committee is continuing its work with the Saratoga County Hospital Emergency Management Committee and the Saratoga County Local Emergency Planning Committee. The City's Director of Risk and Safety is the chair of that Committee. The City Safety Committee is also working diligently with federal, state and county organizations to provide a seamless community response as we prepare ourselves and our prospective visitors in what services can and should be expected in a time of emergency weather or other situations that arise.

Insurance & Risk and Safety

Risk and Safety and the City Safety Committee extensively reviewed and revised the City Risk and Safety Manual in 2019, which the City Council unanimously approved that provides changes resulting from federal and state mandates. Fine Art Appraisals will be undertaken in 2020 to determine the value of historical light fixtures in our beloved Canfield Casino and the Visitor Center. As the new 211 Division Street Garage and the renovations for City Hall are completed, insurance appraisals will be updated to reflect the hard work undertaken by the Department of Public Works in bringing these projects to fruition.

Assessments

The Assessment Office continues to see stabilization in the number of grievances being filed. In previous years, we have had well over 100. In 2015, it dropped to 79, in 2016 to 71 and 2017 we had 75. The department saw the least number of Grievances in 2008 at 41 and 2019 continued to stabilize at 41.

In 2019, we also continued to have the lowest Senior Citizen Exemption Denial rate. This is the continued result of contact with each senior via phone calls to remind them of deadline.

The Assessment Office continues to offer a yearly grievance class to help educate and inform property owners. This includes explanation of assessments. In many instances, owners find they are properly assessed and therefore do not need to file.

The Assessment Office also is working towards curtailing the exemption denials by the state for seniors by making the renewal process easier. They have changed the tax year required for proof of income. They will now use the same tax return used for the Enhanced STAR program.

Commissioner Franck also took the opportunity to state he will not be reassessing the City in 2020. Our annual level of assessment is in compliance with NYS guidelines and the cost of reassessment far outweighs the benefits.

Records Retention

As the City's Records Management Officer, his priority has always been to increase the efficiency of information retrieval and access in order to respond accurately and quickly to customers' inquiries. His department is working with Finance and IT to automate the "Cash Receivable Process" thereby eliminating the annual accumulation of 12 cubic feet of records going forward. Capital funds are being used to scan accumulations of files such as payrolls that have a 55-year retention, assessment records, building files and tax rolls. We are grateful to the assistance from Supervisor Tara Gaston who was able to assist our department in obtaining County digitized copies of tax rolls from 2004 through 2013, saving the City the cost of scanning those records.

The Accounts Department received a non-matching grant from the New York State Archives in the amount of \$74,875 to scan Planning Board Project files from 1946 through 2018. That project will be completed this year by the end of June 2020. We are now fully utilizing and accessing previously scanned images of the City's birth, death, marriage and genealogy records in order to efficiently serve the taxpayers of this City. It is no longer necessary to require community members to go to Albany to obtain their birth certificate. We can do it online in just a few minutes.

Conclusion:

Commissioner Franck stated the Accounts Department Team is composed of a special group of professionals who manage a variety of tasks. It is important that my charge to them is leadership, based upon transparency. We are driven by the needs of the community, and together we are committed to excellent service.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

State of the City Address

Commissioner Madigan expressed her deepest gratitude for her staff. The Finance Department did an outstanding job with the budget process this year - once again. She thanked former Deputy Commissioner of Finance Mike Sharp and Acting Deputy Commissioner of Finance Lynn Bachner, who stepped in at a moment's notice to ensure a 2020 Adopted Budget that met the needs of our City that works within the means of our taxpayer and City Departments. She also thanked Christine Gillmett-Brown for her leadership and institutional knowledge and the newly appointed Deputy Commissioner of Finance, Deirdre O'Dwyer-Ladd.

Commissioner Madigan also commended the IT Department, led by Kevin Kling. Cyber security is a constant focus and source of concern now, and we are extremely appreciative of the IT team's dedication and diligence regarding this growing, global issue.

Collaboration & VLT Aid

Commissioner Madigan stated it was announced last week that VLT Aid was being eliminated from the Governor's Executive 2020-2021 State Budget. This equates to a \$2.3 million dollar budget impact for the City of Saratoga Springs or 5% of our General Operating Budget. With Finance taking the lead, the mayor and all the commissioners quickly came together, as a united front, to immediately express our need for this funding to be reinstated. I strongly believe that the collaborative spirit we've enjoyed at the Recreation Center throughout 2018 and 2019 will stay with us for years to come.

2019/2020 Budget

In addition to the development of the 2020 Budget, the extensive renovation of City Hall and the continuation of IT improvements – 2020's finances will likely be impacted by the development of our third Fire / EMS facility on the east-side of the City and our support of Shelters of Saratoga and Code Blue to help find a long-term solution to our homelessness issues. We also wish to maintain and provide support for the restoration of Universal Preservation Hall and other arts-related collaborations, including our ongoing partnership with Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC) - a joint effort in attracting the global cultural tourist to our great city.

Sustainability

Commissioner Madigan stated energy efficiency and connectivity were key focus areas of 2019 and they will continue to remain top priorities in our 2020 financial and environmental efforts. They are committed to providing Community Choice Aggregation to realize its cost benefits and choice of green-energy for residents, and play our part doing what we can for the global climate crisis right here at the local level, with this residential bulk-energy-purchase program.

Commissioner Madigan is working with Tina Carton, Administrator of Parks, Open Lands, Historic Preservation, and Sustainability on a number of sustainability projects, including connected street lighting and the conversion of our streetlights to LEDs, obtaining vital grants and ensuring adequate matching funds

for these grants. These efforts help foster many of our SMART City projects - CCA, complete streets, and climate action for starters.

We are truly “walking the walk” of environmental consciousness and stewardship in our more energy-efficient City. She was thrilled to have been instrumental in purchasing the City’s first ever electric cars and she is committed to providing even more, similar energy-efficiency projects. She is looking forward to continue our partnership with Sustainable Saratoga and the Department of Public Works to reach future sustainable goals for our city.

Solar Energy

Commissioner Madigan announced our Solar Park is cranking. In 2013, she spearheaded the Spa Solar Park project and the cost savings are now abounding. Solar energy is paying for 100% of the electricity for many of our city-owned buildings including the Police Garage, the Westside Fire Station, the Canfield Casino, the Ice Rink and the Recreation Center. The 6.4 million kilowatts of electricity generated since the park’s solar array energized 2017 is equivalent to saving 192 thousand gallons of fuel or powering 218 homes.

SMART City 2020

Commissioner Madigan stated we are no doubt a SMART City, in terms of our fiscal health, our physical and network safety, and our collaborative/partnership nature. It is an honor to be the Finance Commissioner and be able to continue to promise and deliver great, progressive, bottom-line driven, energy efficient programs without raising taxes.

Thanks to our expert Legal Department, led by Vince DeLeonardis and Tony Izzo, and their service contract scrutiny, we are nearly ready to begin the physical implementation of a 5-G fiber network with our partner SiFi Networks, which will increase our City’s internet speed and wi-fi services; attracting new businesses to our downtown.

Finance 2020

Commissioner Madigan stated the bronze lions flanking the entrance of our historical and now technically sophisticated City Hall are a reminder of our City’s strength, wisdom and leadership. They are the perfect salute to the pride we share in our fiscally sound and environmentally conscious “SMART City.” She looks forward to forging steadily and strategically ahead to our even smarter, brighter future.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

State of the City Address

Commissioner Scirocco stated the state of the Department of Public Works is strong, working together, and delivering outstanding services to the public. They are operational 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. He gave credit to the DPW workforce, a group of employees who are ready for anything, always answer the call to serve, and take pride in their work. Without a focused DPW operation, all essential City services would come to a halt.

DPW also works daily to provide specialty services to our City in addition to the routine activities of snow removal, leaf pickup, grounds maintenance, and road repairs.

The Urban Forestry Division and the city arborist maintain and enhance our City’s urban forest. In 2020, we will make an ambitious effort to plant more trees, conduct a tree inventory, and update the Urban Forest Master Plan. The Department of Public Works’ prior efforts have been recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation with being designated for three consecutive years as a Tree City USA.

Congress Park and downtown beautification crews work tirelessly to maintain our beautiful downtown for residents, businesses, and visitors. From setting up the holiday decorations to planting flowers through the spring and summer, one of our best kept secrets is creating a downtown that's inviting. We will enhance this work in 2020 to ensure we do not lose our competitive advantage with other communities.

DPW has excellent street and highway crews, who dedicate their efforts to maintaining our road structures. One area of excellence is the in-house paving expertise that allows us to do more with CHIPs funding year after year. In addition, the outstanding work of Deputy Commissioner Joe O'Neill has ensured more roads are paved in a shorter window with the extension of track season.

2020 Projects

City Hall

Commissioner Scirocco stated the first, and the most impactful on the operation of City government, is the completion of the City Hall renovation and restoration project. City Hall has been a significant undertaking. Some of the stakeholders in the project include the public, the police department, the Design Review Commission and Preservation Foundation, the City's insurance carrier, the New York State Court System, two architectural and engineering firms, three prime contractors for general construction, plumbing, and HVAC work, and five City departments and elected officials.

The project is spearheaded by DPW. All stakeholders worked together to renovate and restore this circa 1870 building. They plan to begin the transition back into City Hall at the end of next month. While sections of the building could have been ready for occupancy sooner, City departments notified DPW that they would be prepared to move at the end of February. In addition, the current parking constraints downtown were taken into consideration as to not lessen the availability of parking spaces for the public.

This Council and the public will be very pleased with the New City Hall. Upgraded plumbing and electrical will be noticeable, along with an HVAC system that will provide temperature controls throughout the building. Energy efficiencies will be realized with LED lighting and the removal of window air conditioning units. The music hall will be preserved and enhanced to host events and dances. This project also satisfied the mandate for a second hearing room and adequate court space for a second full-time City Court Judge.

Last, but certainly not least, is in installation of lightning protection. Although the lightning strike, which caused this renovation, was a great benefit to improving the building, we will make certain that never happens again.

Dispatch

Commissioner Scirocco announced DPW will open a new dispatch center this spring that will support a modern DPW operation. The new dispatch office will assist and coordinate the delivery of routine and emergency services to the public. A new training room and emergency operations center will be utilized to prepare the workforce for the challenges we face. Additionally, an asset management storage room will assist our operation in modernizing the tracking and maintenance of tools utilized in the operation. The building will host a new sign shop. This modern equipment can create street signs, wayfinding signs, vehicle decals, and other items that currently DPW contracts with vendors to provide. Street signs alone can take more than six weeks to receive from the manufacturer. This is a cheaper and more efficient way to do business.

Water and Sewer

Commissioner Scirocco stated over the course of the last decade, the City has made multi-million dollar investments into the City's water and sewer infrastructure. These efforts will continue in 2020 and beyond. This year begins a four-year, \$4.2 million water infrastructure improvement plan to upgrade undersized water mains as identified by an engineering water model. The replacement of four and six

inch mains with eight-inch water mains will improve water delivery to the public. This project investment will result in an upgrade of over 18,000 linear feet of water mains.

DPW will also undertake significant upgrades to the Water Treatment Plant this year. A planned water treatment intake valve replacement project will replace three, circa 1800's intake valves bringing water from Loughberry Lake into the plant. A section of the intake lines and an overflow structure from approximately the 1870s will also be replaced. This replacement project represents a \$2.3 million investment. Improvements to the Water Treatment Plant include a new fire suppression system, rehabilitation of the filter room, removal of old radiators, patch and paint plaster walls, the installation of historically correct windows, and repairs to the slate roof. In consideration of the safety of our employees, a new freight elevator will be installed to replace an inoperable hydraulic elevator that was dated and dangerous.

Canfield Casino

Commissioner Scirocco stated in recent years, DPW has invested millions of dollars into the building to protect and preserve this historic treasure. Work has included a complete plaster restoration in the ballroom, the addition of ADA accessible entrances, renovation of the stairs and sidewalk, structural improvements, and the remediation of basement moisture issues. This year the Casino will enjoy renovations to the parlor including structural repairs to the chandeliers, the attic, and restoration of plaster, cupolas, and sconces.

The Canfield Casino is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year. DPW is planning a celebration of this significant milestone. The Canfield Casino is on the National Register of Historic Places and will be honored with a celebration that will welcome the public and acknowledge its importance to our history.

Commissioner Scirocco stated he looks forward to working with the council this coming year and accomplishing a great deal for the people of this City that we are honored to represent. Thank you.

PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

State of the City Address

Commissioner Dalton thanked the Council for welcoming a new kid on the block so graciously. She also thanked Deputy Commissioner Eileen Finneran for bringing her talents back to the Department of Public Safety, Fire Chief Joe Dolan, Police Chief Shane Crooks for their leadership and camaraderie, and her family, for their patience, support and love.

POLICE

Commissioner Dalton stated the mission of the Saratoga Springs Police Department is to serve and protect the lives and property of the people of the City of Saratoga Springs. The members of the Saratoga Springs Police Department carry out their duties to the best of their ability in accordance with their core values of honesty, integrity and respect. The police department is currently staffed with 74 sworn police officers, including three recent academy graduates and four recruits current in the academy, and five sergeants currently deployed on military duty. We are so proud of all of our officers in the armed forces for their service and look forward to a safe and happy homecoming for our deployed officers.

The police department employs 17 civilian employees, including 11 dispatchers, three Parking Enforcement Officers, two of whom are also Animal Control Officers, and 2 employees for records management.

The police department responded to 29,394 calls for service in 2019.

Commissioner Dalton commented on the retirements in 2019 of Police Chief Greg Veitch and Fire Chief Bob Williams and several promotions including the promotion of Lieutenant Shane Crooks to Chief of Police

and Captain Joe Dolan to Chief of the Fire Department. Laura Emanatian was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant and is currently responsible for the Administrative Services Division. Jason Mitchell was promoted to the rank of lieutenant and is currently responsible for the 1st and 3rd shifts. Evan Fort was promoted to the rank of sergeant and is assigned to the 3rd shift. Adam Dingmon was promoted to the rank of sergeant and is assigned to the 1st shift. Angela McGovern was promoted to the rank of sergeant and is also assigned to the 1st shift.

The police department went live with a new Computer Aided Dispatching and Records Management System this year, which features the instant sharing of information between agencies. This includes the location of patrol units to dispatch for the most efficient and accurate management and dispatch to emergencies. In anticipation of the new bail and discovery laws, the department also expanded "evidence.com", its web based evidence sharing system between the police department and District Attorney's office.

The police department conducts numerous area checks on a daily basis for the safety of the community including school checks, checks of local religious community organizations, trains station and business checks. These checks are planned a conducted based on requests and threat assessments. Training was also provided in civilian response to an active assailant for local business, community groups and schools. The department was also needed for 62 special events in downtown Saratoga that due to their size.

The department participated in numerous community outreach events such as the Special Olympics Torch Run, Blue Friday Shop with a cop, Police and Fire Departments charity hockey game, the first annual City Bike Rodeo, charity softball games, and secret and surprise reader programs for the schools.

Commissioner Dalton stated the Police Department continues to make sure that its officers are amongst the highest trained in the area by continuing to learn to meet the needs of our time. The results of that commitment are seen in officers who had multiple Narcan deployments in 2019 reversing drug overdoses. The department also worked with local schools and the Saratoga Springs Fire Department to offer "Stop the Bleed" training for teachers and administrators as well as continuing to offer training to local criminal justice students through the Saratoga Springs High School and BOCES programs.

Commissioner Dalton thanked Police Chief Greg Veitch who retired in June of 2019 after 25 years of service to the city, promoting ethics, training and leadership.

Commissioner Dalton extended a thank you to Assistant Chief John Catone who assumed the position of acting chief during the department's transition period offering his over 32 years of service and invaluable experience in the departments time of need.

Chief Robert Williams retired on February 28, 2019 after 35 years of service to the Saratoga Springs Fire Department. Chief Williams is a third- generation firefighter and a second-generation chief, we are very grateful for his commitment to our city.

FIRE

Commissioner Dalton advised the Saratoga Springs Fire Department has 64 firefighters who provide both fire and EMS response services for our City. Last year the Fire Department received 3,670 emergency medical calls and responded to 67 fires. Response times remained stable and EMS generated over \$1.1 million in revenue.

The Saratoga Springs Fire Department completed over 8000 hours of training last year in fire response and prevention, rescue, hazardous materials, officer development and code enforcement.

This fall a location for a long awaited 3rd Fire/EMS Station was selected on the eastern side of the City and we have moved forward pro-actively since then. The council voted unanimously last week to approve a contract with Hueber Breuer Construction Company. Inc. to assess what will be the defining characteristics and needs of this third station.

Internally, Code Enforcement & Fire Prevention have merged under the Fire Department and are now under the management of Battalion Chief Aaron Dyer.

The goal of Code Enforcement as it pertains to vacant structures is to eliminate unsafe structures and loss of historic structures. Last year they reduced the total number of vacant houses in the City by 39%.

Commissioner Dalton thanked the 202 men and women of the Public Safety Department for all they do. We are so fortunate to have your talent, commitment and service here in Saratoga.

SUPERVISORS

Matt Veitch

State of the City Address

Supervisor Veitch thanked Mayor Kelly for the time to share what he has been working on as supervisor for the City of Saratoga Springs.

In 2019, they continued construction of the new County public safety facility. He served as the chair of the Buildings & Grounds Committee. As a Committee, they moved the Saratoga County Law Library from the 3rd floor of City Hall to the County Court Building in Ballston Spa. They also worked on ongoing improvements and upgrades to the County Airport as part of their Airport Master Plan.

Supervisor Veitch advised that he will continue as the chair of the Building & Grounds Committee in 2020. The Public Safety Building will be completed in April and the County Public Health Department will be moved from their current location on Woodlawn Avenue to the new Public Safety Building. The Building & Grounds Committee will be tasked to determine what to do with the building on Woodlawn Avenue. They will continue to work on the airport runway and other airport improvements.

Supervisor Veitch advised he will continue to advocate for the needs of City and County residents at both the State and National levels as a member of the New York State Association of Counties, and the National Association of Counties. He serves as the Vice-Chairman of the Public Safety Committee at the state level. At the national level, he serves on the Community, Workforce, and Economic Development Steering Committee, the International Economic Development Task Force as a Vice-Chairman, and the IT Standing Committee at the National Association.

One thing Supervisor Veitch plans to work on at the state level in 2020 restoring the VLT aid the City has been receiving. While the City stands to lose much more from the state, the County stands to lose about \$775,000 in VLT funds. The County plans to add this item to our yearly legislative agenda, as well as to bring a full board resolution to our February meeting advocating for the funds. They have been working for some time to tackle the impacts of AirBnB rentals on our legacy hotel and bed & breakfast establishments in our City and County. After several meetings with our Economic Development and Tourism agencies in the City, as well as some of the B&B proprietors, I feel the time is right to look at our occupancy tax law and begin to level the playing field for our legacy establishments. The County will need to get a home-rule legislation passed at the state in order to begin collecting the occupancy tax from the Online AirBnB type operators.

Supervisor Veitch stated he is honored and proud to be asked to serve on the leadership team on the Saratoga Collaborative to End Homelessness. Working to find a permanent solution to our homeless situation will take a team effort. Shelters of Saratoga for started this collaborative to come up with a plan to help alleviate the issues that homelessness causes in our community. He hopes to bring value to the discussions and to work on producing viable, achievable ideas on the leadership team.

Other assignments for Supervisor Veitch this year include serving on the County's Public Safety Committee as its Vice-Chairman, the Racing & Gaming Committee, Legislative & Research Committee, Trails

Committee, Long Range Capital Planning Committee, and the NYRA Local Advisory Board. He will again serve with the mayor on the Saratoga Casino Hotel Foundation and was just re-elected the treasurer of the Saratoga County Capital Resource Corporation.

He looks forward to working with all the City Council members, as well as his colleague, Supervisor Gaston, to continue to serve the residents of Saratoga Springs at the County level.

Tara Gaston

State of the City Address

Supervisor Gaston thanked everyone for coming to tonight's State of the City. She appreciates Mayor Kelly and the rest of the City Council for the opportunity to share both achievements and goals with the City - all of which are only achieved with the collaboration and support of Saratoga Springs residents.

In 2019, she began her second year on the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors, continuing to represent City needs on the Legislative & Research, Real Property Tax, Racing & Gaming, and Health & Social Services Committees.

She continued the promise of her first year - to increase accessibility and accountability to the Office of Supervisor. She held a number of public forums within the City, providing individuals a new level of access. She also maintained a social media and public presence that allowed improved access for residents and the media, including maintaining a public calendar of events. She assisted in issues as varied as veterans' services, roads, food and safety concerns, and social services advocacy - as well as serving as an Uber driver for ten years of City records.

Supervisor Gaston worked for increased representation for Saratoga County on the Capital District Transportation Authority, seeking the appointment of an additional representative to the Board. It is particularly important goal as we look to the County Public Health Department's move from its current location in Saratoga Springs to the County facilities in Ballston Spa, which currently has not access to public transportation. While the process is not complete, she will continue to push for the state legislative approval to get our representative placed and working for Saratoga - trying to stay just below the level of phone calls that has the Governor's Office blocking her number. This has been difficult since the release of the governor's budget and the elimination of the VLT aid. As a note, the Governor's Office did inform me that Saratoga Springs was the first municipality to let his office know and Jeff Wade says he is tired of her; but not the Council so keep pushing.

In the budget process, she strove for increased funding for items with historical need, including the protection and preservation of Saratoga County history, technology through county departments, and support for individuals with substance use disorders and/or experiencing homelessness. She also created the County's first Code Blue subcommittee, taking the first steps to usher in changes in how Saratoga County handles housing. She introduced resolutions recognizing and supporting veteran spouse caregivers, as well as the work the Saratoga County mental health and Sheriff's Department do to provide mental health and addiction services to those in the jail.

Her first term was a good start. At the start of her second term, she has an increased understanding of how county government works best for Saratoga Springs and county residents - and how it doesn't. She also has a better grasp on where her particular experiences and skills can do the most work for Saratoga Springs at the County and is happy to share some of her plans for 2020.

Each month this year she will be holding issue-based public forums for residents to learn more about what their county is doing for them and ask questions. Her first forum, on county infrastructure, was held this past weekend, and future forum subjects include climate, technology, housing, and social services. She has increased her work in representing the county perspective in a variety of other conferences and events dealing with issues such as climate chaos and resiliency, public engagement in government, and the hemp industry. Additionally, she will continue service on state and national committees, including the New York

State Association of Counties standing committees on agriculture and rural affairs and public health and mental health, as well as the National Association of Counties committees on veterans and military services and energy, environment, and land use. New this year are appointments to the Climate Resiliency Committee and women's leadership council on the state level, and a leadership role in national energy policy.

To support this accessibility and increase public participation in county government, which will only result in better representation, she is continuing her drive for increased use of technology in the county. Improvements will increase accessibility to county services, as well as making it easier for the County to meet our mandates for information sharing, discovery requests, and contracting. She is happy that Supervisor Veitch remains chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee with a priority of making certain that county infrastructure is as efficient and effective as possible - and he continues to be gracious in her tendency to sigh at the (often necessary) slow pace of change.

She will also be representing Saratoga County on the Saratoga Collaborative to End Homelessness, a cooperative effort to end chronic homelessness within Saratoga County. As the County Department of Social Services oversees the Code Blue mandate, and along with the Department of Mental Health and Public Health - provides many of the services appropriate and necessary to support this goal. She is excited about serving on the design team in this sprint process. This allows her the opportunity to do the hard work of developing the infrastructure necessary to meet the goal of ending chronic homelessness, which will provide significant benefits to Saratoga Springs and Saratoga County, both in health outcomes and in reducing costs of service.

On a related note, she continues her advocacy for public transportation to make sure everyone has access to their services.

Chairman Preston Allen has made the 2020 Census a priority this year, and she will be working closely with him, Supervisor Jean Raymond, and the City, to make sure every County resident is counted. Fewer people counted means few dollars for our City and our County with regards to infrastructure and additional services. One of her first steps was to make sure Census2020 representatives were in touch with local organizations dealing with underserved population, some real estate interests, Shelters of Saratoga, the Saratoga County EOC, Mercy House, and various groups that work with backstretch and agricultural workers.

Finally, one of her major priorities this year is the development of a climate resiliency plan for Saratoga County. We know that climate chaos is real and impacting us already - we must now step forward and meet the demands head-on. Our farmers are dealing with changing seasons that impact planting and harvesting, and their income. Our Public Health Department is monitoring the increase in vector-borne illnesses such as Lyme and Coronavirus as a result of warmer winters and increased development. The Public Works Department is having to deal with an increase in frequency and severity of extreme weather events that cause road and bridge closures, with the resulting cascade of impacts to our economy. It is important to note that the New York Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act sets ambitious goals for New York State climate action that will require municipal work, and that many bonding and finance agencies, including Moody's, Blackrock, and Swiss Re are beginning to consider municipal climate preparation in their ratings. Saratoga Springs has been ahead of the curve in preparing for and dealing to climate chaos, and I will bring that same energy to the county response.

We live in interesting times; with significant demands both natural and man-made imposing on local governments, including Saratoga County. She is humbled, honored, and excited to have the continued trust of City residents in facing these demands. The state motto is the hopeful "excelsior," or ever upward, but it is important to remember that there is an implied "we" in that. We can only succeed when we are working together - but with the residents, resources, and drive of this city, we cannot fail.

Mayor Kelly closed by thanking the Council member and supervisors. She stated it is a privilege to be the mayor of Saratoga Springs. There is more to accomplish and she looks forward to doing so.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Kelly adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Ribis
Clerk

Approved:
Vote:

DRAFT