



State of the City Address—2014

Ladies and Gentleman of the Centerton City Council, and fellow citizens, as your Mayor, I am honored to report to you the state of the city and its future needs. I am grateful for the opportunity that the citizens have given me to serve the citizens of the City of Centerton over the past 3 years. First of all, I am happy to announce that the City of Centerton is financially sound, and thru fiscal conservation, your staff and City Council has balanced its budget over the past 3 years. The 2013 financial statement will be presented tonight and you will see that we are in a good financial condition.

I would like to report that Highway 102 is about 85 percent complete and should be completed in the spring of this year. We had challenging weather that delayed the project; however, the crew has worked even in the bad weather to get the highway ready to lay asphalt and stripe the roadway. Sidewalks are almost complete on both sides of the roadway and this is going to have a huge impact on the eastern side of our city.

Talking about the east side of the city, our Planning department has been very busy with several commercial projects starting this year to include a new Wal Mart Neighborhood Market, a new Mercy Health Clinic, a new liquor store, and 2 new nursing facilities. Also the voters have approved a 2nd Bentonville School District High School to be built in the northwest part of our city which will break ground in June of this year. Another commercial project completed is a new Casey's store and several new residential subdivisions.

Centerton has seen a huge impact on building in our city with a total of 4,587 inspections and 1,087 permits issued in 2013, and over \$53,000 worth of permits issued in the first month of 2014. Currently we are seeing 30-40 new housing starts each month, and as the highway is completed, we anticipate our number of new commercial permits to increase. A backup inspector has been designated to assist when the work load is high or the main inspector is on vacation, keeping all inspections in-house.

The Police department had over 6,000 calls and has increased its staff by 2 this year. The plan is to increase the police department each year by adding 2 officers, and in 2016 add 3 officers to accommodate the new high school. The current police fleet is up to date. Despite a steady

increase of calls for service, there has been no notable increase in serious crimes, and there has been not been an increase of trends in criminal activity in our community that should be cause of concern for our community.

Next is the Street department, this year we added a parks and recreation person to the staff due to the increased amount of city properties to maintain. This individual will be responsible for upkeep on all city parks and city buildings. The street department has done an outstanding job on keep our street repaired and up to date, and has done well maintaining the 45 miles of roads in our city limits. Major projects for this year include paving Seba Road another 850 feet to accommodate the new high school, and improving the intersection of Seba and Gamble Roads to add turning lanes for the increased traffic. The city also received a \$250,000 State Aid Grant which will help the city double its overlay projects for 2014.

Other parks project to be completed in 2014 is the first phase of the Kinyon Sports Complex, which will include one competition ball field and 3 practice fields. Trails will be added to the Centerton Lake to include a walking trail around the lake and also some natural trails on the north side of the lake, and a pavilion where the Centerton Farmers Market and other events can be held.

The Centerton Fire Department responded to over 700 calls for service in 2013. As the transition to becoming a full time fire department takes place, a full time fire chief has been added, a part time assistant chief, and 2 firefighters working 9 hours shifts and rotating thru the volunteers. A new support truck was added, and a new medical rescue truck has been ordered. A new chief's vehicle has been purchased along with a new Polaris to help remove snow and ice in the parking lots of the fire and police departments, and also can be used on fire scenes to assist with brush type fires.

The Centerton Water and Sewer Department also had a good year and has reached an agreement with the City of Decatur to provide waste water treatment for our community. This will help keep our waste water bill steady, and keep our rates steady. The department will also be reading meters every 29 to 31 days to help keep the bills more consistent. Two new people were added to the department and the department is in the process of hiring another full time billing clerk to help with the increased workload.

Centerton Animal control had a great year in adoptions and returning missing pets to their owners by the use of Face Book and Pet Finder, and to also help adopt pets that were not claimed. Thru these efforts the normal population is kept low. A new truck has been added to replace an aging vehicle and dog tag sales are up from the previous year.

The City received several grants this year. As I mentioned earlier, a \$250,000 grant for road improvements along with a \$25,000 grant from State Rep. Dan Douglass to help place a walking

trail around the lake. A grant for \$50,000 was received by State Senator Bart Hester to help purchase "Storm Sirens" or outdoor warning devices for the community which will be installed in March of this year.

Lastly, no administration is complete without the loyal staff of great employees and support of the Centerton City Council. Our city has many hard working employees, from the Department heads to the troops, that carry out the daily activities and duties to help keep our city running smooth and efficiently. Thanks for a Job Well Done!!!