

2020 State of the City January 27, 2020

“Behold the turtle. He makes progress only when he sticks his neck out” a quote by James Bryant Conant, 1893 to 1978.

I’m honored to be delivering this State of the City for 2020 to all of you here this evening and to all our citizens of Renville. Our city’s future lies in our hands as we strive to build a better community, create opportunities, and protect the heritage of those who served before us.

What does a turtle have to do with this? Are we going to be a turtle that hides in its shell or are we willing to stick our neck out to move Renville forward? 2020 is the start of a new decade, a decade of changes that seem to be coming faster than any decade before this time. Change isn’t easy and it certainly isn’t quick when it comes to government. Are we ready? You bet!!

One of the first changes I had to make when I was elected to the council in 2000 was to learn that city government policies and procedures are much more complicated and time consuming than as a business owner where you spend your own money.

In today’s society where information is almost instantaneous we want to get things done NOW. It seems like a turtle better get out of the way to avoid getting run over. Government, with all its rules and regulations definitely doesn’t move instantaneously. There is good reason for that....well, let’s just say there are “reasons” for that. We definitely want to take the time to get things right and in the best interests of our city. When we are spending taxpayer money, we have to plan farther into the future as funds are never guaranteed from one administration to the next.

A big thank you tonight goes out to our city staff, our council and committee members, and especially their families who have to put up with their absence as the work is done to keep our city efficiently operating and safe.

Looking ahead to 2020, it will be a year of positive changes for Renville. For over two years our administration, and council, along with our committees, have been

preparing, researching and discussing the processes necessary for us to upgrade, update and remodel our public buildings. Engaging our citizens in this process in 2020 will also take time, but it is a necessary step for our taxpayers to have some input.

Progressing *slower* than a turtle's pace due to government regulations, a Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon sign, known as RRFB, will be installed at the intersection of Hwy 212 and Third Street. This sign is the result of safety concerns at this location and became one of the first goals of the collaboration between the City, RCW and the Lions Club----known now as the Community Improvement Alliance. This committee comprises members from Renville, Danube, and Sacred Heart. It is a great example of how we are all coming together for the greater good knowing that "many hands make light work", a quote by John Heywood. (1497-1580). None of us can do this alone. We work in partnerships created out of the needs of our communities. We support our differing viewpoints and encourage all voices to be heard to make the best decisions for our future.

2020 *will* be a year of other economic development for Renville such as the proposed clinic at the intersection of Hwy 212 and Main Street. We look forward to this project as a welcome addition to our business community, our vision of a healthier community, and the ripple effect it can have on Renville's downtown business development.

We will continue to work hard this year to assist new and existing businesses. There are financial opportunities available through our business loan program and the Renville County EDA to assist where needed.

We will continue the ongoing beautification of Renville by encouraging our residents and businesses to take pride in their surroundings. We will continue promoting public safety, and our school system!

We are looking forward to seeing our new logo displayed on all our vehicles and equipment, stationery, website, and local signs to showcase our renewed energy and openness to change.

As your mayor, I want to encourage everyone to make this the year to participate more in local events like Sugar Beet Days, Revitalizing Renville, National Night Out, local organizations, and in city government. I encourage families, citizens of all ages, and especially newcomers, to get to know your neighbors, to volunteer wherever you can, to step up, and be like a turtle and stick your neck out!

I want to extend a special invitation for any interested citizens to attend our committee meetings as well as our council meetings. They are open to the public - the times are posted in our city offices and on the website. This is the year to get involved and be heard.

In closing, I again want to thank our administrator, council and committee members for all their hard work and commitment during 2019. We have stuck our neck out and we are ready for the progress of 2020 and beyond. We know that "slow and steady wins the race". A quote by Robert Lloyd 1733 to 1764

Thank you,
Janette Wertish, Mayor