

November 14, 2011

Remarks Prepared for Swearing In Ceremony

Good afternoon.

Thank you all for coming to mark this occasion. It is an honor to be re-elected and granted a full four year term to work toward our goal of transforming Flint into a city with new jobs, strong neighborhoods and great schools.

These are tough times for our country, state and city. And when times are hard, it is great to have a good family around you. I want to recognize my family who are here today. My wife and our First Lady, Carrie Walling. My sons Bennett and Emery. My parents Paul and Reba Walling. My grandmother Dorothy Cross.

Through the generations, my family has been here in Flint through the ups and the downs.

Since being elected first in August of 2009, we have gone through a lot together. There have been a number of painful and even tragic setbacks because of the weak economy, street violence, and persistent financial stress.

There has also been progress made in every one of the City's nine wards and right here at City Hall that positions our community to move forward into 2012, 2015 and beyond.

Much remains to be done with far fewer resources than we have had in the past, but through hard work, good partnerships, and new ideas, there are new businesses that have moved into Flint like Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy there are new neighborhood developments like Smith Village that are moving ahead

there are new youth programs like the Boys and Girls Club at Haskell Center  
there are more police officers through grants and the Michigan State Police  
there is master planning that is underway  
there are lawsuits that were cleared up  
there are cost savings and changes that were put in place in every department

Yes, we continue to have an operating deficit but it is less than when I was first elected.

Yes, we have to carefully manage cash flow but it is better than it was a year ago

Yes, there are more reforms and concessions that are necessary  
And I am committed to doing my part to stabilize our City and secure our Future

This will take our whole community working together with every partner willing to help.

Every day we have each have a choice:

Pull forward together

Or

Push each other back

Cooperate on solutions

Or

Exacerbate our problems

This fact remain no matter the size of the budget,  
no matter the person who serves as mayor,  
no matter the person appointed by the Governor,  
no matter your age, your income, or your race

We have a choice as a community

Pull forward together

Or

Push each other back

With the voters from all across the city affording me this opportunity when given a number of other alternatives, I believe that the spirit of unity and partnership, which I have worked so hard to instill, is now rooted and ready to grow in our community.

It is affirming to see that we agree that we can not rebuild our city or society with the bad habits of the past

Yes, there will be days of sunshine and of rain. There will be seasons of storms, but also, in due time, of harvest. I have faith that those who choose unity over division, peace over violence, and Will, in the fullness of time, endure to see the Flint of our vision.

Many more positive changes are coming and I will continue to welcome all of the help that we can get.

Thank you again for being there for me and working along side of me to serve Flint