

President's annual report and comments

The Bethlehem Gadfly City government January 6, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts on City Government* 

President's 2020 Annual Report

Last night's January 5 meeting was, of course, the first City Council meeting of the new year and the traditional time for the Council President's annual report.

That report will be online, and Gadfly probably will obtain a copy to share with you (just added, see link above).

The amount of work that our elected part-timers accomplish in the course of a year is always quite impressive, and we need be thankful.

It is not a job that they do for the money, for sure.

So Gadfly begins this day with a tip o' the hat in their direction.

He very much appreciates those who step up, who fight the good fight.

Here is President Waldron reading that 2020 annual report (8 mins.):

But always of interest as well as the report is any comments the president takes this ritual moment to make.

After reflecting on the past and on the brink of the new beginning, what's



on the president's mind as the year turns?

For President Waldron, his focus was on Council interaction.

He was talking to his fellow Council members.

In regard to space to speak, President Waldron said he would “never be stricter than necessary for the good of the meeting,” that it was important to hear all perspectives, especially those you don't agree with.

But he called attention to the negative effect of repetition and indicated that Council members should speak no more than twice on any issue (a Roberts' rule?), except under new business, where the rules are more flexible.

Council members should avoid personal insults, attacks, name calling, be respectful of the time of others, not be combative.

With an eye to the local campaign season upon us, President Waldron said he would work “to keep politics outside of the room.”

With an eye to the national scene we are all suffering from, President Waldron issued a “call for civility,” suggesting that we could model a thoughtful way to run our business.

As we move forward, President Waldron called for the civility, decorum, and respect lacking on the national level.

A “call for civility.” The words resonate strongly with Gadfly after the long night of the Georgia election and on the morning of this day in which we expect another bleepshow at the national level.

Please. Good conversation *can* build community. And a better sense of community in our wider world is obviously what we need.

President Waldron’s comments (7 mins.):

Gadfly will add that he appreciates the flexibility and respect and sometimes necessary patience that President Waldron exhibits toward we public commenters and empathizes with his attempts to be fair to a colleague who can be stubborn and repetitive.

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