

My fellow residents, your mayor here, with an exciting and sober conversation. As usual, we will go over a few key activities and projects going on within YOUR City! On today's agenda are details of a new compost facility opening up in Portage. We will touch on School Resource Officers and a recent meeting I had with Portage Township School officials. Also we will discuss a few details regarding a renewed partnership with an important partner to our city, Indiana American Water. And finally about a long-held Memorial Day service.

Now onto Portage's new compost site. According to their website, The Recycling & Waste Reduction District of Porter County is a local agency dedicated to improving the environment and quality of life by providing services and educational programs which help residents reduce, reuse, and recycle. As a part of a service offered by Porter County, the county operates compost sites throughout the county. Portage will be the newest site to open in the County. Our site opens next week, Wednesday, June 5th.

Converting yard waste into compost is a process these facilities have been doing for years. As a result, fresh compost is available to residents. This new facility is just one more, a new and exciting development for Portage and our County. It is located along Highway 12. Curious minds can find the most detailed and up-to-date information by visiting: www.PorterCountyRecycling.com.

Now we are onto the subject of School Resource Officers. I have been very open and on the record regarding my feelings towards school resource officers in our Portage School System, and how the Portage Township School systems should mend and continue their long serving partnership with the Portage Police Department. Last week, I and the Portage PD had a very productive meeting with school officials regarding school resource officers. The Portage PD has supplied Police Radios to each School in the City. These Radio offer instant communication with the School and the Portage PD. Portage PD has also, after my direction, supplied a Police Radio to the current SRO's, so these officers are in constant communication with the Portage PD. We are making progress to protect our kids and teachers.

In the upcoming weeks, a meeting is expected to happen between Your Mayor, Your Sheriff, and the Superintendent of Portage Township Schools, regarding getting OUR Portage Police SRO's back into OUR Portage schools starting next school year. I am 100% committed to doing what is right for school safety and working with school officials with a program that is to benefit school safety. Being as most of our students reside within Portage City Limits, the program I am advocating for benefits student safety both during and after school hours.

Last week I met with Porter County Tourism officials for exciting new marketing plans for marketing the playground Hannah's Hope at Founder's Square. This is big news. I feel dedicating marketing money and resources towards the heart of Portage is a solid move. Thank you, Porter County Tourism.

Now, onto Fallen Timbers...At a standstill since last year, it has been a big priority for my administration to move forward, and get the project done right. Area residents have been patient. Thank you very much for that. The finished result will be worth the wait. The next step for us was to award a bid to complete sidewalks, drainage and paving for Fallen Timbers; the work will begin very soon as long as Mother Nature cooperates. The Road project for Evelyn Street, right off of Stone, started last week. Again, thanks for being patient.

Water main breaks happen, and when they do it is imperative that our Street Department closes roads as soon as possible so Indiana American Water crews can get to work. In recent weeks, your Mayor's Administration started a new, fresh start and Partnership with Indiana American Water. It's another positive step in the right direction for Portage residents and our visitors.

During last week's city address, we discussed who NIRPC, The Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission, is and what they do. Following my recent meeting two weeks ago, several NIRPC executive committee members met with me here at City Hall to do what they do best...Help the regional municipalities with complex long term planning projects. Our goal is to explore funding for road maintenance for the stretch from Old Porter to the Toll Road Bridge. This will help make things fairer for you, the tax payers. There are no guarantees, but if it is a Go, it still isn't a solution for 100% of the cost. It would be a good starting point. Specifically, we are partnering with NIRPC to explore a program from the federal government called "The FAST act." Even with this progress, your City Hall is still moving forward with truck routes.

Yesterday many local Patriots attended the Memorial Day parade and ceremony honoring our fallen heroes at Calvary Cemetery. The event has been an annual tradition for many Patriots and organizations alike...American Legion, VFW, MCROTC are just a few of several of these organizations. I spoke at the event, and I remind each in attendance what Winston Churchill said of those American soldiers he met in World War II, that they seemed to be the only young men who could laugh and fight at the same time. A great general in World War 2 called them our secret weapon, "just the best darn kids in the world." As we honor their memory, let us pledge that their lives, their sacrifices, their valor, shall be remembered for as long as God gives life to our Nation. Let's never forget our heroes who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our way of life.

Thank you for your ongoing prayers and support. Until next time, See you Soon.