

Mayor Winthrop's Letter to Readers



To all Citizens of Newport,

It has been an honor to serve as Newport's Mayor this past year, and I look forward to a very busy and productive 2018. As I look back on 2017, I am very proud of what we have accomplished as a community.

The year of 2017 saw the completion of several important and very visible improvements including the \$6 million Broadway streetscape project, which has been met with rave reviews, and the completion of the \$6.6 million upgrade to the Gateway Transportation Center, which included new bus shelters as well as roadway and drainage improvements. Also, thanks to a \$3 million gift from Salve Regina University, the City was able to install a new state of the art playing surface and upgrade the locker rooms at Freebody Park's

Toppa Field. In November, the "Newport Re-Uses" campaign to ban single use plastic bags went into effect. In support of this initiative, a very generous donation was made to the City to buy and distribute 9,000 re-usable bags. A few hundred of these bags are still available, so please visit City Hall to pick one up.

In 2018, the City Council and City Administration will be focusing on a number of significant projects that got their start this past year. In March, the City received a \$40 million commitment from the State of Rhode Island for the realignment of the Pell Bridge ramps. The objective of this project is to calm traffic, reconnect City streets, and free up over 40 acres of land for commercial development. This project is one of the most significant undertakings in Newport in the past 50 years. We have only one chance to get this right, so we will be soliciting input from all stakeholders and will thoroughly vet this project with the public. The first public meeting on this project will be scheduled in the first quarter of 2018.

Also in the North End, there is a plan to develop a \$1 million bike path which will run parallel with the Newport Secondary Rail Line from the Community College of Rhode Island to the Gateway Center.

We will be breaking ground in January for the \$7 million renovation of the former Sheffield School for the "Innovate Newport" project which will transform the former elementary school into a technology business incubator. The objective is to provide a resource where the area's entrepreneurs and innovators can interact and collaborate to create future economic drivers for the region. The project seeks to attract businesses focusing on underwater technology, marine science, cybersecurity and environmental resiliency while creating well-paying, year-round jobs for Newport and our neighboring communities. This exciting economic development initiative has received strong funding support from the federal government, the State of Rhode Island and the City.

The City Council has also committed to improving the City's communications efforts and has awarded a \$260,000 contract to design and develop a new, dynamic, and easy to use website. We will also be working on \$75 million in upgrades to our Wastewater Treatment Plant, negotiating the final agreement for the transfer of the Newport Naval Hospital facilities to the City, and pursuing an agreement with the National Sailing Hall of Fame for a move to Newport. The City will once again be hosting the Volvo Ocean Race's only North American stopover at Fort Adams State Park on May 8th through May 20th.

In 2018, the City will also host over 3 million visitors, including nearly 70 cruise ship stopovers, see the construction of two new hotels on the waterfront, and watch the 40-room hotel proposal for Broadway work its way through the regulatory process. It is anticipated that many of these efforts will help us replace the \$1 million in lost revenue and the loss of over 200 jobs as the result of the Newport Grand move to Tiverton.

In closing, I'd like to recognize the City Council for all that they do to make Newport the great City that it is and to thank our City Manager, Joseph Nicholson, and his extremely capable staff for their commitment to Newport.

Finally, the Council will continue to position Newport as the greatest City in America, and I assure you that I will never lose sight of the Number one priority in Newport, which is and always will, be public safety.

Mayor Henry E. (Harry) Winthrop

Newport Health Equity Zone Promotes a Healthy Start to 2018

Newport Health Equity Zone (NHEZ) has designed and implemented a campaign that encourages Newport residents to kick off the new year both healthy and happy. With emphasis on equal access to health resources throughout the community, the Get Well, Stay Well campaign highlights the availability of numerous classes and programs offered by NHEZ. Classes include diabetes prevention, group exercises, community connection and youth empowerment, allowing participants to take control of their health and reduce the risk of diabetes. For more information or to view the full list of classes, visit <http://newporthealthequity.com/get-well-stay-well/> or contact Kelsea Dixon at (401) 846-4828.



Government 101: What is the "Docket" and Where Can I Find it?

A docket is the official agenda of City Council meetings. All items of business are filed with the City Clerk and come before the Council at meetings which are scheduled at 6:30pm on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month. Included in the docket are the following:

Citizens' Forum where anyone can speak for 3 minutes on any non-docket and non-personnel items;

Consent Calendar where minutes of past meetings and requests of the Council are approved at once, in its entirety, unless a Council member requests specific items to be removed for discussion;

Licenses and Permits where Council members hear requests for approvals of "victualing" (food) and entertainment licenses;

Appointments to Boards and Commissions;

Resolutions of the Council which are official communications from the City Council to the administration and staff;

Communications from the City Manager that require City Council approval.

The City Council also sits as the Board of License Commissions and hears any requests for liquor licenses. To find the dockets, please visit the City's website at www.cityofnewport.com and click on City Council Agendas on the top right of the screen or under the section "Frequently Visited Pages". Dockets are also available in the City Clerk's office on the ground level of City Hall and at the Council meetings.

Newport's Working Cities Challenge Initiative

What can nonprofits, residents, and employers do to change poverty levels and unemployment where they live? This was the question the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston posed to cities across Rhode Island as part of the Working Cities Challenge. The answer was clear: They form collaborative partnerships to address these important issues. After a year of work by local community leaders and non-profits, who formed the Working Cities Challenge Collaborative, Newport was one of only three cities in Rhode Island to be granted \$400,000 to create the systems change needed to drive down poverty levels.

"Residents and employers across the State will see 2018 as a year of unprecedented collaboration between over 20 social service agencies, government entities and the local community as we pilot initiatives that maximize career potential; address employer needs; and connect residents to key services that enable success," said Kate Cantwell, Initiative Director of WCCC. Cantwell continued, "Newporters should be proud of the collaboration that has already taken place. Now the best part begins as we pilot implementation."

For more information, you can visit <https://www.bostonfed.org/workingcities/rhode-island/cities/newport>.



The City is proud to report that Newport is now the 31st community in Rhode Island to receive the Storm Ready Designation. To be recognized as StormReady, a community must establish a 24-hour emergency operations center, provide multiple ways for residents to receive severe weather warnings, promote the importance of public readiness, create a monitoring system for weather conditions and develop a concrete hazardous weather plan. Additionally, discussing the weather in local classrooms, updating residents with weather related notifications and improving the City's Emergency Operation plan are part of the emergency preparation. Thank you, Newport Fire Department, for your continued efforts to keep Newport and its residents safe!



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