

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MUNICIPAL COMPLEX
DATE: MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2016

PORTSMOUTH, NH
TIME: 7:00PM [or thereafter]

The Portsmouth High School Brass Quintet performed several selections for the City Council.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Blalock called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Blalock, Assistant Mayor Splaine, Councilors Perkins, Dwyer, Lown, Pearson, Spear, Cyr and Denton

III. INVOCATION BY REVEREND HILSON, NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

Reverend Hilson of New Hope Baptist Church conducted the Invocation.

POSTING OF THE COLORS

Members of the Portsmouth Police and Fire Departments Honor Guard held a procession and posted the colors.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Former Mayor Lister led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

Wendell Purrington sang the Star Spangled Banner.

Welcoming Remarks by the Honorable Governor Margaret Hassan

The Honorable Governor Margaret Hassan provided welcoming remarks to the City Council.

Remarks from United State Senator Jeanne Shaheen

Connor from Senator Shaheen's office read the Senator's well wishes to Mayor Blalock and the City Council for the future.

PORTSMOUTH POET LAUREATE – KATE LEIGH

Ms. Leigh read the poem she wrote in honor of the event entitled "*Peoples Mayor*" for Jack Blalock.

*Sweet Portsmouth, opens wide her doorways,
Embraces with welcome arms her new mayor.
In kindness may we all proceed, refreshed,
As the new year brings in this crisp air!*

*Consensus is both the Word and the Goal.
True leaders listen, idea-driven,
Speak up freely, agree to disagree,
Guide all decisions with a clear wisdom.*

*Our lovely brick Portsmouth, sown by the sea.
Emerges always historic and direct.
With her intrinsic charm, inherent traits,
She forever garners widespread respect.*

*So blessings be on this inauguration,
And on our community, artistically rare.
Appreciation to this city council,
And glad tidings towards our peoples' mayor.*

OATH OF OFFICE

City Clerk Barnaby administered the Oath of Office to the following officials who were elected at the November 3, 2015 Municipal Election.

A. FIRE COMMISSION

Commissioner Michael Hughes

B. POLICE COMMISSION

Commissioner Joe Onosko
Commissioner Joe Plaia

C. SCHOOL BOARD

Ann Walker, Patrick Ellis and Roseann Vozella Clark. Gary Epler was unable to attend.

D. CITY COUNCIL

1. Councilors Rebecca Perkins, M. Christine Dwyer, Brad Lown, Nancy Pearson, Eric Spear, Joshua Cyr and Josh Denton
2. Assistant Mayor James Splaine
3. Mayor Jack Blalock

V. ADDRESS BY MAYOR JACK BLALOCK

Thank you very much, good evening and Happy New Year!

Welcome family, friends, neighbors, former City Mayors, City Councilors, School Board members, Police and Fire commissioners, City Manager John Bohenko, City Clerk Kelli Barnaby, City staff and department heads, and all special guests.

I would like to thank the Portsmouth High School Brass Quintet, Portsmouth Fire and Police Honor Guards, Reverend Hilson, Wendell Purrington, Portsmouth Poet Laureate Kate Leigh, representatives of Senator Shaheen's office and Honorable Governor Maggie Hassan for their participation in tonight's events.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the residents of Portsmouth for electing me to be the 67th Mayor of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. I am very appreciative of your support and trust in me to serve this great City, and my hometown. Having been born in this very building, it is a proud and humbling moment for me to be standing in front of you all as Mayor. I know my mom and dad are looking down at me and smiling.

While I am here tonight to begin my tenure as Mayor, I want to emphasize the importance of civic participation and collaboration within our community as we move forward. Regardless of whether you voted for me or not, I am grateful towards all who participated in this past election; it is your involvement that shapes the future and influences our decisions. I believe the results of this election truly reflect the characteristics of our City. You are welcoming a City Council in which a healthy blend of experience and demographics exist: Portsmouth natives, Portsmouth transplants, entrepreneurs, educators, veterans, legal experts, art advocates and much more. I believe our citizens recognized that these diverse perspectives will help position the City well, as we navigate various developments.

I look forward to working alongside this hardworking group and I am pleased to congratulate them tonight: Assistant Mayor Jim Splaine, Councilor Rebecca Perkins, Councilor Chris Dwyer, Councilor Brad Lown, Councilor Nancy Pearson, Councilor Eric Spear, Councilor Josh Cyr and Councilor Josh Denton.

As a lifelong Portsmouth resident and local business owner, it almost goes without saying that I am passionate about what this city offers to its community. My roots run deep in this City, both my father and I have previously served on Portsmouth's City Council, and I have served on the City's Board of Adjustment, Economic Development Commission and Portsmouth Housing Authority's Development Board. I believe this is a great City, and will continue to evolve positively. I chose to raise a family and remain here throughout the years due to the excellent, consistent services that this City provides. This is largely in part to City Manager, John Bohenko, who for the past 19 years has worked diligently with numerous City Councilors, Mayors and talented staff members to achieve results many accolades and awards—for its budgeting, AAA bond rating, water sustainability, among other accomplishments—due to the many initiatives of the City Manager and his staff.

In my experiences, I have been fortunate to come to know many of Portsmouth's people. Both old and new residents value the culture and services that persevere through time and development, which leads to high expectations for the future. Maintaining these expectations will take the efforts of not one person but everyone working respectfully together. I would also like to take the opportunity to acknowledge those who volunteer to serve on City committees, boards and commissions. They choose to take time out of their busy lives to be involved in City government and at times, handle challenging circumstances to preserve our quality of life in Portsmouth.

I urge other residents to get involved; whether it be by filling any vacancies on City committees, joining or forming a neighborhood group or association, attending public meetings or input sessions and other future opportunities. A unique, thoughtful citizenry already exists here, but there will continue to be a greater need for public input to enable this City to grow responsibly in a manner that benefits residents and businesses while preserving its overall character.

The passions of our residents has already translated to successful City projects, such as the African Burying Ground, Bike Friendly Community accreditation, and character-based zoning—to name a few. This City Council will be making significant decisions over the next couple of years to uphold a strong infrastructure moving forward, especially regarding wastewater treatment facilities, the Deer Street Parking Garage, Master Plan, a new Senior Services facility and the McIntyre Federal Building redevelopment. I want this City Council to work cohesively with the community to make this next step in Portsmouth's history one defined by smart growth, heritage, patience and involvement. I want this era to not only be remembered by the work of the City Council, but by the diverse citizen participation that led to a thriving environment.

I would like to close by thanking my wife Pam, my children Richard and Jackie, my brother Jim and sister Janie for their continue support. Thank you again to everyone here their support as well. We all are fortunate to be part of this community, and I look forward to serving the residents and working to take Portsmouth to newer, better heights.

I know a lot of people are counting on me. "I promise, I will not disappoint you!"

VI. BENEDICTION BY REVEREND HILSON, NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

Reverend Hilson performed the Benediction.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:40 p.m., Councilor Lown moved to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Spear and voted.



Kelli L. Barnaby, MMC, CMC, CNHMC
City Clerk