

Program: Mayor Donald Kasprzak on *Issues in the City*

With the economy wreaking havoc on communities large and small, Plattsburgh is no exception. Yet Mayor Kasprzak began today's program with good news. He took a few moments to highlight some of the positive developments in our area: the new Kinney Drugs, Catherine Gardens, the United Project, a new Aldi's store, the newly renovated McDonald's, Harbor View Condominium Project, Freedom Heights, the improvements in Plattsburgh State's ice arena and facilities, the fishing tournaments, Nova Bus, the new theater project and the new \$500,000 Main Street Grant recently received by the City's Community Development Office.



Plattsburgh City Mayor Donald Kasprzak

Mayor Kasprzak said, "All of these are positive developments that we are proud of." Kasprzak claimed that he has often been known as the "black cloud covering progress," but the Mayor certainly doesn't see this as the case. Although the entire country is experiencing some of the most difficult economic challenges many of us will see in our lifetimes, the North Country, he said, is resilient in many ways. Despite this resiliency, tough decisions are being made every day.

A few Statistics

The five largest taxpayers in the city of Plattsburgh are Georgia Pacific, Meadowbrook Nursing Home, Bombardier, Plattsburgh Plaza, and Mold-Rite Plastics. Collectively they contribute 6-percent of the total taxes collected annually at \$501,000. The top utility users are Georgia Pacific, SUNY Plattsburgh, Pactiv Corp., CVPH Medical Center and Mold-Rite. Mayor Kasprzak explained that everyone from big business to family and friends are affected by the decisions facing the city. In tight economic times when big business feels the strain, they start looking at their options.

"It's tough to convince elected officials to make decisions that are critical to stabilizing things as we move forward," said the Mayor.

Q: Can you explain the City's energy contract, and tell us what the rate escalators are?

A: There are no rate escalators. The New York Power Authority can pretty much do what it wants to. It doesn't have to wait a year to make rate increases. It can do it immediately.

Comment (Sara Rowden) — I was doing a presentation at Plattsburgh State about budgeting and the inherent chal-

lenges with cutting services. One student asked if there was ever one service that everyone could agree should be cut and to that I answered, "Yes, the services that they don't need at the time."

Q: First, do you have plans for the old airport, and secondly, do you have plans to seek higher office?

A: I am not the best person to ask about the airport progress, as the City of Plattsburgh has only a small active role in the project. [Per Marty Mannix] The Comprehensive Land Use for the Town of Plattsburgh is holding a series of six interviews for engineering firms interested in utilizing the land. The County will be involved with selling the piece of land and finding a buyer.

[Mayor] In terms of seeking higher office, I will only say that at this time I have no firm plans.

Q: Do you draw parallels between the labor issues facing Plattsburgh and those facing Detroit, Mich.?

A: I am not an economist, but generally speaking, in Detroit those contracts were very generous. You throw in the competition from foreign car companies and something had to give. As far as drawing a parallel to Plattsburgh, City employees simply weren't being paid as they would be if they were in the private sector. Salaries have increased, benefit costs have increased and all to a point where public employees are very well taken care of. When the coffers aren't filled, there are suddenly issues such as those in Detroit.

Mayor Kasprzak continued by saying it is time to step back and reevaluate what is financially feasible. The private sector can lay people off immediately in a way that the public sector cannot. However, to say to people, "you can't have as much now as you've had before," isn't something people want to hear.

Comment: As far as the unions go, you have it worse than those at the state level. The state would rather cut people

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Meetings
Wednesdays 12:15 p.m.
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than cut money across the board. But if you were to cut people here, you have to face them every day in the supermarkets and on the street.

A: It amazes me that others would rather see people lose their jobs rather than tighten belts evenly across the board. In the City, if we lay people off, the important services we offer suffer and it creates a no-win situation for everyone involved.

Q: What can we as a business community do to further the efforts for merging and sharing services?

A: Write letters to the Editor. Write and speak to your elected officials as often as possible. It is important to pressure the right people—the ones who have the vote.

This Week: Carmen Carpentier announced that her foreign exchange student, Mario Vasco spent some time skiing and snowboarding with Sara Rowden and Stephens Mundy. He had a wonderful time and continues to do well. The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 23rd. Rotary Radio day will be April 8th. Sadly, Bob Miller's wife has passed away. We offer our deep sympathy to Bob and his family. The fundraising goal of \$1,000 for the Paul Harris School in Nicaragua has been met and exceeded. Thanks to everyone for contributing to the grand total of \$1,422.

Visiting Rotarians: None

Guests: Sean Patrick McSweeney (Tim McSweeney); Maria Alexander (John McGaulley); Sinan Sadar (Paul Sands); Roger Van Guilder (Al Racine);

Fines: Vicki Marking was showing winning Volunteer of the Year through the Chamber of Commerce and spun for \$4. PP Marty Mannix was shown with Bernie Bassett and spun for \$5.

Auction Item: Bill McBride donated to adult lift tickets to Whiteface. PP Kevin Kehoe bought the pair for \$100. Thanks Kevin!

Happy Thoughts: John Seiden's son is the newest City Police officer, and John's second son has joined District 3 as a fireman. Peter Cadieux will be hiking Mt. Washington, and anyone wishing to go along, contact Peter. Marsha Cook announced that Izzy DeFayette is now located at the Vilas Nursing Home. He would love visitors and letters (send to Vilas Home, 61 Beekman St., Plattsburgh NY 12901). Kristen Shives announced that the Boy Scouts has received an award for Quality District 2008. Congratulations and good work.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- 2/23 Board Meeting
- 4/8 Rotary Radio Day
- 5/2 District 7040 Assembly
- 6/5-7 24th Annual Fishing Classic

ON-LINE MAKEUP: www.rotaryclubone.org

NEARBY MAKE UP LOCATIONS:

Mon.	Burlington	12:10pm	Wyndham Hotel
	Canton	12:15pm	Best Western
	Ottawa	12:30pm	Ottawa Marriott Hotel
Tues.	Plattsburgh Sunrise	7:30am	Elk's Club
	Saranac Lake	7:30am	Hotel Saranac
	Massena	12:15pm	Elk's Lodge
	St. Albans	12:15pm	Masonic Temple
	Montreal	12:30pm	Holiday Inn-Pt. Claire
	Grand Isle	6:00pm	So Hero Congregational
Wed.	Middlebury	7:15am	Rosie's Restaurant
	Albany	12:15pm	Wolferts Roost Ctry Club on Van Rensselaer Blvd.
	Tupper Lake	12:15pm	Pine Grove Restaurant
	Potsdam	12:15pm	Sergi's Banquet Hall
	Watertown	12:15pm	Best Western Carriage House
	Chateaugay	6:15pm	Leonard's Cherry Knoll Rest.
	AuSable Forks	7:00pm	Ambulance Hall (no meal)
Thurs.	Williston	7:15am	Will Federated Church
	Lake Placid	7:30am	Howard Johnson's
	Watertown AM	7:30am	Best Western Carriage House
	South Burlington	7:30am	VT National Country Club
	Champlain-Rouses Pt.	7:45am	Old Tyme Café
	Malone	Noon	Gallagher's
	Colchester-Milton	12:10pm	Hampton Inn
	Ogdensburg	12:15pm	Gran-View Restaurant
Fri.	Burlington Sunrise	7:15am	Ethan Allen Club
	Old Montreal	12:15pm	Holiday Inn Select

50/50: Today's pot was worth \$ 2,445; C.J. Soper picked the 2 of hearts. We are going for the Ace of Spades—and there are still 2 jokers left, each worth \$50!

Another Candle Burning For: James Judkins (2/8); Roger Ahrens (2/11); Bob Frenyea (1/12)

	Feb 11	Feb 18	Feb 25
Program	Basin Program Bill Howland	Afghanistan Program John Conroy	Nature Conservancy Michael Carr
Greeters	Heidi Clute & Paul Connelly	Harney Davey & David Davis	Rod Giltz & Laurence Goodman
Hospitality	Marsha Cook	Jack Dee	Ron Graham
Blessing	MaryAnne Bukolt-Ryder	Peter Cadieux	Jack Dee
Introductions	Jon Cooper	Bruce Delventhal	Paul Grasso
Program Intro.	Stan Ransom	Steve Frederick	Rod Giltz
Thank Speaker	Hope Coyer	Robert Frenyea	Donald Green
New Mem. Talk	—	Kristen Shives	—
Seasoned Mem.	Ron Malseptic	—	Sandra Walker
Food Shelf	—	—	A. Recore/K.Kehoe



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