

My Fellow Residents,

I come to you from your Mayors Office with just some straight talk, and this will be the start of many talks.

On Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, when I put my hand on the Bible, I swore to support the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Indiana. The oath I took is the same oath that Mayor Arthur Olsen made as the first Mayor of our City in 1968, and every Mayor has taken since.

I assume the Mayor's office in extraordinary circumstances never experienced by Portage residents. I am very aware that I have not been elected during a normal election to the Mayor's office. I ask for your initial and ongoing approval, support, guidance and especially your prayers.

In all my acts as your Mayor, public and private I will act with integrity, truth and candor. I swear to do what is right for Portage, not what is right for myself. As your Mayor, I will serve this office with not just what I believe is moral, but what is actually moral. I will serve faithfully, objectively, and diligently. Regardless of political party, I will do what is right and just for all our residents.

My friends, the long trial and litigation is over. The law works. In the words of John Adams, "We are truly a government of laws and not of men." Let us flush out of our hearts mistrust and anger; it is over. The time has come to rise above politics and division; it is time to move forward together.

A great example of this is that the past two weeks Council President Lynch, a Democrat, and I have worked together in a transition. Our City should be proud of Council President Lynch for her actions, cooperation and dedication to our City, the City that she truly loves. Throughout this time we have listened, asked questions, and learned a great deal. We worked together over budgets and personnel issues, to name a few.

We both will tell you our City's department heads and employees are the best, truly the best. The Mayor's office is staffed by special professionals that show unmatched love for their jobs and for Portage; I thank them for their service.

In the words of Historian Edward Everett Hale, "Coming together is a BEGINNING; Keeping together is PROGRESS; Working together is SUCCESS."

In the beginning, I asked for your guidance and prayers; before closing, I ask for your prayers for our City, our employees, and their families. May God bless and keep them safe and well.

I use as my guide in life a verse from Proverbs, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."

With all of life's experiences and all that I have learned these past 7 years, Portage can count on me to bring us back with honesty, integrity, common sense, and yes, Portage Pride. With your help, I will not let you down, so help me God! Thank you, and see you soon.