

**Remarks of Mayor Andrew B. MacLean**  
**Inauguration Ceremony**  
**January 2, 2008**  
**Boys' & Girls' Club of Greater Gardiner**

Good evening Representative Hanley, Former Mayor Rines, City Councilors, City Staff, and fellow residents of Gardiner. Happy New Year! Thank you for coming out this evening to celebrate the inauguration of four Council members who represent specific geographic regions or “wards” of our city.

I congratulate Councilors Philip Hart of South Gardiner (Ward 4), Richard Rambo of High Holborn Street (Ward 2), and Richard Nickless of Pope Street (Ward 1) on their successful re-election to the Council. I welcome Councilor Michael Giberson of Heselton Street to the Council filling the open Ward 3 seat formerly held by Councilor Jean Dellert.

Next, I thank Councilor Jean Dellert for her many years of service to the greater Gardiner community in so many different capacities – as State Representative, City Councilor, and volunteer for a wide variety of local non-profit, public service organizations. I have enjoyed my relationship with Jean as a neighbor for years and it's been my pleasure to serve with her on the Council during the past year. Councilor Dellert's numerous contributions to our community is the focus of our Special Recognition a little later in the program this evening.

For all of us, the transition from one year to the next is a time to reflect on all aspects of our lives – on the successes and failures of the past year and our aspirations for the year to come. I think it's appropriate for the members of the Council, the City Staff, and the public to expect some reflection on the past year from the Mayor. I have very much enjoyed my first year of service as your Mayor. It has been a challenging but

rewarding experience, as I think most people who have given their time to public service would attest.

As you may remember, I ran on the campaign slogan, *Imagine Gardiner Working Together*. To me, that's the heart of the concept of *community*. I have tried to keep this campaign pledge in mind in my leadership of the City Council and in the fulfillment of all of my public duties. I view the City Council as a team of individuals with diverse backgrounds and views bringing their talents together for the betterment of our community.

I want to thank each member of the City Council in 2007 for a positive, cooperative approach to our work on behalf of the citizens of Gardiner – from the reaffirmation of our governing principles and prioritizing the Council's FY 2008 Goal Statement to addressing citizen concerns with snow removal policies and procedures, the Beech Street condemned property situation, the annual city budget, our relationship with fellow community volunteers on the MSAD #11 school board, and all of the important work of the Council last year. Each and every member of the Council has contributed in important ways to making the City of Gardiner a better place to live and work.

Also, I want to thank the professional men and women of our City workforce for all of their hard work during the last year. City Manager Kobrock and the senior management team have provided us with excellent information and analysis to support our policymaking role and have been very responsive to the specific concerns raised by our constituents.

While most of our business interactions are with members of the senior management team, I want to acknowledge the high quality work of the individuals who

provide most of the frontline services to our citizens – the central office and library staffs, the public works and waste water treatment team, and the public safety crew. Most of us do not risk our lives when we go to work each day, but those who work in public safety sometimes must. Our holiday season has been interrupted by a situation that necessitated a Gardiner Police Officer's use of deadly force. Last Fall, we recognized two Gardiner firefighters, Mick Poirier and Marcel DuForge, for valor in rescuing a gentleman from a burning building in Randolph.

On behalf of all of Gardiner's citizens, I thank our public safety officers, both fire and police, who sometimes must put their own health and safety on the line to serve and protect us. Our thoughts and prayers are with Officer James Gioia and his family during this difficult time in his career.

Last but not least in my expression of thanks for the work of the past year are the many citizens who serve in appointed volunteer roles on behalf of the City – those who have served on the Planning Board, the Board of Appeals, the Ordinance Review Committee, the Economic Development Committee, the Conservation Committee, the Sidewalk Committee, and other community service organizations.

What has the City Council and City Staff been doing on behalf of the people of Gardiner in 2007?

On July 11, 2007, the Council adopted an ambitious Goal Statement for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007 and ending June 30, 2008, including 8 Governance Principles and 15 Goals.

The Governance Principles include such concepts as “equity and fairness in the assessment of property taxes,” providing “efficiencies in government operations” and the

delivery of services, “maintenance of a healthy organizational culture,” a “culture of fiscal constraint and frugality,” and a “strong history of reinventing the delivery of services.”

The Goals include, but are not limited to, tax relief, a citywide property revaluation, a major sidewalk project, a master plan and funding for waterfront development, a joint billing initiative with the Water District, improvements to the Common, including replacement of the playground, and expanding the Libby Hill Business Park. The Council developed this ambitious “to-do” list by consensus and includes most, if not all, of the priorities I heard mentioned by Gardiner citizens while campaigning in the Fall of 2006.

The Council and Staff are hard at work pursuing these goals as we begin the second half of the fiscal year. Late in 2007, we took important steps towards achieving several of these goals when a citizen advisory committee on the sidewalk project issued its report and when the City awarded a unique planning and development agreement to a team composed of Wright Pierce engineering consultants, Kent Associates (site & master planning), Bartram & Cochran (marketing), and Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (housing consulting) for 13 initiatives requiring consulting services in the FY 2008 budget.

In addition to work on these specific goals, excellent financial management and creative thinking by the senior management team have resulted in the City addressing, for the short term, a visible public annoyance in the condition of Cobbossee Avenue from the New Mills bridge to the West Gardiner line, reacting positively to a major failure in the City’s grader, and obtaining a FEMA grant to refurbish Fire Engine 1.

Although we are representatives of the people of Gardiner, our interests reach beyond the boundaries of our city – at least to our neighbors in the southern Kennebec County/Kennebec River Valley region. I think we all recognize that in many ways our economic and community development and growth depend on our capitalizing on the great natural resource that is the Kennebec River. We share this interest with adjacent communities along the river. With the opening of the full length of the Kennebec River Rail Trail last October, we now have a first class public facility to promote access to the Kennebec River not only for the enjoyment of local residents, but also as an attraction for visitors from other parts of the state. We already are witnessing the growth of new businesses along the trail and I'm sure that new economic activity will continue next spring when the trail is open for frequent use. The potential benefit to the region from this joint effort of the state government, several municipalities, non-profit organizations, and citizens is enormous.

I have been in a regular dialogue with Augusta Mayor Roger Katz and Hallowell Mayor Tony Masciardi about ways we might collaborate to promote our region, such as the grand opening of the Rail Trail and the now infamous 2007 Cony-Gardiner football game!

Local mayors also have met periodically with Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce President Peter Thompson to consider opportunities for our municipal governments to help our business community in promoting the region. The Chamber invited Mayor Katz and I to address the Chamber Board about such collaboration during its annual retreat in November 2007. One way we hope to do this in 2008 is to emphasize the *river* in the Kennebec River Whatever Family Festival and to present it to

the public in a coordinated manner as a month-long series of events beginning with Gardiner's celebration in late June and ending with Old Hallowell Day in mid-July.

I look forward to continuing our work together to improve our city and our region and I wish everyone a safe and prosperous 2008.