

Mayor Report - Jim Hickerson, Village of Hartford

This is my first time to contribute to the "Mayor's Report" so please bear with me as I give you an update of our Village of Hartford.

We are a small Village which is shrinking daily. At this time, we are the lowest in population since 1930, therefore, we are faced with some dire and difficult challenges. As mayor, I have reduced spending and am seeking opportunities to bring in more revenue. At times, it is a difficult task to create new thinking and encourage elected officials to "think outside of the box" and to consider innovative ideas. I am hopeful that we can collectively make sound decisions to move the village forward and regain its financial stability.

In the past, the village has made some questionable decisions resulting in well over \$3.5 million in overspending in the last five years. I am working diligently to change these old habits. It is my goal and duty to make drastic changes in order to restore and preserve the financial integrity of our village.

The Confluence Tower has fallen short of meeting financial expectations which has created a fiscal hardship since its opening. We are currently seeking sponsors to help stabilize the finances and encourage growth of attendance. We are now making positive changes that will, hopefully, make the Tower a financial asset as it has potential to serve as a tourist attraction.

One of the jewels of our Village is our 17 acre park which includes two ball diamonds, six picnic pavilions and a very popular splash park which is open to the public for a small fee and can be rented for parties. The splash park has proven not only to be a financial asset but also a welcome addition to improving our community life. We encourage the use of our ball diamonds for tournaments. The park includes a one half mile asphalt walking path which is safe and well-traveled.

As mayor, I appreciate working with the RiverBend Growth Association to encourage new businesses to locate to our Village. We have great access off Route 3 and enthusiastic community support for future business. We have great locations for new business that the Village can make available. I am accessible on a daily basis and look forward to joining forces with the RiverBend Growth Association to assist Hartford in regaining its vibrancy and helping us to move forward through a challenging time.