



# Winter Park

## *Our Home*

## State of the City Address

Presented by the Honorable Kenneth W. Bradley

Friday, January 18, 2013

*Winter Park Community Center ■ 721 W. New England Ave.*

### I. “*Winter Park is our Home*” video presentation

### II. **WHAT DOES BEING THE BEST LOOK LIKE?**

#### **The vision of Winter Park—“to be the best”**

The vision of Winter Park – “be the best place to live, work and play in Florida for today’s residents and future generations”— is lofty and compelling. What does it mean to be the best city? How is the best measured? What does it look like?

#### **A living illustration of the best of Winter Park**

Recently, I had a living illustration of what makes Winter Park so special. I was driving down Westchester heading toward my parent’s home. I turned down Buckingham Road—which is the street I grew up on. As I rounded the corner, standing smack-dab in the middle of the road was a man, with his back to me. My first reaction was to honk my horn and yell “get out of my way!” I didn’t because maybe he was a Bradley voter! Instead I paused and realized it was my parent’s neighbor, Rob. And at that very moment he taught me what made Winter Park so special—the best place to live, work and play.

I could tell he was oblivious to a car or a tank or anything behind him. He was watching someone very intently. I peered past him. Halfway down the block was a child on a bicycle. His back, directed to me, was literally and figuratively standing guard for his young neighbor. He faced toward the young bicyclist—Maddie—learning to ride her bike on Buckingham Road. To her he was a coach, cheerleader and a great neighbor who took a few minutes out of his busy life to care for someone else in a major moment of her life.

I immediately had childhood flashbacks growing up on Buckingham. Neighbors driving widowed neighbors to Publix because they couldn’t get around anymore without help. No need for a security system—because neighbors actually watched to see who was coming and going.

All “neighborhood” baseball games with any child—whether athletic stars or not—playing on a field sown together from the front yard of one home and the side yard of another. The adults sat on the porches together—in their very own skyboxes—cheering for each child. There even was a green monster—the across the street neighbor’s hedge.

**Winter Park is great because the people make it great!**

Winter Park is great because the people of Winter Park are great. People who watch out for each other to assure our mutual safety. Neighbors who take a few minutes to help.

Please join me in thanking Rob Cavanna—a great neighbor—and his special bicyclist—Maddie Olinger—along with her sister Abby and parents Kelly and Chris Olinger for bringing to life what makes Winter Park great!

### **III. THE STRATEGIES:**

**Strategies:**

The City Commission and city staff adopted seven strategies to accomplish our city’s vision. These strategies are:

1. Public health and safety
2. Fiscal stewardship
3. Infrastructure
4. Environment
5. Intelligent development
6. Quality of life
7. Lifelong learning

**Highlighting the best:**

There are other living illustrations here today of what it means to be the best place to live, work and play. I would like to feature them now. I want to highlight to you individuals and organizations who clearly are making Winter Park the best.

### **IV. PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

Today we featured two of our employees of the year from our fire and police departments. Without them and their colleagues, we would not enjoy freedom and safety.

**Winter Park Fire Department:**

- Firefighter of the Year: Firefighter/Paramedic **Bryan Moman**

- A fact of Winter Park: if you face a life threatening heart attack, you have a much better chance of surviving than national averages due to the excellence of our fire and EMS teams.
- New **fire tiller truck** was added to the department's assets to improve efficiency and mobility.

#### **Winter Park Police Department:**

- Officer of the Year: Detective **Lisa Suepat**
- The police department has maintained the highest level of law enforcement services by answering 97 percent of 911 emergency calls within 10 seconds and responding to emergency calls for service within two minutes and 24 seconds.

#### **Justice System:**

- Orange County is larger than seven states. Leading our county as both sheriff and prosecutor for over 30 years is Winter Park's own Lawson Lamar.
- **Lawson Lamar** (accompanied by wife Jo-Ann)
  - Started the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation in 1974, the oldest and one of the most successful strike forces in the nation today
  - He has held a record for trying more cases than any other state attorney's office in Florida.
  - He has helped build Orange County's 33<sup>rd</sup> Street jail, to name a few of his major accomplishments.

*Healing, safety and justice—hallmarks of Winter Park our home*

#### **V. FISCAL STEWARDSHIP: LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS**

- Our city is highly rated and unlike our Congress our city knows how to balance a budget.
- We treat every tax dollar sacredly.
- As federal taxes skyrocket, we must give special consideration to lowering local taxes so the overall tax burden our citizens face is lessened.

*Balancing our budget—a hallmark of Winter Park our home*

#### **VI. CITY BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE:**

- Renovation of City Hall:
  - We celebrated the grand re-opening of City Hall that now greets our guests with a more inviting and welcoming lobby and service areas.
- Employee of the Year – **Steve Mathes**, responsible for renovation of City Hall.

- Other projects:
  - Grand opening of the Winter Park Country Club ProShop
  - Winter Park Community Center Pool
  - Fairbanks Avenue gravity sewer installation
- **Norm Brown:**
  - Just celebrated his 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the city of Winter Park in 2012.
  - Longest tenured city employee actively serving.
  - Tends our Palm and Piney Wood cemeteries.
  - Personally, thank you.

*Customer service—a hallmark of Winter Park our home*

## **VII. THE ENVIRONMENT: SUSTAINABILITY**

- Developed the Urban Forestry Management Plan to keep our tree canopy rejuvenated, alive and thriving for the next 60 years:
  - Embracing an electrical undergrounding plan which will enhance our tree canopy.
- Created the Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Board whose mission is to be to improve the quality, sustainability and aesthetics of our environment in order to create a healthier, more beautiful place to live, work, and play.
  - Accomplished by building community gardens, pocket parks, volunteerism, fundraising and encouraging neighborhoods to beautify and improve the community and take ownership of public spaces.
- Enhanced lake quality improvements including the large stormwater treatment equipment installed under East Morse Blvd to treat stormwater pollutants before it enters Lake Osceola.

There is a tree sapling at each of your seats. Today is Arbor Day in Florida and by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Winter Park in the State of Florida, do hereby proclaim today, Friday, January 18, Arbor Day in the City of Winter Park.

*Planting and tending—hallmarks of Winter Park our home*

## **VIII. INTELLIGENT DEVELOPMENT: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

- **Winter Park’s 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations:**
  - On October 12, 2012, we celebrated the 125th anniversary of the official incorporation of Winter Park.
  - It was filled with special events to celebrate this historic milestone ranging from a photography exhibit, prayer service, and reenactments to galas, art festivals and runway shows.

- Meaningful to see our community come together to reminisce and reflect on how our city has blossomed and been blessed these past 125 years.
- We welcomed home immediate members of the Simpson, Israel and Henderson families to the city their great-great grandfathers served 125 years ago.
- Special thanks to our task force members who helped plan these events:
  - Patrick Chapin
  - Kenneth Murrah
  - Fairolyn Livingston
  - Cindy Bowman Lafronz
  - Bob Melanson
  - Susan Skolfield and
  - **Reverend Talia Raymond**
- Reverend Raymond and Mary Joe Searle represented the First Congregational Church of Winter Park that was founded in 1884, the first established church in Winter Park.
- Held beautiful prayer service to remember our historical ties and emphasize our freedom to worship.

*Worship and celebration—hallmarks of Winter Park our home*

- **Other developments:**
  - Two new apartment developments near Winter Park Village
  - Ground breaking Wednesday, February 13 for our new Amtrak® & SunRail® station
  - New Class-A office space - Heritage Park
  - Opening of the new Alford Inn

*Excellent buildings and developments—hallmarks of Winter Park our home*

**IX. QUALITY OF LIFE:**

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Park Dedication will be held Monday, January 21, 2013. We will be officially dedicating this park as a kick off to the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Unity Heritage Festival and I invite you to all join us in this historic day.
  - **Reverend Mitchell Dawkins** (accompanied by wife Melanie)
    - Pastor of New Warner Chapel Primitive Baptist Church in Winter Park, Fl., for 20 years
    - Has been Chaplain for the Winter Park Police Department since 1995
    - Currently serves as president of the Winter Park Ministerial Association
    - Reverend Dawkins was also an integral member of the Martin Luther King Jr., Task Force to successfully gather public input and rename Lake Island Park to MLK, Jr. Park.

- Served with:
  - Mary Daniels
  - Carolyn Fennell
  - Joyce Swain
  - Reverend John Williams
  - Commissioner Sarah Sprinkel
- Together the committee held public meetings, surveyed the community, and held numerous meetings to find the ideal place to honor this great national leader and the principles he stood and died for.
- Thank you Reverend Dawkins for your leadership in our community.

*Peace and opportunity—hallmarks of Winter Park*

- **Edyth Bush Foundation:**
  - Mr. A.G. and Mrs. Edyth Bush came to Winter Park at the invitation of a 3M executive on a retreat. Soon they bought a winter home here. After Mr. Bush's death, Edyth relocated permanently to Winter Park.
  - June 2013 celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
  - Mission of foundation: to improve the quality of life for the people of central Florida.
  - \$100 million gifted, a legacy of one gifted woman with over 660 gifts and \$20 million gifted specifically to Winter Park causes.
  - Stewards of the foundation such as **David Odahowski** and **Herb Holm**, the board's sole-remaining founding board member, help keep this foundation alive and true to its mission.
- **Eric Holm** – spirit of giving
  - Accompanied by his wife **Diane Holm** who was just named the Association of Fundraising Professionals 2012 Outstanding Philanthropist.
  - Moved their business headquarters here two years ago to Morse Boulevard and moved their home here last July 2012.
  - Celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of “Helpings from the Heart” a partnership with Golden Corral and the Salvation Army.
  - This past November served approximately 25,000 meals on Thanksgiving Day, why?
    - He was blessed in his personal life and wanted to share his blessings
    - Holm himself comes from a humble family. He was raised by a single mother who had to work two jobs to help feed, clothe, shelter and care for her family. Holm remembers the family going to the Salvation Army when he was young so they could share in a community Thanksgiving dinner. Wonderful to see the families eat a delicious Thanksgiving meal together just as he did when he was a child.

*Giving—a hallmark of Winter Park*

## **X. LIFELONG LEARNING: THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION**

- Rollins College – excellent community partner with a number of top rankings in the state and across the country
  
- **Vivian Carrington** (accompanied by friend Annette Smith)
  - Rollins College’s oldest undergraduate student, 72-years-young.
  - A Winter Park resident for 22 years who holds a doctorate in ministry.
  - Since she moved here to Winter Park she’s had her eye on Rollins College – 20 years later she applied, wrote an essay and was accepted in 2010.
  - Hopes to graduate in 2014 or 2015 with a bachelor’s in Organizational Communication.
  - Her daughter was so inspired by her enrollment into Rollins that at 53 years old, she too went back to school and is now a successful nurse.
  - Vivian believes this was truly an act of God that she was accepted into Rollins and is fulfilling her lifelong goal.

*Education—a hallmark of Winter Park*

## **XI. THE STATE OF THE CITY IS EXCELLENT:**

The state of the City of Winter Park is excellent. Our city’s finances are strong. Our parks look better than ever. There is a vibrancy and growth on Park Avenue and in our key business districts. We are seeing more development than the past five years. Our attitude is positive! Our expectations for the year 2013 are exciting. But what more can we become?

Today we have seen living illustrations of service, giving and education. Your job is to make your home, your street and your neighborhood the best. By doing this, we can be the best place to live, work and play in Florida.

*May God bless you and may God continue to bless our home—the great City of Winter Park.*