MESSAGE FROM MAYOR RIVERA

I hope you are all staying warm through this winter. We have been working hard to keep our streets clear of snow and ice. As we make our way into this year, I look forward to all of our upcoming annual traditions in Lawrence, including our St. Patrick’s Day Parade—the biggest parade North of Boston—on Saturday, March 19th at 1pm. I look forward to seeing everyone and celebrating a long embraced Lawrence tradition as we march through the streets of Lawrence in our Irish gear! See you soon!!

LAWRENCE PARTNERSHIP AWARDS TWO LOANS

Congratulations to La Cibaeña Bakery Inc and Auto Bori Music LLC for receiving the first two venture loans through the Lawrence Partnership. These loans have allowed these small businesses to purchase the necessary equipment to expand their product as well as to create jobs.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MAYOR RIVERA’S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

- Three credit rating increases in just two years with a positive outlook
- Delinquent tax collections are up 100% in the first 6 months of FY16
- Lawrence Budget balanced 6 years in a row
- 17.3% decrease in crime
- 19% drop in violent crime
- Residential burglaries are the lowest they have been in 12 years
- 5 net new police officers, all fluent in Spanish
- $84M worth of permits pulled
- 335 new units of Housing, 133 of those are affordable housing
- $16M in development dollars awarded
- First Urban Renewal Plan in a generation - $175k.
- $50M in new building and construction at Lawrence General Hospital
- 7 Level 1 schools
- Dropout Rates lowest since records are available

For inquiries, please contact Jessica at jvalentin@cityoflawrence.com
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JIM BARNES AWARD

Congratulations to Community Development director Jim Barnes who received the National Community Development Association Paul Poulos Achievement Award in recognition of his “dedicated commitment and outstanding contribution to the community development block grant program and the citizens it serves.”

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: NEW BUSINESSES

BODY AND BRAIN YOGA

290 Merrimack St.
riverwalk@bodybrain.com

NANNI AND TATA ITALIAN CUISINE

Dine-In, Take-Out, Catering
150 Shepard St.
(978) 655-6024

LAWRENCE PIZZA

2 Lawrence St. Rear (978) 891-2889

AMERICAN CAPITAL ENERGY (ACE)

Finances, builds, and operates commercial and utility-scale solar PV projects
360 Merrimack St.

INSPECTIONAL SERVICES
LARRY HESTER RETIREMENT

Thank you for your 35 years of service to Lawrence!

PERSONNEL EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH:
MYRTLE GRULLON PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTS CLERK

Myrtle has been an employee for the City of Lawrence /Treasurer’s office for 15 years. She started as a temp and through the years grew passionate about her work. Myrtle decided to continue her education, graduating from Hesser College with an Associates in Accounting. She is the Tax Title Specialist and among other duties works hand in hand with the City Attorney, interacts with other departments and provides exceptional customer service to taxpayers.

Myrtle has been a resident of Lawrence for 30 years and has a daughter who is an 8th grader student at the Community Day Charter Public School. Her hobbies include drawing and makeup geek.
FIRE DEPARTMENT NEW EDITIONS, HONOREES

Four firefighters honored as “Firefighter of the Year” at Exchange Club Lt. Matt Nadeau, Lt. Ryan Lavallee, FF Ed Burke, and FF Jay Flores.

Three firefighters graduated from the academy.

7 new firefighters started on Monday January 25th. After a 2 week training, they went off to attend the Mass Fire Academy for a 9 week training program.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

POLICE DEPARTMENT 7 BILINGUAL CANDIDATES TO BE HIRED

Lawrence is under the Castro Consent Decree. Municipalities under the Castro Consent Decree receive Civil Service lists for hiring with a set goal of hiring people of color. Since Lawrence has such a limited English population, qualified, diverse Civil Service candidates with Spanish speaking skills were being passed over on the list to meet the 1 person of color to 3 Caucasian civil service list mandated by the Castro Consent Decree. The City of Lawrence was granted the use of a PAR .08 Selective Certification Bilingual of the Civil Service law to pick the next 7 hires from a Civil Service list of all Spanish speaking candidates. All candidates must first pass the Civil Service exam and then will have to pass a rigorous psychological and a physical aptitude test along with a thorough background screening.

ASSESSOR SENIOR CITIZENS TAX CREDIT

The City of Lawrence is hosting a Senior Citizens Tax Work-Off Program that will run from January 1st through October 31st 2016. This program allows senior citizens of Lawrence, 60 years or older as of January 1st, to work for up to $500 off of property tax. Restrictions and requirements do apply to this program. For more information, contact Senior Center Director, Martha Velez 978-620-3550.

LAWRENCE AIRPORT $2.3M IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

In November, a $2.3 million dollar Airport Improvement project to enhance operational safety was concluded in accordance with the FAA requirement for all airports with outdated RSA's to stay up to date with design standards. The project was the creation of Runway Safety Areas ("RSA’s") on runway 14-32. A safety area provides a clear flat surface for aircrafts to use if they overshoot a runway due to a mechanical or pilot error.
Lawrence Cultural Council Grantees

61 local individuals and organizations received cultural council grants to promote arts and culture in Lawrence. Included in the grantee list are various Lawrence K-12 schools (public and private), cultural associations and small community organizations. For more information, contact LCC chair Pat Mariano at LawrenceCulturalCouncil@gmail.com

Lawrence Boys and Girls Club Hall of Fame

Lawrence Boys and Girls Club Executive Director Markus Fischer and Board President Greg Serrao with the newest inductees Mayor Rivera and grammy award winning Urales Vargas, known as DJ Buddha, both Lawrence kids who participated in BGC programming. Urales Vargas has played a major role in the expansion of hip hop, soca, Latin pop/dance, R&B, and dancehall into the mainstream. He has produced pop and crossover hits for artists including Pitbull, Enrique Iglesias, Ne-Yo, Jennifer Lopez, Don Omar, will.i.am, Chris Brown, Jason Derulo, AKON, Marc Anthony, Daddy Yankee and Shakira.

Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast

Community leaders, students, Mayor Rivera and Congresswoman Niki Tsongas awaiting to hear this year’s Merrimack Valley Branch NAACP Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast keynote speaker, criminal defense attorney, Socrates DeLaCruz. Attorney De La Cruz grew up in housing developments in Lawrence and was a Boys and Girls Club kid. He has received many honors and awards, including the Boys and Girls Club National Youth of the Year Award, which was presented to Attorney De La Cruz at the White House by President George Bush in 1991. He has also been featured on the Oprah Winfrey Show where he was honored with the Oprah’s Angel Award for his service to the community.

Dominican Flag Raising

Celebrating 172 years of Independence.

In recent years, Vargas founded BEYOND Scholarship Foundation, which helps Lawrence students achieve their maximum potential by providing financial assistance to those demonstrating a drive and passion for the arts, academics, athletics, music, and/or other interests. The fund also provides guidance and mentoring to help students achieve their dreams.

Chinese New Year

Community members celebrating the Chinese New Year, the Year of the Monkey at the Senior Center.
City Adopts Complete Street Policy
The MHTF in conjunction with the policy in the city. The presentation was well received and the City Council voted to adopt said policy. Complete Streets call for consideration of all users of the roadways when a plan is being developed for improvements to, or new construction of roadways and sidewalks with the city. Complete Streets policies offer many benefits, including in the areas of public safety, accessibility, health and economic development. These collaborative efforts to improve the built environment are supported through a Mass in Motion Municipal Wellness & Leadership Initiative grant from the Mass. Dept. of Public Health.

Promoting Opportunities for Higher Education
Regis College President, Antoinette M. Hays, PhD, RN, was one of two guest speakers who presented at the January general membership meeting of the MHTF. Dr. Hays talked about the Nursing, Public Health and Sciences undergraduate program launched this past fall, in partnership with Northern Essex Community College. Dr. Hays highlighted the many benefits this program offers to area residents and those residing beyond city limits. Designed with working professionals in mind, this affordable program creates a bridge to access to higher education opportunities in health related fields, addressing educational and financial gaps often faced by residents of low socioeconomic status. Regis College is also planning to offer a Master’s Level program in the near future.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
On December 9th Delamano, Inc. and the YWCA of Greater Lawrence, with support from the MHTF, held their 2nd Annual International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women event at El Taller to raise awareness and trigger action to end this global scourge, marking the brutal assassination in 1960 of the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic. Paula Gomez-Stordy, Consultant, Advocate and Activist for Women’s Rights Issues in the fields of gender violence and the anti-oppression movement was the keynote speaker. Lawrence Chief of Police James Fitzpatrick, along with Ambassadors from the Mass. Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence and Lawrence residents, Andres Gonzalez and Andres Polanco, led the White Ribbon Pledge, an initiative that engages men and boys in the prevention of gender-based violence by promoting gender equality and working to transform harmful and violent aspects of masculinities. The Sugar Kings provided the entertainment for this evening.
**SUNDAY, MARCH 6 AT 2:00PM**
White Fund Lecture - A Pictorial Exhibit of the 1916 Easter Rising with featured guest speaker, Michael Quinlin

Lawrence Heritage State Park
One Jackson Street

**SATURDAY, MARCH 12 AT 6:00PM**
145th Annual Saint Patrick’s Day Banquet and Dance

Reliefs In
One Market Street

**SUNDAY, MARCH 13 AT 2:00PM**
Honor Molloy, Dublin-born, Brooklyn based writer, actor and director will read from her lyrical book “Smarty Girl, Dublin Savage”

Lawrence Heritage State Park
One Jackson Street

**TUESDAY, MARCH 15 AT 10:00AM**
Irish Film Festival

Lawrence Heritage State Park
One Jackson Street

**FRIDAY, MARCH 18 TIME 12:00PM**
47th Annual Saint Patrick’s Day Luncheon

Reliefs In
One Market Street

**SATURDAY, MARCH 19 AT 1:00PM**
Saint Patrick’s Parade
Parade Route
Starting Point
Intersection of Amesbury & Essex Street
End Point
Osgood & Market St
Reviewing Stand
At Salem & Loring St. (by Pizza King)

Good viewing locations:
Claddagh Pub, Central Bridge, Pizza King, Reliefs In

No Street Parking along parade route will be in effect between 11AM-4PM the day of the parade.

**SUNDAY, MARCH 20 AT 2:00PM**
Book reading “The Bad Times,” a novel about the Great Hunger

Lawrence Heritage State Park
One Jackson Street