

OATH OF OFFICE/RE-ORGANIZATION MEETING
OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
10 LAWLOR DRIVE, OAKLAND, NEW JERSEY
TUESDAY JANUARY 1, 2008 AT 5:00 PM

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: By Council President Di Pentima at 5:02 pm

SALUTE TO THE FLAG:

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL: Councilman Di Pentima introduced Kaitlin Petersen who sang "America The Beautiful".

INVOCATION: Councilman Di Pentima introduced Father Lipnicki who gave the invocation.

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT: Councilman Di Pentima announced that this meeting is being held in accordance with the open public meetings law, duly announced and posted in the municipal building.

INTRODUCTION OF JUDGE KENNETH KOVALCIK: Councilman Di Pentima introduced the Honorable Kenneth Kovalcik who administered the Oath of Office to:
MAYOR JOHN P. SZABO, JR.

MAYOR'S REMARKS:

I would like to thank all those present here today, my family, especially my wonderful wife Donna, and my children Danielle, Stephen and Kimberly, my friends and my colleagues whose support made all this possible. I would not be here today if it were not for your efforts. And I am deeply grateful. I also wish to congratulate Councilmembers Karen Marcalus and Donald Burns on their reelection this year. I feel very fortunate to be able to work with such a dedicated and hardworking council because without their efforts nothing would be accomplished. I am very proud to be able to share the dais with each of them. I would also like to acknowledge our honored guests here today. And finally, I must express my thanks to the people of Oakland who have honored me with the privilege of serving for yet another four years as your Mayor. The faith and trust you have placed in me is inspiring and I am truly humbled by your support.

The honor of serving as your Mayor means a great deal to me personally. It offers me the opportunity to be involved in a meaningful way in our community and to work towards making things better for our town. It has provided me with the opportunity to work with many concerned and civic minded residents and to get to know Oakland first hand as the great community that it is. It is an extremely rewarding role and words cannot adequately express the sense of gratitude I feel for being permitted to serve another term.

It hardly seems possible that four years have gone by since I stood before this community to take the oath of office. I made a promise then:

1. To Protect and preserve the character of this community.
2. To Revitalize our downtown.
3. To work with the Council to maintain lean budgets and seek cost savings through better fiscal management and grants to ease the tax burden on our residents

4. To promote a sense of professionalism in our conduct in order to make our residents proud of their elected officials.

I stand here today proud of what we have been able to accomplish in the past four years.

We adopted a vision for our downtown to create a vibrant marketplace. Very soon construction will begin in our downtown at the corner of Ramapo Valley Road and West Oakland Avenue, which will begin the renaissance of our central business district. We have adopted a plan to bring affordable housing to the Borough and interest has been expressed by property owners to construct housing affordable to both families and seniors particularly in our downtown area.

Since taking office we have witnessed the preservation of Camp Todd, the Raymond Property and the New Jersey Capital site totaling in excess of 100 acres. We are also moving to protect the former Pleasureland site along the Ramapo River, and we will do all we can to protect the Preakness Mountain in the southern part of our borough. To accomplish this we utilized over \$3 million dollars from State and County grants.

Working closely with the Council we have fought hard to contain costs and have implemented numerous changes both in our municipal operations and fiscal management to save taxpayer money. We have negotiated fair and equitable contracts with our unions, which have included measures to contain the rising cost of insurance.

We are truly blessed to live in such a wonderful community.

Thanks to the hard work of our elected Board of Education, the leadership of Dr. Richard Heflich, our school administrators and teachers, we have one of the finest school districts not only in Bergen County but in the entire state of New Jersey. With the leadership of our Recreation Commission and the dedication of thousands of volunteers, we have one of the finest recreational programs in the state. For a community of our size we have one of the lowest crime rates not only in the state but in the entire country. And with the fiscal awareness and discipline imposed upon our municipal finances by this governing body, we enjoy an excellent standard of living for the cost of providing necessary municipal services.

No wonder Business Week just recently in 2007 included the Borough of Oakland as one of the top fifty (50) best places to raise a child in the entire United States, one of only three (3) such communities in New Jersey to earn this distinction.

But the truth is, we here in Oakland, already know how wonderful it is to live and raise our families here. What makes us so special is our strong sense of community. This did not happen by accident. It takes leadership, dedication to a vision that makes Oakland a desirable place to live, and all of you, those who spend so much of your valuable time volunteering and working to make Oakland the great community it is today.

I took an oath to serve the people of Oakland to the best of my ability. Four years later I am reaffirming the same oath and I now stand before you to promise that I will continue to work tirelessly on preserving the character of our community. I will continue to work hard with our Council members and our legislative leaders in Trenton to foster fiscal sanity in our budget process. I will continue to pursue grants for projects that will enhance our quality of life.

I will continue to pursue the preservation of our most environmentally sensitive lands and direct development to our downtown to foster the redevelopment of our central business district. I remain dedicated to restoring the Ramapo River to afford flood relief for our residents and to protect our river corridor. I stand committed to making Oakland a “Green” and sustainable community to make us more compatible with our environment but also to save taxpayer money on the spiraling costs of energy. And finally, I will ask the Council to work with me to develop an annual plan with goals and performance measurement benchmarks so that we can report directly to you, the stakeholders of our community, the residents of Oakland, on our progress as your governing body.

We have come a long way in four years, but our job is far from finished. Together, as a united community we can continue to do the kinds of things that make us special not only as a great place to raise children, but as an all inclusive community that is great for all people who choose to live here.

On behalf of my family I wish everyone a very happy, joyous and prosperous New Year.

Thank you.

INTRODUCTION OF JUDGE JAMES GERAGHTY: Mayor Szabo introduced the Honorable James Geraghty who administered the Oath of Office to:

COUNCILMAN DONALD BURNS

COUNCILMAN BURNS’ REMARKS:

First, I’d like to thank Judge Geraghty for the honor and privilege of having him swear me in today. On this day 18 years ago, Jim and I were both sworn in for the first time as members of the Oakland Borough Council. We were subsequently re-elected 5 times and served together for 16 years until Jim was appointed a judge for the Office of Administrative Law and had to resign from the Borough Council. Although Jim and I didn’t always agree, I always respected Jim and his decisions. He thought for himself, made his own decisions, and was a man of conviction in always doing what he thought was best, not what was most expedient or the most popular thing to do. I sorely miss Jim and his insight and counseling. Jim, you still have my utmost respect and deepest admiration and I thank you sincerely for taking the time to come here today to swear me in.

I also have to thank my wife, Jean, for her continued support. I can still hear her ardent exhortation when I told her I was going to run again. She very succinctly said: “Are you crazy!!!! Why do you need all that aggravation???” I simply told her the same thing I’ve told her every time I’ve decided to run for election to the Council. It’s my way of giving to the community. As it says on the certificates of appreciation that we give to people who have served the community, “a community is only as good as the people who serve the community”. Oakland has many, many, great volunteers. That’s why we’re rated one of the top 50 communities in the country in which to raise children. As always, she steadfastly supported me in making my final decision to run for the council. So, again thank you Jean!

Lastly, I’d like to thank all the people of Oakland who have shown enough faith in me to elect me for the 7th time to represent their best interests. It doesn’t matter if you voted for me or not. I’ve been elected to represent the community as a whole and to do what I believe is best for the community in general, not any particular individual or group.

Actually, I have to admit I’m a little surprised that I was again elected as I’ve never considered myself a “politican”. I’m also not and never have been a big believer in compromise. I’ve found too often that many people equate compromise with capitulation. I’m more a believer in what Winston Churchill once said. “An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile – hoping it will eat him last.” and “You have enemies? Good. That means you’ve stood up for something, sometime in your life.”

I wish there were more people who were interested in serving our community, especially as a member of the Governing Body. I know now-a-days everyone has such a busy schedule. However, whether you have an interest in running for local office or not, more people should at least take a more active interest in what goes on and especially how your money is spent.

Abraham Lincoln once said: "You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can not fool all of the people all of the time." That quote is still true today. However, if more people don't take an active and honest interest in their government at all levels and what it does, it might be more correct and appropriate to say: You can fool most of the people most of the time and don't worry about those times that you can't. People have short memories!!!

Again, I extend my thanks to everyone for your confidence in me. I hope I can live up to your expectations. Happy New Year and may 2008 be a wonderful and fantastic year for everyone.

INTRODUCTION OF BRIAN CHEWCASKIE, ESQ.: Mayor Szabo introduced Borough Attorney Brian Chewcaskie who will administer the Oath of Office to:

COUNCILWOMAN KAREN MARCALUS

COUNCILWOMAN MARCALUS' MESSAGE:

Thank you and Happy New Year. I spent a good part of yesterday thinking about what to say today. In the course of doing so, I took inspiration from two sources. The first was a New Year's eve newspaper editorial. The op-ed piece bemoaned New Jersey voters' tolerance of corrupt elected officials and how there is no legislation which will ensure honest leadership in government. The editorial went on to say that there is also no legislation that will ensure that government officials are smart, capable and dedicated to the public good. But, it said, there ARE elections. It's elections that should allow the cream to rise to the top. And, not only should the best be allowed to rise, it should be unacceptable for anything else to happen. The message was that voters can resolve to say, through their votes, that bad government should not be allowed to happen. One of the things I like about Oakland is that so many of us vote to put the best person in the job. That simply does not happen in most places in this state. So, I would like to thank you for that.

My second source of inspiration is a book of quotes that my daughter gave me for Christmas. I went straight to the index of authors and looked up Will Rogers, one of my favorite satirists. Will Roger's words of wisdom and inspiration with regard to government were "Well shucks, we got the best politicians in this country that money can buy." He also said "Thank heavens we don't get all the government we pay for." Well, pithy as these sentiments are, they weren't quite the positive thought that I wanted to leave with you today. So I moved on to Mark Twain, my other favorite, who said, "I believe we should all pay our tax bill with a smile. I tried, but they wanted cash." He also said, "suppose I am a crook and suppose I am a congressman, but I repeat myself." These are not the pearls of wisdom I was looking for either.

So, for today, I abandoned my favorite purveyors of wit and wisdom in favor of one of my favorite phrases, which is "I LIKE PEOPLE WHO CAN DO THINGS." Believe it or not that is actually a quote attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson. It sounds so simple. But, as we all know, it's not easy to find people who can do things. But, to me, that says it all. That's how I feel about running for office and getting involved in governance. I want to do things, and I like to get things done. I also like to work with people who can do things. That's why I am here. I will do my homework, I will ask questions and I will make decisions. I thank you for the opportunity to do that. Good night and Happy New Year.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Szabo called the meeting to order and the Clerk called the roll. Present: Mayor Szabo, Councilmembers Burns, Di Pentima, Marcalus, Pignatelli, Stagg, Visconti. Absent: None. Also Present: Lisa M. Duncan, Borough Clerk; Brian Chewcaskie, Borough Attorney; Raymond Herr, CFO/Treasurer.

MAYOR JOHN P. SZABO JR. ADMINISTERED THE OATH OF OFFICE TO THE OAKLAND VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

2008 OFFICERS

DEPARTMENT CHIEF	PETER SONDERVAN
ASSISTANT CHIEF CO.#1	ROBERT KNAPP, JR.
ASSISTANT CHIEF CO.#2	PATRICK KELLETT
CAPTAIN CO.# 1	CURTIS LE ROY
CAPTAIN CO.# 2	PETER WARNET, JR.
LIEUTENANTS CO.#1	CHARLES KELLY, PETER PFEIFFER
LIEUTENANTS CO.# 2	TIMOTHY RYAN, JOHN MADDEN
SECRETARY	JOSEPH A. GALLUP
FIRE MECHANICS	ROY BAUBERGER, DAVID HUTSEBAUT

APPOINTMENT TO VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT: MATTHEW SORCE

On motion of Councilwoman Stagg, seconded by Councilman Pignatelli, Matthew Sorce be appointed to the Oakland Volunteer Fire Department.

ROLL CALL: All yeas, Councilmembers Burns, Di Pentima, Marcalus, Pignatelli, Stagg, Visconti.

ADOPT 2008 MEETING SCHEDULE

On motion of Councilwoman Stagg, seconded by Councilwoman Marcalus, the 2008 meeting schedule be introduced, adopted and passed by roll call vote:

BUSINESS MAY BE CONDUCTED AT EACH MEETING. EXECUTIVE SESSIONS WILL BE HELD AT 7:00 PM TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE LITIGATION, NEGOTIATIONS AND PERSONNEL MATTERS. ALL REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS WHICH ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC WILL COMMENCE AT 8:00 PM.

ALL MEETINGS WILL BE HELD IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT/COUNCIL CHAMBERS 10 LAWLOR DRIVE, OAKLAND, NEW JERSEY.

OATH OF OFFICE CEREMONY/RE-ORGANIZATION MEETING WILL BE HELD AT 5:00 PM TUESDAY-JANUARY 1, 2008 AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 10 LAWLOR DRIVE.

January	1	Oath of Office Ceremony/Re-Organization
	9	Regular Meeting
	23	Regular Meeting
February	13	Regular Meeting
	27	Regular Meeting
March	12	Regular Meeting
	26	Regular Meeting

April	9 23	Regular Meeting Regular Meeting
May	14 28	Regular Meeting Regular Meeting
June	11 25	Regular Meeting Regular Meeting
July	9 23	Regular Meeting Regular Meeting
August	13 27	Regular Meeting Regular Meeting
Sept	10 24	Regular Meeting Regular Meeting
Oct	15 29	Regular Meeting Regular Meeting
November	12 25 (Tuesday)	Regular Meeting Regular Meeting
December	10 23(Tuesday)	Regular Meeting Regular Meeting

ROLL CALL:All yeas, Councilmembers Burns, Di Pentima, Marcalus, Pignatelli, Stagg, Visconti.

APPOINT COUNCIL PRESIDENT

On motion of Councilman Di Pentima, seconded by Councilwoman Marcalus, Pat Pignatelli be appointed as Council President for 2008.

ROLL CALL:All yeas, Councilmembers Burns, Di Pentima, Marcalus, Pignatelli, Stagg, Visconti.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND LIAISONS

Council President Pignatelli read the following Council Committee and Liaison assignments:

Finance Committee	Chairperson Member	Frank Di Pentima Chris Visconti
Public Safety Committee Police-Fire-First Aid-Municipal Court	Chairperson Member	Pat Pignatelli Karen Marcalus
D.P.W. Committee Roads-Solid Waste-Recycling	Chairperson Member	Karen Marcalus Elizabeth Stagg

Building and Grounds		
Water And Sewer	Chairperson Member	Elizabeth Stagg Donald Burns
Inter Governmental Relations/Administration	Chairperson Member	Chris Visconti Frank Di Pentima
Land Use Committee Planning & Board of Adjustment	Chairperson	Donald Burns

Public Events	Frank Di Pentima
Environmental Commission	Elizabeth Stagg
Local and Regional Schools	Karen Marcalus
Senior Citizens Liaison	Karen Marcalus
Board of Health	Pat Pignatelli
Emergency Management	Pat Pignatelli
Flood Commission	Elizabeth Stagg
Recreation Commission	Donald Burns
Municipal Alliance	Christopher Visconti
Communications Commission	Frank Di Pentima
Shade Tree Commission	Donald Burns
Downtown Improvement	Christopher Visconti
Library	Christopher Visconti
Historical Preservation	Elizabeth Stagg
Community Events	Frank Di Pentima

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

On motion of Councilman Di Pentima, seconded by Councilwoman Marcalus, the official newspaper of 2008 be The Record with the Suburban Trends as alternate.

ROLL CALL: All yeas, Councilmembers Burns, Di Pentima, Marcalus, Pignatelli, Stagg, Visconti.

MOTION TO TABLE REMAINDER OF MEETING:

On motion of Councilman Burns, seconded by Councilwoman Stagg, the remainder of the meeting be tabled until January 9, 2008.

ROLL CALL: All yeas, Councilmembers Burns, Di Pentima, Marcalus, Pignatelli, Stagg, Visconti.

BENEDICTION: Mayor Szabo introduced Reverend Singh who gave the benediction.

MEETING ADJOURNED:

On motion of Councilwoman Stagg, seconded by Councilman Pignatelli, the meeting be adjourned at 5:50 pm.

ROLL CALL: All yeas, Councilmembers Burns, Di Pentima, Marcalus, Pignatelli, Stagg, Visconti.

