



Mayor's Monthly Newsletter

Written by Mayor Andrew Mitcham

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Mayors Newsletter June 2020

Hello Friends and Neighbors,

Somehow, we have already arrived in the month of June of an eventful year... to say the least. Your City staff and Council are working hard to chart a path forward with our budget. We have several citizen-driven committees meeting over the next few months to help update long-term plans and goals for our community. Thank you to every citizen that has stepped forward to volunteer for these important tasks.

I often say that Jersey Village is an island of about 8,000 people in an ocean of 7 million people in our region. We have a unique mixture of challenges that we must overcome as our metro area changes socially and economically. It's important that we focus on our core values as a City and we continue to do so with every decision we make. I'm simply a small-town Mayor, not a Congressman or Senator or Governor, and I have no aspirations for higher office once my time in office ends next year, so I hesitate to step on a soap box about national issues. However, these past few weeks have seen unprecedented protests in response to the murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis Police Department officers.

Protesting, free speech, and the right to peacefully assemble and petition the Government for a redress of grievances is a fundamental, protected right enshrined in our Constitution. Protest can take many forms—it can be tens of thousands of people marching in the streets, or it can be as simple as emailing a Councilmember about community priorities. As Americans, we enjoy the right to do these things without fear of arrest or intimidation by our Government.

I have taken the Oath of Office four times in my life—once when I enlisted in the Army, twice as a Councilman, and once as Mayor. One who takes the Oath swears to “uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States”— a document we can all unite and rally behind. I challenge each person who has taken this Oath—Mayors, Governors, Senators, police officers, etc.— to re-read what you've sworn to uphold and defend. Remember that holding office is a privilege given to us by “consent of the governed”. We were put here by the People, and it is our job to listen to those People and craft policy that protects everyone's right to pursue their own happiness.

In an age where there are dozens of 24/7 news channels of varying biases in addition to social media that enables each user to craft an individual stream of information, it is becoming easier for people to become trapped in an echo-chamber of reinforcing bias. And with a global pandemic limiting social interactions, fewer person-to-person conversations are happening, compounding this echo-chamber effect. I look forward to continued easing of restrictions so we can come together as a community again and remember that we are all Jersey Villagers, Texans, and Americans.

As for me and my scope as Mayor of a small town that places a high-priority on public safety, I sleep easy knowing we have a professional, community-focused police department. Our officers are trained in de-escalation but, more importantly, our officers are not strangers to the community they protect. They are always present for community events. They visit each and every National Night Out party every year. They attend gatherings at local apartment complexes. I loved seeing videos of JVPD officers participating in Birthday Parades for kids stuck at home during the quarantine.

We will continue to support our police department and give them the training and leadership they need to protect and serve our City as the professionals they have shown themselves to be.

Best Wishes,

Andrew Mitcham

Mayor

Jersey Village