

2015 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

MAYOR JOHN STANFORTH

Presented: February 4, 2016

December 15, 2015, then-Mayor Randy Riley wrote an editorial in the Wilmington News Journal, as he often did. It was quite telling and presented a familiar metaphor for that moment and for the job ahead. At that time, he spoke of a water stain in his kitchen. He quoted the words I spoke to him years ago in that kitchen. I had just smashed a hole in that ceiling with my hammer to reveal the source of the problem. It was shocking and unpleasant at first, but the result, a few months down the road, provided him and his wife a great deal of satisfaction—and solved the leaking-pipe problem. "You can't fix a problem if you don't know where it is," I said to him at that time. Armed with a hammer, a flashlight, and a tape measure I have approached problems of all kinds this way in the past 4 or more decades. I must say, that the method produces very good results. I am not, I assure you, going to take a hammer to the city. But I will be carrying my flashlight with me, just in case we need to take a look.

My passion runs deep for this community. My 5th great-grandfather, Tom Gaddis, was a colonel in the Revolutionary War and is buried on the land on Prairie Road he once owned. My daughter and her husband are the 6th generation to live on the family farm. Wilmington is the place I want my children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren call their home. It is important that they are able to stay here and have good jobs. I want them to be able to raise their children in the same prosperous community where I grew up, married, and raised children, and had a successful business.

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I have traveled all over the United States and Canada on my motorcycle and in my automobile. The towns that get my attention are the ones that put forth a "pretty" face. These are towns that have an abundance of trees. They are towns that have flowers. Their gateways are welcoming and landscaped. The streets are clean. The storefronts are well maintained. I always compare where I am traveling to what is at home. Wilmington does a very good job of all of this. We need to continue and add a little "polish" where necessary. I want Wilmington to be as pretty a town as anyone will ever see as they travel through or live here.

I want to give back by serving the community I so dearly love. My goals as mayor are very simple.

- I want our spending to match our revenue.
- I want to maintain our services in the most efficient manner possible.
- I want to repair our streets.

To accomplish these goals, I need your support.

John M. Stanforth, Mayor