

Mayor Randy Mills and the Conyers City Council held their annual State of the City Address at Cherokee Run Golf Club on Wednesday, January 18, 2017. More than 150 invited guests, citizens and city staff members were in attendance for the address with the theme of “Aspiring to be the Best.”

Roll Call – Present: Mayor Randy Mills; Council Members Chris Bowen, Vince Evans, John Fountain, Gerald Hinesley, and Cleveland Stroud.

Welcome – Mayor Mills welcomed everyone to the 2017 State of the City Address.

At 7:08 p.m. Mayor Mills called the meeting of the Conyers, Georgia, City Council to order.

Invocation – Mayor Mills introduced the Reverend David Benson, Senior Minister of Conyers First United Methodist Church, and asked him to give the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance – Mayor Mills led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

New Business:

After introducing all of the council members and their respective committees, Mayor Mills invited each council member to deliver remarks on accomplishments and highlights from their respective committees in 2016.

Councilman Gerald Hinesley, co-chairman of the finance committee and transportation committee, spoke about the city’s 25th consecutive GFOA Distinguished Budget Award in 2015 and the 23rd consecutive Certificate for Annual Financial Reporting (CAFR) awarded by GFOA also in 2016. Councilman Hinesley highlighted transportation projects such as the Millers Chapel Road project, East View Road project and the opening of the Old Covington Highway/Green Street underpass.

Councilman Cleveland Stroud, chairman of the public safety committee, gave a report of accomplishments of the Conyers Police Department in 2016. Councilman Stroud praised the efforts of Lieutenant Greg Carson’s active shooter training that reached more than 1,100 people and 42 groups in the past year. He also shared of the success of the campaign in securing a Kevlar vest for K-9 Eddie. Councilman Stroud also highlighted the Operation Safe Summer initiative, Run with a Cop 5K organized by Corporal Shyra Hardwick and the Gatlinburg toy drive organized by the Community Outreach division of the CPD. Councilman Stroud concluded his remarks with the statistic that crime is down 15.55% over 2015 statistics and thanked officers, 911 operators and citizens for working cooperatively to keep Conyers safe.

Councilman Vince Evans, co-chairman of the finance committee and chairman of the economic development committee, made comments on the state of economic development in the city of Conyers. Councilman Evans shared that Ashley Capital plans to construct two more buildings similar to the new location of Golden State Foods on Sigman Road adjacent to the property. He also spoke about the new construction of homes underway in The Centennial, the subdivision adjacent to Cherokee Run Golf Club marketed by Atlanta Fine Homes Sotheby’s International Realty and Heery Brothers.

Councilman Evans recognized Conyers’ participation in the new “Georgia’s Undead Trail” featuring the communities of Conyers, Covington, Atlanta, Senoia and Woodbury that are reaping the benefits of the zombie and vampire entertainment phenomenon through shows like “The Originals,” “The Vampire Diaries,” and “The Walking Dead.” He also praised the efforts of the arts community through the Conyers-Rockdale Council for the Arts, their numerous shows, new singer-songwriter showcase and the successful 40th season of the New Depot Players.

Councilman Chris Bowen, chairman of the Georgia International Horse Park, Big Haynes Creek Nature Center, Cherokee Run Golf Club and cemetery committee, provided highlights of his committee including the 20th anniversary celebration of the Georgia International Horse Park since it opened for the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. He spoke of the city’s partnership with Allied Energy Services and Inman Solar on the installation of six acres of solar panels at the horse park. Finally, Councilman Bowen heralded the recent start of construction of the new 2.75 mile extension of the PATH Trail in Olde Town Conyers to Pine Log Park.

Councilman Fountain, chairman of the community development committee, spoke about the city’s efforts in working with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government on developing and initiating implementation of the city’s strategic plan. Councilman Fountain also shared of the city’s recent work with R&R Design on developing a new city logo and brand to be unveiled in 2017. Councilman Fountain closed with exciting news of the creation of a tax allocation district to revitalize the Salem Gate shopping center property by the efforts of Tri-Land Properties.

In closing, Mayor Mills boasted of the city's strategic plan serving as a blueprint for the community's future and the opportunities for collaboration in the first ever joint retreat with county government elected officials in late January.

Mayor Mills recalled his 28 years serving the city and, of those, 20 years as mayor. He recalled the words former mayor Charles Walker spoke at the Georgia International Horse Park's 20th anniversary celebration in August 2016 about the children's book "The Little Engine That Could" by Watty Piper. Mayor Mills implored the audience to emulate the little engine and repeat "I think I can, I think I can," because the community has an abundance of heart, people who care, the necessary focus and the wherewithal to not let naysayers tell this community "we can't."

1. Employee of the Year


City Manager Tony Lucas announced that the city's 2016 Employee of the Year and recipient of the Dee Buggay Award of Excellence was named at an employee breakfast earlier that morning. Libra Denmon of the city's Planning and Inspection Services department was the recipient of the award and was presented an engraved crystal bowl and surprised by her husband, Kennie, and other family members who were in attendance to see her receive the award.

City Manager Tony Lucas thanked everyone for attending the 2017 State of the City Address and invited them to stay for the reception.

There being no further business to come before the council the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.



Randal S. Mills, Mayor


Christina Heyman, City Clerk