January 13-20

Another busy week with typical meetings; telephone calls and citizen requests, but a full agenda out in the community.

Tuesday, January 13: We were honored to have the five finalists in town for the Frank Boyles Awards. This is a prestigious national coaching award presented to the best assistant coach in the country. The finalists came from across the United States and are as follows: Coach Brian VanGorder-Athens, Georgia; Coach Shane Montgomery-Oxford, Ohio; Coach Mitch Browning-Minneapolis, Minnesota; Coach Terry Malone-Ann Arbor, Michigan; and Coach Tyrone Nix-Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The Downtown Rotary hosted a luncheon to honor the finalists. This is a great opportunity for Little Rock to host such an event.

The City Manager and I met with members of the Mosaic Templars Society including Ellen Carpenter, a wonderful lady who has led this renovation. This City of Little Rock bought this historic building to save it from the wrecking ball and with State assistance, particularly Senator Tracy Steele, this building is not only being saved, but also restored.

Later in the afternoon, I met with the executive committee of the Arkansas Municipal League. The main topic of interest to the League is a continued effort to persuade the Arkansas Legislature to support an expanded tax base rather than increasing the sales taxes.

Carlette Henderson and Leta Anthony of the Racial and Cultural Commission visited with me and briefed me on the activities the Commission is either planning or currently engaged in.

And lastly, the agenda meeting was held at 4pm in the Board of Directors Room at City Hall.

Wednesday, January 14: This morning I went out to ClearChannel and recorded a public service announcement for Catholic High. They are requesting several alumni to aid in a campaign for the school.

Early afternoon, I…along with Director Johnnie Pugh, toured the MLK Heritage Center located at 3012 Martin Luther King Drive. This home has been completely restored following the destructive tornado in January 1999 and is being redeveloped and they have acquired land next door to help in their mission. The center's mission is to act as the benchmark for economic development and the revitalization of quality housing stock in their community.

Later in the afternoon, I met with Kadi Tierney and Sericia Rouse of City Year to discuss the activities occurring. This program will bring 40 youth from around the country to Little Rock to volunteer in community service. An example of City Year's work is with Baseline Elementary mentoring and tutoring youth. On MLK day, City Year had a full day of "Day Camp" for over 100 children.

Thurday and Friday, January 15-16: The balance of my work week was filled, but a special note is a meeting with George Wittenburg of the UALR Donaghey Project to discuss plans for the bridge behind our River Market. This is another exciting project in our central business district.

Monday, January 19: Finally, along with Director Barbara Graves; Director Genevieve Stewart and Vice-Mayor Willie Hinton, I participated in the MLK Marade on Monday. This is always a special event with a significant meaning. As I said from the steps of our State Capital, "I did not know Dr. King personally, but I feel his dream is alive in people I do know today such as, Philander Smith president, Dr. Trudie Reed; NAACP president Dale Charles; and our city manager.

We are a city of rich diversity and I am proud of our citizens for the many ways you reach out to help and connect with others. Have a great week!