



Clarence State of the Town: 2014

Welcome, my friends! I would like to take the time to thank President Judy Sirianni and the Board of Directors of the Clarence Chamber of Commerce for putting together this event-and for bringing it back from the dead. Just 5 years ago were lucky if we had 20 people who attended the State of the Town. Today? Full house plus+.

Thanks! to the members of the press who are attendance today for covering not only the State of the Town but also all the events that have impacted Town of Clarence residents in 2013 and will have an effect on their lives in 2014. All three newspapers, radio and TV stations have been comprehensive in their coverage of all that happens in our town. In the words of former President Garfield, "Publicity is the strong bond which unites the people and their government."

If would also like to thank the department heads (in fact, many are here today) and the hard working employees of the Town of Clarence for a great year. It would not be an exaggeration to say that 2013 has been both very busy AND very productive. Our discussion today will focus on the promises I made to you over the past two years, the progress that we have made during my first two years in office and my projections for 2014. I will be taking questions at the end of my presentation.

What have we done over the past 24 months??

Politicians are famous for promising big things when they take office and then hoping that the voters forget what they have promised two years down the road. As a life time businessman, I have a trouble living in that fuzzy quasi-political world of lies and half truths. In my world, it gets done or it doesn't. Simple! With that being said, let's take a look at the promises I have made to you over the past two years and see how many of them have actually come true.

My first year in office was 2012.

Promise? New senior apartments on Transit Rd.

Result. Clover Management is finishing up 129 brand new senior apartments and residents should be able to move in by Christmas 2014.

Promise? Sewers in Harris Hill.

Result. A consortium of builders has agreed to contribute over \$300,000 towards the build out of the Harris Hill sewer line. This generous donation will help sewer almost 1/3 of the Harris Hill trunk line, and we feel fairly positive that we will be able to get other commercial participants to cover the next third. Bad news? Our initial estimates are that it will cost us \$41,000,000 to sewer the last third, that being the existing residential section of Harris Hill. We are currently working with our grant writer to try to raise enough State and Federal funds to complete this project. Federal funds have been available in the past, and we feel that they may be available in the near future

Promise? A new outdoor ice rink.

Result. I asked Parks Superintendent Jim Burkard to open Meadowlakes Park shortly after I was elected, and it has proved to be the most popular outdoor ice rink in Clarence. After the recent flood, it was HUGE! Stop by, skate, and tell me if you don't love the smooth, wide open surfaces.

Promise? Hiring a new EDO.

Result. Jim Rash, please stand up. Jim has done a great job for the Clarence Industrial Development Agency, and we are looking at 2014 as being a GIANT year for industrial development in the Town of Clarence.

Promise? No tax increase in 2012.

Result. Not only was there no tax increase in 2012, but the General tax rate actually went down.

My 2nd year, 2013

What did I promise and what did I deliver during my second year?

Promise: To bolster the Youth Department by adding a curvy slide and a new handicapped lift to the Town pool on Main St. and an NBA size basketball court at the Town Place Park that abuts Town Hall.

Result: The slide and lift were both installed last summer. The basketball court was constructed last summer and will be striped this summer.

Promise? Town wide satisfaction survey.

Result. Sent out in February of 2013 and completed by 6/1/2013.

At a cost of only a few hundred dollars, it gave us a unique window into thought and aspirations of the taxpayers of the Town of Clarence.

Promise? Renowned furniture manufacturer Kittingers's move from Buffalo to Clarence.

Result. The City of Buffalo and the ECIDA signed off on the move in 2013, and the new facility at Eastern Hills is nearing completion.

There were other positives in 2013, like the county wide FBI seminar that dealt with the protection of public officials and the new multifamily law. If you combine the new multifamily law with the Clarence Industrial Development Agencies vote to eliminate subsidies for multifamily housing, the number of apartment complexes that will be built in the town of Clarence over the next 20 years will be unbelievably low. This means fewer people, less traffic, lower school and town taxes. Win-win-win-win.

What new for 2014?

Promise? We will have our first *ever* industrial park in the Town of Clarence. It will be built in three phases, and the first phase will be ready by Christmas 2014.

Promise? Progress on the new sewer lines.

Our town wide sewer survey will be finished in 2014, and we will be working to with the Town of Amherst to secure approval for our new sewer line that runs past Spaulding Lake on Goodrich Road.

Promise? We will work with Erie County to rebuild Goodrich Road. The design firm of Clark, Patterson, and Lee has been hired to design and rebuild the road, and soil borings have already been taken. Goodrich Road is a death trap, and this project is long overdue.

Promise? Aggressive flood control.

I will be meeting with the Town Board in February to propose additional flood control measures that will help keep the Clarence dry. If you combine our efforts as a Town Board with an aggressive policy of ditching by our highway department, we will work to keep the water in Tonawanda creek instead of our Taxpayers basements.

Promise? The General tax rate in the Town of Clarence will decline-again. Our goal as a Town Board has been to continue to keep the tax rate low, and in 2014 our general tax rate will drop to exactly 1.030988 per thousand, far and away the lowest in Erie County for a town of 30,000 people.

--Are there any questions??--

Thank you all for coming out on this chilly January afternoon. I truly appreciate the fact that you took the time to find out the current State of the Town in Clarence, NY. I urge you all to take the time to get involved and to make this town a better place to live. My door is always open, and, please, stop by and visit. After all, public officials work for you, not the other way around. Good luck in 2014, and may God continue to bless you and your families in the coming year.