



Mayor's Office

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January 8, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

Seven years ago, my family, following a very extensive decision-making process, unanimously supported my decision to run for the honorable position of Mayor of North Platte. My wife and I filed the paperwork in the last hour and we have never looked back.

I have been a public servant my entire adult career. I served in the United States Air Force including a tour in Vietnam, I served the North Platte Police Department for 38+ years retiring as Interim Police Chief, and I will have had the honor of serving our great City as Mayor for 8 years.

I am proud of all that has been accomplished over the past 7 years. To name a few, we have added new businesses – including Hobby Lobby, we have added motels and restaurants, the downtown revitalization is well underway and we are currently developing plans for changing the complexion of the entry-way into North Platte to draw more travelers into our City – all of which bring financial resources into our City. Thanks to the tireless efforts of City Administrator Jim Hawks, the flood plains restrictions have been removed saving millions of dollars for the citizens of North Platte and allowing for lower cost building opportunities for businesses. We have improved our biking and hiking trails, Blackledge Park has been completed and we are working diligently to address the housing shortages and sub-standard housing issues that are hindering our City's ability to meet the needs of our citizens. I had the honor of being elected as President of the Nebraska League of Municipalities, I am serving my 2nd term in this position – this organization works diligently to represent the interests of member municipalities to preserve local control and empower municipal officials to shape the destiny of their municipality and improve the quality of life for their citizens – The League represents 388 member cities and villages. I have served as President of the Community Connections Board – now serving as a Board Member, I serve on the GP Health Board, Crime Stoppers Board, Linkup and numerous other committees, all of which provide a valuable service to the inner-workings of our City. I also had the honor of being nominated the North Platte Telegraph's Peoples' Choice Favorite Politician for 6 years running.

During my tenure, I have had to ask my family to make many sacrifices, the greatest of these is time, my time. Each of them would support me in seeking a third term of office, we all understand the honor of being able to be a positive example within our community and I am hopeful that all of our family – my

step-mom, our 8 children (spouses included) and our 9 grandchildren will be able to carry a pride with them because of the work we have all accomplished over the 8 years of my term.

I have struggled with this decision. I am proud of all of our City's accomplishments and I know there is a lot more that needs to be done, but I keep coming back to - time. We now have 2 grandsons graduated from High School and another graduating this year. Seven years ago, they were in Elementary School and Middle School. Additionally, we have had some recent health issues in our family. Each medical appointment requires all-hands on deck to get schedules rearranged so I can be with them without leaving our citizens and all of the scheduled events unattended – all of which are very important. I know there are a lot of our citizens who will be disappointed by my decision to not seek a third term as Mayor, they have been very vocal with me about it, and I am certain there will be times when I will regret not seeking another term, but I don't want to regret not being there for my family during times of need and as our young ones grow.

The greatest concern expressed to me has been – if not me, then who? I know the direction this City is headed and I know it will take the right candidate to keep the upward momentum going. This position is not about being the boss, it is not about fulfilling individual agendas, it is about guiding the City and its' people calmly through the good times and the bad times it's about building teams of dedicated individuals who want to see this City grow and prosper. It is about putting a name and face on "The City of North Platte" at home or abroad (I assure you, no matter where you go it is a good probability that people will recognize you as the Mayor of North Platte and anything you say or do will be a reflection on the City of North Platte). It is about doing the right things for the right reasons even when it's not the popular decision. And, most importantly, it's about doing all of this without caring who gets the credit – I believe this is the most important; my motto as President of the League of Municipalities is, "There is no limit to what our municipalities and do or where we can go if we don't mind who gets the credit."

There are many of things for candidates to consider prior to agreeing to take on the responsibilities of becoming the next Mayor of North Platte and for our Citizens to consider as they vote for the candidate, they believe will do the best job for the City of North Platte. When I took office, having worked in one of the larger City departments as a Department Head, I thought I had a pretty good idea of what the job entailed. I have to admit that was not true. I only had a small piece of the puzzle – there was a lot more to learn.

While the position of Mayor is not a "full-time" job, it requires full-time commitment. If the Mayor is going to have a finger on the pulse of the people, of the City, the Mayor needs to be among the people and throughout the City and accessible to the people (I kept my home phone number, it is in the phone book). My philosophy throughout my term has been if the event is important enough for them to ask me to be there, it is important for me to be there. "There" includes: judging chili cook-offs, classroom visits, Eagle Scout Awards ceremonies, ribbon-cuttings, grand openings, Proclamations, parades, 90th and 100th birthday celebrations, welcomes including Miss Nebraska Pageant as well as other conference and civic groups gathering in North Platte (I particularly like doing these – it gives me the opportunity to showcase North Platte and all that it has to offer). There are a number of these events, each one important and each one special and important they are held mornings, afternoons, nights, weekends, holidays These events are the gratifying ones, the fun ones, the ones that give our citizens the opportunity to interact with the person they elected to serve as their Mayor.

The next part of serving in this position is the business end. Council meetings twice a month require more than meeting twice a month. There is a lot of ground work that is done to prepare the information for your Council prior to the actual meeting day. There is a lot of coordination necessary to ensure the information you provide them is complete and accurate so they can make the best decision for this City. There are items that arise that require individual meetings with Council Members so they have a better understanding of what is on the horizon. And there are meetings with concerned, upset, and even angry citizens, each one very passionate about their concerns and only interested in meeting with the Mayor – the follow-up to these meetings, your ability to do the best you can to get the issues resolved is of utmost importance – they are, after all, the ones who put their trust in you and elected you. There is budgetary oversight, departmental oversight meetings, meetings, meetings, all of which are important to the progression, improvement, and well-being of our City – and all under your direction.

The last but absolutely not the least piece to this position is family involvement. Once a candidate is elected Mayor the family is elected as well. There will be missed concerts, sporting events and shared holidays. Shopping within the community will take a bit longer as people greet you and want to discuss things with you along the way (always carry paper and a pen). If you are accessible to your public there will be calls at home, interrupted dinners. It is not possible to please everyone, so there will be times when the citizens, the news media, special interest groups, will criticize you and question or disagree with your decisions very publicly. Spouses, children, and other family members may be subject to those conversations as well. And, the reason for this very difficult decision – the time required to do the job right.

I am thankful for all of you who have encouraged me, supported me, prayed for me. I want all of our citizens to know while I am not seeking a 3rd term as Mayor of North Platte I have another year left of my term and I do not intend to sit by idly. There is a lot left to do and I will be working diligently throughout my final year to address as much as I can. It is my hope that I am able to leave behind a legacy that my family and our citizens can be proud of and one that the next candidate can use as a blueprint from which to begin their term in office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Livingston", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dwight L. Livingston
Mayor