

**March 7, 2014**

As we anticipate spring, there is a bit of excitement in the air. In the past 18 months, the City has welcomed 15 new businesses to town. Partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce are stronger than it has been in years (refer to the Geneseo Chamber tab under Economic Development to view Chamber President Jim Ries' speech from the annual Chamber dinner).

As the farmers will begin to cultivate the ground in spring, we will continue to cultivate those partnerships with new business developers enabling more new projects to move to their fruition. New programs like the downtown business façade programs support established businesses so they can thrive. This current budget will be balanced as it was last year. These financial gains will be used to continue to provide reliable and consistent services and allows us to make the necessary updates and improvements to our infrastructure, parks, and street.

As we near the end of what's been a very harsh winter, our thoughts look forward to winter's end and the upcoming spring.

This winter has been especially demanding on the city staff and equipment. The extreme cold and seemingly never-ending snowstorms required frequent snow removal operations, call outs in the electric department and water main repairs. Through it all, our city hall staff have answered many questions from our residents, our police department has managed the increase in calls keeping our city safe, our streets were kept clear and our water and electricity kept running. On behalf of the residents, city council and myself, I'd like to publicly state a sincere thank-you to our city employees responsible for keeping our city up and running through the winter.

**Linda Van Der Leest** *Mayor for the City of Geneseo*