



Mayor's Monthly Editorial

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MAYOR'S MONTHLY MINUTES MAY 2018 "Always Working to keep Douglas Shining Brightly"

Greetings people of Douglas, we are always working to keep our great city, "always shining bright". Douglas is a great place to live, work, and play and we want to remain that way. As you may have realized, I am passionate about our youth. Over the last few months, I have taken measures to seek out, identify, and recognize youth leaders in our community. It is so important to offer programs that show our leaders are ready to step up and go to bat for our youth by mentoring and developing leadership skills in our youth. I cannot say it enough, how vitally important the youth of Douglas are to the future of Douglas. Leaders of today need to be a light for our youth, by taking an active role and encouraging them to shine their brightest. The youth are our future and through mentoring programs today's leaders in Douglas will help the future leaders of Douglas keep Douglas "Always Shining Bright" in state of Georgia.

Our youth council, which consists of 14 members, is serving as an advisory council to mayor and commission. These bright, intelligent youth will review proposed city ordinances and provide recommendations from a young adult point-of-view. We have begun their education process about government by arranging for the council to visit our state legislators at the Capital in Atlanta. I commend Representative Dominic LaRiccia and Representative John Corbett for taking the time to educate our youth council about the legislative processes at the State level. The youth council is off to a great start. They have held their first meeting, volunteered with American Legion Post 515 to help cleanup Oak Grove Cemetery, and have represented Douglas at the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) Youth Caucus that was held in Savannah and volunteered for community service while in Savannah at the YMCA. I am so proud of the members that I am going to list their names and title again this month, Asia Denning (Junior Mayor), Daisey Surrency (Junior Public Information Officer), Samantha Martin (Junior Commissioner Ward 5), Savannah Cothorn (Junior Commissioner Ward 6), Zianna Odom (Junior Commissioner Ward 4), Zaylon Bivens (Junior Commissioner Ward 1), Ashunti Glover (Junior Commissioner Ward 3), Liyah Carswell (Junior Commissioner Ward 2), Ana Escobar (Junior City Manager), Teairra Thrower (Junior City Clerk), Irian Tatum (Junior City Attorney), Avery Hurst (Junior Finance Officer), Journee Wilkerson (Junior Public Information Officer), and Alexis Davis (Junior City Attorney/Junior Finance Officer). If you see these kids around, congratulate them on their service to this youth council. We are also looking for sponsors for the Youth

Council. Let me be the first to say "THANK YOU" to Papa John's Pizza for being the first business to sponsor our Youth Council.

Another youth initiative that will begin in June is the Douglas-Coffee County Teen Court. This is a great program to help kids that have started on the wrong path, change their lives by choosing to do the right thing and be a more positive impact in our community. These kids have committed misdemeanors and we need to help them before they commit more serious offenses. Once Teen Court is up and running, the court will be totally youth lead with the only adult being the judge. Adults, we need you to step up - we are looking for volunteers to help with this program for our youth.

Our quality of life initiative began over two years ago and focused on cleaning up around personal and business properties. As a part of our Quality of Life (QOL) Campaign, the City of Douglas encourages every citizen to know local ordinances, which can be found on our website, www.CityofDouglas.com, on the home page, Code of Ordinance. Code Enforcement is getting tougher on enforcing local ordinances and holds quarterly QOL Blitz as a way to remind citizens and issue warnings. Knowing key ordinances can help to save you from unwanted penalties, fines, and court cost. I want everyone to know - we are enforcing our ordinances and violators will receive tickets. Loud music, drag racing, and other nuisance activities will not be allowed in Douglas. I have asked our Code Enforcement officers and Douglas Police Officers to start writing tickets and holding people accountable for their actions. Let's all "Team Up, To Clean Up Douglas!"

Last year, we took steps to update our ordinances and re-classified staff positions to oversee our quality of life initiatives. We appreciate our citizens and want them to help us keep Douglas "Always Shining Brightly". In April, we offered a full week for citizens to dispose of large, bulky, unwanted items at no cost during Spring Junk Free Week. In addition to Junk Free week, we also offered Tire Amnesty week and citizens could dispose of old tires at no charge. By not charging a fee, we hoped that citizens would take this week to cleanup around their property and homes. I am proud to say, we collected five 30 yard roll-off dumpsters of junk from citizens and 33 tires. During our Great American Cleanup Day, we had roughly 20 volunteers to pick up over 20 bags of trash and other large items in the South Gaskin Avenue and Pinecrest Drive areas of the city. That's a great start and I challenge citizens to step it up and get rid of more debris that is cluttering our yards and neighborhoods - our Residential Junk Drop Off dates are the first Saturdays of each month. We need you to help keep Douglas shining brightly!

Spring is here and summer months are around the corner, I would like to stress the need to be safe, whether it is taking CPR courses, enrolling your kids in swim lessons, or summer programs with the Recreation Department. Our Recreation Department has summer programs for all ages. Signup is on Tuesday, May 1st, from 4pm-6pm at the Recreation Department. Go ahead and make plans for childcare over the summer. I strongly encourage everyone to practice water safety rules when around bodies of water - please keep your eyes on children and older adults. Be safe and let's all get out to enjoy this amazing spring weather by spending time with family and friends.