

Danny

CITY OF PELL CITY

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

September 27, 2004

I would like to welcome you to my annual State of the City address for 2004. This year's address focuses on our current state of the city and accomplishments and challenges of this administration as well as future challenges. On September 13, 2004, the council unanimously adopted our budget for 2004/2005. Alabama law requires a budget prior to October 1 and also requires a 10% reserve of which this budget contains. The budget was developed over several months with extensive input from department heads and the community. This budget, as does all budgets, will serve as a road map for the upcoming year.

ADMINISTRATION: The citizens of Pell City can be proud of the work accomplished by this department, not only from the past year, but the preceding several years. This department's emphasis over the past five years has been having all audits current, enhanced policies and procedures that allow a more efficient operation of city government, training and cross training of city staff, updated software that allows for enhanced and more timely reporting of finances, leading to increased efficiency and proficiency. The amount of effort and dedication that has been expended to accomplish these goals has been, quite honestly, phenomenal and has been among the most dedicated efforts I have ever had the opportunity to be a part of. I salute these efforts and call on the city administration to become involved in the process as it truly sets an example for progress and good government. It was well attended by the very nature of the location of my office. I have worked with these individuals on a daily basis through both good days and challenging days. I have achieved a deep appreciation and love for them as individuals.

COURT: Our court system, like all other departments, has directly been impacted by growth. In 1999 our average number of new cases per session was 58. Currently that number stands at 65. Funds collected for the same period totaled \$212,811.16 and \$261,937.84 respectively. The number of warrants issued, through joint efforts of the court and police department, have gone from 835 in 1999 to 930 in September, 2004. Warrants issued in 2003 totaled 1,412. The court system operates with only two full-time employees and a part-time municipal judge. These employees are on call twenty-four hours a day. I must also commend these employees for their professional and courteous approach to those they serve.

UTILITY ADMINISTRATION: This department has been impacted by advances in technology as much as any department within the city. Electronic meter reading has reduced our meter reading staff by 50% and has also allowed for a more efficient and accurate reading of utility meters. This staff has excelled in the challenges that the department has faced in the past year and I am confident that this success will continue.

UTILITY MAINTENANCE: In the past four years, approximately \$6.8 million of city funds has been expended to upgrade our utility services in all areas of our city. While I am pleased that we were able to appropriate these funds, I must inform the public, and most especially the new administration, that if this city is to continue in its growth appropriately, our utility infrastructure

must also continue and may need enhancements. Our growth has been positive but it offers many challenges and no department is more affected by these challenges than our utility department. In 2001, we adopted new water and sewer rates. This increase resulted in improved infrastructure. Our location of a new well site will by estimation produce 1.4 million gallons of water a day. This new source of water will provide a comfortable relief to our current water supplies. The well should be on-line in the year 2005. This department will also be involved in providing utility infrastructure to Jefferson State Jr. College. They continue to repair lines within the city and I am constantly informed by our citizens of the courteous and professional manner in which these employees conduct business. I join the council in thanking this department who provides invaluable public service under many times difficult circumstances.

WWTP: As you know, Phase I improvements to the wastewater treatment plant were dedicated November 6, 2003. The \$3.7 million expenditure was completed \$100,000.00 below bid amount. The improvements were provided by State Revolving Loan Funds and allowed for an increase of 2.7 million gallons daily during periods of heavy rain. Our capacity at the plant to handle wet weather flow has substantially improved. A recently completed Eden sewer line will enhance services in the Eden area. I encourage the new mayor and council to evaluate this plant as our growth has and will continue to affect its operation. These employees, like so many others, are on call 24 hours a day and are truly committed to their jobs.

PARK & REC: This past year saw the completion of a multi-purpose room at the civic center, a new roof, an air-conditioning system, a weight room, and improvements to the gymnasium. Our sports complex, dedicated in 2000, continues to draw thousands of children to participate in a wide array of athletic activities. Since Kids Kastle was completed in 2001, many of our youngest citizens have had the opportunity to play in a play area that was well-maintained through an incredible community undertaking. Additional tennis courts and a 1.1 mile walking trail have added to a much used and much loved city park. Our 19th Street community center and adjacent playground have served as enhancements to the community and continue to grow in popularity. Our recent lighting project at the courts on 19th Street will further add to our recreational facilities. This department has excelled in community events that include the annual Easter egg hunt, the catfish rodeo, the Halloween candy hunt, and pictures with Santa, just to name a few. This department is responsible for our Senior Citizens program and they continue in their efforts to provide activities and opportunities for a group of our most treasured citizens, our seniors. On behalf of the council, I commend our employees of the Pell City Park & Recreation Department.

PLANNING: Our Planning Department is the first department to experience growth. From October 1, 1999, until present, 502 building permits have been issued, which resulted in \$83,626,085.00 of new construction. During this same period of time, 332.68 acres have been annexed into the city and 254 single-family dwellings have been constructed along with more than 300 new apartments. We continue to achieve a balance between our commercial construction, residential and industrial growth. We have witnessed improved services to the citizens through the addition of a city engineer. Developers, builders and individuals have expressed satisfaction with prompt on-site availability of answers to questions they may have. On behalf of the council, I would like to thank Municipal Consultants for their valuable advice regarding planning and infrastructure issues. In 2001, new subdivision rules and regulations were adopted. These regulations have favorably impacted the city's infrastructure. This three member staff continues to be on the front line in witnessing the growth and progress of our city and they are to be commended for their efforts and dedication.

REVENUE: Our main charge as a government is to provide services to our citizens and without adequate revenues, we would not have adequate services. In 1999 our basic revenues totaled \$8,371,681.00. In 2004 these same sources produced \$11,303,696.00. Our city has received \$2,333,632.00 in grant dollars since October 1, 1999. L. P. Campbell Company has been the city's official grants writer for more than ten years and we have been extremely well served by Mrs. Campbell. In October 2003, our city hired a compliance officer who has collected \$192,272.00 of unpaid taxes and licenses. These funds were a result of 631 contacts either in person or by letter. Our business license ordinance has been revised on more than one occasion in an attempt to make our city more compatible with the needs of our constituents. As our city continues to grow, we must also continue to regularly evaluate and make changes, if necessary, to our license and tax ordinances. It has been my observation that this department is committed to being both fair and balanced in their administering of our laws. They have been advocates for our taxpayers and balanced in their collection of our revenues. These three ladies, by the nature of their jobs, are many times faced with difficult situations, but their commitment to the city and her citizens has been unwavering.

FIRE: Since October, 1999, three full-time and two part-time fire fighters have been added. In 2000, a new fire station was dedicated in Eden and in 2003, Fire Station #3 was put into service in Mays Bend. We also saw our ISO rating dropped to a 3, meaning savings to our citizens. We have been honored with Muscular Dystrophy's "Golden Axe" award twice, awarded the Life Safety Achievement Award from the U. S. Fire Administration twice, placed our HAZMAT response trailer in service, acquired a "Fire Safety House", paved our drill fields, renovated Fire Station #2, added a new fire engine for Station #4 and joined with the police department in placing into service an Honor Guard. These accomplishments over the past four-plus years have allowed our fire department to become one of the best, best-equipped and well trained departments of any city in the state. I join the council and citizens of Pull City in thanking the men and women of the fire department for their dedication and service.

LIBRARY: The year 2004 saw the library director become a full time department head position and, in my assessment, this was both a bold and appropriate decision by the City. This has allowed for better communications between the Library and the citizens. Also in 2004, a four year renovation was completed and 40,000 visits were made to the library.

The outpouring of support from this community, and more particularly the unequalled support both financially and by the volunteers of the Library Guild, has been overwhelming. Enhancements will be needed in this department as we continue in our growth pattern. I salute the Director and his staff for the service they provide to our citizens.

STREET DEPT: This past year we completed our most aggressive paving project in the City's history. With funds from the Gasoline Excise Tax and the Tobacco Tax accounts we were able to expend approximately \$600,000 on our streets and paving projects. The department continues in its efforts to maintain and enhance drainage ditches in areas where flooding is prone to occur.

This past year a Transportation Enhancement Grant paid for crepe myrtles along US Hwy. 231. The Street Department provided in-kind assistance assuring that the taxpayers were not responsible for any direct funding for the project. While maintaining streets is the major function of this department, street signage and right-of-way maintenance is also their responsibility.

This past year also brought a most aggressive remodeling and landscaping improvement project to this department. This was accomplished through discretionary funds from the State of Alabama.

Employees of the city shop have instituted a vehicle maintenance program that insures that all city vehicles are properly maintained. My sincere thanks to the men of the Street Department and the Shop for all their efforts within the City.

POLICE DEPT: Over the past few years the police department has undergone a major transformation. The department is presently in the midst of accreditation, which will serve as an acknowledgement of a well managed police department. One of the most notable improvements has been the establishment of a pay scale comparable with surrounding cities which has decreased the turnover rate in our police department. The department has also instituted a background screening process for officer recruits and a fair promotional process. In 2002, the council approved the purchase of a K-9 unit to aid in the search for illegal drugs in our community. In an effort to reduce injuries and improve officer safety, the department purchased Tazers and trained officers in their use. Under this administration, every patrol car has been equipped with in-car cameras.

The Police Department has also developed several programs to reach out to the community. The Citizen Police Academy is held once per summer to offer individuals a chance to learn first hand about police work. The Junior Police Academy is a highly structured, county-wide program for at risk youth that is offered each June. The Explorer Program provides local youth ages 14 to 21 an opportunity to serve their community and learn about public safety. The Police Department continues to work closely with our schools through the SRO/DARE program offering instruction, mentoring and security for our Pell City students.

PERSONNEL: This past year saw a complete review and revision of our personnel handbook. This was accomplished with input and recommendations from department heads as well as employees to the Council. We also saw the face value of the life insurance provided to the employees at no cost increase from \$25,000 to \$35,000 for employees in 2004.

Within the past five years we have increased the number of paid holidays by two per year and instituted a merit system for our employees. The merit pay plan assures each employee a raise of approximately 5% for those who earn a score of 70 or above on their annual evaluation. In 2000 we were able to increase the city's payment for family health coverage from 30% to 50%.

The following is a comparison of pay rates prior to the merit system and what they are today under the system.

Position	Starting Pay Comparison	
	1999	2004
Police Officer	\$ 9.50	\$12.57
Firefighter	\$ 9.50	\$ 9.87
Athletic Director	\$ 9.88	\$13.20
Equipment Operator-Street	\$ 8.27	\$10.26
Line Service Worker	\$ 8.27	\$10.26
Supervisors	\$10.48	\$17.30
Department Heads	\$12.74	\$21.20

Salaries and benefits for our employees account for 52% of the budget for 2005. I am pleased that we have been able to aggressively implement the above measures which have stabilized our work force and reduced the employee turn over to an extremely low level.

CITY FINANCES: Our City's finances continue to remain strong. An attached memo indicates that currently the City has approximately \$5 million in cash on hand or in reserve. This amount has increased by \$1.9 million since 1999. The City enjoys a AAA rating with its Bond insurers and our annual audits are current.

Recent Bond Issues for commercial projects such as the Bankhead Crossing have resulted in revenue enhancements of \$3,853,763.00 in sales tax and license fees to date. We have also been very pleased to partner with our local school system in arranging for their bond financing. This arrangement is part of our City's fiscal reporting procedures, but it is not the financial responsibility of the City, nor does it impact the City's debt limit.

We are proud of the association that we have with Region's Bank and the incredible staff of Morgan Keegan. The devoted assistance and ingenuity of Mr. Larry Ward and Mr. Fred Major in the bond market arena has proven them to be a most integral partner of the City.

The firm of Bradley Arant Rose & White has served us as Bond Counsel for several years. Mr. Alan Zeigler has become synonymous with the issuance of bonds and his cordial and timely assistance has proven to be a tremendous asset and most worthy of acknowledgement. On behalf of our City, we extend our thanks and appreciation for the many hours of work.

As we face and better growth and new opportunities along with additional challenges. It is our belief as a Council that we have met these challenges and are proud of our accomplishments.

BOARDS & COMMITTEES:

I want to thank the men and women who have unselfishly volunteered their time and efforts to help guide and direct our city in the areas of their expertise. Our city has been well served by various boards, committees, and commissions.

The Industrial Development Board has and continues to work tirelessly to bring industrial development to our City. Announcements are forthcoming about enhancements to the Industrial Park.

The Commercial Development Authority is about to formally unveil their plans for a downtown façade program.

The Beautification Council has helped to maintain the beauty and integrity of this City through their clean-up programs.

The Library Board has been a tireless supporter on behalf of the Library patrons.

The Economic Development Council has been one of the most rewarding undertakings for me. I am honored to have been at the table when this partnership was conceived and I am pleased to report that the City and the County is stronger today because of this Council.

The Planning Commission has been a steady guiding force to help direct growth in the City and I applaud their efforts.

In the past year we have also formed an Oral History Committee and have strengthened our Mays House Board and Committees. I also offer my congratulations to these men and women for their efforts.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that when completed next year that the Mays House will be a shining city treasure. I look forward to visiting the Chamber of Commerce when they relocate to the Mays House. Our Chamber has been a true partner in promoting our community and has served us well.

The past year has seen the hiring of a full time director at the Boys and Girls Club. I believe this action has been the most important since the beginning of our association.

We have been able to achieve some lofty goals in the City due to partnerships and bridges that we have built among ourselves and other entities. None have been more important than our relationship with the St. Clair County Commission. They have been a true partner in our progress and have helped us to accomplish our goals.

The Coosa Valley Water Authority is one such partnership that will help insure future success for both growth and development.

Work is nearing completion on our Social Services Center. Once completed, this will bring together the agencies to serve those of our citizens needs.

Our recent announcement of Jefferson State Junior College locating in Pell City will prove to be one of the most significant announcements in our City's history. Jeff State will provide employment, educational and economic development possibilities for years to come. We are proud to have played a part in this most important endeavor.

This administration's work on the problems along I-20 has helped to improve the safety of all who travel this corridor. Again, we are proud to have played a roll and encourage these efforts to continue for much depends upon safe travel on I-20.

The firm of Church, Seay, and Minor has continued to be the strength of law and counsel for the City. The staff has tremendous knowledge of municipal law and has served this administration in all aspects regarding the legality of contracts, partnerships, and even the bond issue questions as they have come to light. I commend the firm and staff for their support to this City.

The Pell City-St. Clair Animal Shelter Board was formed as a concerted effort to promote better care and protection of the animals in the community. The men and women who serve on this Board give tirelessly to the unwanted animals. Their patience is undeniable as is shown in their efforts.

On September 13, 1999, I, along with the Council at that time, began a journey. That journey had good days for our City that far exceeded the difficult days. We have seen every department

and almost ever facet of our community change. This change was spurred on by what many consider as our most aggressive growth period in our 124 plus year history.

As the City's first full time Mayor, it has been my extreme pleasure and privilege to preside during this period. As I look back at the past five plus years, I am overcome with a sense of pride at what our City has become. But, as always, there is much more to be done.

Councilmen McGowan, Walls, White, Todd, and DeLoach have been not only my partners but my friends through this journey. To these men I publicly acknowledge your commitment and love that we share for this great city.

In my first speech as Mayor, I said that economic development would be the cornerstone of my administration and that I would work with this City and her people to promote and enhance progress in any and all ways possible. It will be up to history to judge if we succeeded. But, I am comfortable and confident that we have accomplished our goals and objectives.

To the employees – it was my desire to treat you with respect and insure that all had a fair place within the 'city family'. Again, I believe we have succeeded.

We also set the bar high in our community and all seem to have reached that bar. It has been this administration's belief that for ordinances and procedures to work for one, they must therefore be applicable to all. We have worked hard and diligently to have that take place. There is no place for special treatment at city hall. Fairness and equality must apply to everyone.

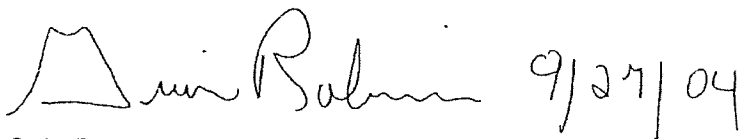
As I have said before, this job has been the greatest honor of my life. I want to publicly thank my family and many friends who have supported me unconditionally in this endeavor. To the citizens - Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to do what I hope I was called to do, public service.

To the new Mayor and Council – Congratulations and best wishes as you now embark on your journey. It will not always be easy. You will have difficult decisions ahead. But, I am of the opinion that if you always think of what is best for the citizens you will make the right decisions.

In the words of the late General Douglas MacArthur, "Old soldiers never die!"

Thank you.

God bless each of you and God bless our great City!



Guin Robinson, Mayor
City of Pell City

City of Pell City

1905 FIRST AVENUE NORTH
PELL CITY, ALABAMA 35125

Guin Robinson
MAYOR

Marinda Gipson
CLERK

TELEPHONE: (205) 338-2244
FAX: (205) 338-2320



COUNCIL MEMBERS

Forest A. Walls
James McGowan
Bernard White
Donnie Todd, Jr.
Dwain DeLoach

MEMO

TO: Mayor Robinson
FROM: Penny Isbell
DATE: September 20, 2004
RE: Cash on hand

An October, 1999 financial report indicated the City of Pell City had approximately \$3.1 million cash on hand. A financial report for August, 2004 (first report available) indicates the City has approximately \$12 million in cash on hand, which represents an increase of \$8.9 million. These funds are monies the City has in various checking accounts and investment accounts but do not include bond monies.

City of Pell City

1905 FIRST AVENUE NORTH
PELL CITY, ALABAMA 35125

Guin Robinson
MAYOR

Marinda Gipson
CLERK

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COUNCIL MEMBERS

Forest A. Walls
James McGowan
Bernard White
Donnie Todd, Jr.
Darrin DeLoach

MEMO

DATE: NOVEMBER 12, 2003

TO: DANNY STEWART

FROM: MAYOR ROBINSON *GR*

RE: STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

I would like to make certain this State of the City Address is a permanently placed on file at the library.

STATE OF CITY ADDRESS NOVEMBER 10, 2003

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the State of the City Address 2003-04. This year's address will focus primarily on our current state of the city with additional emphasis directed toward other accomplishments and challenges. On August 25, 2003, the City Council adopted our budget for the up coming year. It is my understanding we were the first city in Alabama to adopt a budget for the next fiscal year. This budget was developed over several months with input from community, department heads and the city council. I am extremely proud of this budget and its potential impact on the citizens of Pell City.

Police:

In early October, we authorized the solicitation of bids for four new equipped police cars. These vehicles will continue a plan that was begun in 2000, toward replacing public safety vehicles. The city is also awaiting the arrival of taser units. This state of the art equipment will enable the department to better and more safely manage crime. Our School Resource Officer Program, Explorer Program, Junior Police Academy, Bike Patrol, Reserve Officer Program, Special Operations Unit and K-9 Unit along with countless other worthwhile programs will help ensure that our citizens are among the safest in the state. We have also added new body armor and vest, purchased with grant funds from the Department of Justice. In 1999 starting pay for a police officer was \$9.50 per hour, now starting pay is \$12.57 per hr. I'm extremely proud of the attitudes and sense of professionalism exhibited by the men and women of the Pell City Police Department.

Street:

We are currently in the midst of a \$600,000 street paving project. This project is the most aggressive in the city's history. It has been financed through current revenues which are on hand from our gasoline and tobacco tax funds. New equipment has been budgeted for the street department. This department continues to make the overall appearance of our city a top priority. They have recently eliminated several condemned buildings to the delight of many of our citizens. The street department has spearheaded projects such as Cropwell Drive drainage improvements, aggressive Right-of-way maintenance, sign placement and traffic light maintenance to mention just a few. The men of the City Shop work tirelessly to keep City vehicles and equipment in proper working order. The employees of the street department do an excellent job and many times are among the last thanked. Tonight, on behalf of the council and the citizens, I thank you.

Utilities:

This utility department continues to upgrade and enhance utility services throughout our city. Their commitment is 24 hours daily. Our long awaited Avondale sewer project is completed, and a \$250,000 grant will allow us to enhance sewer service to the Eden area. In September 2003, the city located a new well site. Early projections indicate this well will pump 1.4 million gallons of water per day. We are also in the process of installing new radio read water meters. These meters

are among the most advanced technology available today. Our water department has purchased new computer software that will allow a continued and enhanced over all operation of this department. A new water line that will serve the Highway 78 corridor to the Interstate should be completed within the next 2 weeks, further expanding utility service to this community. I share the council's view that the employees of the utility department are both courteous and accommodating in maintaining services to our citizens. While the adoption and implementation of the water and sewer regulations has at time been challenging, I truly believe that these guidelines will continue to protect and enhance our infrastructure throughout the city. Utilities will continue to play a vital role to future growth. Thanks for a job well done.

Fire:

On November 23, 2003, the council will join the Pell City Fire Department and residents of the south end of the city as we dedicate a new permanent fire station. Fire station # 3 will join our most recently completed Eden fire station which was dedicated in 2000. This new state of the art facility is being financed through the county wide fire tax and 2002 bond issue. The department is also extremely proud of the new fire safety house, which arrived July 22, 2003. This house is being used as a training tool for our citizens. It is our hope that it will educate and save lives. The funds for this house were obtained through federal grants. Among other projects the fire department is involved in are MDA Boot Drive and Safe Halloween. As most of you know last year our ISO rating dropped from 4 to 3, a remarkable achievement for the fire department and our community. At this time I congratulate the ladies and gentlemen of the Pell City Fire Department, they are truly public servants in every sense of the word.

WWTP:

On November 6, 2003, we dedicated phase I improvements to the wastewater treatment plant. The plant bid was 3.76 million dollars, with a final price tag 110,000 below the bid amount. The enhancement to this plant was financed through SRF funds. Prior to the improvement our plant could handle approximately 2.2 mgd; we can now handle 5 mgd during periods of heavy rain fall. The annual capacity of the plant to handle wet weather flow has increased substantially. A new clarifier, lift pumps, screens and grinder have also been added. As we have previously stated, in order to continue maintaining growth in the city, we must continually evaluate this facility. The dedicated employees of the wastewater treatment plant are on call 24 hours a day and they are committed to their jobs.

Library:

Our past year budget contained the final phase of a 4 year renovation program. The library employees, board, guild and foundation have formed one of the most incredible partnerships that we have ever been associated with. They are all to be commended for their commitment and dedication. We are keeping the library open

additional hours, and we made the library director a department head position. Citizens of all ages continue to benefit from the library and I believe its growth mirrors the growth of the community. Residents of the Pell City area made over 35,000 visits to the library last year.

Administration:

Our administrative department is continuing in their aggressive training and cross-training of employees. Through this training we have introduced, implemented and enhanced our purchase order system. This allows for up to date accurate bookkeeping. At any given time a department head can know exactly where they stand in the budget year. Over the past 3 years our court system has experienced approximately 28% in revenue enhancements. The court system in conjunction with the police department has established a program to more efficiently serve warrants. This 2 member office continues to serve the public with professionalism often under difficult circumstances. New computer technology has greatly improved the budgetary process of the city. It has allowed immediate and accurate financial information. It has been my personal and professional honor to work along side the administrative department on a daily basis. They are among the most dedicated and committed employees that I have ever worked with.

Park and Recreation:

Your park and recreation department continues to grow at a rapid rate. In this years budget new fencing for soccer and football fields has been completed. Weight room equipment is currently on order. Repairs and enhancements to our most used facility, the civic center, should be completed in the spring on 2004. A new roof and air conditioning system will be added along with an additional banquet type room. We will also be making improvements to the gymnasium and walking track. These enhancements are being financed through the recent 2002 bond issue. In 2002 we dedicated 2 new tennis courts, which was a joint effort through the city and the Logan Martin Tennis Association. Our 8 tennis courts, 1.1 mile walking track and Kids Kastle continue to draw thousands of our citizens to the park each year. Our recreation department coordinates various community events including Easter Egg Hunt, 5-K Fun Run, Catfish Rodeo Halloween Candy Hunt and Pictures with Santa to mention a few. Our sports complex, was completed in 2000, with funds from the 1998 bond issue. Our Lakeside Park and Sports Complex, are truly 2 of our city's greatest assets. The Pell City Community Center which is located in the old armory is currently serving as a mini civic center. Our senior citizen center mirrors the city's growth. We are currently working to provide even more activities for some of our most treasured residents, our seniors. The employees of the Pell City Parks and Recreation department are truly called to their jobs. I along with the council thank them for the wonderful job they do.

Planning:

Like all departments in the city our planning and revenue departments is experiencing financial growth. In the past 4 years, we have issued 278 permits for new homes. In 2001, after extensive public debate and discussion, we adopted new sub-division rules and regulations. These regulations have enhanced the cities infrastructure.

Revenue:

We have filled a long vacant position of compliance officer in the revenue department. In September of 2000 general revenues totaled 7,503,491: In September of 2003, these same funds totaled 9,415,888. While completing several major projects we have managed to grow our reserves from 3,218,000 in 1999 to 5,500,000 in 2003.

The planning, revenue, water and court employees are truly committed to the ideal public service and I thank them for their commitment.

The City of Pell City has long been served by an excellent grants writer. During fiscal year 2002-2003 our city was awarded \$620,611 in grant monies. Since 2000 the city has received approximately 2 million dollars in grant funds. We have also applied for \$120,000 grant that along with the currently budgeted amount will complete renovations to the Mays House. We expect an announcement in the next few days concerning this grant award.

As a council we have long been committed to the Animal Shelter of Pell City. We continue to help in the financing of their most worthwhile endeavors.

We are continuing the on going downtown renovation program that thus far has included new sidewalks, street lights and landscaping. We have introduced the idea of a downtown façade program to our Commercial Development Authority.

Our Beautification Council continues to work tirelessly to promote and enhance the aesthetic appeal of our community. While we have had recent disagreements on our sign and downtown parking ordinances, these debates have been both healthy and encouraging to the future of our city. It is my desire, from recent discussions, that a downtown action committee and a city wide business organization will be formed. Work should begin very soon on a long awaited landscape project on Highway 231. This program will be funded through Federal grants.

Boys & Girls:

We as a council believe the Bridge Builders, also known as the boys and girls club, has a positive influence and impact on the youth of our city. We are indeed proud of the relationship we have with this organization.

In 2001, the council adopted a city wide merit system. This system is a 5 year plan that ensures salaries that are both fair and competitive. In order for an employee to receive an annual increase in pay, they must score 70 or above on his/her performance evaluation. The merit system has allowed for a stable work force through out the city. Also, we have awarded 2 additional paid holidays in the past 2 years. We continue to provide insurance coverage to our employees at no cost. The City has increased the amount it pays on dependent coverage to 50%. We are maintaining this level even as premiums have increased.

The City of Pell City and the School System are currently partnering on a project that will provide a long awaited multi-purpose facility for our entire community. This facility will consist of a 400 seat auditorium for performing arts and a gymnasium. The 4.5 million dollar project is being jointly funded by the city and the school system through the city's multi-purpose facility 2003 bond issue. We have continued to enjoy our working relationship with Dr. Bobby Hathcock and the Pell City Board of Education. We will continue to join with them as we attempt to provide for our most treasured resource, our children.

The council has approved several advancements and changes to the city. We have added a full time city engineer to help manage the day to day growth of our community. We have approved a new personnel handbook we believe to be fair to employees and the city. The Pell City Fire and Police Departments have a full complement of officers.

I continue to be touched by the commitments of our employees as they work on community projects.

Our newly renovated City Hall completed in 2002 continues to be a source of pride and center for government business. Your building was financed through the 1998 bond issue.

Much of the success that we have enjoyed in Pell City would not have been possible without the efforts and cooperation of the St. Clair County Commission. A special thanks to my friend Chairman Stan Bateman and his commissioners. I would also like to recognize what I consider to be the finest legislative delegation in Montgomery. To Senator Marsh, Representatives Wood and McClendon, and our good friends Senators Biddle, Means and Representative Galligher. We appreciate your support.

On behalf of all who travel Interstate 20, it has been my privilege to join others as we have lobbied since early 2000 for safer travel conditions. It is my belief that these improvements will save lives. We will continue until the job is finished.

Boards and Committees:

The City of Pell City is very fortunate to have a long history of committed volunteers who serve on its various boards and committees. The Industrial Development Board which was chartered on March 23, 1959, has a distinguished history of providing jobs and opportunities for the citizens of our community. I know of no other community our size who can boast the industrial base that we possess.

The Economic Development Council, under the direction of Ed Gardner has been a catalyst for positive growth and development in Pell City and St. Clair County. As its chairman, Tommy Bowers has provided exemplary leadership.

Pell City Chamber of Commerce:

We would also like to take this opportunity on behalf of the business community to thank the Chamber of Commerce for their tireless efforts. We have had a long and prosperous relationship with the chamber, that I am certain will continue.

On behalf of the council, I would like to thank the media for the coverage of this community. The role they play in informing the citizens about various government information is critical to the success of any community.

We as a City Council are proud of all businesses, both large and small who have chosen to make their homes in Pell City. In the future, if this city is to continue to grow and prosper, it will depend on your success.

As this administration begins its final year, I am filled with a great source of pride, enthusiasm and gratitude for the many accomplishments I have just mentioned. It has been my goal since September 13, 1999, that every decision had the citizens as a whole in mind. I am proud to say I have always kept this pledge. There will remain challenges and opportunities for all administrations to follow. That is what Government is all about. That is why this announcement comes with some difficulty, but knowingly it is truly the right decision for me. After much prayer and thought, I have made a decision not to seek re-election as Mayor of the City of Pell City. As you hear these words, it is my sincere hope that you know this decision did not come easy. Quite simply, I believe that it will be time for me to take on new challenges and endeavors. I am at this time unsure as to what challenge and endeavors lay ahead, but I am confident that at the appropriate time, I will know. There is still much to be done, my commitment to the council, the employees and the citizens is that I will continue to work as hard as I have in the past 4 + years. To Councilmen Forest Walls, James McGowan, Bernard White, Donnie Todd and Darrin DeLoach, serving with you has been both an honor and privilege. I respect you both personally and professional. Thank you for what you have meant and continue to mean to me and the citizens of this community. This job has truly been the greatest honor of my life. I want to publicly thank my family who has supported and stood beside me in all my life's endeavors. Especially to my mother and the rich history of public service she instilled in me. To the citizens who have allowed me this great honor, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

THE MAN IN THE ARENA:

"It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly....who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who have never known neither victory nor defeat."

To the citizens, employees, and council, make no mistake, I will continue to be the Mayor until my last day in office. Now, let's get back to work as we still have much left to do. God Bless each of you and God Bless Pell City.

At this time, the Honorable Judge Bill Hereford has asked for the opportunity to address the council.

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

OCTOBER 16, 2002

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the 2002/03 budget and State of the City Address.

This year's address is specifically designed with the city employees as a priority, and a vast majority of our employees are present today. These 158 employees are in my opinion, the heart and soul of city services. All of you and the citizens of our community are aware of the unprecedented growth and prosperity our city is facing. This growth and prosperity however, is as a result of much planning and strong economic times. Many cities across our area have yet to adopt a budget. Many of our neighboring communities have been unable to give a cost of living adjustment. On behalf of the City Council, I am proud to announce the 2nd year of our merit system increase and a 3% cost of living raise. At this time I would like to recognize our City Council.

You and the citizens of Pell City are indeed fortunate to have these dedicated individuals as advocates for the betterment of our community; it is an honor to serve with them.

In addition, as you are aware on August 12, 2002, the council agreed to encumber an additional portion of the family coverage health insurance. This was done in order to maintain our commitment of 50% of the family coverage.

Upon being elected as full time Mayor in 2000, my first obligation to this City was to see that the budget was balanced. The budget was approved for the fiscal year 2000 - 2001 and included a ten percent reserve. The anticipated revenues were \$10,084,041 (including \$394,500 in grant funds). The total expense budget for this period which included long and short term debt service and grant expenses was \$9,115,087. We met those goals and projections!

In comparison, the budget adopted by the Council on September 23, 2002 for the fiscal year 2002 - 2003 includes \$12,459,702 in revenues again with a ten percent reserve. The total expense budget for this fiscal year including long and short term debt service and grant expenses is \$11,329,438.

The scale of more than two million dollars dictates the rapid and progressive growth that the City is experiencing. The reserve serves as a "cushion" in the event revenues do not meet expectations.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

We will be purchasing four (4) new police vehicles from drug seizure funds. You will also, remember that at the end of last fiscal year the city obtained a drug dog and officer/handler for fighting drugs. The department will be enhancing programs offered to our citizens through community policing. The department is on the road to becoming an accredited police department. Currently only 7 police departments in the state have obtained this status. The certification application was authorized by the council on August 26, 2002. Our D.A.R.E. Program and SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER Program, (SRO), will be strengthened and enhanced in the coming year. Bids have been sent out for new body armor for the police officers and the vests will be purchased with grant funds from the Department of Justice.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

I am pleased to again inform you of our recent ISO rating which dropped from 4 to 3. Under certain conditions, some citizens may see a decrease in the home owners insurance as a result of the new rating. You will note that the lower the rating the better the rewards. At this time I congratulate the lady and gentlemen of the Pell City Fire and Rescue Service. As part of a recently approved bond issue the city will construct a permanent building for Fire Station #3. This has been a long time dream of this city. Proceeds from the county wide fire tax will be allocated toward the \$300,000.00 construction estimate. This construction will put 4 permanent stations throughout the community. On October 14, 2002 the council authorized the solicitation of bids for a new Safety House. This house will be used as a training tool for our citizens. It is our hope that it will better educate and save lives. The funds for this house, was obtained through federal grants.

STREET

Our new budget will include more than \$100,000.00 for street paving projects. These projects will be prioritized by Mike Martin and his staff, with a decision by the council during mid-year. Two new trucks for the street department have been ordered and will be delivered soon. The employees in the street department have done an excellent job in their recent improvements to drainage ditches around the community. I, along with the council have received many favorable words about Cropwell Drive in particular. Many improvements have been made to the City Shop. The new fencing is a big plus. The street department continues to make progress in the overall appearance of our city. It remains among our top priority.

UTILITY:

The rules and regulations adopted by the council continue to enhance and protect the tax payers of Pell City. We continue to replace old pipe throughout the community. The employees of the utility department are committed to replacing and enhancing the sewer and water service for the city. This commitment is on a 24 hour basis. I, along with the council am often told of how polite, courteous and accommodating these employees are in maintaining and restoring our services. The utility department continues to do an excellent job regarding new construction, this has saved the tax payers money.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT:

New construction is well underway at the wastewater treatment plant. You will remember this 3.7 million dollars is part of the state revolving loan fund. This construction will allow us to be able to handle higher influent flows. We are constructing a 1.3 million gallon clarifier, updated hydraulics, and modifying influent headworks. The wastewater treatment plant staff does an outstanding job in maintaining and monitoring our water and wastewater needs. The future of our city depends on this plant and its operation. If we are to continue with progressive growth, we must continue to improve this facility. I truly believe that our future is in good hands with the employees at the wastewater treatment plant.

PARK AND RECREATION:

On October 12, 2002, it was my honor to join the dedication ceremony of two (2) new tennis courts. These courts are a collaboration effort of the city and the Logan Martin Tennis Association. The park has been enhanced by our new 1.1 mile walking track and additional park improvements. Kids' Kastle continues to be a gem. Our recreation program continues to grow by leaps and bounds, in all sports, we are now serving approximately 2,000 participants. As I travel across the state on behalf of the city, I am reminded of the fact that we are known as a recreational community. I assure you our facilities are the envy of cities both large and small.

Our recent bond issue will provide for much needed repairs to the Civic Center. These repairs include, but are not limited to, a new roof, new air conditioning system, a multi-purpose room and work to the existing track. These repairs are of utmost importance as the Civic Center serves as the center of the city's most utilized facility. In addition the bond will provide \$100,000.00 for a new gym floor and improvements to the armory building. These improvements along with recently completed offices for the utility department, will assure that this building is utilized to its full potential. You will note, that an agreement made during the construction of the armory, that the building would be used for recreational purposes when it ceased to be an Armory. I believe this was truly a visionary move. We received a

grant for funds to construct a playground adjacent to the Pell City Recreation Hall. This will further enhance the Park and Recreation efforts in this community. The park and recreation continues to provide quality activities for all ages in our community. The men and women of the Pell City Park and Recreation Department do an excellent job in providing for not only the recreational needs but strive to improve the over all quality of life as well. To illustrate the point, one need not travel further than the Senior Citizens Center. We continue to serve as a place in which our seniors can enjoy social interaction and be rewarded for what they have contributed to Pell City. I too salute the employees of this department. Congratulation on a job well done.

LIBRARY:

Our 2002/03 budget contains an appropriation for the final phase of our Library renovations. For the past 3 years sufficient improvements have been make to the Pell City Library, the City , Library Board, Guild and Foundation have formed a working partnership in which all those who enter this library will truly be benefactors. Recent changes to the library structure will allow the facility to stay open on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. The library continues to make phenomenal stride in their efforts to better serve the public. We salute their efforts.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

Since becoming full time mayor in 2000, I have seen first hand the dedicated efforts of the administrative, court, finance, planning, and utility services departments. These men and women serve as a tremendous support for other departments and the public in general. I consider it an honor to serve along side with these employees and other employees that make up our city government.

The firm of MORGAN KEEGAN COMPANY, INC. is currently working for our City while serving as bond counsel on our projects. According to their financial and trust advisor assigned to our projects, our city is in GREAT FINANCIAL CONDITION!

OTHER PRIORITIES OF THE COUNCIL:

Continued work on the Mays House. You will remember that the Mays House will house offices on the second floor and down stairs area will be used for city functions. We have applied for a \$25,000.00 grant that would also provide a Welcome Center in this historic home. We received work that the city has been rewarded \$120,000.00 to be used on Highway 231. Downtown Redevelopment will remain one of our top priorities as the council and downtown committee are determined to

improve our historic downtown area. Sidewalks in the residential section of old Pell City are nearing completion. The downtown project will be starting soon. The lighting project at the Eden and Pell City exits has begun. This long awaited project will serve as a tool for further economic development. On September 14, 1999, I stated that I felt Economic Development would be the common source of our city's future. Since that time a spirit of cooperation among City, County, State and the Economic Development Council has made this area a leader in promoting smart economic growth. With this growth comes additional tax dollars which will continue to motivate and enhance city services. While we as a city, are to be proud of the many new businesses that have located within our community, we are equally proud of the businesses that have been the heart and soul of the economic district. Our budget includes an additional appropriation to Pell City Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber continues to promote our community's endeavors such as the Downtown Block Party and Leadership Pell City to name a few. Fiscal year 2001/ 02 saw an increase of 14 new home sites under development. At the end of fiscal year 2001 there had been 48 permits for residential construction issued. This year a total of 62 permits were issued. We continue to gain new residents as our community continues in its growth. As the local economy continues to grow, revenues from our \$.01 sales tax earmarked for the Pell City School System also continues to climb. The City of Pell City is committed to work along side the Pell City School System to ensure that our children obtain the best education possible. The city continues to receive positive complements regarding the new City Hall, it is my desire and the desire of the council that this building will serve the citizens of Pell City for many years to come. The city will maintain its efforts in working with the State Department of Transportation in finding a solution to the problems that pledge all who travel I-20. We will continue to work with the Coosa Valley Water Authority, of which we are a member, to prepare for the water needs of our community.

At this time I will call on any councilman that would like to make comments.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the employees who make Pell City a better place to live, work and raise a family.

Thank you all for coming today. I truly believe that we are all fortunate to be a part of such a wonderful community with a rich past and a bright future. God Bless you and God Bless Pell City.

Napkin



*City Hall Dedication
May 5, 2002*

CITY OF PELL CITY ALABAMA



**CITY HALL
DEDICATION
May 5, 2002**

God Bless America

God Bless America.
Land that I love
Stand beside her, and guide her
Through the night with a light from above.
From the mountains, to the prairies,
to the oceans, white with foam
God bless America
My home sweet home.

God Bless America,
Land that I love
Stand beside her,
And guide her,
Through the night
With the light from above,
From the mountains,
To the praires,
To the ocean,
White with foam,
God bless America,
My home sweet home.
Composer, Irving Berlin

Mayor Guin Robinson

Council

James McGowan, *Mayor pro tem*
Forest A. Walls
Bernard White
Donnie Todd, Jr.
Darrin DeLoach

Program

Welcome	Guin Robinson, Mayor
Invocation	Mike Sewell, Fire Chief
Pledge of Allegiance	Forest A. Walls, Councilman
<i>God Bless America</i>	June Brascho & audience
Recognition of former Pell City officials	Lawrence Fields, former Mayor
Entertainment	St. Clair County HeadStart Elsie McGowan, Director
Closing Remarks	Mayor Guin Robinson

Music provided by Birmingham Society of Piping

HISTORY

From Greenberry Garrett Evans, Pell City's first mayor, to Guin Robinson, the present mayor, the City of Pell City has been well served by progressive leaders. Incorporated in May 1891, the city was an enterprise of railroad entrepreneurs and Northern investors. What started as a boom town, soon became a ghost town and remained so until 1902. In that year, due to the foresight and leadership of Sumter Cogswell, Pell City began a dramatic recovery and was on its way to becoming a New South city.

The meeting place of city government in the early years is not known, but most likely it was the Maxwell Building on present day Cogswell Avenue or the Cornett Hotel located alongside the railroad track. In 1902 the St. Clair County Courthouse was completed, and the mayor and council likely met there until 1904 or 1905. The July 7, 1904 edition of the *Coosa Valleyan*, noted: "The city council has voted to erect a city hall at a cost of \$1,500." The August 4th edition stated: "A city hall and jail to cost \$1,500 is to be built in Pell City at once on the opposite side of Howard Avenue from Starnes law office." The mayor at that time, Thomas S. Millsap, began the project, but it was completed during the W.A. Starnes administration. That building served the city until 1957 and is still standing. It presently houses the optometry office of Dr. Wendell Bedsole.

During the administration of Mayor Joe Kilgroe, the city began an aggressive campaign to improve city services. A new city hall was an essential element of Mayor Kilgroe's master plan. The site selected was the northeast corner of the intersection of 19th Street and First Avenue North which at the time was the location of Pell City Grammar School. The school building had been built in 1905 or 1906 and was the original Pell City High School. It was demolished to make way for the new city hall. At a cost of \$130,000, that building was completed and dedicated on Sunday, October 6, 1957. It housed the mayor, council, city clerk, court, library, as well as the police and fire departments.

The 1957 building served the city for forty-four years. During that time the city experienced tremendous growth. The administration of Mayor Mack Abercrombie saw the beginning of another city wide improvement plan. Once again, the city hall was a top priority. Mayor Abercrombie's plan was implemented by Mayor Guin Robinson. The building which we dedicate today contains 20,000 square feet. It was designed by architect Robert Wanninger and built by the Pell City firm, Goodgame Welding Company at a cost of \$2,000,000.

Danny Stewart
Pell City Librarian