



# February Mayor's Report - Mayor Tom Hoechst - Making Do With Less

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**February 10, 2012...**City government could not function without the hard work and dedication of volunteers. These people, our neighbors, volunteer their time to serve on a variety of committees. Their work is often bureaucratic and sometimes controversial. They receive little praise and are often criticized for their recommendations.

Many of these committees, like the Plan Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals, are required through state law. Other committees exist because someone thought that the City should take a leading role in addressing an issue. Due to financial constraints, these committees have little funds to do projects or attend trainings. However, through creativity and a desire to do physical work, several of our committees have undertaken projects.

In 2008, Alton joined the Cool Cities Program with the objective of protecting the environment and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Shortly thereafter, the City of Alton created the Climate Protection and Energy Efficiency Committee, as required by the Cool Cities Program. Since its inception, this committee has secured over \$187,000 in grant funds for the City with an annual budget of \$0. Thanks to their creativity and partnerships with other individuals and agencies, we upgraded the lights in our Public Works Building, improved energy efficiency at the Sewer Treatment Plant, and installed an electric car charging station without spending municipal resources.

On another note, recently, the Alton Beautification and Clean City Committee (ABCCC), created to combat littering, has taken a proactive stance and decided to

organize small cleanups at various locations instead of meeting monthly to simply discuss strategies of combating litter. To date, they have worked along Broadway, around the Lovejoy Memorial, and Seminary Square.

The above are two examples of how committees within City government have been innovative during this time of belt tightening. I appreciate their forward thinking and commitment for taking a “hands on” approach.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all of the individuals that serve on committees of the City. Their input and evaluations of proposals under consideration are extremely valuable to the success of the City, both now and in the future. Because of their abilities to find ways to make due with less, the City of Alton continues to move forward during these tough economic times.