

# **Tom Hoechst statement regarding privatization and staff reduction rumors**

March 29 2013 2:11 PM



As everyone knows we are in the midst of campaign season for the upcoming City election. I've always tried to avoid using my office as Mayor as a platform for any political campaigning and that is not my motivation for speaking tonight.

However, as Mayor, I think it is incumbent upon me to try to refute a number of ridiculous rumors that are being circulated in this political atmosphere, particularly those that have worried some of our City employees.

I have no plans or intentions to consider any plan to privatize any of the services now being performed by our City employees. None. When I first took office, the City's expenses exceeded its revenues by nearly Three Million Dollars a year. That was simply unsustainable. Most of the city expenses are the salaries and benefits provided to its employees. In fact \$20 million of the \$29 million annual budget goes for salaries and

benefits. I was forced to reduce the total number of staff in the City of Alton because we were in danger of not being able to make payroll. I tried to do that fairly and by attrition across all departments. That reduction in force was accomplished more than two years ago.

I am satisfied that we now have a sustainable balance between our revenues and the services provided by our City employees. I have great respect for our City employees and the way they have stepped up to increase overall efficiency, as we went through this difficult financial period, and how you continue to provide a high level of service to our citizens.

Let me be clear, I have no plans to reduce the number of police officers, firefighters, teamsters, or ASCME workers now employed by the City. I firmly believe that the level of services we are providing can be sustained and that our employees are absolutely necessary to continue to provide these services to continue to improve our City.

I do not want even one of our City employees to worry that his or her job is in jeopardy. The huge financial problems we faced when I took office have been addressed and based upon our current and projected financial future; our City employees have no reason to fear reductions in a second Hoechst administration.

Thank you!

Mayor Tom Hoechst