

ELECT

Dan Knapik

MAYOR OF WESTFIELD

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STATEMENT OF CITY COUNCILOR DAN KNAPIK, CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF WESTFIELD

My Record – Our Children and Recreational Opportunities

WESTFIELD- The city of Westfield owns and operates a number of playgrounds throughout the community. As a child, I spent my summers at the Municipal Playground located on Franklin Street. Over the last 35 years, this playground, like many around town, found itself in need of repair and modernization. During the spring of 2002, the City was notified by the state that Veterans Pool was going to be closed as the state deemed the facility too expensive to renovate. The trend in recreation today is water spray parks in place of pools. At that time the cities of Holyoke, Springfield, Northampton and Chicopee either had water spray parks operating or were in design. I felt that Westfield should plan accordingly for a similar park.

At my direction, the city designed a modernization project for Municipal Playground, and with the assistance of the former mayor, the city council and the Commonwealth, we worked together to fund the project. This million dollar investment in one of the City's signature recreational facilities should serve as a model for a future vision of our City's park operations. Presently, we are in the planning phase of a similar project for Chapman Playground. As your mayor, I will continue to work with neighborhood groups to continue my commitment to our children and to improve the facilities at our other playgrounds like Cross Street, Hampton Ponds, Sadie Knox, and Papermill.

As a city councilor, you are often asked to sit on boards of directors of not-for-profit organizations. In the summer of 2004, I joined the board of the Discover Westfield Children's Museum. Soon upon my arrival, we embarked on an ambitious campaign to build a new facility at Amelia Park. This was a challenging and rewarding experience. Our cause was helped significantly by the generous donation of over \$1 million from philanthropist Mr. Al Ferst. Over the course of the next year, additional donations and grants were secured and with financing in place, a decision to build the museum needed to be made.

In the summer of 2005, I was the president of the board. In this position, at my direction, we put the project out to bid. The first submissions were not within our budget. Undeterred by this event, I rebid the project. This decision, led to the selection of the Forish Construction Company. A contract for construction was signed on October 3, 2005. Working together we were able to get the building built within our tight budget.

I am proud of the role I played in the construction of these two magnificent projects for our city. As your mayor, I will continue my commitment to our children. I'm ready to go to work for you.

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