

Kassandra -
Inauguration Speech

Well, this is my first opportunity up here without a timekeeper... so settle in!

Thank you all for coming. I'm humbled to stand here tonight, having just taken the oath of office to be the new Mayor of Amesbury. I want to thank Mayor Gray for the work he's done in the last 6 years, and say that I'm grateful for this opportunity to keep Amesbury moving forward. I want to congratulate our recently elected officials who also took their oaths tonight - I truly look forward to working with each of you.

I'm honored to be the first Amesbury native fulfilling this role. Throughout the campaign we talked a lot about my family history in town and that I grew up in our schools, and our neighborhoods. I also grew up in the neighborhood of Mr. Fred Rogers. His legacy and impact have been celebrated in the last two years with a documentary, the book, *Kindness & Wonder: Why Mr. Rogers Matters Now More Than Ever*, and a new film. His children's television show aired for over 30 years so I'm sure many of you also grew up in his neighborhood. He had a way of slowing things down and appreciating the silence, with a genuine concern for the social and emotional development of our children.

One of the things he often did with a live audience was to pause... and you're my live audience so I'm going to take a page from Mr. Rogers. I want us all to take 10 seconds to think about and thank the people who've supported us, guided us and gotten us to where we are today. We're all entering 2020 together, a new year, a new decade. Some of us on stage with new responsibilities, and all of us with goals and achievements to celebrate. So, join me in thinking of those who helped you get here today, for just 10 seconds... I'll keep the time.

Author Kevin Ashton points out that "every creator inherits concepts, contexts, tools, methods, data, laws, principles and models from thousands of other people, dead and alive". I have friends, family, teachers, students, coaches, supervisors, bosses, staff, leaders and mentors who have all helped guide me and influenced me to become the person I am today. Some of them are in the room, some may be watching online thanks to the internet and our friends at Amesbury Community Television, and some may have no idea they made an impression on my life.

I've had a few months to just be your Mayor-Elect. To be stopped by a husband and wife at the coffee shop so they could say, "You're making history!", for a young mom to find me at an event to say, "I have two little girls and they are so proud of you!", and for the cashier at CVS to come from behind the counter to give me a hug and tell me her whole family voted for me! So, the people who got me here, right here, today... are all of you. And I take that seriously. I also know there are almost as many people in our community who voted for someone else on November 5th, and many who didn't vote at all. It's a new year and time to come together to make this community even stronger.

We have a lot of work to do and we're not always going to agree, but I can promise you that I will always listen and work to do what's best for the future of Amesbury. I promise that I will always be transparent. I will make sure that we are communicating what's going on and how decisions are being made. My team and I will have an open-door policy for anyone who has questions, ideas or just wants to talk.

Benjamin Mays said, "we today stand on the shoulders of our predecessors." I want to acknowledge the four gentlemen in the audience who have served as Mayor of Amesbury prior to me. I'm incredibly honored they are here tonight. Amesbury wouldn't be the community it is without their leadership. Please stand, Mayor Costello, Mayor Hildt, Mayor Kezer, and Mayor Gray.

Over the last few weeks, I've met with every department head to get up-to-speed on what we're doing well, what we can be doing better and what resources each department needs to be even more successful. We've talked about staffing, scheduling, space and facilities, technology and communication.

We have a lot we want to accomplish, and a lot we want to get done in a short period of time. As I said during the campaign, I want you to hold me and my team accountable. We're going to work hard for this City every day, and I look forward to talking with all of you to make sure we're moving Amesbury in the right direction. I also encourage you to get involved. We have boards and commissions that need volunteers. Please, join us!

Tonight, has been an exciting and memorable night, and I'm looking forward to getting to work tomorrow. Thank you.