

As required by law at the first regular council meeting of each year the mayor is required to give a state of the city address.

2021 was another very trying year for the city of Cheviot with the COVID pandemic. 2022 has started out on an even worse note. We the "City Safety Committee" (myself, SSD Braun, Police Chief Stone, Fire Chief Klein and PWS Craig) held a safety meeting and due to the high number of employees in every department that tested positive for COVID and had to be off work, we made the decision to once again lock down city hall and require masks to enter. This decision was made to help protect our employees and their families and help limit the number of exposures to our employees.

On January, 1st, just a few short days ago, a total of 6 city officials were sworn in by the honorable Judge Winkler. Three 1st time elected city officials were sworn in, one appointed official, one re-elected official and one prior council member to a new position. In 2021 there were 2 appointments to council. One appointment to fill a vacancy at large and one appointment to fill the Council President position. All told, half of our elected officials are basically new to their positions. You were sworn in as a local city official, not to the U.S Congress, not the U.S Senate, not to a State of Ohio position, nor even to a county position. As such, we all need to work together for the betterment of our city residents. There is no place in local city government for partisan politics. We need to work together towards a common goal and that is providing what matters most to our residents. In my 38 years of public service with the city of Cheviot; Police protection, Fire and Life Squad, road maintenance, waste collection, city facilities, and road re-construction are the things that matter the most to our residents and I hear them over and over again.

I do not yet have the final numbers for the year ending 2021, and due to the unforeseen illness to our Assistant Auditor and the fact we have to wait for her and our Auditor to provide our certificate of available resources, I'm not sure exactly when that will all be pulled together. I have been telling council for many years now that the city needs to increase revenue. Only City Council has the authority to do this. The city administration can only recommend action by council. There is no fat in any of our budgets to cut and we are facing severe shortages of man power in both our Police and Fire departments. City Council will have to take action in 2022 if we as a city are going to survive. The run numbers for both our Police and Fire departments are through the roof with no end in sight.

2021 saw many new projects in the city, either started or completed, including the building of a new gas station/mini mart on the vacant Franks property and the reconstruction of Delmar, Davis, Alma, Olivette and North Bend roads. The funding and planning of the restoration of the Harvest Home Lodge was completed in 2021 and the actual work will hopefully be done and completed by May, 2022. The Hamilton County application for funding to purchase the Cappel's building for the city of Cheviot was successful and the transfer of ownership will occur in early 2022.

2021 also saw the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) in full swing to help promote local businesses.

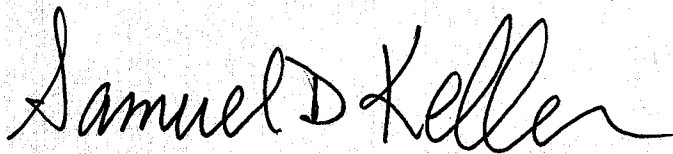
2022 is a contract year for all 3 groups of our union employees, Police, Fire and Public Works. These employees work hard and deserve a fair working contract. Employee retention is a huge issue right now as other cities, villages and townships are offering very attractive lateral transfers. We are losing part-time and some full-time employees to other departments.

I would like to publicly thank my administrative staff for all the hard work, dedication and professionalism displayed in 2021. They have all stepped up and filled in wherever needed. SSD Braun is truly the glue that holds this city together. Police Chief Stone, Fire Chief Klein and PWS Craig all do a fantastic job keeping their perspective departments running and providing service to our residents. Brenda, Alison, Nicole and Sarah are phenomenal!! They have been filling in for one another and for Patty as she battles cancer. I think we all have a new respect for what Patty has done for the city quietly behind the scenes for many, many years.

So, let's all put our personal feelings aside, check our egos and do what we were sworn to do, that is to faithfully carryout the duties of the office that we have been duly elected to do to the best of our abilities, so help me God.

I look forward to working with all of the elected officials as we move forward in 2022.

Respectively submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samuel D Keller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "S" at the beginning and a long, sweeping underline.

Mayor Keller