

Mayor Linda M. Balzotti

Biography

Within days of being sworn into office, Linda M. Balzotti, Brockton's first female mayor, was met with a rash of gun violence in the city, resulting in four homicides in January 2010. Mayor Balzotti worked closely with the Brockton Police Department, Plymouth County District Attorney's Office, and State Police to step up patrols, and reallocate resources to develop a zero-tolerance approach to public safety in the city. Later in the year, a raid conducted in Brockton and the surrounding towns led to the arrest of more than 20 individuals, curbing the sale of illegal substances in the city and beyond. An additional raid in January 2011, resulted in the arrest of an additional 20 plus individuals.

In early 2010, Brockton was dramatically impacted by difficulties at home and abroad. The January earthquake in Haiti created anxiety and fear for many Brockton residents with family and friends still residing there. Mayor Balzotti worked closely with local groups to get information to residents looking for assistance and services. In March, she worked closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and local officials to provide information and services to residents impacted by successive heavy rain storms that flooded many homes, streets and businesses in the city.

During the first three months of her tenure, Mayor Balzotti worked tirelessly to recreate Building a Better a Brockton, the city's designee to oversee Community Block Grant Development Funds which was marred in controversy, into the Brockton Redevelopment Authority and in doing so, saved the city from losing over \$1 million in state funding, which had been in jeopardy under the BBB. This funding would have gone to another community had she not stepped in to champion the City's cause at the state level.

She brought community stakeholders together to form task forces to explore five of the city's major issues: economic growth and development; education and workforce training; housing and neighborhoods; public safety; and street violence. Following the release of their reports, a community forum was held to get input from the public. These reports, as well as the information gathered at the forum, will help to shape the future of Brockton.

Mayor Balzotti, in her first budget submission, maintained essential city services, while providing funding to hire 9 new firefighters for the first time since 2007. Five new police officers were hired and the Brockton Public Library branches remained open with abbreviated hours, providing a key resource to the neighborhoods they serve. An additional \$3 million in funding was provided to the Brockton Public Schools to help alleviate the budget deficit created by rising fixed costs and reduced state and federal aid.

Mayor Balzotti, working closely with the state delegation and the administration of Governor Deval Patrick, secured \$140,000 in funding to support planning and economic development initiatives, which will be the cornerstones of her vision for the revitalization of downtown Brockton. Brockton was also the first community to be named a pilot community for the state's Brownfields Support Team Initiative. This project, led by a group of local and state agencies, will identify Brownfield sites in the city for potential remediation and reuse.

Mayor Balzotti, recognizing the importance of keeping the public informed, is leading an effort to redesign the city's web site to provide information to residents and visitors more effectively. She also implemented monthly constituent office hours to open up the Mayor's office to city residents and developed a quick and efficient method of keeping City Councilors up-to-date on issues and events.

Prior to her election as Mayor in 2009, she served as a City Councilor for 12 years, providing strong constituent services, advocacy for neighborhoods, and a strong focus on fiscal restraint.

She was appointed in 2010 by Governor Deval Patrick to the Massachusetts Work Force Investment Board. Mayor Balzotti presented with four other mayors at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government's Institute of Politics on Helping Urban Areas Thrive. She also participated in The Mayors' Institute on City Design hosted by the Penn Institute for Urban Research at the University of Pennsylvania.

A life-long Brocktonian, Mayor Balzotti holds a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University and is a proud graduate of Brockton High School.

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