

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – TOWN HALL MEETING**  
**Webster City, Iowa March 27, 2017**

The City Council met in special session for a Town Hall Meeting at the Middle School Commons, Webster City, Iowa at 6:00 p.m. on March 27, 2017, upon call of the Mayor and the advance agenda.

1. The meeting was called to order by Mayor John Hawkins and roll being called there were present John Hawkins, Mayor in the chair, and the following Council Members: Matt McKinney, Brian Miller, Jim Talbot and Logan Welch.

2. It was moved by Talbot and seconded by Welch to approve the agenda.  
ROLL CALL: Hawkins, McKinney, Miller, Talbot and Welch voting aye.

3. Mayor John Hawkins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also in attendance were City Manager Daniel Ortiz-Hernandez and City Clerk Karyl Bonjour. There were approximately 32 other community members in attendance including Adri Siestra from the Daily Freeman Journal. Pat Powers, KQWC, arrived at approximately 6:45 p.m.

4. Kathy Getting, Power Up Youth, gave a presentation on a Community Needs Assessment for Youth for Hamilton County. The assessment was completed by Power Up YOUth and an AmeriCorps Public Allies intern with the help of 23 staff from Hamilton County organizations or nonprofits, a teen focus group and the funding from several donors. Several topics were highlighted such as Transportation, Quality Child Care, Mentoring, Engaging youth in Community, and ways to increase access to food as well as other items. She ended with presentation by asking audience members to fill out a survey checking their top three choices for community focuses to help youth grow stronger from a list of 17 options.

5. Mayor Hawkins moved the Town Hall meeting forward on the topic of Nuisance Properties and Procedures and opened up the discussion to those in attendance. Several members of the audience spoke, all expressing concerns of the many dilapidated dwellings and nuisance issues throughout Webster City and what is being done to address them. Of most concern is the property located on East Second Street by the Grid Iron Restaurant Bar and Grill. City Manager Ortiz-Hernandez explained to those in attendance, that unfortunately with this situation, the City's hands are tied to an extent as it has involved a criminal aspect with the property owner and there are certain procedures the City has to follow to take care of this issue.

It was agreed by Council and those present that this issue has been a problem for quite some time, and the lack of consistency has now snowballed to this point of frustration for all involved. Taking a look at the current Ordinance, possibly making some changes to make it stricter, involving the Police Department and the Fire Department, and looking at the properties from the aspect of being a health issue were suggestions discussed in moving forward in re-establishing pride in the community and taking care of this issue throughout Webster City.

Each Council Member expressed at one or more times during the discussion that they are committed to addressing the concerns brought forth from this Town Hall Meeting and complaints previously brought to City Hall. However, it was also explained that legalities also play into what can be done in a timely manner, regulated by the State of Iowa Code. Many times the owner of the property is difficult to locate and going onto the private property without permission can be considered trespassing. It was also explained that once the City has done the due process, a court date will be set for trial and sometimes scheduled for several months after the infraction has been filed. At the trial, the Magistrate can then give the property owner additional time to resolve the issue or uphold the infraction for the City. Council told the audience that the property owned by Duane Carlson at 1014 Elm Street is a prime example of this scenario. The City followed proper procedures in giving notice to the property owner with a time frame to take care of the problem. After the time allowed arrived, and the problem was not resolved, the City filed a Citation and a trial date was scheduled, which in this case was several months after the filing of the Citation. At the hearing, the Magistrate can rule in favor of the City and have the property owner take care of the matter or give the property owner more time to take care of the problem, which on this particular property, the owner was given until April 15, 2017 to resolve, which is where we are currently at with this property. Addressing the property located by the Grid Iron as well as addressing habitual offenders will be priorities the Council will look to act on aggressively as allowed by current statutes in place.

Council will be holding a Work Session on Wednesday, March 29, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall to work on Unsafe Buildings, Nuisance Properties, City Code and Procedures.

6. It was moved by Miller and seconded by Hawkins that Council Adjourn.

ROLL CALL: McKinney, Miller, Talbot, Welch and Hawkins voting aye.

The discussion on Agenda Item No. 5 was taped.

The March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Town Hall Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.