

Town of Iowa

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Monthly Mayors Report

October 2023

THE UGLY

Ash Ridge: The repair work will be resuming the first week of November and we should have the culverts repaired by the end of the year.

Joshua Street: Here again we have another subdivision that has a culvert issue, and it is leading to quite a bit of erosion. Starting next week town workers will begin on Joshua Street and will fill holes and dress the areas needed dressing. Depending on our maintenance workload we might be in a position early in January to proceed with making some permanent corrections. Depending on the weather we may not be able to facilitate the permanent repairs, we will not work the ground if it is muddy. A muddy ground leads to a poor job of compaction which is needed.

Mayor's Report: The month of September has been a very active one. My apologies for the delay.

THE BAD

TOWN BUDGET: As has been the case for months now, we are again seeing a continued downturn in revenue. As has been the case in years past, raises were commonplace. Recently both the Town Council and I chose not to be given a raise, and in so doing we changed an ordinance that had been on the books requiring a cost-of-living adjustment, anytime raises were considered.

We amended the budget to accommodate a small raise for employees. It is with respect to all employees of the Town of Iowa that I submit the need for restraint regarding raises as we move forward over the next 14 months. I will be issuing a hiring freeze, along with no additional raises for the next 14 months unless something extraordinary changes the circumstances of our General Fund.

Our "General Fund" monies covers the Administration, Mayor & Council, Police Department, City Hall, Multi-Purpose Center and Court. The monies that are entrusted to me to manage should not be done to

the detriment of any of these departments. As many of you know and some have expressed their displeasure with me for dismissing many employees. Furthermore, I have not replaced any “managers” that have either left or been let go. Nor have we replaced all the other staff that is sorely needed.

The bottom line is that we are working shorthanded, and we will continue to do so until there is a significant change in the General Fund.

I will continue to strive to move Iowa forward, seeking but not limited to economic development, community involvement, and fiduciary obligations.

THE GOOD

Submittal for Funding Projects: As a matter of keeping everyone informed, I am listing items that we have recently submitted for funding. Please bare in mind that submittal does not guarantee any of these projects will be awarded.

- 1) -Municipal Complex Water and Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure- Resilient Communities Infrastructure- Steven J Vincent Emergency Operations Center - Total CDBG-DR Requested \$1,225,000.00
- 2) -Downtown Plaza- Hometown Revitalization Program – Total CDBG-DR Requested \$731,500.00
- 3) -Sewer Improvements- Resilient Communities Infrastructure – Total CDBG-DR Requested \$751,780.00

Geographic Information System Mapping (Gis): As mentioned in the last newsletter, this program will help the Town of Iowa for years to come. It will help our maintenance staff and elected officials be more effective and efficient, which in turn allows the Town of Iowa to be on the cutting edge of development and maintenance of our streets, drainage, water, and wastewater. As we had anticipated, starting this past September, circumstances beyond our control have delayed us but I am happy to report that we will begin in November, as all items required have been fulfilled.

REMINDER - IOWA FARMERS MARKET: November 4th Saturday 8am-12 noon! First Annual CHILI COOK-OFF: \$500 1st place, \$250 2nd place, and \$100 for 3rd place. Just \$5 will allow you to try all the chili for the cook off. If you want to participate in the cook-off, call and ask for Roxanne @ 337 582 3535 Hope to see you there!

Last month we had the largest number of vendors, and it appears we will be north of 30 vendors for this market. Remember always free popcorn, and don't forget the raffle! Just drop your name and number in the box. Need not be present to win! Farmers Market is every first Saturday of the month.

ADMINISTRATION

Shop local and help grow our community when you can.

Baseball Field: The fence and field have been repaired, leveled, dressed, and the grass is starting to grow. Baseball season will begin next March. However, as is the case with manufactured goods the light poles and lighting are not scheduled to arrive from production until early to mid-February 2024. Prior to that we should be able to install the new scoreboard and preliminary wiring for the lighting (All parts and poles are made 100% USA). We are still sorting out the concession stand.

We have a couple of trouble spots on our streets that need “patching”, and we are hoping to have this done within the next couple of months. If you observe an issue with a street- pothole, signage, etc. Please do not hesitate to call town hall and ask for Kim and give her the information.

Mayors Chat: As a reminder, prior to each council meeting, I am making myself available for open conversations starting at 5:30, ending at 6:30 pm. I simply request that we have respectful conversations, regardless of the topic.

Mayor Watkins