

Minutes

Watrous Heights Neighborhood Association Members Meeting, Monday April 8th, 2019

Guest Speaker - Matt McCoy:

- Current budget 242K
 - 2019 focuses
 - Health services
 - Jail
 - 1k on average in Polk county jail
 - Starting a jail diversion program
 - Mental health
 - Substance abuse
 - Also working to improve juvenile mental health issues
 - Water quality improvements
 - Flood Zone review and homes located in them
- Polk County Tax Assessment
 - 10 percent average across Polk county
 - Assessments went up do to housing sales and amounts
 - Can appeal through June 5th
 - Find 2 or 3 like houses in the area
 - Similar style and square footage
 - List nuisance/blight properties
 - 50% of appeals they end up reducing on average
 - Neighborhood improvements
 - Property tax percentage was reduced in 2019 and will take effect in July
 - If you are/know a senior citizen on a fixed income you can have property taxes suspend for life if you meet the below
 - Makes under 23k/year
 - House asses less than 110K
 - If you're going to contest your value get it in before June 5th. (Extension was provided due to Polk county being declared a disaster area.)

Sargent Lance Ripperger:

- Current crime report- 6 events (first time all year we higher current/year vs last year): 3 burglary's, 1 larceny, and 2 motor vehicle thefts
- Previous year- 3 larceny, 1 burglary

Joshua Raleigh- Inspector:

- Dave asked to see what's on the top of the list in the WHNA area
 - No list right now, they are currently working on the list to establish the properties needing the most attention
 - Each inspector gave their top 3 nuisance properties (16 inspectors)
 - 4300 SW 5th broken into, will I give another chance then will do a full board
- Discussed/confirmed list of nuisance properties members wanted addressed
- Josh will provide a list as soon as possible. Will shoot for next month.

Joel Van Roekel- Parks and Recreation Liaison Officer:

(Guest Speaker Lee – Park Planner for 10 years)

Current DSM park projects:

- MacRae Park work
 - Work continues
 - Showed pictures of progress
 - Goal with pond is to make it one of the strongest urban fisheries
- Easter Lake Open
 - Will be stocked April 17th
 - But several stockings waves will occur
- Grays Lake open
 - Worst flooding ever there
 - Caused by ice jams
- Parks and rec comprehensive plan
 - In the next 20 years every resident will have a 5-minute walk to a trail system
 - Current goal is to identify gaps in the parks/ trail system
 - See Web Page for full detail: livedsm.org
- Weeks Park update
 - South union fills the gap for Watrous Height's as a community has a use of the school playground.
 - Weeks chosen due to no access to the school on nights and weekends
 - Partnered with weeks Students to help design the park
 - Will utilize funds from the sales tax increase
 - Building will start in 2020