

COMMUNITY NEWS

APRIL 2019



New City Hall Hours

The new hours of City Hall will be from 2 pm to 6 pm, Monday thru Friday. These hours will be temporary for the next month of two.

Clerk Retirement

When Theresa told me she was finally retiring from the City Clerk position... a job she has dutifully held for almost 18 years... I had very mixed feelings. For starters, I was so happy for her to be able to retire at the age of 32 (That's a joke, but I won't say her real age), but I was also distraught knowing that we were going to lose a really important piece of what we have going right around here.

Cities in Iowa have an attrition rate of 25% annually for clerking positions. While other towns have been dealing with constant turnover, we have been extremely blessed to have someone that we can count on for the nearly two decades showing up to help us manage our town. Theresa is one of the most organized and well-intended people we could have ever hoped for in this

job... and she makes the position look a lot easier than it is. Knowing what I know, I have no doubt that she will be most appreciated when we don't have her to turn to in order to keep things running smoothly.

Luckily, she is sticking around for a while longer to help us navigate the rest of our fiscal year reports and to give us time to find a replacement. As we

get closer to the end of June, I encourage everyone to take the time to stop in and give her a big thank you for all of her hard work. She is a big reason we have been so successful these past few years and her knowledge and wisdom will be thoroughly missed.



Clerk Position

The Council had some intense discussions about what we are going to do with the Clerk's position in the future.

We are working with Cindy Kendall, a municipal consultant, to figure out a new job description, qualifications, and appropriate

salary package. As this process evolves, we will post the job for any interested applicants. One thing we do know for sure is

that whomever steps into the role will need to be able to handle the very complicated world of municipal finance. Expect more information on this matter in the very near future.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

As many of you have noticed, our town has been going through some changes. A new gas depot, fire station, new houses going up... old houses coming down. All of these changes will be having an impact on our local tax base. Collins, like a lot of cities in Iowa, is going to be taking advantage of these improvements in the form of TIF.

What TIF does is it allows a taxing entity (city, county, etc.) to capture the value increase of a property and redirect the tax revenue toward a specific project. For an example, if an empty lot is valued at \$1,000 and the tax revenue on that lot is \$100 a

year, that revenue is currently shared by the state, the county, the city, and the school district. When you TIF something, though, you do so out of anticipation that the value of the property is going to dramatically go up. In the case of the empty lot... say we put a house on it. The value of that property goes from \$1,000 to \$100,000. Maybe the tax revenue on those improvements would have increased the collection to \$1,000. Under normal circumstances, that increase would have been split between all the parties involved (state, county, city, school), but if the area was TIF'd, then those entities

keep on earning their portion of the \$100, but the increased collection (\$900) goes directly to the agency that did the TIF for 10 or 15 years (depending on how it was set up). This is the exact same process that Story County has used with all of the wind turbines that have gone up. Colorado used TIF to do some major road upgrades. Nevada has used TIF to build their fire station. And Huxley has completed many projects using TIF.

No one is losing money and no one is paying higher taxes. The City is just going to capture tax revenue off of the increased value of the property.

When this happens, we get a projected amount of income we can expect over the next 10 years, and then borrow against that revenue.

TIF has a lot of very strict rules as to how it can be used and what it can be used for. In our case, we plan to utilize the extra capital to improve our city streets. Improvements will include rebuilding all of the intersections in town with concrete. The idea is to do them all at once, and then each year after we can use our road fund to "connect the dots", so to speak. Considering the fact that we have not done major road repairs in town for what seems like a really long time... this plan is pretty bold and will be a major improvement. We also hope to make some of these upgrades in a way that complements our flood mitigation efforts.

Flood Mitigation

We have had some crazy weather already this spring, and some homes have taken a real beating when it comes to flooding. The City has done a lot of work to make sure that we can process water out quickly, but we still have massive issues with water pooling while our system tries to catch up. It's easy to point to our storm sewer improvements and

brag about how much better off we are than other towns, but those words don't mean a lot to someone who gets flooded out in the process.

I want to assure those of you that have been hit hard already this year... we are looking at ways to keep improving our system. Of course, money is always an issue. In saying that, we do have a few options

that we hope can be done in a cost effective way that we hope will have a positive impact. Along the way, we will continue to chase funding opportunities that can help us manage this problem.

If you have been dealing with flooding, we strongly encourage you to go Story County's website and find the Emergency Management page. There is a link for you that will help you self-report those damages.

The County is trying to collect data that would help us get funding later down the road. If you feel overwhelmed by the website, or are not tech savvy, feel free to contact Councilman Del Amsden. He has volunteered to help people out if needed. You can reach out to City Hall for his contact information, or go to our website and you should be able to get it there.

Open Burning

Even though our fire department is the pride of Story County, we don't necessarily want to see them in action any more than necessary. Burning is restricted to enclosures designed to manage fires, such as a fire pit or barrel

with a mesh grate to cover it. Items being burned should be limited to natural products, such as sticks, logs, leaves, etc. Please, no open burning in your yard. These rules aren't in place to take away your rights... they are there to protect

everyone else's. Air pollution and the risk of out-of-control fires pose a real concern to the people around you. So, once again, please help look after your neighbor.

Thanks for your cooperation.



Collins Days

Councilwoman Dawnell Kennedy has been very active this year in working with the Collins Days Committee. She, with a handful of other people, is working to make sure we build off of last year's success to ensure that this year's celebration is the best ever. They've already got a long list of events planned and plenty of things for all ages. Even with all of the new ideas that have been floating around, I know that

this group has been really dedicated to making sure that we keep as many of the old traditions alive as possible.

Last year's raffle (one of those great traditions) ended up being a major hit. We were very fortunate to have awesome support from a wide range of vendors in the area. Their generosity helped us raise thousands of dollars and ensured that our celebration continues on.

If you have any connections that have donated, or might like to... we could definitely use their support this year. As we get ramped up for collecting prizes, we want to make sure that everyone and anyone able and willing is part of the process. So, if you have something you'd like to kick in, have an employer that might like to donate, or know someone who wants to be part of this great event... please let me know. Any and all contributions are greatly ap-

preciated.

My contact email is Brett.M.Comegys@gmail.com or you can call City Hall (641-385-2205) and leave a message if necessary. We will make sure that someone from the committee gets back to you as soon as possible.

Our Facebook Pages:

- Collins Watch
- Collins Days/Events - Iowa
- City of Collins - Iowa

Affordable Housing

"When you're green, you're growing. When you're ripe, you rot." – **Ray Kroc**

For many years, I was told that local leaders resisted the idea of growth because they didn't want Collins to be like an Ankeny or

other places like that. I think it is safe to say that becoming that size is probably never going to be in our future. Unfortunately, we haven't had any real growth since the 80's... and if you aren't growing you are dying. That is just the way things

are. So, we have to be constantly looking at things in a way that promote our growth... this includes residential development.

A lot of things have to happen for us to expand beyond our current borders. Yes, it can happen, but it is a tougher road. The fastest, simplest way to

get more houses in Collins is for us to take advantage of some of the empty lots that already exist. These spaces already have infrastructure and are also already set up for construction. With some of the old houses coming down, we have quite a few places where a new house could go up. In saying

Affordable Housing (Con't.)

that, though, those plots were not designed for some of the large homes that a new development would be able to accommodate. Instead, we have to be able to attract smaller, more affordable homes for people to live in. Please don't mistake this concept with the idea of building low-income housing. It is not the same.

Limited space does dictate the need for something less grand than what

most builders want to construct. In fact, I don't know of anyone in the state that has been focused on new, smaller homes. I have become convinced, though, that there is a real market for young families or those who want to downsize to be able to buy a new smaller home with a price point of less than \$150,000. Unfortunately, they don't exist.

I was so dedicated to the idea of how affordable housing

could help make use of our empty in-lots that I took a risk, borrowed some money, and built one myself. It is currently for sale near the baseball park. The house is a nice 3 bedroom, 1 bath, 1100 square foot home ready to attract a new family to Collins. If it sells, then I will take the money and try to build another one... and then another one. Combined with other residential improvements, and our Main Street Revitalization efforts, I am hopeful

that we can continue to build on the idea that Collins is "green and growing".

Additionally, the council very recently started discussing the idea of annexing property to expand our City limits and possibly prompt a larger development effort. Those conversations are just starting and a long way from happening. In the meantime, we can focus on what we already have and continue to find ways to build on the lots that already exist within our town.

Gas Station

Councilman Jay Christie, along with other parties, was instrumental in bringing a fuel station back to Collins. So far, according to Jay, the station is doing very well.

New Century is happy with the results so far and we are proving that our town definitely has the ability to support the depot. As word gets out, and

the season changes, I suspect the spot will become even more popular. It is this kind of community support that makes it easier for us to justify outside

investment and faith in our ability to perpetuate growth.



Visit from Linda Murken

We were visited by Linda Murken, the newly-elected member of the Story County Board of Supervisors. She and I spent an hour touring the City, looking at improvements, and discussing areas we hope to succeed at in the future. Linda was very impressed by every-

thing that has been going on over the last couple of years, but I have to say that her eyes really lit up when we got the fire station. Having a volunteer background, she was like a kid in a candy shop... climbing in and out of trucks, asking questions about new equip-

ment, and taking in all of the features of our fire station.

After the tour, she attended our council meeting and was able to provide feedback about County support for Collins, ask questions about our agenda items, and soak in some of the pressing issues that our town is facing.

Her visit reinforced the idea that our county's Board of Supervisors is very interested in helping our small towns and are invested in helping us be viable communities.

Collins Website

Council members Staci Corbitt and Dawnell Kennedy did some fantastic work to help launch our city's new website. Please take the

time to visit it when you have a chance. The site has some great resources which we hope to expand over time.

Visit us at <https://cityofcollins.municipalimpact.com/city-government>

If you have pictures of Main Street businesses, landscaping, the elevator, etc., please submit those pictures for the website to: cityofcollins@gmail.com

Neighborhood Watch

Councilwoman Corbitt has been active in promoting a local neighborhood watch and she asked that we let everyone know that the next meeting will be on May 7 at 6 p.m. at the Community Center.

Facebook site: [Collins Watch](#)



Heart of Iowa Trail

Councilman (Del) Amsden has been representing the City regarding the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail (HOINT), which is the pathway that traverses through both Story and Marshall counties. The route is actually part of the American Discovery Trail... a path that goes from coast-to-coast across the United States.

Story County is working on a plan to pave the entire

Heart of Iowa Nature Trail and reconstruct some areas to improve the trail. There is also an effort with Marshall County to pave and connect the trail from Rhodes to Melbourne at the Chihuahua Valley Trail, which then goes south to Bondurant. All being said, if everything is connected, someone would be able to travel west on the trail to Slater and eventually cross the High Trestle Trail while heading to

Ankeny. This Trail's development is a big deal and Del was one of several representatives who tried to drive home the point of making the area between Collins and Maxwell a priority. Improvements will draw in cyclists from all over and would also be great for locals who want to travel back and forth between towns during the summer season.

Part of Del and Mayor Gast's (of Maxwell) pitch for prioritizing our shared stretch of

Trail was due to the fact that Collins and Maxwell are part of a consolidated school district and that focusing on our area first would help facilitate traffic between the two towns and support summer activities such as baseball and softball for the school district. The end result is that our area is at the top of a list that is supposed to take 5 years to complete. So, expect some big changes to our part of the American Discovery Trail really soon.

Convenience Store

I am not 100% confident that Collins can support a convenience store in Collins... but I am convinced people want it and a select number of folks actually need it. Because of that, I

am actively pushing the idea of getting something set up in town.

Yes, we have a Casey's 5 miles away with Logsdon's Grocery right next door,

and rumors of a dollar store moving into Maxwell. We could not hope to establish something that would compete with any of those places, nor would I want to try.

None of that negates the right of people living in our town to be able to walk down the street and get a loaf of bread, a carton of milk, or a hand full of miscellaneous items that

Convenience Store (Con't.)

they might really need. It doesn't have to be place that has everything. It doesn't even need to be a place much bigger than the size of a small room.... Just some place

where folks could get a few things of convenience... as well as a few other items that maybe the other places don't offer.

Done right, I really think this might

work. I'd feel a lot better, though, if I had some data to back the idea up. Attached to this newsletter is a survey. Please fill it out and get it back to City Hall. You can drop it off, mail it, or send it

~ Survey Attached ~

with courier pigeon... it doesn't matter... just get it back to us. The more feedback the better. Your input is vital in trying to figure out what direction this effort can go. Thanks.

Mural Committee

Last fall I sent out a newsletter to pitch an idea for a mural on the wall of Hair Hut. We had tremendous feedback and overall there was a huge amount of support for the idea. In saying that, maybe the idea was such a hit because it didn't have any competition.

The last couple of days I have been working to put together a committee to brainstorm some competing ideas to what has already been presented. Judi Tiffany (the owner of Hair Hut) is very open to what we the City comes up with, she just hopes that we will

find a way to not only honor the past, but to also honor the present and the future as well.

I will hold off listing the names of those involved in the committee until they give me permission to do so. Everyone reading this should be assured that this group is made up of both men and women, repre-

sents an infinite amount of knowledge of our town, and is a group of people that have no specific agenda or particular ambition in serving. They are just good people who have been around a long time. The building belongs to Judy, so she will have final say... but she is very flexible and eager to work with whatever the City decides.



COLLINS CHRISTIAN CHURCH

~ VBS PROGRAM ~

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY,

JUNE 10-14

Collins Convenience Store Survey

Please return Survey by April 25th, 2019, to the Collins City Hall

Would you use a small convenience store in Collins if it was established? YES or NO

How many people are in your household? _____

Are the majority of adults in your household over the age of 65? YES or NO

What hours would you most likely want to have access to a convenience store in Collins?
(circle all that apply)

Early Morning 5-8 am	Mid-Morning 8-11 am	Afternoon 11-2pm	Late Afternoon 2-4 pm	Early Evening 4- 7 pm
-------------------------	------------------------	---------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

If a convenience store was in Collins, and it had items products comparable in price and selection to other convenience stores, how many times do you think you would visit per week or spend per visit?

Visits per week

_____ none

_____ 1-2 times

_____ 3-4 times

_____ 5 or more times

Estimated average dollar amount spent per visit

_____ \$0.00 - \$20.00

_____ \$20.00 - \$100.00

_____ \$100.00 or more

Primary **reason** for visit. *Check all that apply.*

_____ getting weekly/monthly groceries

___ picking up a few essential/emergency items

___ eating at restaurant/café/deli

___ supporting local food growers/producers

___ supporting my community

If this store had items that are considered specialty items, such as meat products from a local locker, treats from a local ice cream shop, or other unique things... would you be more likely to use the store?

YES or NO

Please check the kinds of items that you would most likely buy from a convenience store in town, as long as they were reasonably priced.

Milk	Beverages	Quick Meals	Pasta/Rice
Bread	Chips/Crackers	Things you could eat on-site (microwaveables)	Personal Care Products
Cans and jars of food	Pet food	Paper products (toilet paper, paper plates, etc.)	Vegetables
Meat	Breakfast items	Eggs	Fruits
Dairy products (cheese, butter, dip)	Cereal	Items for baking, cooking, and grilling	Miscellaneous items, i.e. batteries, tape
Cleaning Products	Homemade Goods	Condiments	Other: _____ _____
Candy/snacks	Pastries	Packaged Foods	Other: _____ _____

Collins Days 2019: Cherish Today ~ Challenge Tomorrow

Like our Facebook Page: "Collins Days/Events - Iowa" to stay updated. Find your Advance Tickets and Registration Forms here.

FRIDAY, JUNE 21



STREET DANCE

Where: Collins Fire Station
Time: 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM

Food & Drinks will be available
FIREWORKS @ INTERMISSION
Sponsored by: Collins Fire & Rescue

SATURDAY, JUNE 22

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST
Community Center
7:00 AM ~ 9:30 AM Sponsored by: American Legion

5K RUN - MUFFINS, MUTTS & MIMOSAS
Registration @ 7 AM - Amphitheater on Main
Run from 7:30 AM ~ 9:00 AM

Jointly Sponsored by: The Collins Wellness Center
The Whimsical Wine Trailer

GIRL'S SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT
Trailside Park (Softball Field)
9:00 AM Sponsor: Collins-Maxwell High School
PARADE ON MAIN
10:30 AM

Registration ~ 9:30 AM Corner of 4th St and 4th Ave
*Grand Marshall: Winston Reitan
Sponsored by: 4H Club

SATURDAY, JUNE 22 (CON'T)

COMMUNITY LUNCH @ COMMUNITY CENTER
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Beef Burger/ Hot Dog Meal
Library/Friends
Sponsored by: Collins

AFTERNOON ATTRACTIONS

BAGS TOURNAMENT
Collins Fire Station
12:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Food & Drinks will be available
Sponsored by: Collins Fire and Rescue

*Becca The Balloon Lady ~ 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM
*Bingo ~ 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM @ Wright Learning Center
Sponsored by: The Mother's Club



CAR SHOW
Registration at 11:30 AM
Event runs: 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM
If interested, please contact Dan Fitzpatrick @ (515) 231-4236
Sponsored by: Rim Right of Iowa

*Duck Pond ~ 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM (Collins Christian Church)
*Dunk Tank ~ 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM (Collins Christian Church)
*Face Painting ~ All Day (Collins-Maxwell Cheerleaders)
*Glitter Tattoos ~ 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM (C-M Youth Recreation)
*Ice Cream Treats ~ All Day - Near the inflatables (Snack Shack)
*Ice Cream Social ~ 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM (HairHut)
*Inflatables/Ferris Wheel ~ 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM (Gotcha Games)
*Kids Activities ~ See Shop for Details (Small Town Tattoo & Art)
*Live Music and Entertainment ~ All Day @ Amphitheater
Sponsored by: The Whimsical Wine Trailer

*Logs for Heroes ~ 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM (Anthony Martin)
*OPEN HOUSE ~ Noon to 2:00 PM @ Collins Christian Church
"Ole Time Sweet Treats At Ole Time Prices"

*OPEN HOUSE ~ 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM @ Collins Library (Remodel)
*OPEN HOUSE ~ 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM @ Impact Pro-Wrestling
*Petting Zoo (Demos) ~ 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM (4H Club)
*Punt, Pass and Kick Competition (Collins-Maxwell Football Players)
*Restrooms/Shopping ~ 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM (Barney's Gun Shop)
*Sno-Cones ~ 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM (Christian Church)
*Vendor Show ~ 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM ~ Participation Fee: \$20.00
Organized by: The Whimsical Wine Trailer
*White Rose Bubbles ~ 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM (Gregg Patterson)

EVENING ATTRACTIONS

COMMUNITY SUPPER @ COMMUNITY CENTER
5:00 PM ~ 6:30 PM
Sponsored by: Christian Youth Group
RAFFLE @ COMMUNITY CENTER
6:30 PM
Sponsored by: Collins Days Committee



SMALL TOWN BLUES & REDS IOWA WINE FESTIVAL
Amphitheater next to Community Center
8:00 PM ~ 11:00 PM
*Be sure to purchase your tickets in advance



CASEY MUESSIGMANN (THE VOICE-TEAM BLAKE)
Alibi Bar
9:00 PM to Midnight
*Must be 21 to attend

SUNDAY, JUNE 23

CHURCH SERVICE
10:00 AM
Sponsored by: Collins Christian Church



VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT
Sand Volleyball Courts @ The Trailside Park
Registration @ 11:00 AM. Games starting at NOON
*Chris Sheeley Concessions

Sponsored by: Summer Sands

A Short Country Drive to
Anywhere

CITY OF
COLLINS

PO BOX 15
212 MAIN STREET
COLLINS, IA 50055
Phone/Fax: 641-385-2205
E-mail:
collinsclerk12@yahoo.com

CARRIER ROUTE PRESORT

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

COLLINS IA 50055

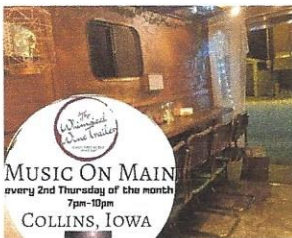
PERMIT NO. 16

ECRWSS

BOXHOLDER

COLLINS IA 50055

MUSIC ON MAIN



"We have our first two shows booked for MUSIC ON MAIN this Spring & Summer!

These live music shows are hosted by The Whimsical Wine Trailer and FREE to the community

With support from local business: Pro Sound

Come out to support small business & local talent!

May 9th- Jesse & The Medicine Men

June 13th- Joe Bach (Singer/Songwriter)"