

## City of Decorah Community Betterment Committee Meeting

Monday, May 18, 2020 – Immediately following the regular city council meeting.

The City of Decorah Community Betterment Committee met on Monday, May 18, 2020 at approximately 6:30pm, immediately following the regular city council meeting.

**The meeting was held electronically pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8 – In circumstances where such a meeting is impossible or impractical due to concerns about COVID-19 and social distancing for the safety of Council members and the public.**

Chairman Johanna Bergan called the meeting to order and the following answered roll: Ross Hadley, Steve Luse, and Randy Schissel. Mayor Lorraine Borowski, Andy Carlson, and Emily Neal were also in attendance. Others in attendance: City Manager Chad Bird and several Dept Heads.

### Agenda

1. Bldg. codes / building and zoning official  
*There was general discussion about the job description for the position. Bird noted he is working on writing it. There was discussion about building codes, nuisance codes, and abatement applications as part of the position and new city dept.*
2. Deer management  
*The committee continued long standing discussion regarding deer depredation in the City. There was concern that it is a difficult topic to manage with so much public land and large areas of wooded private land to content with, the deer have habitat and a food supply.*  
  
*There was discussion about the city paying for tags, if hunters could be identified. There was discussion about using the Fire Dept's drone for a deer count survey. There was also discussion about being in partnership with Luther College regarding a broader community-based land management plan.*  
  
*Parks and Recreation Director, Andy Nimrod broached the subject of processing and noted most local lockers have more than a 9-month wait for processing.*
3. Junk vehicle code amendment, chapter 8.20  
*Bird reviewed staff level proposed changes to the junk vehicle code. He noted staff desired changes to assist in abatement of junk vehicles in various locations about the city. He noted one current exception in city code is merely licensing a vehicle is enough to stave-off removal of an otherwise junk and abandoned vehicle.*  
  
*The committee discussed changes and it was noted that tailpipe and muffler should also be terms used in the definitions.*
4. Race track / noise ordinances  
*Hadley brought forward several complaints about the recent racing at the track and the noise it generated.*  
  
*He wondered about current community understanding of the races' conclusions and frequency of racing.*  
  
*Schissel noted the races are important to the community and there will be some noise. He said they are usually concluded by 9:30pm.*  
  
*The committee directed staff to meet with the race promotor and develop a memorandum of understanding to outline the races and their operations.*  
  
*The committee also asked for better communications between the city and the race promotor.*

**Community Betterment & Housing** – \*Bergan, Hadley, Luse, Schissel

*Improving quality of life in a community requires supporting initiatives that look to the future of the community. Initiatives and suggestions involving housing, and quality of life matters for the citizens and visitors of Decorah. Improving the quality of the environment through conservation; educational efforts; community beautification or restoration efforts; improving the quality of neighborhoods through capacity building efforts; economic development and overall planning contribute to betterment of a community. Connecting community needs with available resources; by officially recognizing the participating communities and neighborhoods. Ordinance and other policy issues related to matters involving Human Rights Commission and code sections and Historic Preservation Commission and code sections.*

**City of Decorah Public Safety Committee Meeting**

**Monday, May 18, 2020** – *Immediately following the regular city council meeting.*

The City of Decorah Community Betterment Committee met on Monday, May 18, 2020 at approximately 6:30pm, immediately following the regular city council meeting and the Betterment Committee.

**The meeting was held electronically pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8 – In circumstances where such a meeting is impossible or impractical due to concerns about COVID-19 and social distancing for the safety of Council members and the public.**

Chairman Emily Neal called the meeting to order and the following answered roll: Johanna Bergan, Andy Carlson, Ross Hadley, Mayor Lorraine Borowski, Randy Schissel, and Steve Luse were also in attendance. Others in attendance: City Manager Chad Bird and several Dept Heads.

Chapter 2.16 / 2.48 amendments regarding police dept reporting and city manager responsibilities

*Mayor Borowski brough forth proposed changes to these chapters noting she believed they would provide for better administration.*

*Bird noted some of the proposed changes were discussed during changes in the fire department staffing several years ago and in August 2019 by the consultant hired to conduct the police chief search.*

*Chief Smutzler noted he was not in favor of any changes to current code sections.*

*The committee directed staff to conduct a survey of Decorah's comparable cities regarding code and administrative chain of command language.*

**Public Safety** - \*Neal, Bergan, Carlson, Hadley

*Reviews policy and issues involving the Police and Fire departments, First Responders and Disaster Services. Also reviews initiatives and suggestions related to building code, building inspections and general public safety concerns.*

There was no other business and the meeting adjourned at 8:21pm.

Respectfully submitted,

