

Prairie City Hometown Pride Committee  
Prairie City City Hall  
6 p.m.  
Minutes  
May 18, 2015

The meeting of the Prairie City Hometown Pride Committee was called to order by Mayor Chad Alleger.

Committee members present: Sue Ponder, Mayor Chad Alleger, City Council Representative Lyle Burkett, City Administrator Manny Toribio, Tony Ladehoff, Dianne Taylor.

Jeff Davidson, Jasper County Hometown Pride Community Coach was also present.

What are we about?

1. Community beautification
2. Community development. Look at ways to spur the community to be prosperous.
3. Economic development.

Jasper County Hometown Pride Community Coach Jeff Davidson gave the committee a progress report.

Jasper County towns participating in Hometown Pride are Colfax, Sully, Monroe, Lynnville, Baxter, Newton and Prairie City. JEDCO will represent Jasper County.

Jasper County has a five-year contract with Jeff Davidson. Total funding is \$80,000 per year. Funding:

Keep Iowa Beautiful	\$ 60,000
Newton	9,600
Prairie City	1,066
Other cities pay the balance	

Six counties across the state are involved in the program. There has been some interest from Story County, but they are not involved at this point.

The minutes of the meetings will be distributed to Keep Iowa Beautiful.

A decision will need to be made to determine the number of members for the committee. Other communities have between 6 - 15 members on their committee. Voting members at this meeting were: Sue Ponder, Tony Ladehoff and Dianne Taylor.

Tony Ladehoff agreed to be the Chairman of the Prairie City Hometown Pride Committee. Dianne Taylor will be the recording secretary.

The group will meet on the 4th Monday of the month at 6 p.m. The exception will be the June meeting which is scheduled for June 29 at 6 p.m. at City Hall.

**Iowa Heartland Resource Conservation & Development**

Jeff Davidson gave the group an update on the Iowa Heartland Resource Conservation & Development plans for trails in Jasper, Madison, Warren and Marion County. The project will link trails in the four

counties to the existing trails in Polk County. A comprehensive plan will developed for trails in Jasper County and Marion County. A grant has been approved to fund the trail planning project.

- Monroe has begun to build their part of the trail.
- Trails may initially be crushed rock and then paved in the future.
- The Colfax group is working on the quarry project and would possible like to link up with the trail at Prairie City. There is discussion about building a five foot shoulder on the blacktop between Colfax and Prairie City with a rumble strip and a bike lane.
- National Heritage Foundation is acquiring the trail from the railroad.

The Prairie City Hometown Pride Committee will ultimately have a project list with five or six goals. To jumpstart the process, the group generated a list of strengths and threats/weaknesses for Prairie City.

### Strengths

- Location - near Des Moines metro/HWY 163
- Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge
- Small school district
- Close to Pella, Knoxville, Newton, Grinnell
- Goldie's is a destination. Known for their tenderloin.
- Project volunteers/community pride. An example: the community coming together to build the playground.
- Appearance - well-kept town
- Municipal utilities
- High speed internet service
- Land is available for building. Three houses currently being built.
- Affordable housing - buy or rent.
- Fast growing municipality
- Park and ball fields
- Faith community and cooperation among churches.

### Threats/Weaknesses

- Extremely financially conservative community
- Change doesn't come easily --community acceptance of change.
- Aging population
- Lack of community daycare--in home daycares only
- Hard to feel a sense of community
- Lack of businesses
- Availability and condition of rental housing
- Disinterest in downtown buildings - vacancies
- Storm water management
- Marketing
- Lack of community activities and cohesiveness.

The committee members were given eight dots each to use to prioritize the discussion items. Jeff will bring the results back to the group at the next meeting.

Strategies will be developed for Prairie City for year 1, years 2-3 and years 4-5.

The next meeting will be June 29, 2015 at 6 p.m. The committee will meet in the meeting room at City Hall.

The meeting was adjourned .

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Dianne Taylor, Recording Secretary