

The Melcher-Dallas Miner

New City Council Working on FY 2021 Budget

The election held in November brought two new council members to the table. Mark Moon and Seth Williams joined the council effective January 1, 2020.

The Council is currently working on the Fiscal Year 2021 budget that will cover the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. One of the biggest challenges the council faces is to ensure the delivery of consistent, quality public works services to the city while delivering a balanced budget. The city must not only ensure the quality of water and sewer services and road maintenance but must also fund upkeep of city properties, such as the library, city hall and the city maintenance shops.

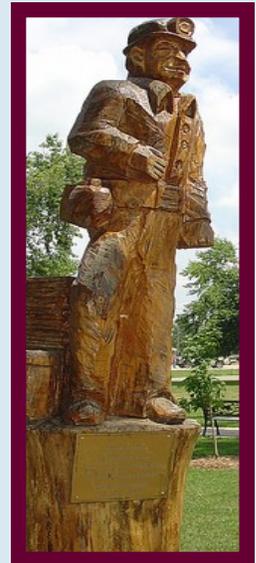
One of the biggest surprises to new council members can be the strict laws the city must follow when funding key services. For instance, the city's roads are maintained primarily by the Road Use Tax (RUT) paid out by the State of Iowa. These funds can only be used for road-related services, and the money must be kept in a separate account within the city finances. Money can be transferred out of the RUT fund to the general fund (only to help with road maintenance expenses), but no funds can be transferred into this account. Likewise, revenue generated from water and sewer must stay within those funds and generally cannot be transferred out for other uses.

One of the greatest challenges faced by small cities is ongoing funding of infrastructure. As most citizens are aware, the 2019 sewer upgrade project is about to wind down, while planning for the upcoming wastewater treatment plant upgrade is moving along. Ideally the city would be able to space these projects further apart. However, strict DNR guidelines for wastewater treatment will go into effect in 2022, forcing the city to ensure adequate facilities by the deadline to avoid burdensome fines that can come with non-compliance.

If you have ideas about projects you would like to see funded in the next few years, please let your council members know. Your input matters and allows the council to prioritize the limited funds available for discretionary spending.

Salvage Title Inspection Program Generating Revenue

The City of Melcher-Dallas serves as an approved site for inspection of salvage vehicles. People come not just from Marion County but surrounding counties to have the M-D police department conduct an inspection. Each inspection earns the city \$40, which goes into the general fund and helps offset expenses for the police department. Inspections can be scheduled by leaving a message 641-947-2003.



Important Dates

January 20

Martin Luther King Day
(City Hall is open)

February 11

Regular City Council Meeting
Public Hearing re FY 2020
Budget Amendment

Public Hearing re FY 2021

Budget Maximum Levy

February 17

President's Day
City Hall is open

Mayor

Barbara VanWyk

City Council

Mark Moon

Seth Williams

Chris Heaton

Mark Herold

Terry Fisher (Mayor Pro-Tem)

Newbie News

Meet Sarah & Daniel Gentry



If you're wondering who bought Adam Wadle's old house, the answer is Sarah & Daniel Gentry. They were kind enough to stop by City Hall to provide a little background on how they ended up in Melcher-Dallas.

Sarah and Daniel moved to M-D from McGill, Nevada. Daniel is finishing up his employment with a copper mine in McGill. Sarah grew up in Lorimor, Iowa, and Daniel lived in Milo and graduated from Southeast Warren High School. They spent ten years in Nevada and are happy to be back in their home state.

The Gentry's have two children. MyKayla is 12 years old and MyKole is 7. They love their new school, and are happy to be living close to family. Daniel's brother and his family live just east of town.

Sarah is working part-time at Casey's and spending a lot of time working on projects in her new home. When asked what they like most about Melcher-Dallas, Daniel quickly answered, "The locker."

If you see them out and about, please welcome the Gentrys to Melcher-Dallas. We are lucky to have them!

Free Income Tax Preparation Services Available

Marion County residents now have a free income tax preparation option available. The Weller Center for Business and International Studies at Central College is offering appointments Tuesdays from 4 to 8 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., starting February 15, 2020.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 641-629-6729 or email a request to centralcollegeVITA@central.edu.

The Five R's to Reduce Your Footprint

1. Refuse

Refuse to buy or accept products that can harm you or the environment. Use water based cleaners and products instead of chemical solvents. Consider whether you need to purchase paint, strippers, or stains in an oil-based form rather than latex or water soluble versions. Oil-based products ultimately become hazardous waste requiring special handling for disposal.

2. Repurpose

Take something and use it for something else. Could you use scrap paper for notes instead of purchasing scratch pads? Use condensation from your HVAC system or a dehumidifier to gather distilled water. Use metal cans and buckets for creative plant containers. For instance, if the motor on your ice cream maker burns out, could you use the bucket as a planter for flowers? If you want new furniture, could you refurbish the furniture you have and make it look different and new?

3. Reduce

Could you turn your thermostat from 74 degrees to 68 or 70 degrees in the winter and wear a sweater? How about putting up a clothesline in the backyard to save energy used by your dryer during warm months? Finding ways to minimize energy usage reduces your footprint.

4. Reuse

Use washable cloth rags for cleaning instead of one-use wipes. Use cloth tote bags for groceries instead of plastic bags that end up in the landfill. Purchase a water bottle and fill it from the tap instead of purchasing bottled water.

5. Recycle

If the four options above won't work, then always consider recycling. The City of Melcher-Dallas offers free recycling of paper, tin and aluminum at the recycling center in the city shop (next to the legion). The recycling center is open every first and third Saturday of the month from 8 a.m. to noon and is available to citizens of Melcher-Dallas. Styrofoam and glass are not accepted items. Please bring only accepted items to ensure the continued availability of the recycling center.



L to R: Chris & Jaymi (Crozier) Saunders; Lisa & Jim with granddaughter Tavy; daughter Hayli & Brett Douglas; daughter Lexi; and Shalynn & son Jordy Tickle.



Jim & Lisa on vacation, practicing for their “snowbird” days.

Life as a “Lifer”

Jim and Lisa (Anderson) Crozier are faces well known to Melcher-Dallas residents. Jim has taught school in the M-D district for more than 30 years, and Lisa has provided a loving in-home day care option to dozens of families. Jim also serves as the school’s athletic director.

Jim and Lisa have three daughters and a son, as well as two grandsons and two granddaughters. Lisa grew up in a family of four girls and three boys, and Jim is one of six Crozier boys. They are both lifelong residents and raised their families in Melcher-Dallas.

When asked if they ever considered leaving M-D, Lisa said they will always call Melcher-Dallas home but says they will probably live the snowbird life after retirement. “Even if we go south in the winter after retirement, Melcher-Dallas will always be home base for our family,” she added.

When asked what they like most about living in M-D, Lisa said its the joys and benefits of living close to family and lifelong friends that keep them here. She added that when her sister was battling cancer, the town came together and supported the family in a way that you do not see in a big town. “Melcher-Dallas is a giving and loving town,” said Lisa.

When asked if they have retirement plans in the works, Lisa said they are thinking of retiring in five to seven years. Their retirement, whenever it comes, will certainly be well earned.

Thank you, Jim and Lisa, for staying in your hometown and positively impacting the lives of hundreds of kids and dozens of families through your love, support, teaching and caring.

Your City Employees

- Gary Comer—Sewer & Water Director
- Mike McCarty—Streets/Sewer/Water
- Jacob Hoch—Chief of Police
- Dylan Forkner—Police Officer
- Zachary Kalvig—Reserve Officer
- Stephanie Ripperger — Deputy Clerk
- Jenny Knust—Clerk/Treasurer
- Lori Davis—Library Director
- Fran Smith—Library Assistant
- Bill Cooper & Janet McBride—Recycling

Employee Spotlight

Stephanie Ripperger
Deputy Clerk



Please meet the new Deputy Clerk, Stephanie Ripperger. Steph was previously employed with the city as an administrative assistant and recently accepted the Deputy position. She lives just west of town in a new home with her husband, Shane, and five children still living at home. Steph and Shane have a total of three daughters and four sons.

Steph enjoys working with the public and knows almost everyone in town. We are happy Steph chose to accept the Deputy position and know that visitors to city hall appreciate her stellar customer service and beautiful smile.

What's up with the library, Lori?

We hope everyone enjoyed our Christmas trees. Thank you to everyone who put one up. We want more next year!

It is time to start planning our summer reading program. If you have any ideas or would like to volunteer, please stop in. Your ideas are needed now as planning early is the key to a successful program. I have already booked the Blank Park Zoo to come in June.

We are your library—let us know what you want and we will do our best to get it.

Lori Dhabalt-Davis, Librarian

NEW BOOKS & MOVIES THIS MONTH

Smoke Screen, Terri Blackstock
Dale the Quail, Megan Huddleston
Stealth, Stuart Woods
The Dinky Donkey, Craig Smith
Game of Scones, Mary Lee Ashford
Fatal Accusation, Marie Force
Star Crossed, Kele Moon
Seeing Red, Sandra Brown
Perfect Alibi, Phillip Margolin
The Best Lie, Sarah Lyu
You Don't Own Me, Mary Higgins Clark
Surrendered Love, Laura Hilton
The Rancher's Redemption, Kate Pearce

The Aussie Next Door, Stefanie London
Wrapped Up in You, Jill Shalvis
Wasted, Linda Wolfe
Little Heathens, Mildred Armstrong Kalish
Mending Fences, Susanne Woods Fisher
The Second Chance Rancher, Kate Pearce
The Oysterville Sewing Circle, Susan Wiggs
Sisters First, Jenna Hager Bush & Barbara Bush
Project Middle School, Alyssa Milano
Surrendered Love, Laura Hilton
The House at Saltwater Point & Leaving Lavender Tides, Colleen Cobe

NEW MOVIES THIS MONTH

The Kid Who Would Be King, Hobbs & Shaw
Art of Racing in the Rain, Overcomer

City crew working hard to keep roads cleared

Special thanks to all Melcher-Dallas residents who called in to express appreciation for the city crew's efforts to keep roads cleared. A simple thanks can go a long way toward spurring on employees who are working incredibly long hours to ensure streets and alleys are cleared in a timely manner, especially during back-to-back snowfalls. Your patience, understanding and expressions of gratitude make a difficult job a little easier.

A Trip Down Memory Lane

Do you remember:

- When the marching band practiced all week to deliver music and amazing formations on the football field at half time?
- When there were three school cooks in a row dishing out food that, no matter how unappealing it looked, you could not refuse?
- When the softball team and baseball team played on the same field (where the elementary sits now)?
- When you thought your elementary teacher was really old, and you now realize she was probably in her thirties?
- The little dairy shop that sat where the community center is where you could get an ice cream "rocket" and if your stick was red, you got a free rocket?

If you have special memories of growing up in Melcher-Dallas, please e-mail them to mdcityhall@windstream.net

Do You Know Your City Ordinances?

1. I can find the agenda and other city notices at the bank, the post office and city hall.
2. I can receive a fine for allowing weeds to grow on my property.
3. If my cousin wants to sell vacuums in town, he needs to obtain a peddler's permit from the city.
4. If my neighbor's dog bites me, I have the right to keep it to myself because I don't want to make my neighbor mad.
5. There's nothing that says I can't pop wheelies or zigzag down the street on my bicycle.

1. False. The City Council passed a new ordinance that designates the Post Office, City Hall and the library as official posting places. 2. True. The Nuisance Abatement ordinance prohibits the dense growth of weeds. 3. True. Your cousin will need a peddler's permit for door-to-door sales in M-D. 4. False. The new Dangerous Dog ordinance requires residents to report any dog bite that causes injury to the M-D police, Marion County Sheriff or Public Health. 5. False. Chapter 76, "Bicycle Regulations," prohibits riders from "improper riding," which includes stunting and zigzagging.