



CITY SCENE

Winter 2002



Gene Gray
Councilman

Council Corner

All one needs to do to experience the ever-changing face of our city is to look through the phone book - or perhaps the police blotter in the local paper. The names are constantly changing because of those who choose to come here to live or who choose to leave for other places.

I, for one, chose to move here with my family in 1964 for several reasons: the school system was excellent; the commercial and business options were vast; our church was here; and the people were friendly and very helpful. And I've never been disappointed with my choice.

It's probably not going to happen that all the goods and services that were once available are going to return to the city. New highways and concentrations of industry and commerce have made that likelihood very unlikely. However, we still have a very viable community, and it's to that end that I expend my time as a councilperson. We can and will continue to make Webster City the place where we can be both proud and comfortable.

All of us, councilpersons, city manager, and staff, welcome your constructive criticism for making our city better. The City Scene provides an opportunity for you to voice your concerns; I hope you will do just that.

Back in 1979, I penned, wrote, jotted down the following feelings that I had and have about our city. Please don't spend too much time parsing the lines or being too sensitive to rhyme or meter. As a greeting card company says, "It's the thought that counts."

MAIN STREET, U.S.A.

In the heartland of America
Lies Main Street, U.S.A.;
A wonderful place to live in,
Growing better every way.
With tree-lined streets and avenues,
With lovely parks for play,
How pleasant to be a part of
Our Main Street, U.S.A.

Webster City's in the process
Of providing for our needs;
Our city's full of promise,
And fruitful lives we lead.
Here residents and merchants
Work hand in hand and say,
"Give thanks, we are so fortunate
In Main Street, U.S.A."

Our factories, schools and churches,
Senior citizens and all the rest
Have worked and planned and managed,
To provide us with the best.
Our hopes, our joys, our freedoms,
We relive them every day;
Our lives we make the most of
In Main Street, U.S.A.

We're a city with compassion
Where neighbors really care;
Our city's marked with progress,
The signs are everywhere.
Now all of us may join in
The tribute that we pay,
With heartfelt thanks and gratitude,
To Main Street, U.S.A.

Gene Gray - 1979

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City Council Call In Show

Catch the City Council Call In Show on Tuesday mornings at 9:00am following a Monday night council meeting. The show is broadcast live from City Hall on KQWC-AM 1570 and on Cable Channel 12. It is also rebroadcast on Cable Channel 12 following the council meeting on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings at 7:00pm. Phone in your questions and comments during the show at 832-9151. You can also fax your questions anytime at 832-9153.





Mike McConnell
Chief of Police

Webster City Police Chief Discusses Dispatching Concerns

For many years, Webster City and Hamilton County has participated in a consolidated dispatching arrangement. For more than 11-years this included enhanced E-9-1-1, Police, Sheriff, Fire, Ambulance, Emergency Medical Dispatching (EMD), and First Responder emergency dispatching for the entire county.

Operating under an inter-governmental agreement (28-E), Hamilton County reimburses Webster City for 50% of the base wages of dispatchers while the City picks up the other 50% of their base wages. Overtime and benefits are covered 100% by Webster City. As a result of this formulation, Webster City ends up covering approximately 60% of the total dispatching costs (\$110,035.00) with Hamilton County contributing approximately 40% (\$70,990.00).

Webster City employs six dispatchers that are each assigned to specific shifts. On occasion, two dispatchers are assigned the same shift depending on staffing levels and days off. Besides dispatching, some of the other important functions our dispatchers and clerical staff perform are:

- Clerical & public assistance duties
- Submit fingerprint cards
- Answer phone
- IA/NCIC validations
- Window traffic – accept payment for parking tickets, tree dump deposit, traffic citations, animal impounds, vehicle impounds, report requests, accept packages, give directions
- Bike registrations
- Enter, post payment, send to court parking tickets
- Business contact information
- Enter traffic citations, warnings
- Towed vehicle entries, updates
- Enter municipal infractions
- Filing of pictures, dispositions, incidents, accidents
- Enter dispositions, juvenile and adult arrests
- Enter jail dockets
- Send accidents to state
- Fulfill insurance requests, mail
- IBR submissions to state
- Run CCH (Criminal history)
- Vacation house watch entries
- Make copies of incidents for proper dissemination
- Maintain accuracy of records, calls for service, arrest entries, incidents, etc
- Order and put away office supplies
- Prepare media reports

- Prepare monthly report for department
- Transcribing criminal cases

The dispatchers normally do not have any direct contact with inmates as those duties of booking subjects in and out of the facility are the responsibility of Webster City Police Officers. When a female prisoner is booked in, the female dispatchers will assist in searching the prisoner and conducting the required hour and half hour visible checks. Our police officers provide for all other care of the inmates, such as feeding, medication, and ensuring that each inmate is supervised while at court every day.

When the residents of Hamilton County voted to approve the funding and building of the new jail, we were very pleased, however, as the Chief of Police, I was also very concerned about how the dispatching would be affected. Again, I would like to state clearly that Webster City is eager to close its jail and transfer those responsibilities to Hamilton County, whose responsibility it is to house prisoners.

Just after the vote, it was unclear as to how E-9-1-1 phone answering would be handled. The decision as to the location of the placement of the E-9-1-1 phones resides with the Hamilton County E-9-1-1 Service Board. At a meeting of the E-9-1-1 Service Board and after Webster City's objection, it was decided to move the E-9-1-1 phone service from the police department to the new jail, after it opens.

At that meeting, I argued the point that there had not been sufficient time to come up with a suitable plan of action to address several concerns that Webster City has. I had two basic concerns, (a) that there is only so much money available in my budget for policing services of which dispatching is part of that overall picture, and (b) how would the new dispatching system have an effect the overall operation of the Webster City Police Department in relation to serving our residents at the current level they have come to expect? In spite of the City's concerns, the E-9-1-1 Service Board voted to move the E-9-1-1 phones to the new jail when it is built.

This vote, as I feared, would present a situation to Webster City in which we would be forced to either move with the County or remain as a stand alone operation at the police department.

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City Scene

Webster City Police Chief Discusses Dispatching Concerns continued...

Conventional Wisdom

Under normal circumstances, one thinks of governmental consolidation as a method to reduce the financial burden to the taxpayers while maintaining an acceptable level of service, unfortunately, this move will have exactly the opposite effect. This is not a new concept, i.e., during and after the jail study committees' visits around Hamilton County, that fact was made crystal clear by members of the Hamilton County Board of Supervisors that this jail/dispatching project would not be an inexpensive proposition and will cost more. I appreciated their honesty, but at the same time, I knew that would later translate to an increased budget asking for dispatching costs from Webster City.

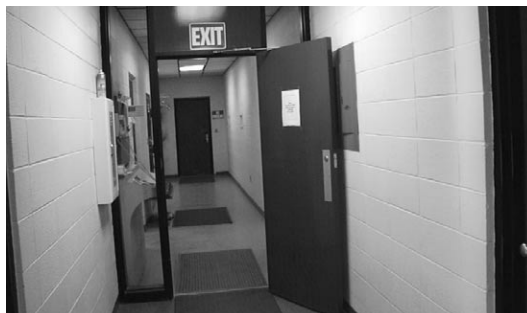
City-County Discussions

Over the past several months, Webster City and Hamilton County officials have met in committee and at special meetings along with various pieces of correspondence back and forth with the goal of reaching a consensus of what Hamilton County can offer Webster City and at what cost. The last meeting occurred at the Hamilton County Courthouse with the Board of Supervisors. As a result of that meeting, it was determined that Hamilton County's desire to charge Webster City 70% (\$157,949) of the cost related to dispatching was not going to change and that was their offer to Webster City.

If Webster City were to accept such an offer, we would have to retain two clerical positions to make up for the loss of the six dispatchers who also perform other clerical duties listed above. That additional hidden cost has the effect of adding more dollars to the requirement in the police budget.

It seems clear to me that the police department has to essentially remain at a budgetary level consistent with where we have been over the past several years. Increasing the cost of dispatching \$46,000 dollars or \$102,000 dollars depending on which option is selected, will have a devastating effect to the operation of the police department as we now know it.

It should be clearly noted that both Webster City and Hamilton County agreed at the meeting that should we fail to reach a workable agreement at this time, the door must always remain open for future opportunities. Now may not be the optimal time to close the Webster City dispatching facility



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Webster City Police Chief Discusses Dispatching Concerns continued...

but a review of the matter in several years may be more appropriate.

Service and Budget impact

Remembering that nothing is free and everything has consequences, for the police department to locate an additional \$46,000-\$102,000 dollars, will result in some services being reduced or cut altogether. The most obvious cuts on the table are: some personnel, DARE, some training, community policing efforts, bicycle patrol, courtesy vehicle unlocking, investigating only motor vehicle accidents over \$1,000 or personal injury accidents, picking up animals, nuisance abatement including junk vehicles and other service oriented duties. These are simply the most obvious cuts, nothing is seriously on or off the table for discussion at this time.

Cause and Effect

Understanding that the city and county currently operate a consolidated dispatch center at this time is important in understanding the big picture of what is about to happen over the next months and years. I believe that the jail is long past due for being built and am eager to see it open. On the other hand, the most fiscally responsible option for dispatching has been snatched away from Webster City Officials by the E-9-1-1 Service Board. Their vote to separate an already consolidated and functioning dispatch center will have a cause-and-effect action that will directly affect the taxpayers of Webster City and Hamilton County, I believe clearly in a negative manner.

The Level of Service Offered by Hamilton County

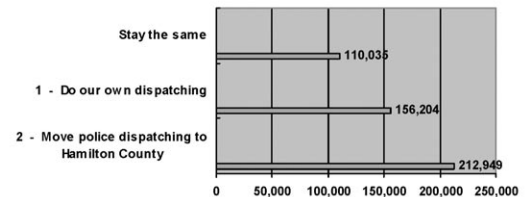
Because the proposed dispatch center will be located within the locked confines of the jail and the dispatchers will also double as jailers/control room operators, Webster City has raised the concern that such doubling up on the responsibilities of these employees may impede the effective operation of emergency calls, particularly EMD-Emergency Medical Dispatching calls in which the full attention of the dispatcher is required from the time the call comes in to the time the Emergency medical staff arrives on scene. While Hamilton County officials assure the City that this is a reasonable manner of operating a smaller jail/dispatch center, concern is nevertheless a reality. The Board of Supervisors have advised us that they intend on adding a

conduit from the current design location of the dispatch/jail control room to the garage area, should it become necessary to add a dispatch center in the garage if things don't work out as anticipated.

Another concern for Webster City is that the front window from which we receive over 5,000 contacts a year would only be open during regular business hours. Since Hamilton County has decided that they would not answer our after hours utility phones, as we currently now do, this would also be an additional cost that would have to be absorbed by Webster City and a solution as to where such after hour calls would be answered would have to be determined.

The Bottom-line Cost for Webster City

The following chart reflects factual costs related to the two available choices Webster City has.



As the chart indicates, the best option for Webster City is an option that has been voted down by the E-9-1-1 Service Board, that being, keeping the dispatching as it is. Since that is not an option we can choose, the second best option is to conduct our own police dispatching with an increase of \$46,000. The third option of increasing our dispatching costs \$102,000 over what we are currently paying would have extremely negative effects on the level of police service Webster City residents currently receive.

As Police Chief, I would not recommend the last option on the basis of a substantial increased cost to Webster City and a decreased level of service offered to our residents.

Finally, this decision will ultimately be made by City Council after thoroughly reviewing the facts. Speaking for the staff and officials of Webster City, it is our sincere desire to do the right thing, not based on emotion, not based on feeling, but simply based on cost and the level of service being offered.

It is our strong desire to work together through this difficult issue to come to the best working solution for our residents in Webster City.

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City Scene

Webster City Water Plant Maintenance

by Ken Wetzler, Utility Operations Director

"Thank you" to the citizens and industries of Webster City for your patience and understanding during the recent maintenance of our softening process at the water plant.

To understand the maintenance performed, we need to first understand the process of our water treatment plant.

The water is drawn out of 3 wells from the Jordan Aquifer at a depth of 2000 feet. This water is naturally hard and by treating with lime and soda ash, the hardness is reduced by 70%.

In 2002, the Webster City Water Treatment Plant pumped approximately 475 million gallons, which is about 1.3 million gallons per day. Three full-time and one part-time employee operate and maintain the plant 365 days a year, including all holidays, on average of 10.5 hours per day.

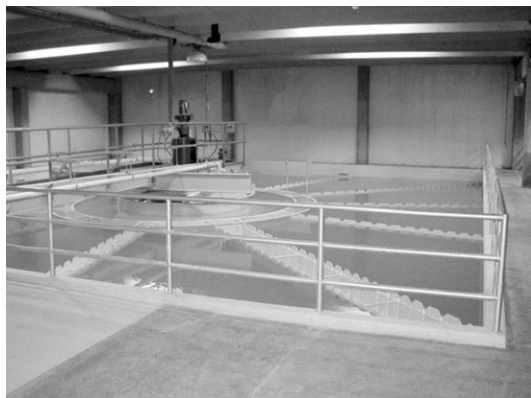
To give you an idea of the scope of maintenance work undertaken during October, visualize the water plant building with a concrete tank/basin (clarifier) two stories in height, occupying one quarter of each floor and being able to hold 463,600 gallons of water. In the middle of this basin is an inverted steel cone supported by troughs, with a walkway at the top to the walls and a propeller inside the cone. The cone and

propeller rotate in opposite directions mixing the two softening agents, soda ash and lime.

In the softening process, particles of lime and soda ash attach to iron and other mineral particles, together settling out in lime sludge and clinging to the concrete clarifier walls, cone, propeller and troughs at a rate of about 2" per year. To maintain effective mixing, the lime build up is removed annually from the metal and concrete surfaces. Each time the build up is removed some paint is also removed, thus, about every 10 - 15 years it is necessary to sand blast the metal and repaint it. Therefore, the cleaning/sand blasting, primer painting, drying time, then painting and again allowing time to cure, lasted from September 28th until October 31st last year.

The maintenance we performed to this clarifier is the first step in making the water potable for drinking. Subsequently, the water flows from the clarifier troughs through the filtration system and finally pumped to our ground storage tank and water towers for your use.

The Water Plant can be reached at (515) 832-9146, FAX 9148 or wewater@netins.net. More information and photos are on our web page at www.webstercity.com



A Friendly Reminder...

The City has received complaints about excessive litter throughout the community. Litterbugs cost the State of Iowa almost \$13.5 million last year! Please be conscientious about depositing trash in the trash receptacles available in the downtown area. Please do not throw litter from your vehicles. A fine for such an act is \$60.50. A well-groomed, attractive community plays a role in attracting new businesses and residents. Take pride in your community. It is YOUR community!



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Snow Emergency Parking Regulations

Chapter 70 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Webster City prohibits parking on residential streets during a declared emergency situation such as snow and ice conditions. A declaration of emergency may be called by the City when conditions warrant during winter weather conditions. The declaration will be made between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. The City stresses the need for each person affected by this ordinance to seek alternate parking places. It is solely the responsibility of each vehicle owner to find out when the declaration was made and where his/her vehicle can be legally and safely parked.

The announcement or cancellation of declaration will be made on KQWC-AM 1570, KQWC-FM 95.7, Cable Channel 12, or a recorded message is available on the snow emergency status line at 832-9122.

Two hours following the declaration of emergency, parking will not be allowed on any residential street.

The provisions of this regulation will be in effect and will supercede all other parking regulations relating to parking on public streets until the emergency declaration is terminated. Parking may be allowed on residential streets after BOTH sides of the street have been completely plowed or the declared emergency has been removed. The Central Business District, however, is exempt from the emergency parking regulations and is regulated as the posted signs indicate. The central business district is the area between Prospect Street and Superior Street and between Bank Street and the Union Pacific Railroad Company tracks.

Two hours after a declaration of emergency has been called, the Police Department will begin ticketing and towing operations. We don't really want to tow your car, so please move it in time. If your car is towed, you must call the Police Department at 832-9166 to start the process to get it back.

Manager's Message

Many times I use acronyms or abbreviations when I'm discussing city projects. I'm reminded that the general public does not necessarily know what I am referring to. I refer to the CIP and CEP continually. The CIP is the Capital Improvement Plan and the CEP is the Capital Equipment Plan. I would like to briefly touch on both:

Capital Improvement Plan

Capital improvement programming requires a balancing of the City's long-term capital project needs with the City's financial plans and capabilities. The end result of this effort is the production of the CIP documents which prioritizes the City's capital project needs over the next five years and provides a realistic financing plan to meet those needs. Updating the CIP annually allows for a review of priorities and adjustment of financial plans to meet changing community needs and financial conditions. CIP projects are defined as those projects having a cost of at least \$10,000 and a life expectancy of at least fifteen years.

In December and January of each year, the City Planning and Zoning Commission reviews and approves the CIP prior to Council approval. The Council approves the CIP and the financing for the budget year they would be heading into. The Planning and Zoning Commission will be reviewing the FY 2003-2008 plan at their January 13, 2003 meeting and the City Council will be reviewing it during the budget work sessions in January. While adoption by the City Council of the CIP is necessary,

the City Council throughout the year will have the opportunity to reconsider a project, which would be funded by general obligation bonds or revenue bonds, at the time the actual project is starting.

Capital Equipment Plan

The purpose of the CEP is to provide a long range schedule to show when and at what cost major capital equipment purchases are projected. It is intended to be used as a planning tool to facilitate estimating of future budget needs.

All departments must maintain a current capital equipment plan which identifies the anticipated replacement schedule and cost of existing or new equipment purchases. We also update the CEP annually to allow for adjustments in anticipated costs or adjustments to the anticipated equipment need. Capital equipment which will be included in the CEP should have a minimum value of \$1,000.

The City Council reviews the CEP during their budget work sessions also. Once the Council has adopted the CEP, the purchases under \$7,500 identified within that fiscal year are approved with no further consideration by the Council. Purchases of equipment over \$7,500 are taken to the Council individually throughout the year for their approval.

Summary

Both of these plans are quite detailed and are available at anytime for the public to review. Just stop in to City Hall and take a look.



Teresa Rotschafer
City Manager

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City Scene

Meet the Webster City Municipal Utility Office Staff

by Vicki Smith, Finance Office Manager



The Webster City Municipal Utilities Staff is here to serve you, our customers. With a combined total of nearly 75 years of experience in public service, we are committed to quality service.

The Webster City Municipal Utilities are made up of the electric, water and wastewater utilities. The Utility Office is part of the City Finance Office and is responsible for handling all utility service customer issues. Our staff is made up of Vicki Smith, Finance Office Manager; Kasie Doering, Accounting Specialist; Sue Asklund, Finance Office Support; Liz Pevestorf, Finance Office Support; Pat Nokes, City Clerk; Brian Fitzpatrick, City Finance Officer; Jeff Jackson, Utility Technician and Todd Madsen, Utility Technician. We work closely with the Line Department, Light Plant, Water Plant, Wastewater Plant and Street Department to make sure that you receive quality utility services at all times. In addition, Kelly Needles of the Energy Group serves as our utility advisor.

The utility office keeps computerized records of all meter activity and customer history's for each property location in town. We also handle all customer service issues related to the municipal utilities including metering and billing of services, receiving payments and handling utility questions, delinquent accounts, disconnections, service changes and new services. We regularly attend informational meetings and follow the state code regulation changes to make sure we are in compliance with all Iowa Utility Board regulations and procedures. We also follow all state reporting guidelines.

In October, we hosted a Customer Appreciation Open

House at which utility employees served food, had electrical demonstrations and gave away prizes. We felt this was a big success and thank everybody who came and celebrated with us. In addition, as a joint effort with our other Corn Belt Power Cooperative members, we sponsored a Build-It-Right Seminar in November at City Hall. This provided great information about healthy home building and maintenance. We had knowledgeable speakers and great attendance. We hope to host similar events in the future as they provide valuable information to our customers. We are committed to providing you with the best service possible.

In addition, we handle all of the City's financial and accounting systems; for example, we are responsible for handling accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll, asset management, project management and inventory management. We are currently working on implementing a project management system for the entire city. This will include tracking all costs related to each project worked on and completed by city employees. We also will be placing valuations on all city infrastructures, which would include things such as electrical poles & lines, streets, sidewalks, bridges, water mains, sewer lines, etc. New governmental accounting standards are requiring that we make these changes within a certain number of years. It has required additional work by all employees and we appreciate all the help we have been getting. We hope to have these procedures in place and the valuations done by the end of this fiscal year.

Please feel free to contact our office with any questions or concerns. Our staff is happy to help you in any way we can. We are here to serve our customers Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If you ever have a service problem after regular business hours, please contact the police department non-emergency number at 515-832-9166 and they can reach the on-call personnel.

Fuller Hall Recreation Center Opens

On December 20, 1956, the Fuller Hall Recreation Center opened. On December 20, 2002, the Fuller Hall Recreation Center celebrated its 46th Anniversary and re-opened with its newly renovated facility. The new facility now includes a 25 meter swimming pool; game room area that includes three pool tables, bumper pool, air hockey, foosball, ping pong, pinball machines, video games; television lounge with a 61 inch big screen television; renovated gymnasium; Sampson Multi-Purpose Room; Conference Room; fitness (weight room) room with new equipment to be arriving shortly; a third locker room to be used for special needs (persons with

disabilities, family locker room), and; elevator to make all of the facility user friendly for persons of all abilities. The Fuller Hall renovation/swim pool project began on June 14, 2001, at a cost of approximately \$2.4 million and is being paid for solely by the Fred M. Fuller Trust.

The staff have been programming additional activities. Some of these activities include: yoga, tae kwon do, Aquacise, Aerobics for persons of all ages, swim lessons, indoor park, winter golf lessons, birthday party rentals, Sunday group rentals, and various special events. For more information contact Fuller Hall at 832-9193.



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2002 Project Summary

by Jan Andrew, Public Works Project Coordinator

Downtown Improvement Project – Phase III

Sidewalk reconstruction has been completed in the SSMID (Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District). This project area included Seneca Street, Willson Avenue, and Des Moines Street between Second Street and First Street, and between Second Street and the north Alley. This work was done by TK Concrete of Pella, Iowa.

2002 Water Distribution Improvement Project

Nels Pederson Company, Badger, Iowa, completed the work to extend the City's water distribution system to the recently annexed property south of the Boone River along Highway #17. This project was completed around October 1.

Brewer Creek Recreational Trail

Jeff Habhab Construction recently completed construction of a recreational trail from the intersection of Ohio and Beach south to the Brewer Creek parking lot. Future plans may include the extension of the trail along the south side of Brewer Creek and north of Brewer Creek Estates into the Wehrheim Park with the specific alignment of the trail still under consideration.

Webster City Child Care Center and Riverview Child Care Center Projects

Work is underway at the future location of the Webster City Child Care Center on Beach Street. Peterson Construction has completed the demolition portion of the project and has completed the new roof. The well

driller has begun work on the wells for the geothermal heat pumps. Renovation work is slated to take 240 days at the Webster City Child Care site and the Riverview Child Care Center project 160 days. Work at the Riverview Child Care Center is scheduled to begin in January. These projects are being funded by private donations, and both federal and state loans and grants, with the City of Webster City being the sponsoring agency for the projects.

Line Department Building Addition

In October, a contract was awarded to Peterson Construction for an 880 square feet addition to the existing Webster City Municipal Line Department Building. Work on this project is scheduled to begin in the near future.

Southeast Development Park Improvement Project (Located in the southeast quadrant of the Highway #17 & U. S. Highway #20 interchange)

The City Council, in conjunction with the Business and Industry Group, has prioritized the completion of the Southeast Development Park infrastructure so that the remaining industrial parcels can be aggressively marketed. Grant funds have been secured from the Iowa Department of Transportation to fund a portion of the street and storm improvements. The project will also include the installation of water main and sanitary sewer. Project completion is scheduled for September 2003.



Webster City Needs Your Voice

This is your community. Please let us know if you have suggestions or changes that need to be made.

Four horizontal lines for writing comments.

My name is _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Clip and mail to:
CITY SCENE COMMENTS
P.O. Box 217
Webster City, IA 50595

For all valid comments, signatures are required.

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Ph: 515-832-9151

Quarterly Newsletter for the City of Webster City

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