

Council Bluffs Mayor



Mayor Matt Walsh, Council Bluffs city mayor, spoke at the Treynor Optimist Club on May 3. He is the first new mayor in Council Bluffs in 25 years. He ran for mayor based on his administrative skills, looking for ways to save money in the city.

Matt has a busy schedule. In his first three months in office, Matt said he had 10-12 people coming in his office each day. That has slowed some. One memorable experience is that he visited a couple in the Amelia House who

have been married 79 years.

The city is working on a new recreation center for basketball, volleyball, and soccer. It is a public/private partnership and will cost \$50M. It will include a hotel, workout facility, and arena, with six soccer fields next to the facility.

Cesars' management has been able to reduce losses at the Mid America Center.

About \$150M has been spent on the Interstate over the past four years. That much will be spent each year for the next few years. There will be a four way interchange to Broadway. The state currently maintains Broadway, which has no storm sewers. Council Bluffs proposed taking over from the river to 16th street, if the state helps with needed infrastructure upgrades.

Loess Fest will return again this week with three weeks of free entertainment, starting Memorial Day.

Mayor Walsh said one of his biggest challenges is property taxes, especially the commercial tax rate. Pottawattamie County raised taxes 19% this year, 8% last year, and about 4% the year before. It is difficult to attract new businesses when taxes are going up that fast.

Many department heads are retiring in Council Bluffs. The Fire Chief already retired. The Human Resources, Police Chief, and finance director will also all leave this year.