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Press Release

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CITY OF KEWAUNEE PROVIDES UPDATE ON MARQUETTE SCHOOL

The City of Kewaunee needs your help. The City is in the process of obtaining and demolishing the old Marquette School building, and while we have received grant funds and match funds to help offset the cost, we are still short of our goal. The City is exploring all options for funding and we need to hear from community members about their ideas to help raise matching funds.

The old Marquette School in Kewaunee has had multiple owners since its 1999 sale by the Kewaunee School District for \$12,000. The building's owners have removed many of the building's assets and allowed it to deteriorate, including a partial roof collapse, to the point of being structurally unsound, resulting in eventual catastrophic failure. Consequently, restoration is unfeasible and the building must be demolished. The estimated cost for demolishing the building is approximately \$750,000. The cost estimate could increase if any unforeseen contamination or circumstances occur.

On September 9, 2016, the City of Kewaunee was awarded a Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$500,000 which requires a 50% match. The City has been working with the federal Environmental Protection Agency who is currently working on the building this summer to remove friable asbestos. The EPA's work should be completed by August, 2017, and will provide an estimated \$125,000 of in-kind match. The City is also working with Kewaunee County and we are hopeful the County will also assist with reduced tipping fees, and forgiveness of owed back-taxes which could provide up to \$65,600 of in-kind match. Some of this amount would be returned when the property is sold. The City also has \$84,283 dedicated to this project in the current budget. Therefore, based upon the match requirement, the City needs to raise \$225,117. Or based upon the demolition estimate of \$750,000, minus the in-kind, the City needs to raise \$100,117.

Due to the CDBG grant, match from the EPA and possible match from Kewaunee County, the cost to demolish the old Marquette school will never be more financially viable. That is why the

City is moving forward with this project now, because the longer we wait, the more expensive it will be to raze this building in the future. We have a grant match opportunity currently in hand to attend to this building now. If we do not pursue razing the building now, costs can easily be doubled or tripled down the road.

City leaders are exploring all options for funding. The city is in the process of seeking additional partners who can provide in-kind and cash funds to meet the match requirement, but we need to hear from community members about their ideas to help raise matching funds. Sandi Christman, Mayor of the City of Kewaunee said *"Our community is facing the challenge of bringing down a crumbling vacant building safely before it collapses. If no buyer steps forward, the city will probably proceed with transfer of ownership and demolition. In the meantime, the city is in the process of seeking additional partners who can provide in-kind and cash funds to meet the match requirement."* There will be a public comment period at the July 24, 2017, City of Kewaunee Committee of the Whole meeting at 6:00 p.m. where we hope to hear your ideas on raising needed funds. If you are unable to attend, please contact your district alderperson to provide feedback.