

City Commission sets hearing on 13 unsafe properties

(KNZA)--The Hiawatha City Commission Monday evening approved a resolution setting a hearing for November 13 to consider the condemnation of 13 properties the city has deemed as unsafe and dangerous.

The owners will have an opportunity at the hearing to present evidence why the structures should not be condemned and ordered repaired or demolished.

The resolution was approved on a 4-1 vote. Commissioner Brian Shefferd cast the lone dissenting vote, voicing his concerns about the city's process for addressing derelict properties.

In other business, discussion was held again on property at 310 Hiawatha Avenue.

Hiawatha resident Michelle Martindale, representing the property owners, was present for the discussion. She argued there's been a lot of progress made on the property.

Mayor Becky Shamburg and other commissioners acknowledged the property has been cleaned up but voiced concerns about the safety the house itself.

Martindale said she has purchased siding and roofing materials for the house, but her current schedule has made repairs difficult to perform.

Commissioner Toni Hull said she would hate to see Martindale put any more money into a house that's only valued at \$2,550 by the county.

Martindale said she doesn't want to lose the house, saying its all her and her siblings have left from their deceased parents and it would leave three people homeless.

Commissioner Shefferd recommended having an outside third party licensed by the state inspect the house to determine if it should be demolish or not.

The Commission tabled further discussion for two weeks so Shefferd can check into what an inspection would cost.