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## Residents vote 32-31 to unincorporate city of Mount Union

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MOUNT UNION, Iowa (KWQC) – Residents of Mount Union voted last week to decide the future of their city. A close 32-31 vote was the deciding factor to unincorporate the town with a population fewer than 100 people.

“It has been a very hard thing for a lot of us, it wasn’t easy,” Robyn Buffington, a resident of Mount Union, said.

She says throughout the many years she has lived off and on in Mount Union, she has seen many changes, including the public school she attended closing down.

“It was very sad when we lost the school,” Buffington said.

Mayor John Marek says more than \$30,000 in city debts were a big part of the decision to unincorporate.

"Our debts are increasing 23 percent, while our incomes are decreasing by 7 percent," he said. "There's no way to overcome that, we have no other way to off set those losses."

He says now, though, auctions of city properties, like the community building and the ball field will help Mount Union pay those off.

"We'll still exist and hopefully we can turn things around as a community and move as a community as opposed to fighting over things such as city budgets and who's dog is attacking who's dog," Marek said.

Buffington says even though Mount Union will no longer be considered a city, this is not the end.

"We'll be a community and hopefully in years to come we can heal it's going to take a lot though, a lot of hard work for a lot of us," Buffington said.

She says several vacant houses and businesses show people have left town, but that's not going to be her story, even after the town officially disbands.

"I'm not going anywhere, no not at all, I'm here until I die," Buffington said.

Before Mount Union officially unincorporates, Marek says the state has to approve the city's request. He expects that will happen in March.

Marek says people in town will be able to keep receiving services like road work, responsibilities will just be transferred to the county.

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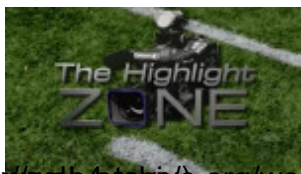
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