

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA
FRIDAY, JANUARY 7, 2022 1:30 P.M.

(These are the minutes in their entirety. Archived minutes can be found at www.linncounty.org).

The Board met in session at the Linn County Jean Oxley Public Service Center.

Present: Chairperson Rogers, Vice Chairperson Zumbach and Supervisor Walker. Board members voting "AYE" unless otherwise noted.

Chairperson Rogers called the meeting to order.

Public Comment:

Paula Robinson, 1127 Linn Delaware Rd., Coggon, stated that she is one of the adjacent landowners of the proposed solar project near Coggon. She shared with the Board a Coggon cookbook from the 1982 Quasky Centennial that has come very near and dear to her heart. There is the Boy Scout chili recipe, her mother's cinnamon rolls and pie crusts. At the bottom of each page is a little cooking tip and also some lifelong thoughts to take into consideration. She asked the Board to keep in mind one of those thoughts on page 154 which says "Better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and regret". She is not against solar but there is better use for the proposed land set aside for this proposed solar project.

Laura Robinson, 2094 Linn Delaware Rd. Coggon, stated that believe it or not the Robinson's are not against solar. However, she and their family are opposed to putting an industrial solar complex on prime farm ground. The soil is perhaps some of Linn County's most valuable natural resource.

Brent Oleson, Deputy Dir. of Public Policy & Community Relations, stated that there have been no changes since the last reading of the ordinance establishing voting precincts. He stated that he will send it along with other documents/maps to the Secretary of State.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Walker to approve upon third and final consideration of Linn County Public Ordinance #1-1-2022 establishing the various voting precincts in Linn County, Iowa and defining the boundaries and listing of the populations thereof pursuant to the Code of Iowa.

Discussion: Supervisor Zumbach stated that the consolidation of precincts in the rural area is due to ADA accommodations. VOTE: All Aye.

The Board discussed possibly delaying Board of Supervisor considerations of the Coggon Solar Rezoning.

Charlie Nichols, Planning & Development, stated that the solar applicant, Clenera, has requested that the public hearings be delayed for 2 -3 weeks to address concerns brought up by the Planning & Zoning Commission. The applicant, Tom Fitzgerald and Jared McKee, Clenera, are on the phone and Joi Alexander, Communications Dir., is also present to explain what is entailed if meetings are rescheduled and how it will be communicated.

Supervisor Walker stated that these dates have been public for some time and the Communications team has gone through great lengths to ensure that the general public is aware. There is great interest to the public and the Board is trying to be as transparent as possible. He also knows how tough it is for the three board members to be present. Unless there is something of catastrophic importance that is pressing, it seems that they should continue as planned with the schedule.

Chairperson Rogers stated that it would take some considerable efforts on a Friday afternoon to get the message out and received to change the date from Monday. His personal thought is that this has been a known date for some time and unless there is some technical reason that is substantial enough that warranted a delay, he favors leaving the meetings as scheduled. They have published for 1st consideration to take place on Monday. If Clenera is asking for additional time, he wants to inquire as to the nature of the request.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Walker to not delay the Board of Supervisor's consideration of the Coggon Solar Rezoning.

Discussion: Supervisor Zumbach stated that there is a lot of mental anguish and getting it started would limit some of that.

Supervisor Walker asked that the applicant explain their reasoning for the request for a delay.

Fitzgerald stated that they are largely inclined to agree with them about the public's interest in this project and the publicized nature of the current schedule. He stated that coming out of the Planning & Zoning meeting, they heard a lot of concerns that they are now trying to incorporate into the project. One of those crucial elements is to make sure that local labor is used on the project. They have been in negotiations with the local labor groups for several weeks and feel that this is a very crucial component of the project and the project's success. They want this in place before they appear before the Board on this matter. That is the nature of their request for additional time.

McKee stated that the motivation is to come before the Board with a project in the best form possible. If there is a way to still meet on Monday but acknowledge the fact that that they are working on labor agreements, they could be complete by the second reading.

Supervisor Walker stated that if it is the case that Clenera is interested in hammering out a tentative labor agreement that further incentivizes them to do that. There will be ample opportunities for amendments to be made at each hearing.

VOTE: All Aye

The Board reviewed the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 budget for Facilities. Present: Dawn Jindrich, Financial Dir., Sara Bearrows, Budget Dir., Tony Rossetti, Facilities Mgr. and Darrin Gage, Dir. of Policy & Admin.

Facilities - Proposed appropriation exceeds the Board's guidelines by \$16,500 due to the acquisition of the Homeless Overflow Shelter.

Tony Rossetti stated that he has done some history research and there are issues he would like to address moving forward. Everything is rock solid for this year, but he is looking at some areas such as several replacement vehicles (mostly snow related). Motion by Rogers, seconded by Walker to approve Facilities FY 2023 budget expenditures in the amount of \$3,024,056.

Board Buildings - Proposed appropriation exceeds the Board's guidelines by \$52,091 due to a 3% increase in utilities and \$16,480 for the new building recently acquired by the Overflow Shelter.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Walker to approve Board Buildings FY 2023 budget appropriations in the amount of \$1,196,263 and revenue in the amount of \$144,000. Darrin Gage presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 - 2027 Capital Improvement Plan. A lengthy discussion continued regarding the request for \$925,000 for new voting equipment. It was suggested that the request be removed from the CIP projects and be submitted for payment through the ARPA lost revenue money (which it qualifies for). Discussion also continued regarding the Secondary Road Shop Dist. 1 (\$500,000). With the removal of the voting equipment from the CIP fund, it will free up \$500,000 for FY 24 for the shop project.

Supervisor Walker also wanted to mention the complaints about the Board's AV ability in the formal boardroom and it seems to him that the world is quickly moving in a direction that they struggle with.

Gage stated that IT staff have gotten proposals and he heard that it will also be submitted as an ARPA application.

Motion by Zumbach, seconded by Walker to approve \$925,000 to be paid from the lost revenue ARPA funds for voting machines and approve \$500,000 in FY 24 CIP funds for the Dist. 1 Shop.

Gage will bring back a revised CIP plan for the Board's formal action.

Adjournment at 2:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JOEL D. MILLER, Linn County Auditor

By: Rebecca Shoop, Deputy Auditor

Approved by:

BEN ROGERS, Chairperson

Board of Supervisors