

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA
MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2023 10:00 A.M.

The Board met in session at the Linn County Jean Oxley Public Service Center.
Present: Chairperson Zumbach, Vice Chairperson Rogers and Supervisor Kirsten Running-Marquardt. Board members voting "AYE" unless otherwise noted.

Chairperson Zumbach called the meeting to order.

Motion by Zumbach, seconded by Rogers to approve minutes of January 18, 2023 as printed.

Stephanie Lientz, Planning & Development, presented the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Construction Evaluation Resolution relating to the construction of a confinement feeding operation structure. There have been no changes. The Board will approve on Wednesday.

Tamara Marcus, Sustainability Program Dir., presented the Host Site Memorandum of Understanding between Green Iowa Americorps and Linn County Sustainability for 2022-2023 program year. The Board will approve on Wednesday.

Sonia Evans, Finance & Budget, presented an amendment to the contract between Linn County and Benevate, Inc. for extension of Neighborly Software services for the Linn County Emergency Rental Assistance Program. This allows Linn County to hit the ground running should more money come in.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Running-Marquardt to authorize Chair to sign an amendment to the contract between Linn County and Benevate, Inc. for extension of Neighborly Software services for the Linn County Emergency Rental Assistance Program.

Public Comment:

Dustin Mazgaj of Walford stated that he is commenting on a 1st Amendment Auditor meeting and a FOIA request to the city of Marion. He gave a PowerPoint presentation on the matter which included a discrepancy in what the city of Marion charges and other governmental entities. He also received conflicting stories from them such as a down payment and paperwork. The Marion Police Dept. says one thing and then does something completely the opposite. Because of his FOIA request, there have been false accusations, bullying and intimidation tactics to not pay him the \$200 owed to him.

Supervisor Rogers stated that he appreciates the time that Mr. Mazgaj has spent attending board meetings and the time and attention to provide information to the Board. The Board values people coming in to help them be more accountable or improve their processes. While he does not know the facts, as for public comment, this strays away from what they do with Board business. It helps them, however, with FOIA processes. The county tries to give cost estimates and will print it off. He is not sure what Marion's processes are, but Linn County strives to make the process a better one. This is away from what the Board can do but brings up a good topic and examples.

Chairperson Zumbach pointed out that the Board does not have jurisdiction over Marion or any other Linn County municipality.

Mark Banowetz, 2188 Ivanhoe Rd., Ely, commented on what Auditor Miller mentioned last week about changing the status of deputies over to managers and then changing the pay. When a new Elected Official comes in, they have the pleasure to decide who they will have as deputies. Is it the Board's position to take that away? The new Elected Official might decide that they don't like what they saw happen in the past in Elections. Two years ago, ballots were sent out that should not have been sent out and in the 2022 Election, the race for County Supervisor (Kirsten and himself) was left off the ballot. The current Auditor wants to preserve these existing people to make sure they don't lose their jobs. If a person of integrity comes in, he's not sure they would want to keep the staff that messed up. The Auditor mentioned that it requires a simple resolution, but it goes beyond that. It's changing job titles to managers which gives different authority about how they are retained and the pay to consider. The Board also has to deal with all of the Elected Officials in Linn County that have deputies. Does that mean they will start changing all of them over? Banowetz compared it to spot zoning, resulting in a lack of consistency. He asked the Board to consider his comments. Since there were errors in the last election, he'd like to see if they make changes that they make the correct changes.

Bernard Hayes, Cedar Rapids, followed up on what Mr. Banowetz shared. He has submitted several emails and letters to the Secretary of State regarding his own Senate race in Cedar Rapids. His concern was with the ballot and how it was formatted, reviewed and edited. There were irregularities that concern him. Some of the folks that were involved in producing and making that ballot are the same folks that could be the focus in pay and job position. As he got feedback from the Secretary of State, they have referred these issues to their legal department. He asked the Board that before any decision is made, that they step back and let the dust settle and see how these things come out. Are they people of integrity or are there issues to be resolved.

Motion by Zumbach, seconded by Rogers to approve Employment Change Roster (payroll authorizations) retroactive to January 18, 2023 as follows:

AUDITOR'S OFFICE

Account Technician Barb Nemeth Step increase/contract 01/24/23 58B \$26.48 – 58C \$27.98

FACILITIES

Custodian Cody McIntosh Termination/resignation 02/03/23

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Income Mtc Worker Karen Merta Transfer from Family Transformation - internal applicant

54E \$22.70 – 57B \$24.48 Replaces N. Butler

Assistant Teacher Nicholas Stokes Step increase/contract 02/07/23 53B \$18.06 – 53C \$18.93

Account Technician Veronica Ridenour Step increase/contract 02/21/23 58B \$26.48 – 58C \$27.98

Ryan White Prog Options Couns Josephine Miller Step increase/contract 02/21/23 56B \$22.51 – 56C \$23.78

JUVENILE DETENTION

Tracker Darren Cook End of probation 02/03/23 56A \$21.42 – 56B \$22.51

Tracker Sara Miller End of probation 02/17/23 56A \$21.42 – 56B \$22.51

Motion by Zumbach, seconded by Rogers to approve Employment Change Roster (payroll authorizations) as follows:

TREASURER'S OFFICE

Universal Clerk Stephanie Cavalier Step increase/contract 01/25/23 56D \$25.06 – 56E \$26.42

PUBLIC HEALTH

Intern Hala Abu-Assaf Termination/completion of grant work 01/18/23

Intern Sri Akond Termination/completion of grant work 01/18/23

Intern Josephine Itakpe Termination/completion of grant work 01/18/23

Medical Asst. Nancy Reasland Termination/temporary position ended 01/18/23

Medical Asst. Robina Ulrich Termination/temporary position ended 01/18/23

Public Health Nurse Jill Asprey Termination/temporary position ended 01/18/23

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Running-Marquardt to approve claims for payroll deduction checks #71009774-#71009795 in the amt. of \$718,533.68, payroll deduction ACH in the amt. of \$58,334.87, and payroll wires in the amt. of \$1,985,663.44 for a total of \$2,762,531.99.

Legislative Update: Dawn Jindrich, Finance Dir., reported on proposed Senate Study Bill 1056. It is a change in the residential rollback (retroactive) from 56.4919 to 54.6501 which means Linn County will lose approximately \$1.7 million in tax revenue. That would require a levy rate increase of 15 cents. She is not sure they can do that. The other piece of the legislation is a change in the BPTC (Business Property Tax Credit). This would take the Auditor's Office awhile to calculate. If it moves forward as written, it would be quite devastating for Linn County (all counties and cities). School aide would have implications as well. Anyone the Board can talk to would be helpful.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Running-Marquardt, to enter into a closed session pursuant to Iowa Code Section 21.5(1)j to discuss the purchase or sale of real estate.

Rogers - Aye Zumbach - Aye Running-Marquardt - Aye

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Running-Marquardt to go out of closed session.

Rogers - Aye Zumbach - Aye Running-Marquardt - Aye

The Board recessed at 10:54 a.m. and reconvened at 1:33 p.m. to review and discuss proposed Fiscal Year 2024 budgets. Present: Dawn Jindrich, Finance Dir. and Sara Bearrows, Budget Dir.

Board Other - appropriations request is over the Board's guidelines by \$550,848 due to the following: increase in Regional Planning/ECICOG - \$2,384; increase in publications and notices - \$500; increase in Board Proceedings and Streaming - \$11,000; Decrease in Photocopying - \$(500); increase in Employee Recognition - \$3,000; Increase in Fiscal Agent Fees (bonds) - \$1,000; Increase in RACOM contract - \$377,690 and Increase in EMA allocation - \$155,774.

Sara Bearrows presented the budget which includes discretionary funding.

Dawn Jindrich stated that a breakeven budget will require an 11-cent levy increase. She presented levy history for the previous fiscal year and gave examples of how this would affect property taxes on \$150,000 and \$200,000 houses.

Discussion continued regarding the proposed legislative change that will result in a large reduction of property tax revenue.

Joel Miller, Auditor, shared the impact that the legislative change will have on his office noting that his sources feel it will pass. He highlighted the various steps that would need to take place before a new valuation could be submitted.

Discussion continued regarding salaries for all county employees. Jindrich stated that she will bring the Board a list of departments that will need health insurance corrections.

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Adjournment at 2:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JOEL D. MILLER, Linn County Auditor
By: Rebecca Shoop, Deputy Auditor
and Amanda Hoy, Executive Assistant

Approved by:

LOUIS J. ZUMBACH, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors