

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA
MONDAY, MAY 17, 2021 11:00 A.M.

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

Chairperson Walker called the meeting to order.

Public Comment: Russell Hotchkiss, 7070 Alexis Ln., Marion, spoke with regard to the mask mandate. He asked the Board to redact or at least make it optional. He has done his research and his son had no medical issues until he was mandated to wear a mask. He is better when he takes the mask off. He will not be vaccinated due to their religious beliefs. The Board needs to drop their mask mandate or at least make it optional as do the schools. "My body my choice" goes along with his offspring.

Lt. Mike Kasper presented a Communications Systems Maintenance Agreement between Linn County and RACOM. Legal has reviewed and there is no budget impact. The Board will approve on Wednesday.

Pramod Dwivedi, Public Health Dir., presented information and statistics related to Mental Health and asked the Board to authorize Linn County to be a registered Make It OK Workplace. He stressed that Mental illness is a massive Public Health issue.

Motion by Walker, seconded by Rogers to authorize Linn County to be a registered Make It OK Workplace.

Discussion: Chairperson Walker noted that there is a stigma regarding mental illness and particularly in persons of color. He also shared information about his family and his personal experience regarding mental illness.

Supervisor Rogers has also shared his story regarding his own journey with brain health and his sobriety journey. The statistics that Dr. Dwivedi has provided is very real.

VOTE: All Aye.

Mike Tertinger, Planning & Development, presented a Temporary Use Permit from Bill & Donna Warhover, owners of Morning Glory Farm, requesting permission to hold seasonal outdoor food truck events at the Morning Glory Farm & CSA operation located at 681 Hwy 1 South, Mount Vernon, Iowa. He explained COVID mitigation strategies that are planned.

Donna Warhover stated that they had a temporary use permit in 2019 and hosted a handful of events using their food truck. The Board will approve on Wednesday.

Lisa Powell, HR Dir., presented the Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield and Delta Dental Insurance FY22 Renewal effective July 1, 2021. The increase is below trend (single digit). There has been one change to the Delta Dental Plan.

John Hatch, Gallagher, explained that after review, he recommends maintaining the current stop loss level. The Board will approve Wednesday.

Powell also presented the Madison National Life Short Term Disability Insurance Proposal. This additional benefit would help new employees that have not accumulated sick leave or a long term employee that has exhausted their sick leave and has an event. This is a stopgap insurance that would cost \$190,000 plus administrative costs to be paid from the health and dental fund.

Powell presented and explained the Promotions and Transfers Policy and Layoffs and Furloughs Policy effective July 1, 2021 (previously discussed at Elected Official/Dept. Head monthly meeting). The Board will approve on Wednesday.

The Board discussed lifting the mask mandate for Linn County.

Pramod Dwivedi explained that this discussion came about after the changes last week to CDC guidelines (those fully vaccinated relax the wearing of a mask) and his department's research over the last few days. Their recommendation supports updating Linn County's mask mandate to reflect current scientific evidence that fully vaccinated not be required to wear a mask.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Zumbach to lift mask mandate in Linn County and put parameters in place.

Discussion: Chairperson Walker stated that there was no notice given to Public Health regarding the recommendation from the CDC and he stated that it is his opinion that the new guidance has been loosely interpreted and he has concern about lifting the mask mandate fully.

Tricia Kitzmann, Public Health, explained vaccination numbers in Linn County and explained in detail what the actual CDC guidelines mean.

A lengthy discussion continued regarding the fact that there is no way to determine who has been vaccinated and who has not and not wanting to back slide on the progress that has been made.

Supervisor Rogers clarified that other communities have relaxed their mask mandates and Linn County's mask mandate does not affect cities, it is only for the unincorporated areas of Linn County. Supervisors Walker and Rogers indicated that they are willing to look at an amended version of a mask mandate.

Lisa Epp, Asst. County Atty., stated that procedurally, the Board of Health will need to make the amendment (with proper notices) and the Board of Supervisors in turn will adopt a new resolution approving the new Board of Health regulation.

Supervisors Walker and Rogers indicated that they are not in support of doing away with the mask mandate but would signal to the Board of Health that they could get to a place with a mask mandate that closely aligns with CDC guidelines and the city of Cedar Rapids.

Leslie Wright, Board of Health board member, stated that this is a challenging conversation for all of them and that the action of the Board of Supervisors will be taken seriously by all people who live in Linn County.

Supervisor Zumbach stated that he lives in rural Linn County and he would like to see the mask mandate removed and leave it up to people to make that decision.

Discussion continued regarding voting on the motion to lift the mask mandate.

Darrin Gage, Dir. of Policy & Admin., suggested that rather than voting on the motion, that the person who made the motion make another motion to rescind it.

Motion by Walker, seconded by Rogers to rescind motion to lift mask mandate.

Discussion: Supervisor Zumbach stated that it's time to align with the State. It is confusing for those who travel to Linn County and the mask mandate is for the unincorporated area. It includes no towns and the vast majority of people are responsible for themselves and can take care of themselves. He would like to end the mask mandate.

VOTE: Walker & Rogers - Aye Zumbach - Nay

The Board discussed necessary measures and timeline for reopening Linn County buildings to the public. A date in July has been discussed.

Gage stated that the Board Support Team could meet tomorrow and discuss an earlier date.

Recorder McCalmant stated that she is required to give a 30-day notice for passports to be issued by her office as well as staff needing to be recertified.

Treasurer Gonzalez stated that she has new staff to train and she would like at least two weeks notice or wait until after the Memorial Day Holiday.

After lengthy discussion, it was determined that Linn County cannot create two classes of employees - those that are vaccinated and those that are not. The Board indicated that they will need to be clear on expectations of employees for mask wearing. Elected Officials and Department Heads can determine when employees that have not returned to work can do so. Lobby enforcement can be provided by a security company (federally funded).

In conclusion, the Board indicated that their intent is to move up the date from July and to stress the importance of communicating to the public what expectations are when the buildings reopen. The passport portion of the Recorder's responsibilities cannot be fulfilled without a 30-day notice and staff recertification. Security will be present.

Public Comment: Frank Sherman, 4170 Canton Court Marion, asked for clarification on the mask mandate and the cities of Marion and Hiawatha. He will put his questions in an email to the Board or Public Health.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Zumbach to approve claims for payroll deduction checks #71002365-#71002387 in the amt. of \$347,925.95, payroll deduction ACH in the amt. of \$52,133.74; and payroll wires in the amt. of \$1,982,164.58.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Zumbach to approve Employment Change Roster (payroll authorizations).

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Deputy Sheriff	Renee Sheely	Termination/resignation 05/28/21
Correctional Center Nurse	Renee Henderson	Termination/resignation 05/13/21

FINANCE & BUDGET

Senior Accountant	Mary Wiese	Step increase/contract 06/01/21 40B \$32.89 - 40C \$34.64
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