

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA
TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024 9:00 A.M.

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

Chairperson Running-Marquardt called the meeting to order.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Zumbach to approve minutes of March 11, 2024 as presented.

The Board received updates from the following Department Heads:

Garret Reddish, Asst. County Eng. – 2024 project plans are designed and ready for bid; Linn County and the City of Cedar Rapids applied for an IDOT grant for guardrail replacement on Ellis Rd. along the river and was approved; plan to apply for two other grants in the next month; the good winter weather has allowed Secondary Roads to get an early start on some ditch work and larger tree removal projects.

Dawn Jindrich, Finance Dir. and Sara Bearrows, Budget Dir. – A budget amendment will be needed due to staff benefit changes; April 5 is due date for department budget amendment submissions; March 27 is next FY 25 budget meeting at 9:00 and April 17 is final budget meeting. The Elected Officials salary resolution will be presented on April 17; and Grant Writing Workshop was held for county staff members (low attendance).

Darrin Gage, Dir. of Policy & Admin. – Budget on target; working internally to review job descriptions within his department; small working group that is looking at the Vicious Animal Ordinance; reviewing policies; capital projects (audio/video at Public Service Center & Harris Bldg.); Courthouse space needs study (plans have been reviewed); Fillmore Building sale (Abbe is working through processes); working on plans for 16 additional isolation cells at Jail; Secondary Roads is in the process of moving from the old Morgan Creek Shop to the new shop (taking proposals for sale); Secondary Roads Main Shop project will go out for bid in July/August; there has been no significant action taken on Linn County legislative priorities; will start interviews for Sustainability Dir. on April 4; and the water system equipment at the Courthouse could use an upgrade.

The Board recessed at 9:25 a.m. and reconvened at 9:30 a.m.

The Board canvassed the votes for the March 5, 2024 Special Election: Marion Independent School District Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL); Linn-Mar Community School District Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL); and Hiawatha City Council - to fill vacancy. Results are on file at the Linn County Auditor's Office.

The Board recessed at 9:35 a.m. as they were waiting for an additional document for the canvass.

The Board reconvened at 9:40 a.m. to complete the canvass of votes.

Deputy Auditor Matt Warfield reported that Jill Weigel will fill the Hiawatha City Council vacancy and Linn Mar passed their PPEL by 74.84% and Marion passed their PPEL by 79.69%

Public Comment:

A member of the public stated that he will be exercising his right under the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution. He wanted to speak about two things. 1) The Linn County Courthouse, specifically Nick Maybanks and Monica Slaughter/Monica Miles. Previously there was conflict about a discovery, defendant Casey Van Nevele and a public employee by the name of Bonnie Waller. The conflict was that Casey didn't get his discovery the first time or even after 10 times. Judge Nicholas Scott finally told the County Attorney to do their job and they were forced to do their job. Now that Casey and Bonnie are gone, and a new person, Rik Green, took over it's the same situation. They are legally obligated to disclose evidence in a criminal case. Monica Slaughter and Nick Maybanks are the reason why conflicts are happening at the Linn County Attorney's Office. 2) Eric Gutschmidt received hundreds of thousands of dollars and different tax benefits from the Linn County Board of Supervisors. Prior to getting the money he was a convicted felon. Recently he has been charged with stealing thousands of dollars from the local Menards (it's all on camera). The problem is that when the taxpayers pay out money to the government and then the government decides to use it for this landlord, it shows that the taxpayer's dollars are not going to the intended purpose. This is something the Board should look into.

Bailey from Marion, stated that she is a Christian, Humanitarian and the Founder of a volunteer organization in Linn County. She is speaking because she brought concerns to the Marion Mayor, city council, Chief of Police, City Manager and other city officials who have completely ignored her and the issues. The Board may not have direct authority over the Marion Police Dept. but the Board does have authority over the County Attorney's Office who is enabling the Marion Police Dept.

She is also hopeful that the Board knows who can help create a positive change in her community. She has been a Marion resident for 20 years and raising 3 children in Marion. Over the past 2-3 years she has become appalled about some of the outrageous behavior by the Marion Police Dept. employees. They have become more and more aggressive; they tend to escalate violent behavior rather than de-escalating it. There is a serious lack of respect toward citizens. She would be happy to sit down with the Board and provide specifics. Not all scenarios are negative, but the negatives are rapidly outweighing the positives. She gave an example of how Marion takes intimidation to a new level by walking into the Marion Police Dept. with a brightly lit room with the welcome window being a mirror. The Marion window tint is symbolic of the current relationship of the Marion Police Dept. and its citizens. Many of those that are negatively affected were born and raised in Marion. They can and should prioritize customer service and de-escalation training for the communication team and officers in Marion. She asks that if the leaders in their community truly desire a healthy relationship that they start by removing the mirror window tint and start working with them to allow them to express their frustrations and come up with solutions. The actions of the Marion Police Dept. are becoming more and more like intimidation.

Adjournment at 9:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JOEL D. MILLER, Linn County Auditor
By: Rebecca Shoop, Deputy Auditor

APPROVED BY:

KIRSTEN RUNNING-MARQUARDT, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors