LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2025 10:00 A.M.

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

Chairperson Rogers called the meeting to order.

Public Comment: Kelly Merta, 4194 Quail Ridge Rd, Center Point, stated that she has some questions regarding today's agenda item (Update from Alliant Energy and NextEra). She asked about the status of the decommissioning bond and emergency management plan and transitioning from NextEra to IPL. She is also looking for some context on generation. When looking at the EIA data for Phase I, they were posted online starting in March but no generation for March, June, July or August. There is also no data available for November and December. It was her understanding that the generation is what drives property taxes now that they will both be online for the commercial operation and central assessment. There was no generation for four of the 10 months. How does that impact taxes for the following year?

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Meisheid to approve minutes of January 7 & 8, 2025 as presented.

Motion by Meisheid, seconded by Rogers to approve accounts payable checks dated1/13/25 #71016625 in the amt. of $23.00.

Charlie Nichols, Planning & Development Dir., stated that Alliant Energy has completed the purchase of Duane Arnold Solar Phases I and II. They have signed off and agreed to all the conditions that were imposed on Phases I & II at the time of approval. They also have an updated financial guarantee from Alliant Energy. The financial guarantee from NextEra for Phases I & II for decommissioning has been released and they have a new one from Alliant Energy. The Emergency Management Plan has also been transferred.

Justin Foss, Alliant Energy, provided an update on the recently purchased and partially completed Duane Arnold Solar I & II. While these are two individual distinct projects, because they are nestled, this is the largest solar project in the state. They continue to work on establishing vegetation and they expect to turn in a construction complete certificate to the County in late summer. It is currently online and generating revenue through generation tax payments and generating electricity for customers as well. This project meets all three critical factors (willing landowners, power grid and local leaders who are willing to partner with them). They need to continue to move forward a diverse mix of projects to continue to meet the needs of their customers. They will continue to update as they move forward the decommissioning plan and parental guarantee that are associated with the project (per the ordinance). He stressed the number of jobs that these projects generated. Now that they officially own the project, they are in the process of changing the name to Pleasant Creek Solar I & II. He responded to the three questions during Public Comment. 1) The County has a Parental Guarantee backed by their corporation. 2) Emergency Management Plan provides the needs for today and they are working to update that (waiting for final design drawings from surveyors). 3) He's not sure if they provide generation updates monthly but they are generating good electricity and report that.

Supervisor Rogers asked where power generation can be viewed and Foss will research and get back to them.

Kimberly Dickey, NextEra, stated that the Road Use Agreements have been released, however, there is a punch list of items with Secondary Roads that will be addressed as weather allows. The performance bonds for the Road Use Agreements remain in effect for 12 months post COD or until County Engineer signs off.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt stated that she appreciates the open communication with the Board and for today's presentation. She looks forward to their partnership as they continue to look at what they can do for renewable energy. While she is really excited about the renewable energy that's going to be created, she hopes that rates don't go up as high. She has constituents that have increasing energy bills and they are working really hard to reduce their usage any chance they can get. She asked that they keep that in the forefront of their minds for the people that are trying the best they can to pay their monthly utility bills and asked that they do what they can to keep the costs from increasing.

Nichols presented the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Construction Evaluation Resolution relating to the construction permit application of proposed confinement feeding operation structures. The Board will approve on Wednesday.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Running-Marquardt to approve Class E Retail Alcohol License for the Troy Store, Troy Mills, noting all conditions have been met.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Running-Marquardt to approve the Employment Change Roster (detail is available upon request).

The Board recessed at 10:20 a.m. and reconvened at 1:30 p.m. to review the following FY 26 budgets. Also present: Dawn Jindrich, Finance Dir., Sara Bearrows, Budget Dir., Sheriff Gardner, Col. Riniker, Darrin Gage, Dir. of Policy & Admin. and Joi Alexander, Communications Dir.

Sheriff – Appropriations of $33,268,824 and revenues of $6,327,644.

Jindrich stated that the proposed budget exceeds guidelines by $350,523 and revenues will increase by $627,000. The patrol cars are replaced regularly and are included in the budget. The FY 26 proposed budget includes 13 vehicles, one more than in prior years.

Col. Riniker presented the budget and explained in detail. After nearly a year without housing Federal inmates, they have a new IGA in place (effective 2/1/25) that has established the rate at $140/inmate/day. Key Performance Indicators was explained. One Offer was submitted: One additional Patrol Deputy.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt stated that she appreciated Deputy Anderson who demonstrated to her the condition of his radio. She also stated that they talk about all the great work that comes out of the Sheriff's Office, noting that they are leaders in the entire state and while under budget constraints, his department remains a priority. She also gave a shout out to those who work at the Jail, one of the toughest jobs at Linn County. She had an opportunity to tour the Jail and the level of professionalism and how people are treated as human beings is very honorable. She sincerely appreciates the entire department.

Discussion continued regarding body cameras.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Meisheid to preliminarily approve Sheriff's FY 26 appropriations in the amt. of $33,268,824 and revenues in the amt. of $6,327,644.

Board of Supervisors – Appropriations of $1,269,582.

Bearrows stated that the fiscal year 2026 Board of Supervisors General County Management budget meets guidelines. Staffing includes 8.23 FTE's.

Gage presented one Offer: Increase Capital Improvement Plan Funding from $1,200,000 to $1,500,000.

Alexander presented one Offer: Email Signature Software.

Chairperson Rogers stressed the importance of brand integrity and why it matters. He asked if in the case of no Offer pot, can the software be absorbed within the budget. Alexander responded that she is asking for $1,240.

Supervisor Meisheid stated that after being on the Board for 13 days, she also appreciates the importance of the brand and did some research on the topic.

Motion by Rogers, seconded by Running-Marquardt to preliminarily approve Board of Supervisors FY 26 appropriations in the amt. of $1,269,582.

Adjournment at 2:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

TODD E. TAYLOR, Linn County Auditor
By: Rebecca Shoop, Deputy Auditor

APPROVED BY:

BEN ROGERS, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors