

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2025 9:00 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.

The Board received updates from the following Department Heads:

Charlie Nichols, Planning and Development Dir. - Working on improving communication with homeowners acting as their own general contractors; budget on target; will be posting for a Zoning Intern; Building Official has partnered with Marion Building Official to shed light on building departments' role with the construction industries; Building Division is organizing and hosting training to building divisions from all across the state; clerical staff are creating videos to help customers navigate their online portal; Center Point Fringe Area Agreement has been signed; looking to update Comprehensive Plan which was adopted in 2013 (massive undertaking); openings on Planning & Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment; opportunity for technical assistance from NACO for housing solutions; Dows Farm Governing Plan updates are being proposed by the developer related to structure designs; and permit activity stats.

A lengthy discussion continued regarding Planning & Development's relationship and collaboration with the County Assessor regarding aerial images of properties in an effort to flag properties that are making improvements and perhaps without building permits. This is an effort for the Assessor to increase efficiency so that staff does not have to actually visit the property.

Supervisor Meisheid stated that AI and stuff in the sky makes things easier but does not mean it is right. Monitoring from above is a violation to an extent and not the best use of resources to check on people. She questions if they are overstepping a little bit and cautioned to tread lightly.

Britt Hutchins, Purchasing Dir.- fully staffed; continue to work with departments regarding green/sustainable products; postal piece statistics; purchases and the involvement of other departments and gave examples (Mobile Command Center); vehicle purchase for next year (departments give him a heads up for vehicles to keep an eye out for) and handing down used vehicles for other departments. Sheriff's office handles maintenance and they give their input on the condition of the vehicles; and bids he has been involved with. Hutchins thanked Rogers for his service to the county and his support shown to him and his office.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt commended Hutchins for his positive impacts with his involvement with the EMA project and the ripple effect on other counties. She also commended him on his work with vehicle assessment and keeping vehicles safe and reliable for employees. She gave an example of the Juvenile Detention Center's appreciation for new vehicles that were approved for FY 26.

Supervisor Meisheid also thanked Hutchins for his involvement with the Mobile Command Center noting that Linn County communities are excited to have it at their festivals.

Steve Estenson, Risk Management Dir. - reportable injury summary for 2024; barn at County Home Rd is demolished and gone; working out closing our building projects for FEMA; and COVID 19 disaster final closeout (\$550,000 reimbursement). He has a good indication that their remaining FEMA projects are still moving along.

Joi Alexander, Communications Dir. – Learning Inst. goals (boards and commissions); increase website accessibility compliance; brand policy-compliant email signatures (new software will be implemented); editorial calendar; 2025 communication strategy (Customer Centered Communication); 2024 communications recap; website traffic statistics; working on communication plan for mobile command center; Make It OK activities; dept of justice ruling on website accessibility for governments (ADA components); website trainings; MHAC awareness campaign; 2025 priorities; scheduled for website redesign this year; will be working with Treasurer with online appointments; events include State of County and Courthouse 100 year anniversary; crisis communication training; networking with communication colleagues in other jurisdictions; Contact Us Forms inquires; and brand management. Alexander thanked Rogers for his leadership and support of communication efforts.

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Chairperson Rogers announced that a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will be appointed at tomorrow's meeting.

Adjournment at 10:29 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

APPROVED BY:

BEN ROGERS, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors