

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2025 10:00 A.M.

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

Chairperson Meisheid called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment:

County Treasurer Brent Oleson stated that he met Ben Rogers on a debate stage in a public forum during their respective campaigns for County Supervisors in the fall of 2008 and they went on to become County Supervisors. Rogers can be trusted, leads by example and does the work. If he says he will do something, he will do it. He tells the truth, and he doesn't play games with people. He has treated the position as a fulltime job, which it is, always available to fellow staff and the public and truly cares about each Linn County team member. He cares about the image of Linn County and conducts himself professionally. He cares deeply for their organization's professional culture and champions many of their professional development programs. Rogers supports his department heads and works to get them what they need to be successful. He works to improve the morale of the entire organization and that's why he is well liked by department heads, managers and the entirety of the county team members. He's loyal, a loyal friend and very loyal to the county's organization. They have been through the county/city wars together, the legislature's attack on local control, other elected officials demonizing the county or the motives of the Board, many citizen activists that tried to impugn the integrity of Board members or the Board itself. Rogers never gave in and always stood up for his colleagues, always stood up for the Board as a whole and the relative importance of the county as an independent and a vital important player of community affairs. He is kind and he cares. That's a great attribute to have in one of a person's closest friends. He champions so much in the area of homelessness, mental health, developmentally disabled and anyone down and out in the community. He is leaving a lasting legacy, and they would not have a Mental Health Access Center without his work. He also took in his colleagues and others he worked with when they struggled with their mental health, their sobriety, lost someone close, or suffered through losing a marriage. He would be there as a leader and a colleague. Rogers is openminded and self-aware. He was never stuck in a hardline position where he wasn't flexible. He was open to change with new information. He took the council of trusted department heads with years of experience to shape how he acted as a leader of the organization. He sought to become a subject matter expert in so many things like mental health where he could better county services to people and utilize his position as Supervisor to advance the public interest rather than just claiming the title or the paycheck. He did his homework and was well read and met with people constantly to take in new information and perspectives. He gave himself room to adapt to changing circumstances. He was self-aware that he was part of a team, and it wasn't about him alone and everyone had an important role to play in their success. So few leaders possess the qualities of open-mindedness, self-awareness and a quest to be intellectually curious, so few friends as well. He thanked Rogers for always being honest and direct in his communications, always being transparent in dealings with others, always being a supportive colleague to fellow board members and department heads, always challenging them to be better, always protecting the county's interest and reputation in the community, always showing up and working hard on behalf of citizens, always looking to get to know people he worked with, always trying to improve the organization's culture and supportive of all, for always being there in good times and bad. Rogers could always be counted on and trusted in all things he did. Oleson wished him good fortune in his next venture.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt wished Becky Shoop a heartfelt and sincere Happy Birthday. She has been a dedicated public servant for the county for almost 50 years. She has given her life to service and the county wouldn't be where it is without her leadership and guidance.

Motion by Meisheid, seconded by Rogers to approve minutes of March 24, 2025 as printed.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Rogers to approve accounts payable checks dated 3/26/25 #71017329 to 71017376 in the amount of \$63,208.53; and ACH in the amount of \$418,302.78; for a total of \$481,511.31 and voided checks totaling \$1,700.00.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Rogers to approve payment to Brandy Meisheid in the amount of \$150.00.

VOTE: Running-Marquardt & Rogers – Aye

Meisheid - Abstain

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Meisheid to approve payment to Benjamin Rogers in the amount of \$135.00.

VOTE: Meisheid & Running-Marquardt – Aye Rogers - Abstain

Motion by Meisheid, seconded by Rogers to approve payment to Kirsten Running-Marquardt in the amount of \$135.00.

VOTE: Meisheid & Rogers – Aye Running-Marquardt - Abstain

Motion by Meisheid, seconded by Rogers to approve Consent Agenda as follows:

Resolution 2025-3-44

SET PUBLIC HEARING TO VACATE EXCESS RIGHT-OF-WAY

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors, Linn County, Iowa, is empowered under the authority of §306, Code of Iowa, to vacate all interest of Linn County, Iowa, in real property, and WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors, Linn County, Iowa, shall vacate the right-of-way described as:

LEGAL DESCRIPTION A portion of the NE 1/4 NW 1/4, Section 30, T. 85N., R. 07W. of the 5th P.M., Linn County, Iowa described as follows: The NW 475 feet of Cummings Ford Road located in said NE 1/4 NW 1/4. Said vacated area = 31,363 sf or 0.72 acres.and

IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors, Linn County, Iowa, this date met in lawful session that a public hearing shall be held for the purpose of determining whether Linn County, Iowa, will vacate all interest Linn County, Iowa, may have in the above-described parcel of right-of-way.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said hearing shall be held on Monday, April 7, 2025, at 10:00am, in the formal Board Room on the lower level of the Jean Oxley Linn County Public Service Center, 935 2nd St SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, for the above-stated purpose and that notice of the time and place of said public hearing shall be published in accordance with §331.305, Code of Iowa.

Resolution 2025-3-45

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors, hereafter referred to as “the Board”, believes the FM-C057(176)--55-57, hereafter referred to as “the project” is in the best interest of Linn County, Iowa, and the residents thereof. The project is defined as bridge replacement on North Center Point Road over East Branch Blue Creek; and WHEREAS, the Board has sought appropriate professional guidance for the concept and planning for the project and followed the steps as required by the Code of Iowa for notifications, hearings, and bidding/letting; and WHEREAS, The Board finds this resolution appropriate and necessary to protect, preserve, and improve the rights, privileges, property, peace, safety, health, welfare, comfort, and convenience of Linn County and its citizens, all as provided for in and permitted by section 331.301 of the Code of Iowa; and IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED by Board to accept the bid from Peterson Contractors Inc., in the amount of \$1,466,795 and awards the associated contract(s) to the same; BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all other resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed. If any part of this resolution is adjudged invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of the resolution or action of The Board as a whole or any part thereof not adjudged invalid or unconstitutional. This resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after the date of its approval as provided by law; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Linn County, Iowa, that after receiving the necessary contract documents, including but not limited to, the contractor’s bond and certificate of insurance, Bradley J. Ketels, Garret A. Reddish, or Curtis A. Logan, the County Engineer or Assistant County Engineer for Linn County, Iowa, be and is hereby designated, authorized, and empowered on behalf of the Board of Supervisors of said County to execute the contracts in connection with the afore awarded construction project let through the DOT for this county.

Resolution 2025-3-46

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors, hereafter referred to as “the Board”, believes the FM-C057(175)--55-57, hereafter referred to as “the project” is in the best interest of Linn County, Iowa, and the residents thereof. The project is defined as bridge replacement on Covington Road, over Morgan Creek; and WHEREAS, the Board has sought appropriate professional guidance for the concept and planning for the project and followed the steps as required by the Code of Iowa for notifications, hearings, and bidding/letting; and

WHEREAS, The Board finds this resolution appropriate and necessary to protect, preserve, and improve the rights, privileges, property, peace, safety, health, welfare, comfort, and convenience of Linn County and its citizens, all as provided for in and permitted by section 331.301 of the Code of Iowa; and

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED by Board to accept the bid from Jim Schroeder Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$1,279,755.15 and awards the associated contract(s) to the same;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all other resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed. If any part of this resolution is adjudged invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of the resolution or action of The Board as a whole or any part thereof not adjudged invalid or unconstitutional. This resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after the date of its approval as provided by law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Linn County, Iowa, that after receiving the necessary contract documents, including but not limited to, the contractor's bond and certificate of insurance, Bradley J. Ketels, Garret A. Reddish, or Curtis A. Logan, the County Engineer or Assistant County Engineer for Linn County, Iowa, be and is hereby designated, authorized, and empowered on behalf of the Board of Supervisors of said County to execute the contracts in connection with the afore awarded construction project let through the DOT for this county.

Resolution 2025-3-47

ESTABLISH ROAD CLOSURE AND DETOUR FOR PROJECT

WHEREAS: Linn County Project FM-C057(173)—55-57, bridge replacement project, on Matsell Park Road in Linn County will begin soon.

WHEREAS: A map of the detour is attached hereto.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: commencing at the intersection of Matsell Park Road and Stone City Road east 1.58 miles along Stone City Road until Dearborn Road, then continue north 0.61 miles on Stone City Road until Ridge Road, then continue northwest 1.72 miles on Ridge Road until the Linn County line where Ridge Road becomes Buffalo Ridge Road, then 1.27 miles northwest until Hart Road, then continue west 0.46 miles to the end of the detour at Matsell Park Road. (See attached map) Signs shall be placed when and as necessary to protect the work and the traveling public in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and Chapter 306 of the Code of Iowa.

Resolution 2025-3-48

ESTABLISH ROAD CLOSURE AND DETOUR FOR PROJECT

WHEREAS: Linn County Project FM-C057(176)—55-57, bridge replacement project, on North Center Point Road in Linn County will begin soon. WHEREAS: A map of the detour is attached hereto. NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: Commencing at the intersection of Spencers Grove Road and Grubbs Street, east 0.6 miles along Grubbs Street until Bettys Grove Road, then continue east 4.7 miles on Walker Road to Troy Mills Road, then continue south 6.0 miles along Troy Mills Road to Central City Road, then continue west 5.0 miles to Grubbs Street, then continue west along Grubbs Street the end of the detour at Franklin Street. (See attached map) Signs shall be placed when and as necessary to protect the work and the traveling public in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and Chapter 306 of the Code of Iowa.

Approve and authorize the Chair to sign a certificate of insurance for employee participation at the United Way Day of Caring on May 8, 2025.

Approve and authorize the Chair to sign a Linn County American Rescue Plan Act Grant Closeout Agreement between Linn County and the City of Hiawatha.

Approve and authorize the Chair to sign a Linn County American Rescue Plan Act Grant Closeout Agreement between Linn County and Northwest Neighbors Neighborhood Association.

Approve and authorize a contract amendment between Linn County Community Services and the State of Iowa Health and Human Services for HIV Client Services Program, adding \$3,630 to the contract for a total of \$1,050,492.00. Effective April 1, 2024, through March 30, 2025. Contract PUHEHSH24102.

Approve 5-Day Special Class C Retail Alcohol License for Lucky Wife Wine Slushies to be located at Culver's Greenhouse, 1682 Dubuque Road, Marion on May 10, 2025.

Approve a purchase order PO743 in the amount of \$7,947.60 to HP Inc. for two HP professional desktop computers for the Secondary Road Department.

Erin Foster, MHAC, gave a presentation of the Linn County Mental Health Access Center Withdrawal Management Program. This is specifically addressing mental and psychological care of residents experiencing withdrawals.

Supervisor Rogers thanked Foster and stated that their "baby" is four years old and was celebrated with a ribbon cutting on March 5th. He stated that it is hard to believe that this service did not exist four years ago

and he recognized all of the tremendous work she, community providers and stakeholders do on a daily basis. He added that law enforcement is also trying to keep people out of the hospital and that these kinds of services can have a generational impact the likes of which may not be fully measured or understood.

Foster stated that the Mental Health Access Center would not exist if it were not for Supervisor Rogers. He has advocated for them at Region meetings, including road trips to Dubuque for even harder Region meetings when they felt that they didn't have a voice. His impact and legacy of the Access Center is immeasurable to her and her staff knowing that Supervisor Rogers was on their side.

Charlie Nichols, Planning & Development Dir., presented one change since Monday's presentation regarding the proposed amendment to the Dows Farm Agri-Community Governing Plan which is to increase the maximum driveway width which has low impact.

Motion by Meisheid, seconded by Running-Marquardt to approve proposed amendments to the Governing Plan for Dows Farm Agri-Community and authorize the Chair to sign the following Resolution:

Resolution 2025-3-49

A Resolution Amending the Governing Plan for the Dows Farm Agri-Community
WHEREAS, in April 2017, Linn County acquired approximately 485 acres of land generally located north of Mt. Vernon Road and west of Highway 13. The acquisition consisted of a north 306-acre tract and a south 179-acre tract. Approximately 7.58 acres of the 179-acre tract was sold in 2023, leaving approximately 171 acres of project area. AND WHEREAS, because of the strategic location of the north 306-acre tract adjacent to existing park and recreation facilities, this was the County's priority for acquisition with an intended long-term use for conservation and related uses. AND WHEREAS, the south 171 acres, bordered by Mt. Vernon Road on the south, Dows Road on the west, and the Squaw Creek Ridge residential development on the northeast, was included with the purchase and is the project area for the Dows Farm Agri-Community. AND WHEREAS, the guiding principles for development of the 171-acre Dows Farm Agri-Community are rooted in the Linn County Comprehensive Plan: A Smarter Course – Building on the Past, Embracing the Future of Rural Linn County. AND WHEREAS, the vision for the Dows Farm Agri-Community is one of walkable neighborhoods with healthy and diverse lifestyle choices for multiple generations. The Dows Farm Agri-Community will create a unique living, educational and economic experience and will be developed in a sustainable way that efficiently uses land, energy, and water in order to reduce waste and pollution, and to conserve natural resources. AND WHEREAS, the Dows Farm Agri-Community keeps 75% of the site in conservation open space or agriculture, with only 25% of the site allocated to development of a mix of housing types and a carefully integrated commercial area. AND WHEREAS, a Master Plan for the development of the Dows Farm Agri-Community illustrates the vision for the Dows Farm Agri-Community. The Master Plan identifies the Conservation Area, the Farm, and the Development Area including neighborhoods. The Master Plan illustrates residential types and densities, streets, green infrastructure, public spaces, and the small, carefully integrated commercial area. AND WHEREAS, a Governing Plan for Dows Farm Agri-Community providing detailed development criteria including but not limited to: identifying planning parcels, streets, utility corridors, stormwater management strategies, public spaces, land uses and densities was approved by Resolution by the Linn County Board of Supervisors on August 20, 2020. AND WHEREAS, certain amendments to the Governing Plan were recommended for approval by the Linn County Planning & Zoning Commission on November 18, 2024, and approved by Resolution by the Linn County Board of Supervisors on December 4, 2024, including: increasing overall dwelling units from 251 to 295, removing references to the Dows Farm Design Review Board, removing access through the farm to Dows Road, adding in a future fire access to Dows Road, changing the name "Squaw Creek" to "Wanatee Creek" except when reference is to recorded subdivision, and altering requirements related to the farm operation. AND WHEREAS, the developer (Dows Farm Agri-Community LLC) has proposed certain amendments to the Governing Plan, including: defining Minor Changes, clarifying farm expectations, decreasing roof pitch requirements, expanding siding options, clarifying maximum structure width requirements, changing minimum roof overhang requirements, clarifying enclosed storage requirements, increasing maximum building depth allowed for Lake Street Apartments (parcel 1C), providing alternative paths to meet minimum patio requirements, clarifying that individual patios are required where space allows, increasing maximum garage width from 22' to 24', increasing maximum garage widths to 20', adding a 55+ community option to parcel 8, clarifying tree planting requirements on space-constrained lots, clarifying light fixture requirements, and providing guidance on how the Public Art Fund will be created and structured. AND WHEREAS, at its regular meeting on March 17, 2025, the Linn County Planning & Zoning Commission recommended approval of the amendments to the Governing Plan. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Linn County Board of Supervisors approves the amendments to the Governing Plan for Dows Farm Agri-Community.
R/M Discuss and decide on proposed amendments to the Water and Land Legacy Bond Public Review Board Rules and Operating Procedures.

Public Comment:

Chairperson Meisheid stated that she has known Ben Rogers in the capacity of a Supervisor for 90 days or less. She remembers when he first told her he was leaving, she was sad because they had forged a relationship that they were surprised by. He told her that they could have moved mountains, and they were both surprised by that. She stated that when she came into the position, she didn't know what relationships would happen. She knew there would be disagreements but also knew that through that disagreement, greater outcomes happen working together. During their short time working together they have learned that. It's more than obvious that his legacy will be the Mental Health Access Center and she's happy for him and all the work that has come to be for that. She thanked him for everything that he's done during his 16 years of service.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt stated that Ben Rogers has absolutely dedicated himself to the service of others and she knows that he has so much more to come. He can hang his hat on what he has done for the people of Linn County. She has sincerely appreciated what she has learned from him and gave examples of challenges that they worked through (cutting \$1.7 million from the budget, then the next year cutting \$1.2 million). She stated that she appreciates his leadership and that she's able to trust that they made decisions that really honor the culture and the community of Linn County and its people. They made the best choices moving forward for the county. When speaking about his life's dedication and service, it's for the most vulnerable people of Linn County, mental health services, homeless overflow shelter and the developmentally disabled. She has counted on him for his leadership and so have the people of Linn County and all have greatly benefited from that. His living legacy will not only be his family that is attending the meeting today, but from his choices, his votes and the hard work he put in for the last 16 yrs. at Linn County. She thanked him for his service and leadership, and she knows for sure that Linn County is absolutely a better place because of what he has done. She sincerely thanked him for all of that.

Supervisor Rogers stated that today is his last meeting and his seat is officially vacated April 1st. The word that best captures his emotions is gratitude. He's had the privilege of serving in the roll for 16 years and it has been a responsibility that has been both an honor and an incredible opportunity. The residents of Linn County entrusted him with the responsibility of being one of their voices in decision making during some of the most challenging times. This includes guiding the community through the recovery of two floods, COVID pandemic and the 2020 Derecho. This also included discussions on disparities and racial justice and health equity, as well as approving major utility scale solar projects and allocating \$44 million of ARPA funds. He has also worked to address significant challenges in regional and state mental health systems, the growing issues of homelessness and gaps in societal safety nets, the state's ongoing erosion of local home rule, and the diminishing trust in local officials exacerbated by the turmoil in national politics. Politics feels like it has become a zero-sum game where often it feels that there are only two choices with no space for the middle ground. Not this Board. He is proud that while this is a partisan board, they have consistently strived to find common ground through thoughtful and deliberate compromise. Some of their best decisions were born from such compromise. Despite those challenges, he has had the privilege of leading and contributing to life affirming and soul fulfilling projects such as the establishment of the Mental Health Access Center and the creation of the Winter Weather Shelter for the homeless and the development of world class facilities like the Percy and Lileah Harris Public Health and Child Youth Development Center. In 2011 he was one of 10 elected officials selected to go to Pakistan as part of a citizen led delegation effort to improve relations. Another opportunity was the honor and privilege of meeting the President of the United States, lobbying the Corp of Engineers in DC for federal funding towards flood protection systems, collaborating with municipal partners on quality of life initiatives and making this region the best place to live, work, raise a family and build a sense of community. He spoke about the meaning of the tattoo on his right arm, "I'm not as I once was". In 2019, shortly after the passing of his father and on the 5th anniversary of becoming sober from alcohol, he wrote a guest editorial about his journey with substance abuse disorder and mental illness to help reduce the stigma related to mental health. It was important for him to use his position to highlight that it was a normal part of the human experience. He is so proud of Linn County and work they do to support the human condition and because of that, he is not as he once was. While the work of public service may seem straightforward, it's weight, especially at the local level, is not fully understood. Public service requires sacrifices that are hard to put into words. It's not just about tough decisions and the constant balancing of priorities, it's the personal commitment serving others and the emotional and mental energy required to lead, listen and be fully present for the community. This does take a toll. Although the sacrifices often go unseen, they are deeply felt and there is a unique bond that forms when committed to something greater than oneself,

especially when surrounded by others who share that same commitment. In moments of challenge and change when the stakes are the highest in the true spirit of service emerges and in those moments the support of his colleagues on the Board and Linn County staff has been invaluable. Among the many staff members, and fellow Board members that have consistently supported him, he wanted to give a few deserved special recognitions. He named those that especially played a pivotal roll in his life both professionally and personally. To the staff that he has humbly worked alongside, he noted that they have left an indelible mark on his life and for that, he is better because of them. First, Linda Langston who encouraged him to run for office in 2008 when the Board expanded to five Supervisors. She helped him discover his leadership voice. To his brainstem and nerve center, Darrin Gage, Sara Bearrows and Dawn Jindrich. Their advice and council made all the difference and their professional, expertise and skillsets are without equal. To Joi, Britt, Mary, Karen, Jessie, Cara and Sonia, quiet yet steady presence is their gift. He recognized the late John Harris, the patron saint of gentle grace and calm waters. He also recognized Stacey Walker, grandson to Shirley Martin, son to Tracey Walker, brother to Ben Rogers. To Brent Oleson, his loyal best friend, and continued to speak about Oleson and his family and what that has meant to him. In closing, he recognized his mother, Marcia and his father, Dan, his wife Andrea, children Penelope and Kieran and expressed his love and devotion. He will now look on from the outside with pride and comfort knowing that the county is in capable hands and he wishes them continued success and happiness. He expressed his most heartfelt gratitude.

Adjournment at 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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

APPROVED BY:

BRANDY Z. MEISHEID, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors