

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2026 10:00 A.M.

(These are the minutes in their entirety. Archived minutes can be found at www.linncountyiowa.gov)

The Board met in session at the Linn County Jean Oxley Public Service Center. Present:

Chairperson Running-Marquardt, Vice Chairperson Scheetz and Supervisor Meisheid. Board members voting "AYE" unless otherwise noted.

Chairperson Running-Marquardt called the meeting to order.

Public Comment: Bruce Lindholm, 316 Forest Dr. SE, CR, stated that he is the Chair of the IEEE Power and Energy Society. They want to see the approval of the power plant. It is a step along the way, and they need the power otherwise they will be importing power from data centers and consumers will be hit hard.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to approve minutes of December 22 & 23, 2025 as printed.

Motion by Scheetz, seconded by Meisheid to approve claims dated 01/02/26 for payroll deduction Check Nos. 71020010 to 71020012 in the amount of \$500.00, ACH in the amount of \$24,399.24, an EFT wire in the amount of \$30,283.79 and a Ceridian ER Funds Trust Wire in the amount of \$2,309,811.45, for a total of \$2,364,994.48.

Alicia Presto and Meagan Prestegard, ECICOG, presented a letter of support for the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) to participate in a US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields grant application as a non-lead coalition member. This allows them to apply for up to \$1.5 million that covers the entire 6 county ECICOG region with no grant requirement. The funds provided would be for phase 1 and 2 assessments throughout the region. They are hoping for the Board's support again this year.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt stated that she appreciates the work ECICOG is doing. This could bring a lot of funding into the area for the Brownfields cleanup.

The Board will approve Wednesday.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to open a public hearing on a request to rezone approximately 393 acres located at 3277 DAEC Road, Palo, Iowa, from Agricultural (AG) to Exclusive Use-Two, Nuclear Energy Generating Facility and Nuclear Waste Storage (EU-2).

Charlie Nichols, Planning & Development Dir., presented proof of publication. There were no oral or written objections. A PowerPoint was presented that highlighted the background of the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC) previous operation period and recommissioning; staff summary of the exclusive use-2 rezoning standards of approval staff summary; additional considerations; Host Community Agreement (HCA) proposed terms; Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); additional considerations and the conditions of the staff report. The county required an impact analysis to be submitted with NextEra's application. A DAEC restart in 2029 for a 25-year run is projected to funnel millions of dollars into the Cedar Rapids Community School District, Kirkwood Community College, local fire departments and Linn County along with other financial impacts for counties that host sites like DAEC. An agreement has been established on an annual operating payment that would provide \$1.9 million to the county each year that the commercial operation is running. The payments would provide long-term financial protection for the county and the taxpayers, as well as fund the county's emergency response, public safety and regulatory oversight. The construction period of the project is projected to bring an economic impact of about \$213 million, while about \$127 million is expected post construction.

Discussion continued regarding tightening up the language on the MOU to make it more clear regarding reimbursements being made to Linn County and not EMA. Also, adding an amendment for a road use agreement.

Garrett Goldfinger, Senior Dir. of Nuclear Power Development representing NextEra, gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting their application to seek approval to rezone 393 acres from agricultural to exclusive use 2 noting that rezoning is a critical step in the overall recommissioning of the nuclear plant. NextEra is still working through a number of state, federal and local permit processes, so this is one step of many that they will work through as part of the permitting scope. NextEra will continue work on permit procurement, preparing the site to restart, management and construction through mid-2028. At that time, NextEra will request permission from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to place nuclear fuel into DAEC's reactors and conduct reliability testing. They plan to transition into commercial operations in late 2028 or early 2029.

Supervisor Scheetz stated that he would like to clarify for the public that NextEra will not be seeking a rate increase as a result of the restart and Goldfinger confirmed that is correct.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt thanked Goldfinger for his presentation noting that they have been a good partner and that is another one of the reasons they've had so much support, not only from the Board, but from the community. They are putting the safety and people of Linn County first. By having both an HCA, which is a voluntarily negotiated, legally binding contract between a private business and a local government, and a mixed land use agreement in place, it shows that NextEra will pay for its fair share of operating expenses and that the expenses won't fall on the backs of Linn County taxpayers.

Sue Biederman, 1509 Matterhorn Dr. NE, CR, asked how much nuclear waste will be generated per month or per year at the facility. She also asked where the waste would be placed and if there would be ongoing monitoring for everything.

Charlie McClintock, 227 Donald Dr., Alburnett, shared his appreciation for all 3 of the Supervisors. He is a Senator for District 46 and also chairs the technology committee in the Iowa Senate. He is speaking in support of the application for the DAEC, a project that has statewide and local importance. Rezoning the DAEC would provide a significant economic development opportunity for Iowa. Over its operating life, the project is expected to generate more than \$9 billion in economic activity statewide reinforcing Linn County. Linn County's role as in innovation hub and strengthening Iowa's leadership in advanced energy production. The workforce impact is substantial and long-lasting, producing hundreds of construction jobs

as well as high quality permanent jobs for the local base. Countless Linn County residents have made careers and ultimately retired from DAEC during its first 4 decades of operations. These are skilled positions that will support families and will strengthen the local and regional workforce and provide durable economic growth for Linn County. He noted that he knows a lot of people over the years who worked at DAEC and they were career jobs and not just jobs. He knows that everyone in the room probably knows people that worked at Duane Arnold and although the plant closed, if they talk to people that worked there, and have reentered the workforce such as security people who went into law enforcement. A lot of those people stayed in this area and their job skills helped them to move into the local workforce and economy. DAEC is highly engrained in people out there and he's excited to see them restart the plant. From a statewide economic standpoint, the DAEC restart supports Iowa's ability to compete for major private investment supplying reliable carbon free power to large employers like Google. It strengthens Iowa's reputation as a place where Iowa's companies can invest with confidence while delivering long term economic benefits, jobs and tax revenue for Linn County and communities across the corridor. McClintock lives here too and has been in Linn County most of his life. He has worked with the power plant in the past through the decommissioning and has a high comfort for nuclear energy. He lives north of Linn County and was within the circle of the EPZ as were many other folks. There is a high comfort level with the power plant and their high level of professionalism in dealing with nuclear energy. He respectfully encourages the Linn County Board of Supervisors to approve the rezoning application for Duane Arnold.

Al Schafbuch, 509 Sherman St., Dysart, stated that he farms in Benton County. He is a citizen that lives in the community and was very proud when they had a nuclear plant in Palo before. It was clean and reliable energy, and he was disappointed when it closed. He is here because he found out there was a chance they could bring it back. He is in support of getting this reliable energy back online. It is low cost, non-interruptible energy that they need. He also stated that with co-ops being a part of it so the energy will stay in Iowa rather than being sent out over the grid. He is supportive of this rezoning project.

Barbra Solberg, 2075 Vista Cir. NW, CR, stated that she is here on behalf of the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance. The Economic Alliance is a nonprofit organization that serves the businesses and people of the Cedar Rapids region. Their mission is to help grow the regional economy and support projects like the DAEC restart that advance that goal. They have had the opportunity to express their support for the DAEC restart in front of this Board and others, and she is here today to reiterate that support and respectfully ask for the Board's support as they consider the rezoning application. This step is a critical part of the restart process, and they appreciate the sincere care and thoughtfulness they are bringing to it. They continue to hear at the meetings and throughout the community that the DAEC provided hundreds of high quality, good paying jobs for decades. Looking ahead, the restart is expected to create nearly 1,600 construction jobs and approximately 400 permanent jobs over its planned 25-year operational life. It's encouraging to hear former employees who have spoken in support of the restart at recent public meetings. Their enthusiasm for the opportunity to see DAEC provide careers for the next generation speaks volumes for what this facility has meant and can continue to mean for Linn County. The economic impact is significant as they have heard. The restart is expected to generate more than \$9 billion in economic impact statewide with \$8 billion of that investment occurring locally. As the Economic Alliance continues to work to strengthen their region, opportunities like the DAEC restart are exactly the kind of projects they look to support. They are respectfully requesting the Board's support as well.

Bill Gerhard, 5134 Rapid Creek Rd. NE, Iowa City, stated that for over 50 years he's worked in the construction industry in Iowa and for 14 of those years he was President of the Iowa State Building and Construction Trades Council. He now works for the affiliate of the Labors union, and they are in support of the rezoning project for DAEC. 1,600 construction jobs and 400 permanent jobs are all good jobs with good fringe benefits and they think this is great. They have sat in a lot of meetings talking about solar and wind and now they are talking about restarting an atomic power plant that was well liked for the 50 years it was running. He hopes the Board supports the rezoning.

John Zakrasek, 531 Lawndale Dr. SE, CR, thanked Charlie Nichols and staff and the Board for doing an outstanding job on creating a really good nuclear ordinance and working to get that into effect. He appreciates that Linn County has really thought through the process and all the things they can do to make this the best project it can be for all of the residents. He worked at the nuclear plant from 1993 to 2005 and was responsible for all of the IT personnel, so he has a lot of familiarity with all aspects of the plant. He was very impressed with all of the redundancy that was built across the plant to make sure if there ever was a failure there was another approach to take care of that so it wouldn't cause a problem. Zakrasek is very much supportive of this project as he has been around the people that worked there, and there are lots of really great people who had good well-paying jobs. The electricity demand is really going up right now and to think about refurbishing and reusing that massive infrastructure to produce over 600 megawatts of power 24 hours a day is fabulous to him. With respect to nuclear waste, people do get concerned about it but there is now technology that will allow that waste to be reprocessed and reused and more energy extracted from that. That isn't here yet, but it is evolving. He encourages the Supervisors along with staff to work with other nuclear plants to push the Department of Energy to actually implement laws that are on the books for them to handle all of the nuclear waste and either reuse it or get it off site. That is something good for them to do over the next several years and it will take some time because no one wants that waste in their backyard. He fully supports this project and thanked them for the fine work they have done.

Steve Dodson, Mayor of Hiawatha, stated that the City of Hiawatha supports the restart of the DAEC and the rezoning application before them today. Restarting DAEC will support a skilled workforce in eastern Iowa providing several hundred jobs and economic activity that benefits the entire corridor. It's a long-term investment that helps their region grow responsibly. Students in Hiawatha attend schools within the Cedar Rapids Community School District and increase tax revenue from the DAEC will help support the schools, along with infrastructure, public safety and essential local services across the region. Hiawatha is also encouraged by NextEra's investment in their community, including the conversion of a former call center into a training facility, demonstrating a strong commitment to local workforce development. For

these reasons, he respectfully urges approval of the rezoning application so this important project can move forward for the benefit of the entire corridor.

Eric Rosenthal, 3935 Nancy Jane Ln. NE, CR, stated that giving a worldwide perspective there are almost 1,000 nuclear power facilities in the world and the US has almost a quarter of them. In the last year, the total amount of investment moving into artificial intelligence production and offshoots of products is estimated at between 1 and 2 trillion dollars. Their investments are for power. The economic impact of this project on the location here before any of the off discussed projects such as the casino or other bonded building projects. The present value analysis of this project will exceed \$5 billion dollars for those in Linn County. He encouraged the Board to thoughtfully and carefully proceed with this project.

Scott Flory, Atkins City Administrator, stated that he won't repeat all of the economic benefits previously cited. The company has been very forthright in their dealings with them in many informational meetings throughout this process and they've appreciated that. The city of Atkins does support the rezoning application and encourages the Board to support it as well.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to close public hearing.

Garrett Goldfinger, NextEra, spoke regarding the questions asked during the public hearing about nuclear waste. The nuclear waste is stored and managed on site at roughly half of what was produced.

Technologies are emerging to reduce the volume. There is an enhanced focus on spent fuel that is regulated by the federal government. They are looking at the consolidation of spent fuel and exploring more reprocessing technology.

Supervisor Scheetz stated that he is in support of the rezoning application today. He cannot stress how important the HCA agreement is for the community. The county will not be paying the price for someone to come in and profit off of Linn County. They are being responsible taking the time to ensure that residents are not footing the bill for massive profits. NextEra will pay their full tax bill and that is incredibly important. This investment is close to \$8-9 billion in the community. There will be 400 permanent jobs and close to 1,600 construction jobs. The community is accustomed to nuclear power generation. He feels very comfortable with the overall support they've received for this project and is excited to see the plant come back online. Linn County ratepayers will not pay increased rates. Scheetz is incredibly proud of their team meeting and negotiating.

Supervisor Meisheid stated that she will place on file a letter of support from Center Point. She extended her deepest thank you to the county team for putting forth an agreement that protects Linn County taxpayers in the best way possible. Her statement is towards the application but also the HCA. One thing she appreciates about their ordinance is that they did the best they could do within their jurisdiction. There are still things that are regulated by the NRC that are beyond their control. They have the ability to protect and set boundaries and regulations on everything that they could in their Linn County jurisdiction. In terms of waste, she agrees that there are things need to be done and there are things that could come down the road with technology and it's something they are very aware of. Meisheid went to DC this past spring and lobbied on behalf of Linn County making sure their partners at the federal level are aware that the long-term storage of nuclear waste is a concern of theirs. They are supportive of economic development. She quoted what Nichols stated earlier "NextEra is invested in the long-term success of their community". She feels that is shown through their HCA and is proud of their partnership with NextEra. Signing the HCA reflects Linn County's commitment to putting residents and public safety first while ensuring taxpayer dollars are not used to subsidize private businesses. She believes the agreement also reinforces the level of partnership and accountability that they expect from any large entity seeking to locate in Linn County and to use Linn County resources beyond just NextEra. Meisheid is also proud that they have this shared vision for what they think it means to be a partner in Linn County.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt echoed the appreciation other Board members shared for the county staff that worked through this process. This is an important first step for them. This ordinance and then the HCA and the MOU with the primary goal being to put Linn County residents first, their quality of life and what kind of county they want to have moving forward in the future as it's really important for the local workforce and the economy. This ordinance gives them a seat at the table and to ensure they are being treated fairly. They are no longer going to subsidize a trillion-dollar company in Linn County. They look forward to continuing the good partnership as they move forward. For these reasons, she is supportive of this application and first consideration.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to amend First Consideration of a request to rezone approximately 393 acres located at 3277 DAEC Road, Palo, Iowa, from Agricultural (AG) to Exclusive Use-Two, Nuclear Energy Generating Facility and Nuclear Waste Storage (EU-2) to add a condition that NextEra is required to enter into a road use agreement with the city of Palo before new building permits can be applied for, separate from the road use agreement with Linn County.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to approve First Consideration of a request to rezone approximately 393 acres located at 3277 DAEC Road, Palo, Iowa, from Agricultural (AG) to Exclusive Use-Two, Nuclear Energy Generating Facility and Nuclear Waste Storage (EU-2) as amended.

Nichols presented a Memorandum of Understanding between Linn County Emergency Management Agency and NextEra Energy Duane Arnold, LLC regarding reimbursement of pre-operational emergency management costs associated with the potential restart of the Duane Arnold Energy Center and a Host Community Agreement between Linn County and NextEra Energy Duane Arnold, LLC establishing annual host community payments and responsibilities associated with the potential restart of the Duane Arnold Energy Center. The MOU will provide an annual operating payment of \$1.9 million to the county each year that the commercial operation is running. It will also automatically sunset once the HCA takes effect, transitioning from cost reimbursement to long-term operational funding.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt stated that it is very important that the MOU is approved as part of the ordinance. She is looking forward to this being an example for others.

Supervisor Meisheid echoed Running-Marquardt's comments noting that it reinforces the level they expect. She is thankful for NextEra working with them.

Supervisor Scheetz added that he is also in support of the MOU.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to approve payroll authorizations (detail is available upon request).

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to appoint Steve Dodson to the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) Board of Directors for a three-year term expiring December 31, 2028.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to reappoint Ted Doscher to the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) Region 10 Regional Trails Advisory Committee for a two-year term expiring December 31, 2027.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to reappoint Carter Baldwin to the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) Region 10 Transportation Technical Advisory Committee for a three-year term expiring December 31, 2028.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to reappoint Carter Baldwin to the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) Region 10 Passenger Transportation Advisory Committee for a two-year term expiring December 31, 2027.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to reappoint Kristina Kremer to the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) Revolving Loan Fund Committee for a one-year term expiring December 31, 2026.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to appoint Darrin Gage as an alternate representative on the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG) Board of Directors until he no longer meets the qualifications for appointment or until a successor is appointed.

Adjournment at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

TODD E. TAYLOR, Linn County Auditor

By: Amanda Brown, Deputy Auditor

APPROVED BY:

KIRSTEN RUNNING-MARQUARDT, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors