

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2026 10:00 A.M.

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 and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: Tony Daugherty, Air Quality Scientist at Public Health, stated that he's speaking in regard to the gas fired power plant ordinance, specifically about comments made during the first consideration. He was not prepared to make an accurate statement since he wasn't aware of Supervisor Running-Marquardt referencing the 2.25-mile setback that was based on the radius of impact. Daugherty and his manager met with the Board in August to explain the significant impact area based on EPA levels. He explained the process of those impacts and air quality standards including the micrograms per cubic liter. There are multiple factors that have an impact on any results including surrounding terrain, discharge style, flow rate, temperature, pollutant emission rate, building downwash, etc. During their meeting, they let the Board know that they could not conduct their own analysis due to too many variables. The scope of the project has changed including entirely different equipment than what was initially proposed so the radius of impact data is meaningless. Air permits in the county and state of Iowa cannot be issued without a facility demonstrating certain things. He read Linn County's air quality ordinance. They cannot fault Alliant. Public Health does not support a 2.25-mile setback requirement and respectfully request that the ordinance only move forward if they eliminate the 2.25-mile setback requirement or any setback.

John Zakrasek, 531 Lawndale Dr, SE, Cedar Rapids, stated that these large gas fired power plants can consume as much as three times the amount of water as a 100-megawatt data center. He feels that the water study would be appropriate for gas fired power plants as well. This would be another facility consuming massive amounts of water. He thinks a water agreement should be done for this too. Battery energy system storage is going down 27%. Solar, wind and batteries are a solution when using a gas fired power plant. What if there is an increase in gas rates as they grow and what if there is a disruption to the gas. Fuel costs double and that comes straight through to their bill. There is no fuel with solar, wind and battery. Zakrasek recommends an energy study be included in the ordinance just like the water study. He suggests they take a comprehensive look at the cost of energy and gas in their community. Would it be more effective to go solar, battery and wind and is it a better deal for the county. The Board has information to decide what is best for their community. This would align what is done with the legislature and no fuel or water impact would be great for their community. He appreciates all the work they do for the community.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt stated that she appreciates Public Health attending the meeting today and being a part of the conversation. She acknowledged that they understand they do not have authority on air quality or monitoring as that is part of Public Health. She does not feel that the Board looking at them as the radius of impact was provided by an Engineer working on a project jeopardizes or puts anything at risk that Public Health is doing. She is looking at the 2.25-mile radius of impact information and looking at the economic and community impacts that a natural gas power plant would make and that's part of it. She understands the job that Public Health and IDNR have here and their authority. The Board has authority when it comes to community and economic considerations and explained examples. She wanted to address to Public Health that she did not make that correlation in the numbers for air quality monitoring. She wanted to correct that falsehood.

Motion by Scheetz, seconded by Meisheid to approve accounts payable checks dated 03/11/26 #71020713 to #71020754 in the amount of \$154,751.74; and ACH in the amount of \$468,674.11; for a total of \$623,425.85 and voids totaling \$375.00.

Motion by Scheetz, seconded by Running-Marquardt to approve segregated claim for Brandy Meisheid in the amount of \$230.00 (travel reimbursement).

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

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to approve Consent Agenda as follows:

Receive and place on file the Sheriff's Quarterly Report from October 1, through December 31, 2025, a total quarterly amount of \$1,597,700.

Approve purchase order PO872 to CDW GOVT in the amount of \$276,030.72 for three-year IT maintenance for the IT Department.

Approve and authorize the Chair to sign the Mental Health Access Center Provider Agreement between Abbe Community Mental Health and Linn County. The term is effective from the date signed through June 30, 2026.

Approve and authorize the Chair to sign the Independent United States Department of Justice (USDOJ) Certified PREA Auditor Agreement between KDM Consults, S-Corporation, and Linn County Juvenile Detention Center. The auditor's fee and travel expenses are \$3,700 and not to exceed \$800 in additional expenses.

Approve and authorize the Chair to sign an amendment to the Agreement to Provide Juvenile Detention Services between Johnson County and Linn County for four units of service per day at \$304.65 additional units are on an availability basis. The term is effective April 1, through June 30, 2026.

Karen Heiderscheit, Asst. Finance Dir., presented a Resolution Approving an Appropriations Transfer within the Linn County Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Budget from Conservation to Sustainability in the amount of \$27,000. Sustainability was awarded a grant, and this transfer allows them to start the project.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to adopt Resolution 2026-3-38
A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN APPROPRIATIONS TRANSFER WITHIN THE LINN COUNTY FISCAL YEAR 2026 ANNUAL BUDGET
WHEREAS, the Linn County Board of Supervisors previously approved the Linn County Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Budget; and,
WHEREAS, it has been determined that it is necessary to transfer appropriations within the County Environment and Education area of said budget; and,
WHEREAS, sufficient appropriations are available to provide for the necessary transfer; and,
WHEREAS, said transfer is within the County Environment and Education service area, and is made by resolution of the Board of Supervisors in accordance with Iowa Code Section 331.434(6).
NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED by the Linn County Board of Supervisors that appropriations within the Linn County Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Budget are revised as follows:

Organization	Transfer
15 Sustainability	\$27,000
46 Conservation	(\$27,000)

Charlie Nichols, Planning & Development Dir., discussed Second Consideration of an ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Linn County, Iowa, by amending provisions in Chapter 107, pertaining to gas-fired electric generating facilities, and to provide for their siting within the EU-2 Exclusive Use-Two zoning district. The following were discussed at the first reading: Population Center Setback reduction; Waste Management Plan requirement; Host Community Agreement additions (suggested by Linn County's Attorney's) and Minimum Setback waiver (received an email Monday from Alliant suggesting this).

Supervisor Running-Marquardt shared her thoughts regarding the 1,000 ft. setback to dwellings and place of public assembly noting that they are here to protect the affected entities. Alliant brought up the change at the last minute, not the public. She doesn't believe that it impacts what Alliant is looking at and doesn't stop the project. Protections are put in place for the residents and a mechanism for financial situations. Alliant could be a good neighbor by supporting the ordinance because it has a 2.25-mile setback for economic and community considerations. She will not be supporting the waiver as it is not something the community is demanding of them and doesn't stop Alliant from giving funds to areas of public assembly.

Supervisor Meisheid stated that she is in favor of the HCA language but is on the fence about the minimum setback waiver. They have accomplished a lot through large setbacks, and it allows property owners some rights and it doesn't give Alliant the right to take that from them.

Supervisor Scheetz added that there is a reason to allow the property owner and adjacent property owners to reduce setbacks as one property owner allowing a setback could affect a neighboring property owner who might not agree.

Discussion continued regarding providing an equal opportunity for the public and Alliant to comment during the second consideration (and future considerations) since Alliant did not speak during the beginning public comment period today.

Nichols stated that his recommendation is to not advance the amendment. The amendment can be considered at the third consideration next Wednesday and a fourth consideration can be added to tie everything together.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt acknowledged her appreciation for all the work everyone has done on this. She is supportive because of all the protections that are in place. Running-Marquardt did attend the Fairfax City Council meeting last night and although they may not go as far as Fairfax may like, she appreciates their thoughtful deliberation.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to amend Second Consideration of an ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Linn County, Iowa, by amending provisions in Chapter 107, pertaining to gas-fired electric generating facilities, and to provide for their siting within the EU-2 Exclusive Use-Two zoning district to adopt the staff language (as written) for the Host Community Agreement.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to approve Second Consideration, as amended, of an ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Linn County, Iowa, by amending provisions in Chapter 107, pertaining to gas-fired electric generating facilities, and to provide for their siting within the EU-2 Exclusive Use-Two zoning district.

Scott Mather, City of Cedar Rapids, presented a request from the City of Cedar Rapids to enter into a Joint City/County Agreement to include property owned by Linn County within two miles of Cedar Rapids corporate limits in the Edgewood Pointe Urban Renewal Area. He explained that the City intends to establish Edgewood Pointe Urban Renewal Area at a public hearing on March 24, 2026. The joint agreement allows the City to use Urban Renewal authority outside city limits but within 2 miles of those limits. The City requests Urban Renewal authority to complete infrastructure improvements to advance economic development. Those future improvements are to 42nd Street adjacent to development property and half of the width of 42nd Street is outside city limits.

Supervisor Scheetz thanked Mather for presenting and questioned what portion is in the county.

Supervisor Running-Marquardt added that she looks forward to being better partners moving forward including other conversations that can be had about financials and partnering with cities.

Public Comment: Ben Rogers, Senior Community & Public Affairs Spec. for Alliant, stated that he wanted to take this opportunity to level set. The two amendments were not made public until today's meeting, so Alliant had no knowledge of the Host Community Agreement definition or that the public has sufficient notice that the waiver was going to be on today's meeting. Alliant did ask for the waiver on Monday as a result of an informal conversation with Charlie Nichols. This is a request coming from a property owner to waive their rights and allows for and keeps the 2.25-mile restriction in place. They did not get confirmation that it would be on today's agenda, but he was there to speak and couldn't speak at public comment since they weren't aware there would be two new amendments. Rogers read Nichols' email response to Alliant regarding the waiver. Rogers added that having been on that side of the dais, Darrin Gage is a great resource for any questions on ordinance readings and who can and can't speak and when during a board meeting.

Jay Hopkins, resident of Linn County, stated that it's not as simple as just talking to Charlie Nichols, he pushed this in there without any notice to the public. He wouldn't be able to do that on a Monday night and that puts the Board under some pressure and carries weight that Nichols is behind this. Hopkins is questioning how that process can occur. How does Alliant have this insider track to Nichols and then he brings it to the Board. He is fully supportive of the Board and how they said the process works. The public wasn't notified about that and the Alliant proposed site has a direct impact on Benton County. Hopkins isn't sure what Linn County's position is when it comes to working with other counties. Linn County would hate it if another county put something on Linn County's line and said there was nothing they could do about it. Linn County and Benton County are both affected by these things and last minute. It's odd that Alliant can communicate with Nichols informally and then it's brought to a formal resolution within a matter of 36 hours. Hopkins agrees with their decision not to address that today and to potentially have a fourth reading. These changes need additional consideration.

Darrin Gage, Dir. of Policy & Admin., presented action related to proposed legislation. Supervisor Scheetz brought SF472 to Gage's attention, which deals with the recertifications of bargaining units.

Supervisors Scheetz and Running-Marquardt explained why they would like to declare against this bill. It makes it harder for public sector workers in Iowa and it's another way to erode local control. There should be rights to join the union and have their voices heard.

Supervisor Meisheid stated that she is in favor of this bill as it protects employee voting rights and allows employees the right to do that and choose representation. It also ensures that laws passed should be followed.

Motion by Running-Marquardt, seconded by Scheetz to declare against SF472.

VOTE: Running-Marquardt & Scheetz – Aye Meisheid - Nay

Adjournment at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

TODD E. TAYLOR, Linn County Auditor
By: Amanda Brown, Deputy Auditor

Approved by:

KIRSTEN RUNNING-MARQUARDT, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors