

Muscatine County Board of Supervisors
Monday, March 21, 2022

The Muscatine County Board of Supervisors met in regular session at 9:00 A.M. with Sauer, Holliday, Mather, Saucedo and Sorensen present. Chairperson Sauer presiding.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Mather, the agenda was approved as presented. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Saucedo, claims dated March 21, 2022 were approved in the amount of \$502,605.07. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Saucedo, the Board approved the following utility permits: Liberty Communications, West Liberty, Iowa – bury fiber on 100th Street, Dean Avenue, Atwood Avenue, Birkett Avenue and Bancroft Avenue; Lumen, West Des Moines, Iowa – bore 680’ and place two new peds at 1777 Vail Avenue, L-(CUL22)—73-70. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Mather, the Board set a letting date for April 25, 2022 at 9:00 A.M. for L-(GO-3)--73-70 a triple 12’x 8’x48’ RCB on Holly Avenue and for L-(WI-4)--73-70 – a triple 10’x6’x48’ RCB on 150th Street. Ayes: All.

County Engineer Keith White updated the Board on secondary road projects.

White reviewed an email from Iowa Department of Transportation regarding the SWAP program which is to be terminated for counties by January 1, 2023 and the program is projected to continue for cities.

On a motion by Saucedo, second by Sorensen, minutes of the March 14, 2022 regular meeting were approved as written. Ayes: All.

Correspondence:

All Supervisors received two emails from residents regarding the road and bridge conditions on 245th Street, Conesville, Iowa.

Saucedo received an email regarding the geothermal system and testing the system.

Saucedo received an email from City of Muscatine regarding a housing study and requests for proposals starting in July 1, 2022.

Saucedo received a call regarding trash and debris on Pettibone Avenue, Muscatine, Iowa. Saucedo referred the call to Planning and Zoning Administrator Eric Furnas.

Committee & Meeting Reports:

Holliday attended the Muscatine County Fair Board meeting on March 17, 2022. Holliday stated the Eastern Iowa Farm Equipment Auction will be held at the fairgrounds on March 26, 2022.

Sauer attended the River Bend Transit Board of Directors meeting on March 16, 2022.

Mather attended the Muscatine County Veteran Affairs Commission meeting on March 15, 2022.

Sorensen attended the Eastern Iowa Mental Health Region special budget meeting on March 14, 2022.

Sorensen attended the State Mental Health and Disability Services Board meeting on March 17, 2022.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Saucedo, the Board appointed Wayne Shoultz to fill a vacancy on the Muscatine County Historic Preservation Commission for a term ending January 1, 2023. Sorensen thanked Shoultz for his willingness to serve on the commission.

Sorensen reviewed a letter that was prepared for Iowa State Auditor Rob Sand stating the displeasure and disjointed process with the FY20/21 audit services. On a motion by Holliday, second by Saucedo, the Board authorized the Chair to sign the letter to the State Auditor's Office. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Saucedo, second by Mather, the Board approved an updated class specification and process/timeline for replacing the retiring County Engineer. Ayes: All.

Saucedo requested an update on the small business sprinkler system regulations. Planning and Zoning Administrator Eric Furnas stated there is pending state legislation that may change regulations so no further discussion or decisions have been made regarding the county regulations.

Danny Chick Jr., 2411 Mittman Road, Muscatine, Iowa addressed the Board with concerns about the Muscatine County Assessment Notice parcel owners recently received with increased home values of 10-25%, which he stated will increase property taxes. Chick stated the Board establishes the budget and a property tax increase is a concern, especially for retirees on a fixed income. Sauer stated that concerns with increased assessments should be directed to the County Assessor's Office to better understand the increase in home values across the county. Mather stated the FY22/23 County Budget has an overall \$1.5 million reduction over the previous year. Mather stated the total tax levy for FY22/23 County Budget is the lowest it has been since 2018. Sorensen stated that all residents should review their tax statements to better understand the levies from various taxing authorities that are included on their tax statements issued by the County.

Chick also addressed the Board on the Iowa Code residency requirement that only requires an elected Supervisor to live in their district at the time of taking the oath. Chick stated he believes this is unethical for candidates to not live in the district they will represent until they are elected.

Chuck Houseman, 2470 Edgewater Road, Conesville, Iowa addressed the Board regarding the road conditions on Edgewater Road and 245th Street, Conesville, Iowa. Houseman stated the owner of 2470 Edgewater Road is Sharon Phillips and they have lived there together for 30 years and currently the only year-round residents on Edgewater Road but there are other parcel owners that intend to become full-time residents when they retire. Houseman stated the 245th Street has not been maintained nor has snow removal, ditch cleaning and weed removal from edge of road been done regularly by the county in several years. Houseman stated his concern is that Board discussion has included to reclassify 245th Street to a Class B road. Houseman stated the county was contacted by a group of deer hunters in November or December 2021 and the county graded

245th Street but due to a poor grading job it exacerbated several bad areas on the road. Houseman stated he contacted the County Engineers Office after the road was graded and a different operator graded the road to try to correct the problem areas however the road has no ditches so there is no drainage.

Matt Storm, 507 Burlington Street, Conesville, Iowa addressed the Board regarding the road conditions on 245th Street and Edgewater Road, Conesville, Iowa. Storm stated the concerns he has with the area has been covered by Chuck Houseman and the emails he has sent to the Board. In discussion with the Board, the Board stated all options are being considered and agreed the bridge on 245th Street is a concern because it currently has a low weight limit that will not accommodate a grader or equipment hauling rock, due to deterioration. The Board estimated the cost to replace the bridge is estimated at \$1.2 million.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Eric Furnas reminded the Board that the parcels on Edgewater Road, Conesville, Iowa are all zoned as A-1 Agricultural. Furnas stated there are only two ways for new construction or to establish full-time residency in and agricultural zone; a farm exemption (which would not apply in this area since there is no activity generating agricultural income) or a special use permit. Furnas stated the Board of Adjustment would review any request for a special use permit but it is highly unlikely one would be issued due to the land being located in a floodplain.

White stated the County Engineer's department has not requested additional tax dollars in the past several years. White stated additional tax dollars in the county budget do not go toward the secondary road maintenance. White stated the department funds are from federal tax dollars, road use tax, local option tax, property tax and occasional grants.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 A.M.

ATTEST:

Tibe Vander Linden
County Auditor

Scott Sauer, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors