

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA  
MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020 10:45 A.M.

The Board met in session at the Linn County Jean Oxley Public Service Center.  
Present: Vice Chairperson Oleson and Supervisor Walker. Absent: Chairperson Rogers  
(personal business). Board members voting "AYE" unless otherwise noted.

Vice Chairperson Oleson called the meeting to order.

Motion by Walker, seconded by Oleson to approve minutes of Mar. 9 and 11, 2020 as printed.

Pramod Dwivedi, Public Health Dir., presented an update on COVID-19 as follows:

- 224 statewide tested.
- 19 cases have tested positive in Iowa and no deaths.
- 7 Iowa counties with one or more confirmed cases.
- Hospitals say there is some delay in getting results back from the State Hygienic Lab.
- They are working 24/7 and are on top of the situation.
- Right now, there are no cases in Linn County.
- Evidence of community spread has been detected in Iowa.
- They are focused on preventing spread and mitigation.
- Everyone can do their part with prevention strategies.
- Gov. Reynolds recommends that schools close for four weeks.
- Starting a joint information center so that messages be the same.
- Persons 60 yrs. and older and anyone with underlying health conditions should avoid gatherings of 50 or more and reconsider travel. Social distancing is recommended at 6 ft.

Supervisor Walker stated that they keep saying that there are no confirmed cases in Linn County, which is true, however, hospital staff are letting them know that there are folks in the community carrying the virus and it is likely that it is being transmitted. He questioned how many tests are available and Dwivedi responded that there are 850 and shipments are coming.

Steve Estenson, Continuity of Operations Officer, stated that from an organization standpoint, they are starting with discussions of when this will start affecting Linn County operations. They are also discussing paid leave for employees and it is good for departments to start looking at their essential and non-essential functions.

Darrin Gage, Dir. of Policy & Admin., stated that he is drafting a request to Governor Reynolds to extend the property taxes deadline. Gov. Reynolds has also issued a proclamation for a Disaster Emergency.

Supervisor Walker also asked that these weekly updates be live streamed.

Lisa Powell, HR Director, stated that she and other management representatives met with members of their largest union, AFSCME, regarding any deviations of the contract for sick leave use. They have drafted a Memorandum of Understanding for the use of sick leave during the COVID-19 response:

Employees will not be required to use their accrued sick leave, or other accrued paid leave, but will remain on paid status, for up to fourteen (14) calendar days (or until released to return to work) if the following criteria is met:

- If an employee tests positive for the coronavirus and must therefore stay home per their doctor's and/or Iowa Department of Public Health's orders.
- If an employee is quarantined per their doctor's, Iowa Department of Public Health and/or the Center for Disease Control orders.
- If an employee has been exposed to someone who has the virus and needs to be tested.
- If an employee is needed to care for a family member who has the virus or has been in contact with someone who has the virus.
- If an employee has traveled to an area that is on a restricted travel list (domestic or international) in effect on the planned date of return.

Employees will be required to use their accrued sick leave for other circumstances connected to the virus outbreak such as:

- An employee showing potential virus symptoms or and who has consulted with a health care provider and submits proof of such consultation.
- An employee who chooses to self-isolate due to an underlying health condition or age and submits a recommendation for the self-isolation from a health care provider.
- An employee who needs to stay home to care for a family member due to the closing of a school or child/adult daycare. An employee choosing this option may be subject to callback in order to maintain minimum staffing levels at 24/7 operations and county-designated essential services.

An employee using his/her sick leave under the second category will be allowed to borrow against future sick leave accruals for up to 80 hours (2 weeks) for a full-time employee once their current sick leave balance is exhausted. In addition, if the absence is due to caring for a family member, an employee may exceed the contractual limitation on use of family sick leave for the period of this MOU. The definition of family will follow contractual provisions. Before an employee will be allowed to return to work, a release from their healthcare provider will be required.

All requests for the first and second categories of leave use must come through the Human Resources Department. In the first category, HR staff will verify the request either through the employee providing documentation of medical condition or quarantine or through consultation with the Public Health Department. In the second category, requests for leave use will also be submitted to the Human Resources Department who will review the request, verify the health care provider documentation, communicate with the department supervisor and coordinate the tracking process for any negative sick leave balance usages.

Representatives of AFSCME, Local #231 and Linn County agree to temporarily waive the contractual provisions regarding use of family sick leave and the normal procedures related to the exhaustion of sick leave for the specific circumstances stated above related to the COVID-19 situation.

Motion by Walker, seconded by Oleson to approve the above mentioned policy.

Supervisor Walker stated that he has been thoroughly impressed with the speed of employees figuring out solutions to complex problems imposed by this. Appreciate flexibility and expertise.

Dawn Schott, Juvenile Detention & Diversion Services Dir., presented a Business Associates Agreement between Linn County Juvenile Detention and Reutzel Pharmacy (meds for kids in Detention). This defines their obligations to Linn County about confidentiality. The Board will approve on Wednesday.

Schott also presented an Addendum to the current Agreement between Omnilink Systems Inc. and Linn County Juvenile Detention. There are no financial changes. The Board will approve on Wednesday.

Mike Tertinger, Planning & Development, presented an Amendment to an existing Professional Services Agreement between Linn County and New Venture Advisors for a Linn County Food System Assessment. He stated that they will add more hours of phone in lieu of in person community meetings and events. The Board will approve on Wednesday.

The Board discussed a proposal to develop a Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Linn County by Bridget Williams, Green Iowa AmeriCorps.

Supervisor Walker suggested that the Board focus on basic government functions at this time, approve the proposal but revisit when it is appropriate and after a Sustainability Coordinator is on board.

Motion by Walker, seconded by Oleson to approve proposal to develop a Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Linn County and revisit when appropriate.

Rebecca Stonawski, Deputy Auditor, presented a request for additional envelope printing for Elections for a potential absentee ballot push due to COVID-19. She stated that the Secretary of State's Office is working with the Attorney General and the Governor's Office to determine potential plans for the June 2 Primary election. The expected cost for additional envelopes is \$13,233.00 (to be paid from the Auditor's budget).

Motion by Walker, seconded by Oleson to approve request for additional envelope printing for Elections at an expected cost of \$13,233.00.

The Board conducted the second Special Election Canvass -- College Community School District crossing county borders. Results are on file with the Auditor's Office.

Motion by Walker, seconded by Oleson to approve Employment Change Roster (payroll authorizations) as follows:

TREASURER'S OFFICE

Universal Clerk                      Brittany Murphy                      Step increase/contract\_ 03/27/20 56C \$22.31 – 56D \$23.51

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Special Prosecutor                      Alexander Geocaris                      New hire – FT 04/06/20 \$3,115.39/biweekly Replaces E. Dupuich

FACILITIES

Custodian                                      Amber Smith                                      Termination – PT, temporary 03/06/20

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Account Technician                      Linda Meyer                                      Termination/retirement\_ 03/20/20

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Child Care Worker                      Lacy Blackhawk                                      New hire – Substitute 04/20/20 48A \$11.29 On-call as needed

Motion by Oleson, seconded by Walker to appoint Valerie Sleege as Washington Twp. Trustee to fill an unexpired term of 12/31/2020.

Darrin Gage presented a copy of the Governor's Proclamation of Disaster Emergency.

The Board recessed at 11:31 a.m. and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

NOTE THIS IS AN UNSCHEDULED MEETING OF THE LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD WITHOUT 24 HOURS NOTICE

The Board will met with Elected Officials and department Heads to discuss Linn County Government's Preparedness and Continuity of Operations plans for COVID-19.

Supervisor Walker gave a recap of the report given by the Health Dept. Director this morning.

Steve Estenson, Continuity of Operations Officer, stated that they are remaining open and working in partnerships with Linn County Public Health, State Health Dept. and the Governor's Office. At the same time, they need to look at other options such as partial closures and limited hours of work to minimize exposures. HR and IT are looking at essential employees allowed to work from home and will identify essential and non-essential functions in the county. They will follow restricting gatherings (trainings assembled and use telecommunications when possible). Timelines are critical. Estenson stated that his Continuity Operations Plan identifying different durations of interruption of operations. Schools went with closing for four weeks and the CDC is recommending a minimum of eight. The guidance is out there and they need to follow what is applicable to government. Departments will need to track any expenditures, purchases and payroll. There are multiple private sector businesses closing and initiating operations from home.

Supervisor Walker stated that the Emergency Operations Center meetings include governments and schools. The Board has sent a request to the Governor to extend the property tax deadline 30 days.

Garth Fagerbakke, Facilities Manager, reported that they have enhanced repetitive cleaning measures of frequently touched surfaces. They are reviewing procedures with Custodians and working overtime for staff starting today. They have also placed paper towels in restrooms with hand dryers. They have also started placing hand sanitation stations in the buildings (product is non-alcohol based which is all that is available at this time).

Lisa Powell, HR Dir., gave a recap of the Memorandum of Understanding approved this morning.

The Board will also ban county sponsored international and domestic travel (will come with extra scrutiny and possible isolation upon return).

Phil Lowder, IT Dir., stated that they are testing and readying a large-scale remote work from home software tool. He is also working with their phone provider to hopefully allow an office phone to be taken home and ring at a remote location.

Lisa Powell added that her department is contacting each department and taking inventory of who can work from home and what are their essential functions.

Chief Judge Grady gave an update regarding the court system:

- Supreme Court has approved no jury trials statewide in criminal court until April 20 and Civil Cases May 4. Cancelling Small Claims docket.
- Still need to be open every day for people to be arrested. Still have to be able to be there for Mental Health commitments; domestic abuse victims (protective orders); child placement, child in need of assistance, foster care and families in need of services.

County Attorney Jerry Vander Sanden stated it is clear that even with the crisis situation courts still must be open and visible. When the court system is open, the County Attorney's Office needs to be open as well.

Sheriff Gardner gave the following update:

- Working with the court system to try to create some space in the jail in case they need to isolate within the jail.
- Screening now within the Jail. If anyone has symptoms, they are sent to hospital until cleared.
- Suspending volunteers (religious, ASAC).
- Limiting the "outside world" to those confined.
- Looking for reduced phone rates for inmates.

Supervisor Walker stated that he is appreciative of everyone's reports and closed by saying, "Be calm, be kind, and be smart".

Sharon Gonzalez, County Treasurer, stated that her office has had 250 customers thus far today and her concern is with her employees with underlying health conditions. While still wanting to serve the public and keep employees safe, she will probably close her office to the public within the next day or so. Many services are available on line or by mail. A drop box will be placed outside the front door of the building. Employees will still come to work and answer phones, emails, process online and mail transactions.

Joan McCalmant, County Recorder, stated that she will follow the Treasurer's lead.

Adjournment at 2:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JOEL D. MILLER, Linn County Auditor  
By: Rebecca Shoop, Deputy Auditor

Approved by:

BRENT OLESON, Vice Chairperson  
Board of Supervisors