

March 25th, 2025

The meeting of the Board of Supervisors was called to order at 9:05 am by Chairman Heath Hansen. Present at the meeting were Heath Hansen, Kent Grabill, Don Mosinski, Lisa Frederiksen, Chassity Musfeldt, Rob Welch, John Hansen, Todd Johnson, Nathan Wahlert, Paul Nielsen, Tom Chambers, Randy Dreher, Dan Madsen, Paul Nielsen, Ron Mullenger, Peggy Smalley, Bruce Haag, Gary Olsen, Jotham Arber, Justin Veik/ETI- phone, and Mitch Rydl- phone.

Motion- Grabill Second- Mosinski to approve the agenda. Vote-all in favor. Custodian Hansen presented the bid for the jail finishing work from Twin Construction. Recent tariffs have increased the pricing of materials. Motion- Mosinski Second- Grabill to approve the bid from Twin Construction for the jail work. Vote-all in favor. Custodian Hansen presented readings of the sound levels in the Courtroom. Motion- Mosinski Second- Grabill to approve the meeting minutes of 3-18-25. Vote-all in favor. Public comment was opened at 9:20 am. No comments were made from the public.

Various taxpayers met with Supervisors at 9:30 am to discuss several areas of concern. Chairman Hansen stated that Secondary Roads and Sheriff's Department are working on areas where the departments can lower the budget. The Supervisors acknowledged that paying down the County debts needs to be prioritized. Taxpayers stressed that excess in each Department's budgets needs to be reviewed and cut down. Questions were asked about the TIF dollars and what the County would do if those were unavailable. Chairman Hansen said the County would probably have not been able to do several projects without the TIF funding. Taxpayers questioned the \$30 million that has been bonded for in the last 6 years. Excessive expenses of several projects were another area of concern, such as the cabins at Littlefield and the HVAC project. The idea of having the Littlefield/Conservation Department be self-sustaining was discussed. Taxpayers inquired about the large amounts being paid towards family health insurance verse just offering the full single plan, costing the County over \$530,000 a year. The raises being given while the County is in such a huge deficit were questioned. Hansen explained the Compensation Board and how the raises are calculated for recommendation to the Supervisors. Taxpayers asked if the raises were consistent across each Department as budget reports showed various amounts that were not consistent. Hansen stated that all Departments are receiving a 2.5% across the board except for the Secondary Roads Union at \$1/hour. Auditor Frederiksen stated that when the Compensation Board does the comparisons and formulas to give a recommended raise percentage, they do not factor the benefits into that formula. Chairman Hansen said some of the salaries are currently set higher than the average and the Supervisors will be looking into getting them to where they need to be within the next couple years, even if it means having a lower percentage than other Departments. Supervisors have opted to receive a 0% increase this coming fiscal year. New legislation has made it that the Supervisors can give a higher raise than the Compensation Board's recommendations, but they cannot go lower than it. Taxpayers suggested having new employees/newly elected officials start at a lower rate, instead of automatically receiving what the prior experienced employee was earning when their employment ended. Taxpayers inquired about the proposed Union agreements and if the Compensation Board takes those into recommendation when making their decision. The Union Negotiations were decided prior to the Compensation Board meeting for the FY26 wages. Chairman Hansen said in this upcoming year they will have the Compensation Board meet before the Union Negotiations are completed, so they can take those into consideration.

Conservation Director Bruce Haag and Board Members met with the Supervisors to discuss the FY26 budget. Taxpayers had concerns on the Conservation budget/expenses versus what will be brought in with the cabin revenues. Haag explained that they have been able to do many projects from various grants they've received. The cabin project was done with a lot of in-house labor, and the engineering was done without the expenses of hiring contractors. Supervisors inquired about the cabin expenses/revenues and what a reasonable estimate would be. Haag said the first year that they are all up and running will give a good estimate of the expenses/revenues. Supervisor Mosinski stressed that when taxpayers inquire, the County should be able to relay transparency regarding these concerns on the budget. Haag said they will start reserving the Cabins around April/May this year. Haag stated that up until the cabin project, Conservation has been able to use the Park Improvement/REAP funds for any expenses except employee wages. Discussion on the open position at Conservation was held and if it could potentially be eliminated. The Conservation Board had some concerns of the

workload for the employees if the open position is not filled. The idea of having extra as-needed or a part-time employee was discussed. Camping/firewood revenues are currently split 50/50 between Park Improvement/County. The Supervisors proposed the idea of having the County retain 100% of the Cabin Revenue. Conservation Director and Board members had concerns that if the County had 100% of the Cabin Revenue, they would be unable to access those funds for immediate purchases if needed. Supervisors explained that if they have a project or item that needs purchased that would require those funds, they can come to the Board of Supervisors and ask. It was stressed that the County can not function without roads and law enforcement, but can function without Conservation, so it is crucial the budget is analyzed to reduce debts. Supervisors agreed to keep 100% of the Cabin Revenue but were not opposed to revisiting the topic after the cabins after been operable for a year.

Public Health updates were given by Jotham Arber. There is a new Social Worker helping provide wrap around services for Audubon County. The HOPES program will be transitioning to PATS. Public Health is currently providing the MMR vaccine to those who would like it. The State of Iowa is reimbursing landowners \$700 towards well plugging and \$1000 towards well rehab.

Motion- Mosinski Second-Grabill to approve claims as submitted by various departments to be paid in the amount of \$35,803.40 and published at the end of the month. Vote-all in favor. Supervisors called ETI/Justin Veik to follow up on yesterday's meeting regarding the decisions on the jail cell. Veik stated that ETI would be willing to reimburse \$4,800 towards the jail cell work. Supervisors stressed that this should not have been pushed out so long and is very disheartening. Meeting went into recess at 12:54 pm. The meeting reconvened at 3:01 pm. Motion- Mosinski Second-Grabill to approve Hiring Resolution 2025-15 as follows.

Resolution 2025-15

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, by the Audubon County, Board of Supervisors, that effective March 31st, 2025, Jonathan Halterman, be employed as Full Time Roadside/Non-Union employee. Starting wage will be \$22.31/hr. with benefits as per the contract between Audubon County and Public, Professional and Maintenance Employees, Local Union #2003, excluding longevity. A \$.25/hr. increase will be made after successfully obtaining a Commercial Pesticide License with Category 6 endorsement. Future wage increases shall follow Grade 1 Classification Equipment Operator A fiscal year percentage increase and step experience wage increases. Insurance coverage shall begin May 1st, 2025.

Passed and approved this 25th day of March, 2025.

Board of Supervisors

Audubon County, Iowa

/s/Heath Hansen

ATTEST

By: /s/ Chassity Musfeldt

Motion- Mosinski Second-Grabill to approve Mid-American Utility Permit, Section 6, T80N R35W(Leroy Township) Goldfinch Ave. Supervisor Mosinski stated that he will reach out to the State Auditors regarding ACED. Engineer Rydl was called to discuss the bid letting from earlier in the day for the Lark Ave project. Rydl said the bids came in lower than anticipated. Supervisors agreed to eliminate hiring an additional full-time employee/Cabin Manager at Conservation to help the budget. Supervisor Grabill will reach out to let Conservation Director Haag know of this decision. 28E agreements were reviewed. Chairman Hansen will set up a work session after contacting Simmering Corey regarding the status of the ordinances. Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

/s/Heath Hansen

Attest: /s/Chassity Musfeldt

Chairman, Board of Supervisors

Audubon County Auditor Clerk