

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
FOURTEENTH MEETING, 2023 SESSION (14)
MARCH 21, 2023**

The Buena Vista County Board of Supervisors met in special session on Tuesday, March 21, 2023, at 8:30 A.M. in the Boardroom with Chairman Snyder presiding, and the following other members present: Altena, Croker, Merten, Ringgenberg, and with Auditor Susan Lloyd as clerk for the meeting.

Unless otherwise indicated, all the following **motions** offered at this meeting were carried with the following vote: Ayes: Altena, Croker, Merten, Ringgenberg, and Snyder. Nays: none. Abstentions: none.

Motion by Ringgenberg, seconded by Merten, to approve today's **agenda**. Carried.

Secondary Report: Work continues on the Linn Grove Bridge. The last piling has been driven and the north pier is mostly done and they are working on the south pier. Then they will set the beam and work on the 450' deck; a pre-construction meeting was held last week on the Bluebird Creek project. They hope to start removing trees next week and close the road April 3 and tear the bridge out; the crew plowed snow last week, and there is another chance of snow this week. They have been hauling gravel and taking care of the soft spot on the gravel roads; Engineer Bret Wilkinson stated that once they go to summer crew in April, they will be edge rutting and shaping up the gravel roads; the deadline is Friday for the superintendent position. They hope to have someone hired soon in order to have a chance to work with Bruce before he retires; Engineer Bret Wilkinson asked the Board to notify him soon if they will be changing his budget, as he will ask the Board to approve his DOT budget on April 11, as he has to submit his budget to the DOT by April 15, which is before the county budget will be certified.

Hear the Public: There was no response from anyone requesting to speak, either virtually or in-person.

Motion by Merten, second by Croker, to approve the **minutes** of the 3/14/2023 meeting, as corrected, and accept the following **report**: Draft copy of the BV County Solid Waste Commission Evaluation of Recycling Operations. Carried.

Supervisor Meeting Reports: Merten will attend the Rolling Hills Region meeting tomorrow, and the Central IA Juvenile Detention Center on Friday; Croker and Merten attended the Conservation Board meeting last week; Snyder attended the NW IA YES Center meeting last week.

The Chair opened the public hearing on the **Proposed Property Tax Levy for the FY'24** County Budget. Auditor Lloyd explained that this Max Levy notice only pertains to the General Fund and the Rural Fund. Buena Vista County may levy up to \$4.64472 for General Basic, which is over the maximum of \$3.50, due to the need for additional monies to permit continuance of programs which provide substantial benefit to county residents. The levy for the General Supplemental Fund may be set at 2.33718. The Rural Basic Fund levy is listed at \$3.97801, which is over the maximum of \$3.97. The total increase for the General Fund property tax dollars is 19.39% from the prior year, and the Rural Fund property tax dollars is an increase of 47.20%% from the prior year. The Chair asked if there were any questions from the public, and there were none. Motion by Croker, second by Merten, to close the public hearing. Carried. Motion by Croker, second by Ringgenberg, to approve and authorize the Board to sign **Resolution #2023-03-21-B** Maximum Property Tax Dollars Resolution. Ayes: Altena, Croker, Merten, Ringgenberg, Snyder. Nays: None. Motion carried.

**Resolution #2023-03-21-B
Maximum Property Tax Dollars Resolution**

WHEREAS, the Buena Vista County Board of Supervisors have considered the proposed FY '24 county maximum property tax dollars for both General County Services and Rural County Services, and

WHEREAS, a notice concerning the proposed county maximum property tax dollars was published as required and posted on county web site and/or social media accounts if applicable,

WHEREAS, a public hearing concerning the proposed county maximum property tax dollars was held on 3/21/2023,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Buena Vista County that the maximum property tax dollars for General County Services and Rural County Services for FY '24 shall not exceed the following:

- General County Services: \$9,508,266; an increase of 19.39% from the prior year
- Rural County Services: \$3,381,344; an increase of 47.20% from the prior year

Passed and adopted this 21st day of March, 2023.

Roll Call Vote: Altena-Aye, Croker-Aye, Merten-Aye, Ringgenberg-Aye, Snyder-Aye. Carried.

/s/ Kelly Snyder-Chair, /s/ Paul Merten-Vice-Chair, /s/ Don Altena-Board Member, /s/ Kathy Croker-Board Member, /s/ Rhonda Ringgenberg-Board Member. Attest: Susan K. Lloyd, County Auditor

Election Deputy Karla Ahrendsen reviewed the ICAP renewal application, for FY'24. Ahrendsen informed the Board that she is hearing that the insurance rates will likely be 25% higher than last year, and workers comp will go up, due to large claims. Motion by Merten, second by Ringgenberg, to approve and authorize the Chair to sign the **ICAP insurance renewal** application, for FY'24. Carried.

County Attorney Paul Allen informed the Board that he checked with another company regarding leasing or purchasing a copier/printer. Loeffler had a purchase option after a 5-year lease, for a total of \$9,620, or a straight 5-year lease for a total of \$12,480. Marco's lease option for 5-years was a total of \$10,620. Allen would prefer staying with Marco, with a 5-year lease. Croker stated that she supported a lease over a purchase. Motion by Merten, second by Ringgenberg, to approve and authorize the County Attorney to sign the 5-year **lease agreement** with Marco, for a copier/printer. Carried.

County Attorney Paul Allen reviewed with the Board the options to consider if they intend to sell the former **Colorize Building**. Allen stated that a notice would be required to hold a public hearing, and to include in the notice how they intend to dispose of the building, whether by sealed bids, listing with a realtor, or by auction. Allen will prepare a Resolution of Proposal for the Board to consider at a future meeting, and to set a public hearing.

Motion by Merten, second by Croker, to accept the letter from County Attorney Paul Allen, rescinding his appointment of **Lindsey Browning** as an Asst. County Attorney, effective March 17, 2023. Carried.

EMA Director Aimee Barritt presented an updated Procurement Policy for the Board to adopt. Barritt stated that it is required to have an updated Procurement Policy for Federal Grants. Motion by Croker, second by Ringgenberg, to approve the updated **Procurement Policy**. Carried.

Bldg/Grounds Supt. Joe Keller presented a request he received from Ashley Brock from SLES. The 3rd grade classes are starting a unit on Marine Life and will be given a challenge to create their own hybrid or imaginative Marine animal or plant. There will be one winner selected from each of the ten sections, and they would like to display them in the Courthouse, near the wildlife display. Keller mentioned that maybe the display could also be moved shown at the Linn Grove Bait Shop or the Conservation Office for a while. Motion by Merten, second by Croker to approve the request of Ashley Brock from SLES,

allowing the 3rd grade classes to **display their Marine Life creations** in the Courthouse, near the wildlife display. Carried.

Conservation Director/Weed Commission Greg Johnson presented the annual noxious weed resolution. Motion by Merten, second by Croker, to approve **Resolution #2023-03-21-A**, Public Notice Destruction of Noxious Weeds & Fines Assessed, and to authorize the Chair to sign. Carried.

RESOLUTION #2023-03-21-A
A PUBLIC NOTICE: DESTRUCTION OF NOXIOUS WEEDS & FINES ASSESSED

TO ALL PROPERTY OWNERS:

Be it resolved, by action of the Board of Supervisors of Buena Vista County, Iowa, that pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 317.13 and 317.14, 2023 Code of Iowa, it is hereby ordered:

1-That each owner and each person in the possession or control of any land in Buena Vista County shall cut, burn, spray, or otherwise destroy all noxious weeds thereon, at such times in each year and in such manner as shall prevent said weeds from blooming or coming to maturity, and shall keep said lands free from such growth of any other weeds as shall render the streets or highways adjoining said land unsafe for public travel. Noxious weeds shall be cut, burned, sprayed, or otherwise destroyed on or before the following dates and as often thereafter as is necessary to prevent seed production:

Group 1. June 1, 2023, for Leafy Spurge and Musk Thistle.

Group 2. July 1, 2023, for Canada Thistle and Field Bindweed.

Group 3. August 1, 2023, for Palmer Amaranth, Multiflora Rose, Bull and Plumeless Thistles.

2-That each owner and each person in possession or control of any lands in Buena Vista County infested with any noxious weeds listed for eradication or control by the Agriculture and Land Stewardship Department Administrative Rules Chapter 58.4 shall adopt a program of weed destruction described by the Weed Commissioner to destroy and will immediately keep under control such infestations of said noxious weeds.

3-That if the owners or persons in possession or control of any land in Buena Vista County fail to comply with the foregoing orders, the Weed Commissioner shall cause this to be done and the expense of said work, including costs of serving notice and other costs, if any, to be assessed against the real estate upon which the noxious weeds are destroyed.

4-That the County Weed Commissioner be and is hereby directed to cause notice of making and entering of the foregoing order by one publication each of the Official Newspapers of the County.

5-Anyone wishing not to have noxious weeds sprayed within the right-of-way adjacent to dwellings or property by Buena Vista County, he or she shall sign an annual agreement by June 1st at the County Conservation Board Office and receive official signs to be posted on each side of the area designated and shall be responsible to destroy such weeds, all season.

6-Buena Vista County primarily uses Milestone and TerraVue herbicide for noxious weed control within the road right-of-way. For individuals who harvest hay from the County's right-of-way consult the Milestone and TerraVue label for possible haying and grazing restrictions. Any additional concerns may be directed to the County Weed Commissioner.

7-The Weed Commissioner, Greg Johnson or Deputy Weed Commissioner, Brian Jones are located at the Buena Vista County Conservation Board office. 377 440th Street, Peterson, Iowa 51047. Telephone-712-295-7985.

PENALTY

Be it further Resolved, that upon failure to comply by the date prescribed in an order, pursuant to Chapter 317, for destruction of weeds, the weed commissioner, following notice, may enter upon the land without consent and have the weeds destroyed with the costs of such action taxed against the real estate on which the weeds were destroyed, or may impose a penalty of \$10.00 per day for each day, up to ten days, that the owner or person in possession or control of the land fails to comply, after which, the weed commissioner, following notice, may enter upon the land without consent and have the weeds destroyed with the costs of such action taxed against the real estate on which the weeds were destroyed.

Passed and approved this 21st day of March, 2023.

/s/ Kelly Snyder, Chair, Board of Supervisors.....Attest: Susan K. Lloyd, County Auditor

Conservation Director/Weed Commissioner Greg Johnson gave a **department update**: they are ready for spring and doing maintenance. The naturalist is busy with programs. Johnson plans to open the bait shop the first part of April. Johnson stated that he submitted a time extension on the “pop” date for the Dam project. The extension can only be granted for 12 month increments by IHSEMD, and the project won’t be completed within 12 months.

Conservation Director/Weed Commission Greg Johnson informed the Board that they have formally withdrawn from 28E negotiations with the IDNR, for the **Marina Project**. Johnson was notified that the project was ineligible for the Destination Iowa Grant, due to the State owning the land. Johnson stated that IDNR changed the indemnification language in the contract, not to the benefit of the county. Johnson stated that the project can’t move forward without funding. IDNR will be operating the slips and will be sending letters out to those that had slips in the past. Supervisor Croker stated that Johnson has put in a lot of effort to try and get this project going, but due to IDNR not willing to make it ADA compliant, nothing will be done. Johnson estimated the cost for the concrete area to be \$700,000, and there is too much liability risk to the county, and they are not able to obtain liability coverage.

The time arrived for the discussion on **salaries**. The Compensation Board had recommended a 10% increase in wages for the Sheriff, an 8% increase for the Auditor, a 6% increase for the Attorney, Recorder, and Treasurer, a 3% increase for the Supervisors, an additional \$1,500 stipend for the Board Chair, a \$1,500 stipend for the Board Secretary, and reaffirmed the longevity schedule for all elected officials. Croker had prepared a spreadsheet showing ten years of history of what the Board has given for increases in comparison to the cost of living (COLA) based on social security, and the consumer price index (CPI). Croker stated that most years, the Board has given more in wage increases than the cost of living or consumer price index, however, this year the Board’s recommendations are lower than those of COLA and CPI. Croker stated that she could agree to either cutting the salary recommendations by 25%, or she could agree to leave the recommendations as presented. Croker also averaged out the percentage increases of last year and this year, and threw that out for discussion. Croker stated that the Compensation Board recommendations are in line with COLA and CPI. Deputy Rob Danielson stated that there is another variable and that is hiring and retaining good employees. Croker agreed with Danielson, and stated that the county has to be competitive in order to retain employees. Merten stated that he has thought a lot about the salary recommendations, and he would like to accept the Compensation Board recommendations, with the exception of the supervisors, he would like to see a zero increase for the Board of Supervisors. Ringgenberg stated that she knows in the private sector it is also hard to hire and retain employees, so she recommends accepting the increases as presented. County Attorney Paul Allen commented that there is pending legislation that may make future raises not as likely. Allen stated that he is fortunate with his office staff, being able to retain them, but said it is extremely difficult to find and retain qualified attorneys. Merten commented that “Back the Blue” started a couple years ago, and the Compensation Board was urged to bring the salary of the Sheriff up to the same salary as State Troopers, which would amount to a 20-30% increase. The Compensation Board didn’t want to recommend that increase all at one time, they would rather spread it out over several years, which Merten commented he is fully supportive of. Snyder stated that he would like to see the Compensation Board recommendations stay as presented. Motion by Croker,

second by Snyder to accept the Compensation Board salary recommendations, setting the **FY'24 salary** increase for the Sheriff at 10%, Auditor at 8%, Attorney, Recorder, Treasurer at 6%, Supervisors at 3%, an additional \$1,500 stipend for the Board Chair, and an additional \$1,500 stipend for the Auditor, as Board Secretary, and reaffirmed the longevity schedule for all elected officials. Carried.

Motion by Croker, second by Merten, to approve **wage increases** for FY'24, for the non-elected officials and their employees that are not under another Board as: Drainage Department-Brian Blomme 3% and Eric Yunginger 6% (which were both approved by the shared 3-County Drainage Board); Bldg/Grounds-Joe Keller 8%, Vance Cords 6%, Jon Buss 6%, Craig Boyd 4%; I.T. Tyler Van Houten 6%, Eric Chase 6%; and Zoning Administrator is based on the agreement at time of hire. Carried.

Motion by Merten, second by Altena, to approve a 6% **wage increase** for FY'24, for all Secondary Road employees, except the County Engineer who is on a contract, based on their current base rate. Carried.

The Board proceeded with their budget work session.

There being no further business, motion by Merten, second by Altena, to adjourn the meeting at 12:31 p.m. until Tuesday, March 28, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. for a regular session.