

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
THIRTY-FIFTH MEETING, 2026 SESSION (35)
AUGUST 25, 2026**

The Buena Vista County Board of Supervisors met in regular session on Tuesday, August 25, 2026, at 8:30 A.M. in the Boardroom with Chairperson Merten presiding, and the following other members present: Croker and Hartman and with Auditor Susan Lloyd as clerk for the meeting. Absent: Ringgenberg and Snyder.

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

Motion by Hartman, second by Croker, to approve today's **agenda**. Carried.

County Engineer Bret Wilkinson and Sheriff Kory Elston were present to discuss a possible contract with **Urban SDK** for computer generated traffic reports and satellite imagery software. Wilkinson informed the Board that not all of the options presented previously at the Board meeting are available yet, they are working on it. Wilkinson stated that they are able to get shots of all roads in BV County. A two-year contract would be \$91,059.51. Wilkinson stated that this is not a live camera, it will provide analytical information such as vehicle turning movements, vehicle count, traffic flows, and numbers of speeders. Croker stated that she does not want to be the guinea pig for \$100,000. Merten commented that he would like to see a demonstration, and he agrees that it is a lot of money. Merten suggested that applying for a community foundation grant would be good, as he is not opposed to the idea, he would like to check on outside funding. Sheriff Elston also suggested that the company present a demonstration to the Board before a decision is made. The consensus of the Board was to table any action on the SDK software until the company provides a demonstration.

Motion by Croker, second by Hartman, to approve and authorize the Chair to sign a **utility permit** for Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, Estherville, IA, to bore under 50th Ave. between Sections 22 and 23 of Maple Valley Township, from the east right-of-way to the west right-of-way of 50th Ave. at approximately 2,750' south of 630th St., to provide electric service for a new house. Carried.

Motion by Hartman, second by Croker, to approve and authorize the Chair to sign a **utility permit** for Iowa Lakes Regional Water, Spencer, IA, to bore under 110th Ave. between Sections 26 and 27 of Scott Township, approximately 15' south of the centerline of the driveway at 5274 110th Ave. from private property to private property, to provide service to that address. Carried.

The Pre-**Design Agreement with Iowa DOT for Hwy7/70th Ave. intersection** was not available at the time of the meeting, so no action was taken.

Secondary Road Report: They continue with driveways, crossroad culverts, hauling rock, and mowing. Phase 2- They are done pouring concrete and have been core cutting and sealing joints. They still need to shoulder and paint the road and put signs up before it opens. It may be the end of next week before it is open. Business 71/N14-The contractor will move on to N14 around September 8 and will get the two miles done this season. The big box culvert on Business 71 will be done in 2026 but the other culverts on Bus. 71 will be done as part of the project in 2027. The 40th Ave bridge project will not start until late October or first part of November and will probably not be completed until spring.

Chairman Merten asked if there was anyone online that wished to be heard during **Hear the Public** and there was none. County Attorney Paul Allen was present to give the Board a flag for the 250th

Anniversary of America that he received from the American Bar Association, to be displayed in the Courthouse.

Executive Director Laura Hanks, Storm Lake United, and Riley Godfredson, Lakeshore Cyclery in Storm Lake to present information about the Iowa Great Lakes Connection Trail and the proposed plan to connect Carroll County, Sac County, Buena Vista County, Clay County, and Dickinson County with a **bike trail**. Hanks stated that ISG prepared a timeline and estimated a cost of \$100,000 to do a feasibility study for a trail from Dickinson County to Carroll County. Hanks asked the Board if they would participate in the feasibility study and pay 50% of the cost, up to \$50,000. Hanks stated that they are looking at completing a bike trail around Storm Lake first. Godfredson has prepared a rough idea to go around the lake in Storm Lake and has contacted landowners, who have been positive, starting at Bel-Air Beach, South Cove, Casino Beach, and the Marina. Conservation Director Greg Johnson was present and stated that he sits on a trail committee and stated that part of the trail from Spencer to Fostoria was paid for by a grant. Johnson also stated that the County has a Trails Committee, which has members from each city in BV County, a county supervisor, himself, GIS, and three people that are interested in biking. Johnson stated that the BV County Trail Committee intended to have the bike trails go through each town, which is why the county added a wide walkway next to the Linn Grove Bridge. The Board would like to see a feasibility study of the cost of a trail south of the lake and would also like to know if all of the counties are interested in helping fund this.

Conservation Director/Weed Commissioner Greg Johnson presented his **weed department update** to the Board. For thistles they have completed 1,268 of approximately 2,000 miles within BV County. Spraying for purple loosestrife was completed yesterday and took four days for County-maintained roads and one day for spots on State roads. They have completed 425 miles of an approximately 500-mile quarter of the county, which is about 85% complete.

Conservation Director Greg Johnson informed the Board that the RFP has been sent out on the **Marina**, to see if there is any interest. Johnson stated that maintenance is normal, and that they have lost one seasonal worker. Johnson stated that he has not received any news from FEMA. The paving at the Marina might be after Labor Day.

Conservation Director Greg Johnson informed the Board that Conservation Board member Rick Meyer's term will expire 12/31/26 and he has stated that he does not want to continue. Johnson would like to advertise for a Conservation Board member, taking applications through October 9. Motion by Hartman, second by Merten, to authorize Conservation Director Greg Johnson to advertise for a **Conservation Board member**, taking applications through October 9. Carried.

Drainage Clerk Lynnette Jacobs and Chairman Merten, informed the other members of the Board about a meeting on Thursday, with the three Auditors, Drainage Clerks, a Supervisor representative from each of the three counties, and Drainage Engineer and Drainage Watchman to discuss funding of the **BV, Calhoun, and Sac Drainage Fund**. Merten will report back to the Board after the meeting, where there will be action needed to be approved.

Motion by Croker, second by Hartman, to approve the **minutes** from 8/11/2026 as presented, today's **claim approval list, Auxiant disbursements and stamped warrant list**, and accept the following **reports**: July Sheriff's Report of Fees Collected and July Conservation Board minutes. Carried.

Motion by Croker, second by Hartman, to approve and authorize the Chair to sign the **Engagement Letter of Ahlers and Cooney** for employment services. Carried.

Motion by Croker, second by Merten, to approve the request from NW IA Regional Housing Trust Fund to have the Board approve and authorize the Chair to sign the FY'27 pledge contribution letter to **NW IA Regional Housing Trust Fund, Inc.** in the amount of \$676 as the funds are used for their local match, to maintain housing, which will contribute to economic retention of workers and work done. Carried.

County Attorney Paul Allen was present for his appointment. Motion by Hartman, second by Croker, to go into **closed session** (at 10:18 a.m.) to discuss two separate items, under Chapter 21.5(1)(c) of the 2026 Code of Iowa, to discuss strategy with counsel in matters that are presently in litigation or where litigation is imminent where its disclosure would be likely to prejudice or disadvantage the position of the governmental body in that litigation. Ayes: Croker, Hartman, and Merten. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Croker, second by Hartman, to go out of **closed session** at 10:37 a.m. Carried.

There being no further business, motion by Croker, second by Hartman, to adjourn the meeting at 10:39 a.m. until Tuesday, September 1 at 8:30 a.m. for a special session. Carried.