

Scott County Board of Supervisors
March 19, 2020 4:00 p.m.

The Board of Supervisors met as a committee of the whole and pursuant to adjournment with Knobbe, Croken, Maxwell and Beck present. Due to social distancing concerns relating to COVID19, Supervisors and staff were separated into two different rooms and spaced apart during the meeting with Supervisors Croken and Beck participating remotely and with Supervisor Kinzer participating via telephone.

Tim Huey, Planning and Development Director, reviewed the Terry and Zach Ralfs (dba Ralfs Finishers) State Construction Permit application for expansion of an existing Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) located at 23300 Maysville Road in part of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 15, T79N, R2E (Hickory Grove Township). He said the public hearing was held Thursday, March 5, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. He said the Board received comments and that Planning and Development has the packet ready to go to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), including all of the email comments, summary from the minutes and the proofs of publications.

Supervisor Kinzer said he followed up on a question from the public hearing, and that even if the Supervisors recommend denying the permit, the DNR would still issue it.

Supervisor Croken asked Huey if there is sufficient area on the property for a 2,400 square foot CAFO and for a 4,800 square foot CAFO.

Huey said that the DNR Engineer said there is sufficient space on the property to meet the separation distances for these types of expansion. He said there are six different tables on the various distances depending on whether it's a new or expanded CAFO, if it is an expansion when the original permit was issued, the number of animals and the method of storing manure.

Croken asked if the application were for a 4,800 square foot facility would the setbacks be met.

Huey said not at the current location, but the setbacks could be met at a different location on the property.

Croken asked if this meant that a plan which included all of the animal units at one time would not meet the DNR requirements.

Huey said he believed that was correct.

Croken questioned why it is okay to concentrate this many animals so close to other properties simply because the animals are added cumulatively.

Huey said the legislature decided this in 2003 when the master matrix was developed.

Tammy Speidel, Facility and Support Services Director, reviewed property acquisition of a 10.17 acre parcel located north of 53rd Street on Tremont Avenue in Davenport. She said Scott County has no property inventory available that would be suitable for future building projects. She said she consulted with a realtor, evaluated some sites, and found this site owned by the Scott County Humane Society, which is looking to sell it. She said the County has negotiated a purchase offer with the Humane Society that requires Board approval, which would initiate soil testing and site development cost estimates. She said if this site is approved by the Board and is found acceptable for future use, closing could occur on or around May 20th.

Kinzer asked what the purchase price is.

Speidel said the price is \$380,000.

Kinzer asked David Farmer, Budget and Administrative Services Director, how this purchase will impact the County and are there any reservations with needing this money for other purposes.

Farmer said the County would pay out of the capital fund that was already assigned for future capital investment. He said it is more difficult to reassign money from the capital fund into the general fund. He said the proposal is to purchase an asset for future use, the capital fund has sufficient balance to cover the cost and he feels comfortable doing so at this time. He said valuation of this property made by OC Iowa Realty based on similar sales, the location, and condition of the property indicated that this is a fair price.

Supervisor Beck said he shares the concern about the cash flow situation, but said the County should act on a land purchase when the land is available. He said if need be other capital improvements could be pushed back.

Kinzer said he does not want to scale back other needed projects.

Speidel said that this parcel is located north of 53rd Street on Tremont Avenue, near the Tremont Warehouse, SECC and west of the Waste Commission property making it a less costly location for extending IT infrastructure connectivity.

Mary Thee, Human Resources Director, reviewed staff appointments.

Mahesh Sharma reviewed approval of a tax suspension request.

Farmer reviewed a FY20 budget amendment. He said the budget amendment was built while preparing for the FY21 budget starting in October, with updates in January and a publication date of late February or early March. He said that nothing that has happened in the last week and a half regarding the COVID-19 pandemic is reflected in this amendment and he still recommends to move forward.

He said the County will suffer lost revenue from the Local Option Sales Tax and Interest Income due to COVID-19. He said his initial estimate a week ago was \$500,000 and he upped that to \$800,000. He said now that the County has started closing services that cannot be provided online, such as various permits, fees, charges for services, etc. the revenue loss could potentially be \$1,000,000 between now and June 30th.

Supervisor Maxwell asked if the Board can amend this budget one more time.

Farmer answered yes, and said he has notified the departments which have until late April to finalize the numbers for the May amendment.

Supervisor Beck commented on the loss of Casino revenue.

Farmer said the casinos are closed for at least two weeks and the County may lose one month or more of Casino Revenue, and a month's worth of revenue is around \$50,000.

Croken asked why not wait and do one amendment in April rather than one now and one in May.

Farmer said the County should take credit for the additional revenue that has come in since July 1, 2019, including some grant funding and to authorize spending authority needed for some of the grants.

Knobbe said he concurs with Farmer and that the County needs to be as accurate as possible going throughout the year for what we are reporting and budgeting.

Beck said this is truing up the budget.

Farmer reviewed the Compensation Board salary recommendations for elected officials.

Beck said he talked to staff about postponing this portion of the agenda and said he was told the Board has to approve this item before the budget could be approved. He said that was unfortunate and that his feelings today are much different than two weeks ago.

Croken said he plans to offer an amendment to this resolution that does not offer raises for Board members.

Kinzer said he wants the item sent back and reviewed as well, and that he echoes Supervisors Beck and Croken's comments. He said he is in support of the Board of Supervisors taking a zero percent increase.

Maxwell said he fears getting out of sync in trying to catch people up, especially with the Sheriff and other elected officials, and we have no idea what the future will be. He said that could lead to inordinately large increases at a later date.

Beck said that the general public looks to the Board to act like leaders. He said with these times and the pending recession, he struggled with giving any increases.

Croken asked if the Board can approve salary increases but delay their effective date.

Mary Thee, Human Resources Director, said she did not think so, but would try to research that question.

Croken said a vote of zero for this year only creates a bigger obstacle next year.

Knobbe said this is a first, a recession probably like none in our lifetime, and that he feared not so much for the next four weeks for the economy, but a longer recovery. He said he leaned toward a zero increase.

Farmer reviewed a 2.5 percent general wage increase recommended for the non-represented County employees. He said the percentage matches what the Board approved for the union contracts.

Knobbe said he agreed with the recommendation to be fair to all of the employees and to mirror the bargaining agreements.

Kinzer asked for examples of non-represented employees.

Thee said it would include managers, supervisors, clerical, every employee in the Health Department, some employees in the Conservation Department, IT and workers in the Juvenile Detention Center.

Kinzer asked if these people are in positions that, by law, cannot be part of a collective bargaining unit or are they people that choose not to.

Thee said both situations apply. She said some clerical people are confidential employees that are prohibited from being in a bargaining unit, but per the classification study are paid the same as other clerical employees in the AFSCME unit. She said the general wage increase should be equal for all employees because not approving the increase will set back the results of the classification study.

Farmer reviewed the FY21 budget adoption and public hearing. He said advanced notice has been given and that 65.8 percent of the budget is related to property taxes, due in the fall 2020 and the spring of 2021.

He noted that the owner of a house with the same assessed value as last year will see a 0.3 percent increase in property taxes from the new County rates. He said in the rural areas it is a one percent decrease.

Croken asked if specific capital items are determined by this vote.

Farmer said the budget authority is determined by this vote based upon the schedule that was discussed in detail at the Board's February budget meetings. He said all projects exceeding \$15,000 need to come to the Board for approval and, at that time the Board evaluates if the County moves forward with something.

Knobbe thanked Farmer and County staff for contributing to production of the budget.

Sharma reviewed the appointment of Hap Volz to the Davenport City Assessor Examining Board.

Roxanna Moritz, County Auditor, reviewed a proposal to mail absentee ballot requests (ABR) to all Scott County voters for the June 2, 2020 Primary Election. She said she recently met with the Iowa Secretary of State's Work Advisory Group about what he legally can do, as well as with ISACA, of which she is the president. She said Secretary Pate will probably release his plan tomorrow for a statewide campaign to encourage people to vote absentee. She said the majority of ISACA wants to push the ABR forms. She said conducting the election by mail was discussed and rejected.

She said six states postponed elections already but the Iowa Secretary of State cannot postpone the election. She said the Secretary can modify how the election is conducted such as consolidating precincts or changing the number of poll workers per polling place. She presented a memo detailing the costs. She said her staff is calling poll workers right now for assignments and scheduling training.

She said she does not have the spending authority to mail to every voter and that is why she is coming to the Board. She said her staff needs time to prep for the mailing, the ballots will be ready mid-April and she hopes to have requests in the mail by May 4th.

Kinzer said he appreciates everything Moritz has done and how she has been proactive. He said this is a way folks can safely vote and he supports this initiative.

Croken said he agrees with Kinzer.

Moritz said she has reached out to St. Ambrose University, the Building Trades Council and the teachers association asking for their members to volunteer as poll workers. She said while these groups were receptive at this time she questioned if they will be as receptive in two months.

Maxwell said some of his confusion was that he thought the actual ballot was going to be sent out, not the request form. He asked what the number of registered voters was.

Moritz answered typically there are around 121,000 to 125,000 registered voters.

Maxwell asked what is normally sent out.

Moritz said it depends on the election and that for a similar primary election, it would be about 5,000 voters or five to seven percent voter turnout.

Maxwell said he is worried if spending all of the money and sending out all of the requests is really going to produce more. He said that people can request absentee ballots on their own and that sending requests to them would not significantly increase the number of people voting.

Moritz said she understood Maxwell, but she thinks the law requires mailing to every registered voter because anyone can vote in the Primary Election. She said as Commissioner of Elections she wants to be proactive in giving everyone the opportunity to vote in safety, and the mailing increases public safety.

Croken said he understood but disagreed with Maxwell's position. He said making voting as accessible as possible is more than a dollars and cents question and goes to the heart of our democracy. He said expecting people to plan ahead and request a ballot, particularly in these times, is unrealistic. He said he feared many people would be hesitant to go to a public polling place due to the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore will not vote. He said giving them this option ahead of time makes sense.

Beck said he wants to wait and see what the State says to do. He said he does not want to go back and redo something if this is not in compliance with the State.

Croken said if the Board passed the resolution the money does not have to be spent, it just gives the spending authority.

Knobbe said he concurred with Beck's comments. He said the Board engaged in a discussion on this subject at the canvass meeting last week but it was not on the agenda and that Supervisors debated a subject that the people of Scott County did not know they were debating. He said there were assumptions of how Supervisors felt about it. He said at that point, as chairman, he should have cut off discussion. He said in the future if there is information to discuss and debate in a meeting the Board should get it earlier. He said he would have loved to have a chance to read this, and ask questions about it before now. He said he would prefer to wait two weeks to see what the Secretary of State has to say, but applauded the Auditor for being proactive.

Moritz said she was disappointed with the Board in that she has been an elected county official for fourteen years, she knows her job, she sits on the Secretary of State's Work Advisory Group, and she is the President of ISACA. She said she thinks she has the pulse and knows what's going on. She said she attended training exercises, paid for by other entities, to help prepare in times of crisis. She said she understands that it is a cost to the County at a time of losing revenue but she did not ask to immediately spend the money. She said she has never been out of her budget.

Kinzer said he did not think the Board was talking in a voting manner at the canvass meeting and said it was a discussion and no consensus was sought. He said it is no

different than how Supervisors are planning for anything else in regards to COVID-19. He said that he did not want to appear to be not proactive. He compared the cost of purchasing land at \$380,000 for some unknown future use to the cost of providing citizens a way to vote in safety.

Knobbe said he disagreed with Kinzer about what happened at the canvass meeting.

Sharma reviewed a resolution extending the collection of the second installment of the 2019 property taxes to April 30, 2020. He said the Governor has issued an order to extend the due date of property taxes and the resolution was in line with that order.

Sharma reviewed a resolution declaring an emergency related to COVID-19. He said in the past the Board has approved similar resolutions regarding emergency situations. He said the State and Federal Governments have already declared the emergency.

Croken asked what effect the emergency declaration would have on Scott County residents.

Knobbe said that several County staff are working on the emergency and the costs of those employees may be eligible for reimbursement from the State or Federal governments.

Sharma said that typically the County would make a declaration and then the State would follow up with its own declaration.

Croken said that the County should have declared a state of emergency earlier.

Knobbe said that the Board did not have a meeting and that a meeting was necessary to make the declaration.

Croken said that the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors is empowered to declare a state of emergency at any time.

Sharma said that was correct but that this was the procedure which has been followed in the past even if it may not be necessary.

Kinzer said that he supported the resolution and that the Chairman had contacted him about the emergency.

Sharma reviewed a beer/liquor license renewal for Glynn's Creek Golf Course.

Moved by Maxwell, seconded by Kinzer at 5:21 p.m. a motion to adjourn. All Ayes.

Tony Knobbe, Chair of the Board
Scott County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: Roxanna Moritz
Scott County Auditor