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Nashua REPORTER

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Budget hearing to be night affair

County sets 'max levy' that would see tax-asking increase by almost 19 percent

By **BOB FENSKE**
Of the Reporter

The Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors on Monday voted to approve its so-called "max levy" for the 2024-25 fiscal year, and if it is enacted, it comes with a steep increase in how much the county will generate in property taxes. During Monday's meeting, board

members unanimously approved setting the public hearing on the max levy, and while supervisors said they'd like the revenue for at least one of the county's three major funds to be lowered, they spent more time discussing what time of day they should hold the hearing.

County Attorney David Laudner said after reading several newspapers and other "forums" over the

weekend, he said "the whole intent of this is to allow the public to come in and make a presentation or object to your budget."

"I'm just curious if an evening meeting might be better to try to comply with not only the letter of the law but also the spirit of it, if that's possible, to allow folks who are working the opportunity to come in."

Supervisors at the meeting agreed that the public hearing should be a "night game."

But they spent a considerable amount of time trying to figure out a time and date where not only all five members of the board could be in attendance but also making

SEE COUNTY BUDGET, 2

Here's a 'speed-camera' heads-up if you are heading to Charles City

Automated traffic cameras to go online soon, but speeders will get a '30-day grace period'

By **TRAVIS FISCHER**
tkfischer@charlescitypress.com

Drivers will need to watch their speed going in and out of Charles City as a series of automated traffic cameras are about ready to come online.

Initially proposed and approved last year, the Charles City Police Department has been working with Altumint Inc. to install cameras at four



Travis Fischer
Traffic cameras will soon be up and running in Charles City.

of Charles City's major arteries, monitoring traffic on South Grand Avenue, Highway 14, Highway 18, and Gilbert Street. The intent of the cameras is to slow down traffic coming into Charles City, particularly near bike trail crossings and on roads where frequent accidents occur.

"We can't be on every road 24/7," said Police Chief Hugh Anderson. "It helps us monitor that traffic."

While originally planned to be ready to go by January, the process of getting the cameras installed has taken longer than anticipated. Delays in getting approval for use of the right-of-ways pushed the installation of the cameras and signage into late January and getting power to the cameras took a few weeks longer, leaving curious drivers wondering if they were operational or not.

"There was a lot involved there," said Anderson.

While the cameras now have power going to them, it could still be a few more days before they are active. Altumint has yet to notify Anderson

SEE CAMERAS, 2



Photo courtesy of Nashua-Plainfield Community Schools

A drone shot shows the progress that has already been made on the new baseball and softball complex that Nashua-Plainfield Community Schools is constructing on land that once housed the Plainfield school building.

THE FRUITS OF AN EARLY SPRING

DIAMOND COMPLEX, ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND GOLF TEAMS JUST AMONG THE FEW ENJOYING RECENT GREAT WEATHER

By **BOB FENSKE**
Of the Reporter

A couple of weeks ago, Nashua-Plainfield Superintendent Todd Liechty was asked if any progress was being made on the school district's diamond project in Plainfield.

"Well, I can tell you this much," Liechty said, "they're moving a lot of dirt right now."

He wasn't kidding, as the photos that accompany this story prove.

Then again, evidence of the early spring Iowa has experienced this year are all around us. In addition to the commencing of work on the new baseball, softball and youth diamonds in Plainfield, sure signs that spring has sprung are everywhere and range from the start of the road construction season to the fact that area high school golf teams, including Nashua-Plainfield's, began their practice season outside.

Granted, as this story is being written Thursday morning, it's a little more seasonable.

Temperatures are in the lower 40s and rain is falling. Hey, at least it's not snowing, right?

But make no mistake about it, spring arrived early this year.

February had 12 days with a high temperatures in at least the 50s, and through the first 14 days of the month, we've been in the 50s and beyond 10 times — capped off by the start of this work week when the high temperatures

SEE WEATHER, 2



Bob Fenske/Reporter

State Rep. Charley Thomson listens as his State Senate counterpart, Sandy Salmon, makes a point during Saturday morning's legislative forum that was put on by the Chickasaw County Farm Bureau.

Area lawmakers leery about overhaul of AEAs

Thomson and Salmon cover a variety of issues during Chickasaw County Farm Bureau forum

By **BOB FENSKE**
Of the Reporter

The two lawmakers who represent Chickasaw County in the Iowa Legislature sounded Saturday like they would both like to tap the brakes on an overhaul of Iowa's Area Education Agencies that has been a focal point of Gov. Kim Reynolds.

Like Reynolds, State Rep. Charley Thomson and State Sen. Sandy Salmon are Republicans, but during a legislative forum sponsored by the Chickasaw County Farm Bureau, the two legislators expressed reservations about overhauling the AEAs.

"As I've said all along, I'm not very happy with the AEA proposal," Thomson said, "and I think they need to start over again basically. That's my posi-

tion in a nutshell."

Salmon said she understands the governor's concerns but also added that lawmakers may need more time on the issue.

"There appears to be but I don't know why there would need to be," Salmon said when one constituent asked if there was a "rush" to get the AEA bill done this year. "I mean we're taking a multi-year approach on property taxes so I don't know why we have to all of a sudden have to do something about the AEAs this year except I know they're concerned about the federal government coming in and monitoring."

The two GOP members, who are in their first terms representing Chickasaw County, covered a wide variety of issues

SEE FORUM, 3

City to have 30-day grace period with traffic cameras

CAMERAS: FROM 1

that they are ready to go live. “They had to do a lot of calibration after the power came on,” said Anderson, who thinks that the cameras could be activated as early as this week. The Charles City Council approved the installation of the cameras last fall, but did so with expressed reservations as the subject of automated law enforcement is a controversial topic in Iowa. The council approved moving forward with the cameras only after feeling comfortable that they would not be used overly aggressively. To abide by the stated purpose of targeting the truly excessive speeders, the automated system is being set to overlook drivers traveling at less than 10 miles-per-hour over the posted speed limit. Specifically, these posted speed limits range from 30 to 45 mph, so drivers will still need to make sure they are bringing their speed down coming into the city. All four cameras track both directions as well, so outgoing drivers will also need to watch their acceleration. Once going live, there will also be a 30-day grace period where flagged drivers are sent a warning instead of a ticket. For those that are flagged by the cameras after the grace period is over, the photos will be reviewed by a Charles City police officer to make sure that the license plate matches the vehicle before a ticket is issued. Tickets will be issued as civil infractions, with a penalty

based on how much over the speed limit the vehicle is going. “They don’t count against your license,” said Anderson. Though the cameras are not yet active, their future in Charles City is already in question as a bill is making its way through the Iowa Legislature that would prohibit the use of remote systems for traffic law enforcement. House File 2595 is the latest in a series of efforts by some legislators to ban automated traffic cameras in the state, this time tying the issue to new restrictions against using electronic devices while driving. If passed into law, the city would have until July 1, 2025, to discontinue using the system. Whether HF 2595 passes or a later effort to ban traffic cameras is successful, Anderson says that he plans to utilize them until the state says otherwise. “We’ll deal these as they come,” said Anderson. On the other hand, if the automated system is successful, Anderson says that other cameras could be considered, particularly on streets around Charles City’s schools. “If we find other areas of concern, there would be discussion on the possibility,” he said. In the meantime, Anderson says that even though the cameras have yet to be turned on, they are already having the desired effect on traffic where the warning signage has been posted. “We’ve seen a reduction in speeds in these areas already,” said Anderson. “That’s what we want. We want these things to work in favor of public safety.”



Photos courtesy of Nashua-Plainfield Community Schools and the Reporter’s Bob Fenske

Two sure signs of our early spring are the work being done on the Nashua-Plainfield baseball and softball complex in Plainfield (above) and the start of a Chickasaw County road project (below).

There are plenty of signs that spring has sprung early

WEATHER: FROM 1

in Nashua were 73, 67 and 69.

THE RECENT SPATE of outstanding weather — at least for those of us who don’t mind relatively snow-less months — brought another sign of spring earlier this week. Road construction season is officially underway. The biggest road project of the year in Chickasaw County got underway on Monday as Croell Inc. workers began working on the more than \$4.21 million overlay project from Highway 18 to the south city limits of Alta Vista. The project also includes a total reconstruction of about 2,600 feet of road in North Washington. “They’re talking about a late May [completion date]. They have a very aggressive schedule,” County Engineer Roman Lensing told the Board of Supervisors on Monday. “It’s great that they’re out there already. It shows you what kind of spring we’ve had, but I don’t know about late May. You have to think we’re going to have some weather days.”

But the 8.6-mile stretch of V18 won’t be the only road project that gets an early start. Lensing also told supervisors that work will begin on a bridge replacement project on 310th Street that is a joint affair between Chickasaw and Bremer counties. **MONDAY ALSO MARKED** the first day that Iowa high school golf teams could start practice. In a normal year, that usually means longtime Nashua-Plainfield golf coach Jeff Trost gathers his players in the Husky Wellness Center to begin hitting golf balls into nets. This, as noted, has not been a normal year. So when was the last time Trost held his first practice? “Well, not in recent years, I can tell you that,” he said with a laugh. “I won’t say it’s never happened but it’s been a while, a long while.” This month is shaping up to be the warmest March in the Nashua area since 2012, when we had 22 days of 50-plus highs that included three days in the 80s and another five in the 70s. “It’s a great way to start the season,”

Trost said. “You actually get to see where the ball is going, instead of 20 feet into the net. We’ll take every nice day we can get, because I’ve been around golf long enough to know that you appreciate the good days, especially in Iowa ... especially in the spring.” **THE BAD NEWS** for Trost and his golfers is that they had to move indoors on Thursday, but Trost was fine with that because of the reason. Rain fell on Thursday in the Nashua area as some parts of the area received close to a half of inch of much-needed precipitation. “It’s never a really good sign to lose track of your ball and only find it because it kicks up dust when it lands,” Trost said. “It’s dry, really dry, and the course needs the rain.” And, more importantly, so do area farm fields as the drought that plagued Iowa growers throughout 2023 has persisted into 2024. The U.S. Drought Monitor’s latest report, released on Thursday, showed that all of Chickasaw, Bremer, Floyd and Butler counties are still experiencing “severe” drought conditions.

Briefs

ISU webinars to be held for beginning/small farmers

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is offering its Farm & Beginning Farmer series, designed exclusively for beginning farmers and small acreage owners. The series is a combination of informative webinars and hands-on, in-person events. It is tailored to provide essential insight and practical advice for those venturing into farming or seeking to enhance their small-scale agricultural operations. Each session, led by industry experts and seasoned professionals, covers critical topics relevant to the challenges and opportunities of small-scale farming. All webinars start at 6 p.m. and are offered through Zoom. The next webinar will be “Manure Management for Small Farms” and will be held on April 11, and the series runs through December. Registration is open to all and is free. Participants can register for each session at <https://go.iastate.edu/FH5MHR>. Miss a session? Email Nerad at Inerad@iastate.edu for the link to the recording.

UIU December grads

Upper Iowa University is pleased to announce the names of its December graduates, which includes Nashua’s Amber Iriarte.

Morningside grads

Morningside University held graduation ceremonies for its undergraduate and graduate degree recipients at the end of the fall semester. Those receiving degrees included Hannah Holthaus and Dawn Wiebbecke of Nashua.



Supervisors to follow ‘spirit of the law’ and hold public hearing on budget and levy in evening session

COUNTY BUDGET: FROM 1

sure they weren’t conflicting with public hearings that county cities and school districts will also be holding. Because of legal publication rules, the earliest the hearing can be held is Monday, March 25, but when Supervisor Travis Suckow said Sumner-Fredericksburg Community Schools will be holding its public hearing that night, board members moved to the following day. The four supervisors at the meeting agreed, but when Board Chairman Scott Cervinske, who was unable to attend most of Monday’s meeting, texted Supervisor Jake Hackman and said he had a prior commitment, board members finally settled on Wednesday, March 27 as the public hearing date. That will mean that the county will not be able to approve a second legal publication until April 1, a week later than supervisors had been considering. Laudner, though, said even if the board holds the hearing on March 25 or 26, he still felt they needed time to

A healthy increase in tax-asking					
Here are the three main levies Chickasaw County uses to fund its annual budget and how they will change when the new budget year begins on July 1.					
Fund	23-24 levy	23-24 revenue	24-25 levy	24-25 revenue	Percent
General Basic	\$3.50	\$3,227,111	\$3.50	\$3,271,534	1.4
General Supplemental	\$1.17233	\$1,080,925	\$2.23213	\$2,086,426	93.0
Rural Services	\$3.31935	\$2,209,055	\$3.70100	\$2,485,638	12.5
SOURCE: Chickasaw County Auditor’s Office					

digest the comments it will receive. “I think you’re going to wait until the first anyway,” Laudner said, “because what happens if you get a lot of feedback ... you’re going to have to spend significant time reworking your budget, correct?” “If you’re going to come off with where you’re at, after a public presentation, you’re not going to do that overnight or in an hour. ... Well, it took you three months to get where you’re at now.” And board members do expect to get that feedback when they convene the hearing at 6 p.m. on March 27 in the Chickasaw County Courthouse third-floor courtroom.

That’s because Chickasaw County’s tax-asking will increase by almost 19 percent in the fiscal year that begins on July 1. The three major levies — General Basic (GB), General Supplemental (GS) and Rural Services Basic (RSB) — will bring in more than 20.4 percent in revenue next year than it will this budget year. Throw in reduced levies for things like debt service and the Pioneer Cemetery Commission, and Hackman said the county’s tax-asking will increase by 18.95 percent. The county’s levy for GB is already maxed out at \$3.50 per \$1,000 valuation so revenue from that levy will

increase by just 1.4 percent — from \$3,227,111 to \$3,271,534. But GS tax-asking is set to jump from just a little more than \$1.08 million to \$2.09 million, an increase of 93 percent. That’s because higher costs in GB next year means the county won’t be able to transfer money from that fund to GS as it has done in recent years. The levy rate for GS would increase from \$1.17233 per \$1,000 valuation to \$2.23213 per \$1,000 valuation. In recent years, the county has also used ending fund balances to offset tax-asking increases. RSB tax-asking would increase from \$2.21 million to a almost \$2.49 mil-

lion, in large part because supervisors want to give 95 percent of the base RSB revenue to Secondary Roads and they are considering moving the costs of two sheriff’s deputies from GB to RSB. “I still think there’s an opportunity to lower GS, at least a little,” said Supervisor Matt Kuhn, who also added that the supervisors could consider moving just one deputy into RSB. Board members, though, decided to go ahead and approve the max levy as it was presented Monday. That, in effect, does leave them some wiggle room, if you will. Under Iowa law, once a maximum levy is published as a legal notice, a county’s board of supervisors can’t increase the levy or the tax-asking. Boards, though, do have the option of lowering tax-asking after a notice is published. “I think we’re going to hear from some people, no doubt about it,” Hackman said Monday afternoon. “We’re far from done, in my opinion, when it comes [to the 2024-25 budget and levy].”

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Board to go to ‘straight pay’ for the county EMS director

New contract will give Knutson salary increase, but no extra pay for working ‘truck’ hours

By Bob Fenske
Of the Reporter

The director of Chickasaw County EMS, it appears, will no longer receive an hourly wage when he takes on the role of a paramedic if he signs a contract extension, but he will receive a \$20,000 increase to his salary.

Board members came to that decision during a Monday meeting when they spent more than 30 minutes discussing the terms of a new contract with EMS Director Joel Knutson.

Supervisors voted 2-1 to increase Knutson’s salary from \$60,000 to \$80,000 a year but also said the salary increase will come at the expense of Knutson receiving an hourly wage when he serves as an ambulance crew member.

Three board members — Chairman Scott Cerwinski, Travis Suckow and Jake Hackman — have all expressed concerns about the hourly-wage language in the first two contracts Knutson has worked under since the service started at the beginning of 2023.

“I guess what I’m getting at is I’d just like to see a set salary,” Suckow said. “I think we can do away with the hourly stuff.”

That led to a lengthy discussion about the ambulance service’s staffing and how much Knutson should be paid once a new contract goes into effect on July 1. Knutson signed a “temporary” contract in the fall of 2022 to help get the service up and running, then signed a year contract once Chickasaw County



Bob Fenske/Reporter

Chickasaw County EMS Director Joel Knutson (left) talks with the Board of Supervisors about changes board members want to make to his contract, beginning on July 1.

EMS began operating. He agreed to a six-month extension this past fall so that future contracts would fall entirely within the county’s fiscal year.

Currently, Knutson is paid \$60,000 to serve as a part-time director and is required to work at least 60 hours during each two-week pay period, but he also receives \$31 per hour when he takes a shift as a crew member.

“I will say the lines get blurred between when I’m a staff paramedic versus when I am a director because even when I’m working a truck as a staff paramedic, I’m still sitting behind my desk doing director things,” Knutson said in response to Suckow’s suggestion. “I wouldn’t be opposed to that. I mean there were so many unknowns when we wrote the contract.”

He said the number of “truck hours” he works has dropped considerably in recent months, and when he was asked if he was comfortable with the service’s level of staffing, he said “we’re getting a lot closer” but pointed out that EMS staff is very cyclical.

“Around the holidays, [it] dips off just a touch because everyone’s busy but

then post-holiday all the way up into the summer, we staff very well. And then, summer we get very thin again because of people’s plans ... kids being out of school, things like that.”

Suckow suggested that board members set Knutson’s salary at \$80,000.

“We’re back where we started a year and a half ago,” County Attorney David Laudner said. “Is there an expectation for rig hours contained in therein or is that just administrative work and we let it run it non-paramedic if there is not a paramedic available?”

Hackman quickly responded. “Straight \$80,000, get the job done,” Hackman replied. “Take hours, take calls.”

But Supervisor Matt Kuhn said he was frustrated with how Suckow came up with the \$80,000 figure.

“I just find it interesting that we just pick a number and looking at the comments and what the surrounding areas pay, I think we’re a little low,” Kuhn said. “And every other time we compare it to other counties and what everyone else is doing ... but yet, we’re not doing that now.”

Kuhn then asked Knutson how he felt about the proposed changes to the contract.

“I guess we won’t know for another year,” Knutson said. “If for \$80,000, I can get it done in a reasonable amount of time ... I think that’s agreeable. To me, it’s tolerable.”

But he asked board members what would happen if midway through the contract and he was “working a ton more” because of staffing levels.

“You can always come back. They’re under no obligation to change it,” Laudner said, “but you can always come back and ask them to change it.”

Hackman said he’d be “open for that.”

In the end, board members voted 2-1 to direct Laudner to make changes to the contract and present it to them at this coming Monday’s meeting.

Hackman and Suckow voted in the affirmative, and Kuhn cast the lone nay vote. Cerwinski was not at Monday’s meeting during the contract discussion, and the fifth supervisor, Steve Breitbach, as he has on all votes on Knutson’s, abstained because he is related to Knutson.

Christians gear up for ‘Holy Week’

Each year in early spring, Christians across the globe celebrate their faith on Easter. Easter commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, an event which is described in the New Testament.

And we’re getting closer to Holy Week; in fact, a week from this Sunday, Christians will celebrate Palm Sunday, the traditional kickoff to the biggest year of the week for churches.

Mass on Easter Sunday annually attracts millions of the faithful. However, many days during the week preceding Easter Sunday, often referred to as Holy Week, also bear significance to faithful Christians.

Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday begins Holy Week and commemorates the entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem. Upon entering the city, Jesus was greeted by crowds waving palm branches. That is why Christians receive palm branches or palm crosses during Palm Sunday Mass.

Holy Wednesday

Holy Wednesday draws attention to the abandonment of Jesus by his disciples. Holy Wednesday services may feature Tenebrae, a religious service characterized by the extinguishing of candles. That portion of the service is meant to symbolize darkness, which is what “Tenebrae” means in Latin.

Maundy Thursday

The Last Supper is commemorated on Maundy Thursday, which also commemorates the Washing of the Feet (Maundy). The Last Supper was Jesus’s final meal with his apostles before his crucifixion. According to Christian scripture, Jesus predicted one of the apostles present at the meal would betray him. This also was when Jesus foretold that Peter will deny knowing him three times before the next morning. According to Trinity College, Maundy Thursday reminds Christians to love others as Jesus loves them.

Good Friday

Good Friday commemorates the trial of Jesus and his resulting death sentence, torture, crucifixion, and burial. It’s hard to characterize any of those things as “good,” which can cause a little confusion among Christians and non-Christians alike. However, Trinity College indicates that, in this context, “good” connotes something holy or pious.

Holy Saturday

Holy Saturday concludes Holy Week. Even though many faithful Christians awake early and don their Sunday best on Easter morning, Holy Saturday celebrations are not muted. On Holy Saturday, Christians may attend a late-night Easter Vigil service that includes a liturgy and the celebration of the Eucharist.

Area lawmakers touch on a wide variety of issues during Farm Bureau legislative forum

FORUM: FROM 1

during the morning forum that was held at the Chickasaw Event Center in New Hampton, but discussion on education in AEAs to the idea that the wide-ranging services AEAs offer have led them away from their core missions.

But those wide-ranging services, Thomson said, should be seen as a positive. He compared the AEA services to rural electric cooperatives and rural telephone companies.

“The beauty of the co-op ... is that businesses in rural Iowa don’t want to go to the last line, they don’t want to go to the most remote farmstead to put in your broadband but the co-ops exist to do that,” he said.

“The same theory in my view applies to AEAs. The AEAs are a system where Tripoli, the smallest of the school districts ... pick a small town, even if you’re in Rudd, you can get pretty high-quality state services for your child at a far better price.”

Thomson added that “it appears the governor wants to move from a co-op model to a fee-for-service model, and I think that could easily leave the rural districts high and dry.”

Salmon agreed.

“You have a district like Tripoli or like Clarksville or maybe Turkey Valley or something like that, and they don’t get enough money to provide their own services. Without the pool of money ... are those rural schools still going to provide those services? That’s the question, and that’s what we can’t get assurance about. That’s why I’ve not supported the bill so far.”

She also said she appreciates the fact that AEAs can help its member school districts in a relatively short amount of time.

“They can respond and help school districts very quickly — like almost turn on a dime — like they did with the Perry



Bob Fenske/Reporter

Chickasaw County Board of Directors member Drew Dietz, who farms in the Nashua area, enjoys a light moment with State Rep. Charley Thomson and State Sen. Sandy Salmon as he introduces them at Saturday’s legislative forum.

shooting,” she said.

The two legislators also said that the final funding for Iowa’s K-12 schools has yet to be determined. Both said it appears likely that lawmakers will agree to raise the minimum pay for the state’s teachers but said that the two chambers have yet to agree on an increase to State Supplemental Aid (SSA), the amount of funds school districts receive for each student it serves.

Reynolds, in her State of the State address two months ago, proposed a 2.5 percent increase but the House has approved a 3 percent increase.

Salmon said the Senate remains uncommitted about how large of an increase to SSA because of budget concerns.

“We don’t know how it’s going to fit with the budget to do the teacher’s salary increases, the school aid increase and whatever needs to be done to

reform these AEAs,” she said. “There’s a lot of moving parts to that.”

The state senator said that work on the budget will begin in earnest this week after the Revenue Estimating Conference meets to set its projections for the state during the 2024-25 fiscal year.

“The three main areas are education, Medicaid and public safety,” she said, “and we’ll see where we end up. It’s the same as always: More requests come before us than taxpayers can fulfill.”

Among the other issues covered during the hour-long forum included:

- Both lawmakers expressed enthusiasm for the work lawmakers are doing when it comes to protecting Iowa farmland. They touted a new bill that Salmon said puts “more teeth” into state laws that do not allow foreign ownership of farmland,

and they also say they support efforts that would not allow state agencies to outbid farmers for land.

“Nobody wants out-of-state interests or the state bidding against farmers for farmland,” he said, “because it distorts the market terribly.”

- Salmon touched on the controversy generated by House File 718, which was passed into law in 2023, and while counties and cities say they are struggling with its ramifications, Salmon said, at most, lawmakers may slightly alter the bill this year.

“We’ve had some blowback from counties and cities about that,” she said.

“What we’re doing this year [is] we may tweak that bill some, but we’re going to let them go through a budget cycle to see how things work and then come back next year with the next step in the plan for the

property taxes.”

- And Thomson again voiced his displeasure with so-called speed cameras, saying he thinks the state should put the kibosh on them.

“The only people who are in favor of speed cameras are city officials, who like the money. They’re trying to combine that with the hands-free driving bill, which is a shotgun marriage of two proposals,” he said during the meeting and he added later that “if they want to raise taxes, they should find another way to do it.”

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Three Chickasaw County incumbents file nominating papers primary

Chickasaw County's auditor and sheriff, along with one of three supervisors up for election, all have filed papers to be on the ballot for the June 4 primary. Candidates who want to be on the ballot for the primary have until 5 p.m. on Friday, March 22, to turn in their candidate papers to the Chickasaw County Auditor's Office. Filing last week were Republican Auditor Sheila Shekleton, Republican Sheriff Ryan Shawver and Democratic

District 1 Supervisor Steve Breitbach. All three are seeking their first full four-year terms in office. Breitbach won a special election in 2021 to fill the vacancy created by the death of Rick Holthaus. Shekleton won an election in 2022 to fill the term vacated by Stephanie Mashek earlier that year and Shawver was appointed sheriff in January 2023 after Marty Hemann retired. Two other county seats are also on the ballot this year. Republican Jake Hackman is currently finishing his second term as the District 3 supervisor while Matt Kuhn, also a Republican, is completing his first term as the District 4 supervisor. Two supervisors — Scott Cerwinske, whose District 2 includes the Nashua area, and Travis Suckow — were elect-

ed in 2022 and aren't up for re-election until 2026. State candidates must have their nominating papers turned in by March 15 to be on the primary ballot. State Rep. Charley Thompson, R-Charles City, is the lone candidate to file thus far in District 58 that covers all of Chickasaw County and most of Bremer and Floyd counties. The other legislator, State Sen. Sandy Salmon, R-Janesville, who represents Chickasaw County, is not up for election this year. Her district also includes the rest of Bremer County, including the city of Waverly, as well as all of Butler county. Those interested in seeking county offices can pick up nominating papers at the Auditor's Office, and those who have questions about the process can call 641-394-2100.

Legal Notice • Legal Notice • Legal Notice • Legal Notice

	NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING -PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX LEVY Proposed NASHUA-PLAINFIELD Property Tax Levy Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025		
Location of Public Hearing: JH/HS Commons 612 Greeley Street Nashua, IA 50658	Date of Public Hearing: 3/25/2024		Time of Public Hearing: 07:00 PM
Location of Notice on School Website: https://www.nashua-plainfield.k12.ia.us/			

At the public hearing any resident or taxpayer may present oral or written objections to, or arguments in favor of the proposed tax levy. After the hearing of the proposed tax levy, the Board will publish notice and hold a hearing on the proposed budget.

		Current Year Final Property Tax Dollar Levy FY 2024	Budget Year Effective Property Tax Dollar Levy (No change in Property Tax Dollars Levied) FY 2025	Budget Year Proposed Property Tax Dollar Levy FY 2025
General Fund Levy	1	2,239,228	2,239,228	2,284,197
Instructional Support Levy	2	111,429	111,429	99,951
Management	3	245,585	245,585	491,394
Amana Library	4	0	0	0
Voted Physical Plant and Equipment	5	341,917	341,917	172,377
Regular Physical Plant and Equipment	6	94,146	94,146	95,883
Reorganization Equalization	7	0	0	0
Public Education/Recreation (Playground)	8	0	0	0
Debt Service	9	0	0	0
Grand Total	10	3,032,305	3,032,305	3,143,802
		Current Year Final Property Tax Rate FY 2024	Budget Year Effective Property Tax Rate (No change in Property Tax Dollars Levied) FY 2025	Budget Year Proposed Property Tax Rate FY 2025
Grand Total Levy Rate		10.62877	10.43626	10.82001
Property Tax Comparison		Current Year Property Taxes	Proposed Property Taxes	Percent Change
Residential property with an Actual/Assessed Value of \$100,000		581	501	-13.77
Commercial property with an Actual/Assessed Value of \$100,000		581	501	-13.77

Note: Actual/Assessed Valuation is multiplied by a Rollback Percentage to get to the Taxable Valuation to calculate Property Taxes. Residential and Commercial properties have the same Rollback Percentage at \$100,000 Actual/Assessed Valuation. Reasons for tax increase if proposed exceeds the current: Increase in enrollment.

No. 23763
3/15/24

Legal Notice • Legal Notice • Legal Notice • Legal Notice

COUNTY NAME: CHICKASAW COUNTY	NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING -PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX LEVY Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025	COUNTY NUMBER: 19
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The County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing on the proposed Fiscal Year County tax asking as follows:
Meeting Date: 3/27/2024 Meeting Time: 06:00 PM Meeting Location: Courtroom, 3rd Floor of the Courthouse, 8 E Prospect, New Hampton, IA 50659
At the public hearing any resident or taxpayer may present objections to, or arguments in favor of the proposed tax levy. After the hearing of the proposed tax levy, the Board will publish notice and hold a hearing on the proposed county budget.

County Website (if available) https://www.chickasawcounty.iowa.gov/ County Telephone Number (641) 394-2100

Iowa Department of Management	Current Year Certified Property Tax FY 2023/2024	Budget Year Effective Tax FY 2024/2025	Budget Year Proposed Tax FY 2024/2025
Taxable Valuations-General Services	922,031,747	934,724,123	934,724,123
Requested Tax Dollars-Countywide Rates	4,776,130	4,776,130	5,823,472
Tax Rate-Countywide	5.17386	5.10967	6.21964
Taxable Valuations-Rural Services	665,508,448	671,612,468	671,612,468
Requested Tax Dollars-Additional Rural Levies	2,209,055	2,209,055	2,485,638
Tax Rate-Rural Additional	3.31935	3.28918	3.70100
Rural Total	8.49321	8.39885	9.92064
Tax Rate Comparison-Current VS. Proposed			
Residential property with an Actual/Assessed Valuation of \$100,000	Current Year Certified Property Tax FY 2023/2024	Budget Year Proposed Tax FY 2024/2025	Percent Change
Urban Taxpayer	283	288	1.77
Rural Taxpayer	464	460	-0.86
Tax Rate Comparison-Current VS. Proposed			
Commercial property with an Actual/Assessed Value of \$100,000	Current Year Certified Property Tax FY 2023/2024	Budget Year Proposed Tax FY 2024/2025	Percent Change
Urban Taxpayer	283	288	1.77
Rural Taxpayer	464	460	-0.86

Reasons for tax increase if proposed exceeds the current: General Supplemental levy and Rural Services Basic levy has increased. General Supplement increase due to the increase cost of operating expense, general and tort insurance and health insurance . Rural Services increase is due to increased daily expenses and moving two law enforcement deputies.

No. 23771
3/14/24 3/15/24

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CHICKASAW COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MINUTES March 4, 2024

The Board convened on Monday, March 4, 2024, at 9:00 AM with members Breitbach, Kuhn, Suckow, Hackman and Cerwinske present in the Boardroom on the second floor of the Court House, New Hampton, Iowa. Chairperson Cerwinske called the meeting to order. Also present were Attorney David Laudner, Auditor Sheila Shekleton, Bob Fenske, member of media, Terry Johnson, Short Elliott Hendrickson (SEH) Rustin Lingbeek, Engineer Roman Lensing, Assessor Iowa, for \$143,838.75. Roll Call: Ayes: Hackman, Suckow, Cerwinske. Nays: Breitbach, Kuhn. Motion carried.

Motion by Hackman, seconded by Suckow to direct the County Attorney to draft two resolutions one to approve contract and bond and the second to award the contract for Chickasaw Heritage Building Center Water Main Extension Project to Popp Excavating, Inc, Osage Iowa, for \$143,838.75. Roll Call: Ayes: Hackman, Suckow, Cerwinske. Nays: Breitbach, Kuhn. Motion carried.

Discussion of the Urban Renewal Plan updates with Alhers & Cooney Attorney Jason Comisky (Phone). Motion by Hackman, seconded by Suckow to approve the agenda for March 4, 2024 with the 9:40 AM Custodian Dave Gorman tabled to a later date. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Suckow, seconded by Breitbach to approve the meeting minutes from February 26, 2024. Roll Call: Ayes: Suckow, Breitbach, Cerwinske. Abstained: Hackman and Kuhn. Motion carried.

Motion by Hackman, seconded by Breitbach to approve the meeting minutes from February 27, 2024. Roll Call: Ayes: Hackman, Breitbach, Suckow, Cerwinske. Abstained: Kuhn. Motion carried.

Motion by Breitbach, seconded by Suckow to amend the February 22, 2024 minutes to have Supervisor Cerwinske leaving at 2:30 PM and have the adjournment read, Motion by Kuhn, seconded by Suckow to adjourn at 2:45 PM. Roll Call: Ayes: Kuhn, Suckow, Breitbach. Absent: Hackman and Cerwinske. Roll Call: Breitbach, Suckow, Kuhn. Abstained Hackman and Cerwinske. Motion carried.

Public comment. Terry Johnson asked about the owl working last week and that he had negative feelings about the Chickasaw Heritage Building Center Water Main Extension Project. Motion by Hackman, seconded by Suckow to set the 2nd Monday of the month for the end of quarter department meetings: March 11 @ 1:00 P.M., June 10 @ 1:00 P.M., September 9 @ 1:00 P.M., and December 9 @ 1:00 P.M.. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried. Motion by Kuhn, seconded by Breitbach to open Public Hearing Pursuant to Iowa Code Section 26.12 for Proposed Public Improvement Project at 9:12 AM. Roll Call: Ayes: Kuhn, Breitbach, Suckow, Hackman, and Cerwinske. Motion carried.

Discussion for and against Chickasaw Heritage Building Center Water Main Extension Project. No written

comment.

Motion by Hackman, seconded by Suckow to close Public Hearing Pursuant to Iowa Code Section 26.12 for Proposed Public Improvement Project at 9:23 AM. Roll Call: Ayes: Hackman, Suckow, Breitbach, Kuhn, and Cerwinske. Motion carried.

Motion by Hackman, seconded by Suckow to direct the County Attorney to draft two resolutions one to approve contract and bond and the second to award the contract for Chickasaw Heritage Building Center Water Main Extension Project to Popp Excavating, Inc, Osage Iowa, for \$143,838.75. Roll Call: Ayes: Hackman, Suckow, Cerwinske. Nays: Breitbach, Kuhn. Motion carried.

Discussion of the Urban Renewal Plan updates with Alhers & Cooney Attorney Jason Comisky (Phone).

Motion by Hackman, seconded by Suckow to approve RESOLUTION #03-04-24-09 FOR A COUNTY TO AWARD CONTRACT & DELEGATE CONTRACT SIGNING IN DOC EXPRESS-WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors, hereafter referred to as "the Board", believes the Bridge Replacement - PPCB Project BROS-C019(111)—5F-19, hereafter referred to as "the project" is in the best interest of Chickasaw County, Iowa, and the residents thereof. The project is defined as Bridge Replacement Project—PPCB on 310th St., over East Fork Wapsipinicon River, S34, T94, R12; and WHEREAS, the Board has sought appropriate professional guidance for the concept and planning for the project and followed the steps as required by the Code of Iowa for notifications, hearings, and bidding/letting" and HEREAAS, the Board finds this resolution appropriate and necessary to protect, preserve, and improve the rights, privileges, property, peace, safety, health, welfare, comfort, and convenience of Chickasaw County and its citizens, all as provided for in and permitted by section 331.301 of the Code of Iowa; and IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED, by the Board to accept the bid from Peterson Contractors Inc. in the amount of \$1,215,158.05 and awards to associated contract(s) to the same; Dated at Chickasaw County, Iowa, this 4th day of March, 2024 /ss/ Scott Cerwinske, Chairman, Aye: Hackman, Suckow, Breitbach, Kuhn, Cerwinske /ss/Attest: Sheila Shekleton Auditor The full text of the resolution can be obtained at the Auditor's Office or online on county's website https://www.chickasawcounty.iowa.gov under Departments, Board of Supervisors, Resolutions.

Motion by Hackman, seconded by Kuhn to approve RESOLUTION #03-04-24-10 FOR A COUNTY TO AWARD CONTRACT & DELEGATE CONTRACT SIGNING IN DOC EX-

PRESS WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors, hereafter referred to as "the Board", believes the Traffic Sign Project HSIP-SWAP-C019(112)—FJ-19, hereafter referred to as "the project" is in the best interest of Chickasaw County, Iowa, and the residents thereof. The project is defined as Traffic Signs Project on B-16, B-22, B-28, B-33, B-44, B-54, B-57, T-76, V-56, V-64, 225th St., Kenwood Ave. & South Linn Ave.; and WHEREAS, the Board has sought appropriate professional guidance for the concept and planning for the project and followed the steps as required by the Code of Iowa for notifications, hearings, and bidding/letting" and WHEREAS, the Board finds this resolution appropriate and necessary to protect, preserve, and improve the rights, privileges, property, peace, safety, health, welfare, comfort, and convenience of Chickasaw County and its citizens, all as provided for in and permitted by section 331.301 of the Code of Iowa; and IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED, by the Board to accept the bid from Iowa Plains Signing, Inc. in the amount of \$65,770.00 and awards to associated contract(s) to the same; Dated at Chickasaw County, Iowa, this 4th day of March, 2024 /ss/ Scott Cerwinske, Chairman, Aye: Hackman, Kuhn, Breitbach, Suckow, Cerwinske /ss/Attest: Sheila Shekleton Auditor The full text of the resolution can be obtained at the Auditor's Office or online on county's website https://www.chickasawcounty.iowa.gov under Departments, Board of Supervisors, Resolutions.

Motion by Kuhn, seconded by Breitbach to approve RESOLUTION #03-04-24-11 FOR A COUNTY TO AWARD CONTRACT & DELEGATE CONTRACT SIGNING IN DOC EXPRESS-WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors, hereafter referred to as "the Board", believes the Pavement Markings Project FM-C019(114)—55-19, hereafter referred to as "the project" is in the best interest of Chickasaw County, Iowa, and the residents thereof. The project is defined as Pavement Markings Project on various county roads; and WHEREAS, the Board has sought appropriate professional guidance for the concept and planning for the project and followed the steps as required by the Code of Iowa for notifications, hearings, and bidding/letting" and WHEREAS, the Board finds this resolution appropriate and necessary to protect, preserve, and improve the rights, privileges, property, peace, safety, health, welfare, comfort, and convenience of Chickasaw County and its citizens, all as provided for in and permitted by section 331.301 of the Code of Iowa; and IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED, by the Board to accept the bid from Vogel Traffic Services, Inc. in

the amount of \$171,883.10 and awards to associated contract(s) to the same; Dated at Chickasaw County, Iowa, this 4th day of March, 2024 /ss/ Scott Cerwinske, Chairman, Aye: Kuhn, Breitbach, Suckow, Hackman, Cerwinske /ss/Attest: Sheila Shekleton Auditor The full text of the resolution can be obtained at the Auditor's Office or online on county's website https://www.chickasawcounty.iowa.gov under Departments, Board of Supervisors, Resolutions.

Motion by Hackman, seconded by Suckow to move forward with a 28E agreement with the City of New Hampton for a locally let PCC Paving Project on Kenwood Ave, from 210th Street to U.S Highway 18 and direct County Attorney to draw the contract up with terms of a five-year contract, interest free, and five annual payments. The first payment set for July 5, 2025. Roll Call: Aye: Hackman, Suckow, Breitbach, Kuhn, Cerwinske. Motion carried.

Motion by Kuhn, seconded by Breitbach to approve the EMS remodeling project contract for \$169,162.00, with Stanton Electric to be Contract Manager, authorize chair signature, make sure we have liability insurance, and payment will come from EMS budget and ARPA budget. Supervisor Kuhn called a question.

Motion by Hackman, seconded by Suckow to amend motion to pay the \$169,162.00 for the EMS remodeling project out of EMS fund Supervisor Hackman called a question. Roll Call: Ayes: Hackman, Suckow. Nays: Breitbach, Kuhn, Cerwinske. Motion failed. Motion by Kuhn, seconded by Breitbach to amend 1st motion to approve the EMS remodeling project contract for \$169,162.00, with Stanton Electric to be Contract Manager, authorize chair signature, make sure we have liability insurance, and payment not to exceed \$64,000.00 will come from ARPA budget and the rest from EMS budget. Roll Call: Ayes: Kuhn, Breitbach, Cerwinske Nays: Suckow, Hackman. Motion carried.

Discussed Health and Dental Insurance renewal.

Budget work session Consensus of the board to set Public Hearing for Tax Levies for March 25 at 1:00 PM next week's meeting.

Motion by Hackman, seconded by Suckow to approve RESOLUTION 03-04-24-12 WHEREAS, the Chickasaw County Compensation Board meets annually to recommend a compensation schedule for elected officials for the fiscal year immediately following, in accordance with Iowa Code Sections 331.905 and 331.907, and WHEREAS, the Chickasaw County Compensation Board met on December 6, 2023 and made the fol-

lowing salary recommendations for the following elected officials for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024:

Elected Official, Current Salary, Proposed increase, Recommended Salary. Auditor: 72,351.38, \$6,511.62, \$78,863.00

County Attorney: \$121,641.77, \$10,947.76, \$132,589.53 Recorder: \$72,342.14, 6,510.79, \$78,852.93

Sheriff: \$99,616.32, \$8,965.37, 108,581.79

Supervisors: \$33,951.65, \$3055.65, \$37,007.30

Treasurer: \$72,342.14, \$6,510.79, \$78,852.93

WHEREAS, the Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors may decrease the recommendation for the elected officials--so long as the decrease is by an equal percentage--and also may decrease the recommendation for the Supervisors irrespective of any decrease for the other elected officials; and WHEREAS, the Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors intends to decrease the recommendation for the Supervisors by 6.7% and the recommendation for the other elected officials by 66.7%; THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors approves the following salary adjustments for the following elected officials for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024:

Elected Official, Current Salary, Proposed Increase, Recommended Salary Auditor: \$72,351.38, \$2170.54, \$74,521.92

County Attorney: \$121,641.77, \$3,649.25, \$125,291.02 Recorder: \$72,342.14, \$2,170.26, 74,512.40

Sheriff: \$99,616.32, \$2988.49, \$102,604.81

Supervisors: \$33,951.65, \$1,018.55, \$34,970.20

Treasurer: \$72,342.14, \$2,170.26, \$74,512.40

Approved on this 4th day of March 2024. /ss/ Scott Cerwinske, Chairman, Aye: Hackman, Suckow, Cerwinske. Nays: Kuhn, Breitbach. /ss/Attest: Sheila Shekleton Auditor Committee Assignments Supervisor Cerwinske, Floyd, Mitchell, Chickasaw County Landfill, February 28.

Motion by Kuhn, seconded by Suckow to adjourn at 11:57 AM. Roll Call: Kuhn, Suckow, Breitbach, Hackman, Cerwinske, Motion carried. Scott Cerwinske, Chairperson Board of Supervisors ATTEST: Sheila Shekleton, Secretary to the Board

No. 23770
3/14/24 3/15/24

Legal Notice

THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT FOR Chickasaw COUNTY IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF David Allen Korinke, Deceased CASE NO. ESPR003201 NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATOR AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of David Allen Korinke, Deceased, who died on or about February 22, 2024: You are hereby notified that on March 6, 2024, the undersigned was appointed administrator of the estate.

Notice is hereby given that all persons indebted to the estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned, and creditors having claims against the estate shall file them with the clerk of the above-named district court, as provided by law, duly authenticated, for allowance, and unless so filed by the later to occur four months from the date of the second publication of this notice or one month from the date of the mailing of this notice (unless otherwise allowed or paid) a claim is thereafter forever barred. Dated on March 11, 2024

Sandra Lawrenz Administrator of the Estate 110 5th Street NW Rockford IA 50468

Judith O'Donohoe, ICIS#: AT0005849 Attorney for the Administrator ELWOOD, O'DONOHUE, BRAUN & WHITE, LLP 116 North Main Street PO Box 307 Charles City, IA 50616

Date of second publication 21st day of March

No. 23775
3/14/24 3/21/24

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Supervisors move ahead with water project at Heritage

By Bob Fenske
Of the Reporter

When it was all said and done, it turned out that the chairman of the Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors didn't need to call into Monday's meeting.

Scott Cerwinski, who was unable to attend Monday's meeting, did make a brief appearance via telephone. In large part, it was because many thought he would be the tie-breaking vote to officially award a contract to an Osage firm that will do the work to enable the county-owned Heritage Building Center to hook up to the city of New Hampton's water system.

It turned out Cerwinski wasn't needed as one of the board members, Matt Kuhn, who had consistently been opposed to the project, had a change of heart and voted to approve the contract with Popp Excavating.

"I had several constituents reach out to me, and they made some really good points," Kuhn said after the meeting. "They helped me change my mind. We got such a good price on it ... and if we ever sell the building, it's certainly going to be a plus to have [city water]."

The Heritage is just outside

the city limits and currently houses the county's Veterans Affairs office and is also home to several non-profit organizations. Concerns over water quality led supervisors last year to explore hooking into New Hampton's system.

The city agreed, as long as the county installed a larger-than-needed pipe and a "flusher." At one point, though, the estimated cost of the project was almost \$230,000, and

Kuhn, along with Supervisor Steve Breitbach, voiced concerns about moving ahead.

When supervisors, though, opened bids during a meeting last week, Popp submitted the low bid at \$143,838.76, and on

Monday, they learned that in all likelihood that price will be even lower after a change order is approved.

"It's hard to beat that price," Kuhn said, "and that was a big reason I voted yes today."

Breitbach, who has supported putting in a "conditioner system," did vote no, but Kuhn was joined by the rest of the board — Jake Hackman, Travis Suckow and Cerwinski — in giving final approval to the project.

Legal Notice

THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT
FOR CHICKASAW COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF
THE ESTATE OF
Robert Thran, Deceased
CASE NO. ESPR003202
NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF
EXECUTOR AND NOTICE TO
CREDITORS

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of Robert Thran, Deceased, who died on or about February 15, 2024:

You are hereby notified that on March 7th, 2024, the undersigned was appointed administrator of the estate.

Notice is hereby given that all persons indebted to the estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned, and creditors having claims against the estate shall file them with the clerk of the above named district court, as provided by law, duly authenticated, for allowance, and unless so filed by the later to occur four months from the date of the second publication of this notice or one month from the date of the mailing of this notice (unless otherwise allowed or paid) a claim is thereafter forever barred.

Dated on 3/11/24

Anthony Thran, Executor of the Estate
102 Dawn Drive
Nashua, IA 50658

Christine B. Skilton, ICIS#: AT0007262
Attorney for the Administrator
Cronin, Skilton & Skilton, P.L.L.C.
Cronin, Skilton & Skilton, P.L.L.C.,
205 Brasher Street
P.O. Box 39
Nashua, IA 50658-0039

Date of second publication 21st day of March.

No. 23778
3/15/24 3/22/24

Legal Notice • Legal Notice

NASHUA-PLAINFIELD COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Special Board Meeting
February 28, 2024
Nashua-Plainfield JH/HS
Commons 5:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order
Meeting was called to order at 5:01 pm by President Pat Lentz. Present: Laura Folkerts, Chris Hagen, Cody Jensen, Lara Lawrence, Patrick Lentz. Also Present: Elementary Principal Shannon Wurzer, JH/HS Principal Dean Young-blut, Superintendent Todd Liechty, and Board Secretary Ashley Ratliff

II. Approve Agenda
Motion by Laura Folkerts, Second by Cody Jensen to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Approve Fundraiser
Motion by Laura Folkerts, Second by Lara Lawrence to approve the Cookie Dough Fundraiser for Instrumental Music. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Approve Interagency Agreements
Motion by Laura Folkerts, Second by Chris Hagen to approve the Interagency Agreements with Dubuque, Clarksville, and Johnston. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Citizen Comments on Budget Issues
Some individuals were concerned with how the budget cuts would directly affect them, and others were concerned with the long-term sustainability of the school district.

VI. Report on Current Fiscal Year Expenditures
Superintendent Todd Liechty went over the report on current fiscal year expenditures. No action was taken.

VII. Enrollment and Budget Predictions Moving Forward

Superintendent Todd Liechty went over the report on current fiscal year expenditures. No action was taken.

VIII. Recommendations and Budget Reductions and Options
Superintendent Todd Liechty reviewed his recommendations with the board on the proposed budget reductions.

IX. School Board Deliberations and Action on Budget Reductions
Motion by Chris Jensen, Second by Lara Lawrence to approve 2 BLT team members in each building instead of 6 and to eliminate the Instructional Coach position in the Elementary and move them into the classroom. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Laura Folkerts, second by Lara Lawrence to flex unspent TQ Funds to the General Fund at the end of the fiscal year, which is estimated to be around \$10,000. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Lara Folkerts, second by Chris Hagen to approve reducing the current health insurance stipend from \$700/mo to the cost of single health insurance on Plan 2 in the amount of \$563.64 (for staff hired prior to FY24) starting in FY25. Motion carried 4-1.

X. Adjourn
Laura Folkerts adjourned at 7:36 pm, seconded by Lara Lawrence. Motion carried unanimously.

The next regular Board Meeting will be held on Monday, March 11 at 7 pm in the MS/HS Commons.

Ashley Ratliff
SBO/Board Secretary
Pat Lentz
Board President

No. 23772
3/15/24



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Laurie Tiemessen/Reporter

Chickasaw County Cattlemen scholarships

Seven area students — (from left) Jalyynn Pratt, Tori Bearman, Ethan Swehla, Trinity Brincks, Ava Throndson, Adriana Tiedt and Leander Reicks — pose for a photo after each received a \$1,000 scholarship from the Chickasaw County Cattlemen’s Association during the group’s annual banquet that was held late last month at the Pub at the Pinicon in New Hampton.

Rewards outweigh the pitfalls when it comes to officiating

OFFICIALS: FROM 8

I want kids in the future to have the same opportunities I had, the same chances to compete that my sons had. And you know what? You need referees, umpires and starters to have games, meets and tournaments.

Trey and I both belong to the North Iowa Officials Association (NIOA), a group that assigns games to us and recently sent out a desperate plea — my words; not theirs — for area residents to consider leaving the stands and becoming officials. “Now would be the time to give some serious thought about becoming a sports official,” the NIOA letter stated, “because scheduled contests in your community and surrounding communities will not be played if there are no available officials to officiate these contests. That may be the case, starting with the 2024 baseball/softball seasons.”

In other words, we need you. Our kids need you.

Everyone knows the pitfalls of being a ref or an umpire. You will never ever make all of the people in the stands happy all the time. You will get grief from time to time. Trust me, I know that by heart.

But the rewards, people, the reward are great.

You get paid. Not a lot, mind you, but it’s a good second gig. When I started officiating baseball in 2021, I joked that my umpire checks were my “Colorado money”

because Noah was playing football for the Buffaloes. Today, I joke that the checks are my “Southern Illinois” money so that I can spend this fall traveling around the Midwest to watch my son play for the Salukis.

The real rewards, however, with officiating go far beyond the extra cash an official pockets; instead, they are all about the relationships you make with so many different people. From coaches to players to athletic directors to the folks who man the concession stand, you’re going to meet a lot of cool people.

And best of all, you’ll work side-by-side with partners who share the same passion you have for the game and the lessons they teach.

I’ve worked with dozens of umpires over the course of the last three years. Some I’ve known for years; some I literally met for the first time when I pulled into my parking spot 45 minutes before game time.

They help me with this craft every single morning and every single night. I’ve learned countless baseball lessons from them, but I’ve also learned just as many real-life lessons from them.

Organizations like the NIOA make it easier than ever to get into officiating.

When I was talking with Mike Kalvig about officiating his first-ever state championship game, he reminded me of how far we’ve come since I first dabbled into officiating years ago.

“Here I was in college and back then you had to go out and find your own games,” he said. “On one hand, it was a great learning experience because I had to write letters to the ADs and go through managing my own schedule. That was great, but with the assignors we have now, it’s so much easier to get into this vocation.”

It is, yet here we are facing a dire need for folks to put on the stripes and set foot on the gridiron, the court and the mat or to put on the blue and step on to the diamond.

And the officials we have are graying. I’m 58, but at least for me as an official of under-varsity basketball and varsity baseball, I’m middle-aged.

I ran up and down the court on 26 different days this winter, and more than half those days, I was the kid on the crew.

Look, I get it. It can be scary standing out in front of God and everyone — including fans who take the games way too seriously — and call holding or a block or a strike or a ball or near-fall points.

Your goal doesn’t need to be a state championship game official.

It doesn’t even need to be working varsity games.

We need you just as much for that seventh-grade basketball game or that junior varsity wrestling tournament. Don’t do it for the money; do it for the relationships you’ll establish.

And do it for the kids.

Kalvig says he was hooked ‘immediately’ on officiating

KALVIG: FROM 8

my first state championship game, but once the ball was in the air, as an official, you just remind yourself that it’s just another game.”

Kalvig, Hoffert and Steege have worked together for the past two seasons, but over the years Kalvig said he has worked games with scores of officials. And over the past 25 years, he’s learned something from almost every one of them.

“I think what I’ve loved about doing this job is that it really is a fraternity,” he said. “We talk about a lot of things — good calls, not-so-good calls, mechanics and everything else — and the guys you work with, they help you become better.”

Kalvig’s basketball season, however, didn’t end with the girls state tournament, where he also helped call a Class 3A opening round game between Des Moines Christian and Benton. Instead, the following week, he worked two games at the boys state tournament — a Class 2A opening round game between Unity Christian and Underwood and a Class 1A semifinal game between North Linn and Winfield-Mount Union.

“I can’t remember the exact year I worked my first state tournament,” he said, “but I can tell you how I felt when I found out I was going to get to go to state. I was really excited. Again, it’s something you strive for and when you consider they bring 60 [officials] to the girls tournament and 50 to the boys ... it’s a huge honor.”

But when he first started calling fouls and violations 25 years ago, Kalvig wasn’t thinking about state tournaments; instead, the money was nice, especially as a college student, and donning the stripes meant he could stay involved in the game.

“I was hooked almost immediately,” he said. “When it comes right down to it, officiating is really about the people — the coaches, the players, the guys you work with, the fans. ... I know it gets heated at times. It’s the nature of the business,

right? But the relationships you gain, you build, when you ref, that, at least for me, is why you keep doing it.”

He had those early mentors — those officials from Nashua — and partners who helped him along the way.

“It’s nice to see someone like Mike get a championship game,” said Trost, who still works high school and college football games. “He was one of those kids who has a really good temperament for officiating. He still does, but if I said anything to him back then, it was probably more about how much fun you’ll have. The relationships, that’s what makes officiating so much fun. That and staying involved in sports. You can’t play forever, but you can officiate a long, long time.”

Kalvig said the unsung heroes for many officials are the family members who realize that their spouse or parent is going to spend numerous nights away from home.

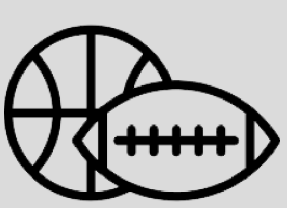
Kalvig, the chief financial officer at Central Rivers Area Education Agency, spent more than 30 nights this past winter on a basketball court, not at home.

“If they’re not supportive of me doing something like this,” he said, “it isn’t going to work. Jill’s home hauling the kids to all their things so I can go officiate. If she wasn’t supportive, I wouldn’t be doing this.”

And despite having spent a quarter of a century running up and down the court, Kalvig is one of the young officials in Iowa.

Much has been written about the shortage of officials in the state of Iowa, one that is beginning to affect all sports. Kalvig, as most current officials will, makes a solid pitch to those who once played.

“I’d love to see more kids get involved,” he said. “For the college guys, I tell them, hey, you’ll make some money and you’ll get to give back to the sport that you love. Your goal doesn’t have to be to work state or work a championship game, it can just be staying involved and making sure kids have the same opportunities you had.”



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The Class 1A state girls basketball championship game officials — (from left) Casey Hoffert, Nate Steege and Mike Kalvig — pose for a photo with the bench official, Deidra Mohr — before the game between North Linn and Newell-Fonda was played earlier this month.

REACHING A REF MILESTONE

NASHUA OFFICIAL HONORED TO WORK HIS FIRST STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

By Bob Fenske
Of the Reporter

When Mike Kalvig was a student at Nashua-Plainfield back in the 1990s, he knew plenty of folks in his hometown who worked as officials; in fact, in a way, Nashua was a “cradle” of officials.

“I had guys like Cary Griffith, Jeff Trost, Randy Morris, Greg Henn and Rod Wilson who all officiated,” he said, “and they

encouraged me — or at least were really good examples to follow — that this might be something I’d like to do, that I’d be interested in doing.”

So back in 1998, during his first year of college, he took the basketball officiating test, bought a striped shirt and went to work as a referee. Twenty-five seasons later, Kalvig reached one of the pinnacles of his “second profession” earlier this month when he officiated his

first state championship game.

“It was an honor, a milestone, and I was really humbled to be selected,” he said. “I think for a lot of officials — most of us played sports in school and by nature are competitive people — making a state tournament, getting to call a championship game, that’s a goal a lot of us have.”

That dream became a reality on March 2, when Kalvig and his officiating partners,

Waverly’s Casey Hoffert and Parkersburg’s Nate Steege, took the court at Wells Fargo Arena and called the Class 1A girls state basketball championship game in which North Linn beat Newell-Fonda 67-52.

“It was a thrill, I won’t lie, but at the same time, we were there to do a job,” Kalvig said. “It’s a game I’ll probably always remember because, yes, it was

SEE KALVIG, 7

If our kids are going to play, we need you

Nashua-Plainfield opened its football season last fall on a Thursday. The reason? There were no officials available to work a Friday night game.

This past winter, the South Winneshiek Invitational wrestling tournament was held on a Friday evening, and while there were other factors at work, one of the reasons the tourney was not held on a Saturday is the host school wasn’t sure it could nail down enough officials to work it.

A month later, a high school basketball doubleheader had to be postponed because ... you guessed it, there were no officials to work it.

This past Saturday afternoon, I met with my buddy Trey Becker at his Charles City home

to go over the baseball rules test and we went over our schedules for this upcoming summer.

“Carrie will be happy,” he said with a laugh as he referred to his wife, “because she won’t have to see me for a month.”

I took a quick glance at my schedule, which begins with a varsity doubleheader at Riceville on Thursday, May 16. Over the course of the next 35 weeknights, I have five of them off. One is Memorial Day, three are Tuesdays and one is a Thursday. I will also work 10 mornings and two Saturday tournaments.

It’s not like I’m the greatest umpire



Kelly Terpstra/Reporter

Jay Marley, who will become Nashua-Plainfield’s superintendent July 1, is also an accomplished wrestling referee and baseball umpire.

to ever don the blue. I think I’m solid as an umpire, although I know some would argue that point, but the reason my life from May 16 to July 3 will be nothing more than work — here at the newspaper and on diamonds from Belmond to Nashua — is we simply don’t have enough officials.

Long story short, we need you.

Pick a sport and it has an official shortage. I’ve written this before; heck, I’ve preached enough about it on these pages

that people are probably sick of it.

But I will continue to pontificate because I find tremendous value in extra-curricular activities, be them sports, music, speech or drama. Some of the best lessons I learned in high school many moons ago did not come in the classroom; they came on the football field, the basketball court, the baseball diamond, the stage and the band room.

SEE OFFICIALS, 7

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