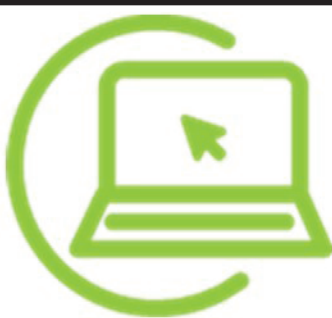




Nashua REPORTER

Catching up
with former
N-P girls
track star
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EMS director to retire next year

Vikturek tells City Council she hopes to leave position by April 1, says there’s interest in job

By Kelly Terpstra
Of the Reporter

Zenda Vikturek, the Nashua Area EMS Director, informed the Nashua City Council at Monday’s meeting that she is planning on retiring next year.

The ambulance service has been a success since it was launched just

over two years ago on July 1, 2023, but Vikturek would like to be able to hire her replacement soon and before she steps down from her leadership position after a planned retirement date that would take place in roughly nine months.

“I would like to be retired by April 1 next year,” said Vikturek.

Vikturek said the ambulance ser-

vice has responded to 102 calls so far this year inside Nashua’s city limits. She said covering shifts in the daytime has become more difficult because she incurred an injury recently.

“The biggest problem we’re having right now is daytime coverage because I broke my wrist and I can’t do anything until the 1st of

September,” said Vikturek.

As far as how the hiring process will be handled to replace her once she steps down, that’s not concrete as of yet, but she said there are a few people that have shown interest in the job.

SEE CITY COUNCIL, 4



Bob Fenske/Reporter and Heather Hackman/Nashua Public Library Director Brock Barnabas (above) “TPs” one of his “volunteers” during his Family Fun Night “dragon trainer” program while Joella Schmitt (below) pets a “dragon” during a Nashua Public Library program on Wednesday evening.

PUTTING THE FUN INTO FAMILY NIGHT

NASHUA PUBLIC LIBRARY ‘LOCKS UP’ WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULES FOR NASHUA AREA FAMILIES

By Bob Fenske
Of the Reporter

Brock Barnabas — using a leaf blower no less — spewed toilet paper all over the kids gathered at the Nashua Public Library Wednesday evening, and trust us, the youngsters loved it.

Two weeks before, Pikachu and Mario were at the library and last week, the library hosted a carnival.

And guess what? The kids loved those programs, too.

Welcome to “Level Up at Your Library,” the summer reading program that has filled the Wednesday night schedule for numerous families in and around Nashua.

“It’s been a fun month,” Library Director

SEE LIBRARY, 3



We could use a little drying out

Nashua has received more than double normal rainfall during July

By Bob Fenske
Of the Reporter

Mother Nature, dang it, went too far this week; after all, that rain she showered on the area meant some of us couldn’t get our Harrington’s Sweetcorn.

Area sweet corn aficionados awoke both Wednesday and Thursday to social media posts in which Harrington Sweetcorn LLC announced that overnight rains both days meant we’d have to take a break from what most of us believe is the best dang corn in the land.

“Due to another 1 1/2 inches of rain, we will not have any trucks out selling today,” a Facebook post read on Thursday morning, although Harrington’s was available at the so-called homestead.

Still, this is getting ridiculous, isn’t it?

The official National Weather Service reporting station for Nashua, which is located at the Northeast Iowa Research and Demonstration Farm just to the southwest of the city, had received 8.61 inches of rain in July as of Thursday morning.

That’s more than double — or 229.6 percent — the normal 3.75 inches that usually fall during the first 24 days of the month.

“You need a kayak to get around anywhere these days,” ISU Extension Agronomist Terry Basol said with a laugh before turning serious.

“Honestly, we could use a little drying out right

SEE WEATHER, 2

RAINY MONTH

Here are rain totals this month in Nashua.

July 1	.....	--
July 2	.....	--
July 3	.....	--
July 4	.....	.02
July 5	.....	--
July 6	.....	1.38
July 7	.....	--
July 8	.....	--
July 9	.....	--
July 10	.....	.32
July 11	.....	.13
July 12	.....	1.37
July 13	.....	--
July 14	.....	--
July 15	.....	--
July 16	.....	.03
July 17	.....	.03
July 18	.....	--
July 19	.....	1.05
July 20	.....	--
July 21	.....	--
July 22	.....	--
July 23	.....	3.30
July 24	.....	0.98
Total	.....	8.61
Normal	.....	3.75
Difference	.....	4.86

Council gets update on Pa’s Playground

Playground supporters hope construction on all-inclusive playground can start in ’26

By Kelly Terpstra
Of the Reporter

Red, green, yellow, orange or even blue?

The city of Nashua and its Park Board will soon have to make that all important decision.

Pa’s Playground, an incarnation in the works in memory of Howard Schuler of Nashua, is coming along nicely.

But there’s still work to be done with the project that plans on building a modern, all-inclusive playground for children and families of all ages.

The idea sprung up a few years ago and has made steady

progress since. The final phase of the three-tiered plan would be replete with a farm-themed playground that would feature constructed “play animals” like cows and pigs, corn stalks to climb on and everybody’s favorite — a tractor.

That’s where a “big” vote will have to be cast as far as what hue the tractor will be at the proposed playground, which could also be called a park as it currently has a shelter built on the property next to the Schluter Addition on the southwest side of Nashua that connects with Amherst Boulevard.

SEE PLAYGROUND, 5



This is an artist rendition of what Pa’s Playground, which will be located in Schluter’s Addition, will look like when it is completed.

Drawing courtesy of parkplanet.com



Bob Fenske/Reporter

A great way to beat the heat and humidity
A jet-skier glides across Cedar Lake around 7 on Wednesday evening when temperatures were still near 90 degrees. Throw in the suffocating humidity that has afflicted the area for much of the week, and a night on the lake provided a perfect way to cool off.

Despite wet weather, crops look ‘amazing’

WEATHER: FROM 1

now. I know the guys wouldn’t mind a few dry days.”
Yet, Basol said that while there is such a thing as “too much rain,” area corn and soybean fields look, “amazing.”
Then again, the same could have been said a year ago as well, and then suddenly, Mother Nature seemed to completely turn off the tap and the area endured drought conditions through this spring.
“Right now, oh my, both corn and soybeans look really, really good,” Basol said. “We need farmers to be scouting fields to keep an eye out for diseases and issues that come with a wet year.”
“So far, though, it looks really, really good. We don’t need to dry out like we did last year, we just need a few days.”
The rainy July followed an almost-as-wet June in which Nashua received 8.76 inches of rain, almost three inches more than normal.
And that has removed any worries, for now, at least of drought.
The latest Iowa Crop Progress and Condition Report that was put out by the USDA’s National Agricultural Statistical Service on Monday showed that 100 percent of topsoil in the Northeast District that includes Chickasaw and Bremer counties and 99 percent of topsoil in the North Central District that includes Floyd and Butler counties has either adequate or surplus moisture.



Bob Fenske/Reporter

A swing set in the “lower part” of Cedar View Park has a “water hazard” Wednesday evening after torrential rains fell the night before. Officially, Nashua received 4.28 inches of rain from the storms that struck the area on Wednesday and Thursday, but residents just to the east of Nashua reported that they received up to six inches of precipitation from the storms.

Subsoil moisture profiles are also full as 98 percent of Northeast District farmland has adequate or surplus moisture and 99 percent of North Central District farmland has the same.
“It’s shaping up to be a very good year,” Basol said, “but you know me, I have to say it. We have a ways to go.”

Those hoping for a break from the rain, though, may have to keep their fingers crossed, especially later today and into tonight.
That’s because the National Weather Service says there is a decent chance that more showers and thunderstorms will move through the area, beginning this evening.

After drying out Saturday afternoon into Sunday, more rain chances — albeit slight — are in the forecast through at least next Thursday.
And those who would like a little break from the heat are out of luck as the forecast high temperature for both Sunday and Monday is 90.

Evolution of a relay

Years ago, the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life challenged members of the community to form teams that could “relay” for those fighting cancer. Teams raised money for the worthy cause, in part, by promising to have at least one team member walking on the track at all times.
It was symbolic. The message to those fighting cancer as well as to their caregivers was, “You are not alone. You have a whole team behind you. We’re with you.”
But like so many things in life, systems and the way we do things will sometimes just run its course. Today, there isn’t much left of the relay in Relay for Life. There is no protocol to form large teams and to commit to time on a track or walking trail. Individuals are still welcome to do that, but it hasn’t been an expectation for quite a while.
That doesn’t mean that Relay for Life has stopped being a force in raising funds for the American Cancer Society.
It continues to be a crucial resource to raise money for cancer research and for new and more effective treatments. It provides nearly a half billion in grants to study and help eradicate these cancers: blood, brain, breast, cervical, colon, head and neck, kidney, lung, melanoma, ovarian, pancreatic, prostate, sarcoma (soft tissue) and childhood cancers.
It provides another \$43 million in research dollars to study other cancers not listed here.
Important dollars are still being raised for the American Cancer Society, but how we’re doing it at the local level has changed.
About 2,000 Relay for Life events are held throughout the country every year.
Each event is unique to its community, but they all have something in common. They celebrate cancer survivors, acknowledge the important role of caregivers, honor and remember loved ones, and raise dollars that will go on to fund critical research.
Individuals may participate in these Relay for Life events in a way that is comfortable to them.
That could mean simply listening to program speakers tell their stories about their journey with cancer. Or hearing, remembering, and silently honoring the names of loved ones who have passed away from cancer. Or sharing a meal with someone and enjoying live music that may be provided—knowing that cancer, in some way, has touched all of us and that it’s up to all of us to try to eradicate it.
Your attendance at Relay for Life makes a difference. And yes, your donations help to move toward the goal of one day making cancer a survivable diagnosis for everyone. But it’s more than that.
Your presence is symbolic. For those currently fighting cancer. For their caregivers. For others honoring the memory of a loved one. For all of these individuals, the message you send is, “You are not alone.”
And that’s what is core to Relay for Life—not an actual relay, but a fellowship.
Let us do good together by supporting our local Relay for Life.



Sandra Reicks is a member of both the Lawler Lions Club and the Chickasaw County Relay for Life Committee.

Chickasaw County Relay for Life set for a week from this Sunday

Chickasaw County residents will gather on Sunday, Aug. 3, to take on cancer at the annual county-wide Relay for Life event that will take place at Highland Park in Lawler.
The Relay will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and include a freewill donation meal, live music and the chance to honor a loved one who has been lost to cancer or who has survived the disease with a luminary bag.
The suggested donation for a luminary bag is \$10.
At 1 p.m., a program will be held and speakers will share short stories about their cancer journeys.
The Relay for Life event is open to all, and attendees are encouraged to bring a lawn chair.
Funds raised during the Relay for Life will be used for various programs and research conducted by the American Cancer Society.

Briefs

Little Brown Church to hold annual Marriage Reunion Aug. 3

Married couples from near and far will gather just outside Nashua on Sunday, Aug. 3, when the Little Brown Church in the Vale hosts its 72nd annual Marriage Reunion and Vow Renewal.
The event will begin at 8:30 a.m. with coffee and donuts, and at 10:15, couples will head into the historic church for its weekly “Sing-a-Long,” and the worship service that will include the vow renewal will begin at 10:30.
Following the service, lunch will be served on the grounds of the church that is located just to the east of Nashua.
Church officials emphasize that the reunion is not just for those who said their “I do’s” at the Little Brown Church; instead, all married couples are invited to attend the meeting.
Those who are attending should call the church at 641-435-2027 to reserve a lunch.

Ionia Fun Days kicks off next Friday

The theme for this year’s Ionia Fun Days — which is to be held Aug. 1 and 2 — is “Honoring Hometown Heroes.”
Grand Marshals of the 11 a.m. Saturday parade will be the “past, present and future Ionia Military Heroes.”
But kicking off the weekend will be kid’s painting at 6 p.m. Friday at the Ionia Community Library meeting room, kids must pre-register by contacting Heather Hackman.
Friday’s activities include a softball tournament, a family game show, the crowning of the Fun Days royalty and a fireworks show that will start at dusk.
The slate on Saturday includes a freewill donation pancake breakfast, the parade, a bags tournament, puzzle, pop and pizza challenge and the Southland Band wrap up Ionia Days on Saturday.

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Despite fund falling below ‘threshold,’ board votes to waive EMS payments

By Kelly Terpstra
Of the Reporter

When six towns entered into a 28E agreement to fund Chickasaw County’s ambulance service back in 2023 – each entity took a chance that the contract would work.

While there was admitted uncertainty as to how that union would play out, the state of that venture is a lot more clear two-and-a-half years in.

At this past Monday’s Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors meeting, those cities, along with the county, learned that another quarterly payment to that EMS has been waived.

“I can’t say for the cities, but I have to assume the way this has gone, I think all of them will be more than happy to continue the agreement. It’s worked well,” said board member Steve Breitbach. “I don’t think anybody expected a year of waived payments this early in the contract.”

That’s what has taken place in the five-year agreement that saw roughly \$280,000 of payment forgone from New Hampton, Bassett, Fredericksburg, Ionia, Lawler, North Washington and the county’s share of that funding.

On a 3-1 vote the Board waived October 5’s fall payment. Breitbach made the motion and it was seconded. His vote, along with Vice Chair Scott Cerwinski and Issac Carter, made it certain that another payment was waived. No payments were made in 2024 by the cities. That will also hold true in 2025 as the next scheduled payment is due on Jan. 15, 2026. The County has made just two payments after certifying the budget and tax levy in the spring of 2024.

“So if they paid in January, this would be their first payment in two years,” said Chickasaw County Attorney David Laudner.

Under the 28E agreements the county has with the six cities, quarterly payments are waived if the EMS fund balance is above \$750,000 for two consecutive “reporting dates.”

“They’ll have to be above 750 for two consecutive quarters in order to automatically trigger the stop again,” said Laudner. “You can waive any payment you want.”

Laudner reminded the Board that January’s scheduled payment goes up 5 percent.

“The number is going to have to be calculated off of 2023, plus five percent, plus another another five percent. Then January would be another plus five percent. It would accrue. It would be 15 percent,” Laudner stated about January’s 2026 scheduled payment.

Chickasaw County EMS Director Joel Knutson said his ambulance service’s cash balance was \$716,000. He said that quarterly cash pool report could be under \$750,000 come January, the next scheduled payment after October.

“We don’t know what the next quarters are going to be,” said Knutson. “We don’t know the financial impact that this Medicaid subsidy is going to have. If they were to make this payment in October or January,

it’s going to push the balance up over a million dollars. I feel like there’s probably a better place that the cities and the county can allocate those funds to than sitting with such a high pool of cash balance.”

Knutson said his department will receive a GEMT (Ground Emergency Medical Transportation) subsidy, which he said will ‘certainly help out.’ But that poses a much bigger question.

“I talked to Jake (Hackman) about it before he left. How much money needs to sit in there? What’s a realistic number?” said Knutson.

That number of \$750,000 was set and determined in 2023 by the Board. Just two of those Board members remain in Hackman and Breitbach.

“When we entered into this 28E Agreement I don’t think any of us were really figuring there were going to be any waivers. We just always figured it was going to always be funded every quarter,” said Breitbach. “I know there were some changes made on this revenue stream. At this point in time we don’t necessarily need any more money in this account for another quarter. That’s my opinion.”

Knutson would like to purchase a new ambulance, but he said he doesn’t know if that will take place during this five-year agreement with the cities and county.

“I do not know that we would end up replacing a truck under the current agreement, just with how they’ve performed thus far. Everything’s subject to change,” said Knutson.

Knutson informed the Board on what the cost would be for a new ambulance. Chickasaw County currently has a fleet of three rigs, which are rotated to lessen wear and tear on those vehicles.

“If we look at major expenditures. We need a ton of capital to buy an ambulance. That’s \$220,000,” said Knutson. “We also don’t want to get caught in the short end of it when we do need to use those funds. We don’t want to run it down to zero.”

Knutson said the plan is to spread out the replacement of ambulances by at least two years, if not longer.

“The goal as it sits right now would be to leave that remounted truck that we got last, first off for all transfers, put the miles on that as much as we can. When that one reaches end of life, we should have two ambulances – Medic One and Medic Two – that sit with less than 100,000 (miles) on them,” said Knutson.

The approximate payment to the EMS in Jan. 2026, with three five percent increases included, would come to a tune of \$290,000. The payment structure started with a base rate in 2023, then included five percent increases added each calendar year according to Laudner.

“In the letter we’ll state that they’re still obligated for January,” said Chickasaw County Auditor Sheila Shekleton about the memo that will be sent to the cities informing them the Board waived October’s quarterly payment.



Bob Fenske/Reporter and Heather Hackman/Nashua Public Library Director

Brock Barnabas (above) fills the Nashua Public Library with smoke to “ward off the dragons” during his Family Fun Night program on Wednesday, when Mackenzie Bean (below) checks out one of Barnabas’ creatures.

Library director appreciates support for Family Fun Nights

LIBRARY: FROM 1

Heather Hackman said, “and it’s great to see so many kids and families in our library. That’s why we do this, and hopefully, it keeps kids engaged with reading during the summer.”

But make no mistake about it, Family Fun Nights is not a one-month deal for the library director. Not by a long shot.

“I start working on them in October or November,” Hackman said Thursday morning, “and actually, it’s really a year-round thing for me. Last night’s program was put on by the son of a guy who did a “dinosaur dimensions” program for us last year so I actually had him lined up last July.”

Hackman said that she gets many of her program ideas at a “class” she attends in November each year, when the State Library of Iowa invites a number of entertainers who put on programs to show off their acts.

“There’s that, and it helps,” Hackman said, “but there’s also word of mouth. We talk amongst ourselves. This librarian will say, ‘Hey, this one’s really good, really engaging,’ and I’ll offer up my thoughts, too. ... A lot of times, I might like something but it doesn’t really fit the theme so I just put it in my, you know, back pocket.”

Family Fun Nights wrap up this coming Wednesday when Denny Ray Burn puts on game shows that will involve families – both as contestants and the “live studio audience.” Like other Family Fun Nights, “Game Show Night” will include a meal – pizza – and each child who attends will receive a free book.

“If a child has come to every Family Fun Night, they have four new, free books,” Hackman said, “and I think that’s one of my favorite parts. The kids are always excited when we hand them a book and that’s what we want.”

For years, library summer reading programs were held in June, but Hackman said she likes the July time frame her facility is using for a couple of reasons.

First, the library isn’t competing with summer sports like baseball and softball and other programs offered at the Husky Wellness Center. Second, she has received positive feedback from those who attend the programs.

“Just last night, I had a parent tell me that she loves that her family has every Wednesday night ‘taken care of’ when it comes to doing something,”



Hackman said. “July has worked out really well for us, and I think we found something we’re going to keep for a while.”

The library director also is appreciative of the support her facility receives for its Family Fun Nights. Start with the city of Nashua and the Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors. Throw in the donations from Dairy Treat, Kwik Star, Casey’s and McDonald’s and add the grants the library

received from the Community Partnerships for Protecting Children and the Theisen’s More for Your Community Foundation and that’s why the library can offer a light meal, a free book and plenty of quality entertainment during the month of July.

“A lot of people, a lot of groups, make this happen,” Hackman said, “and it’s great to see a 100 people in our library. Without the support, we couldn’t do what we do.”

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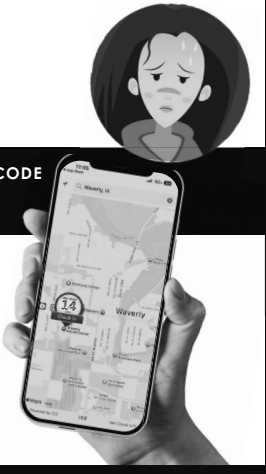
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Council approves used truck for water/wastewater superintendent

CITY COUNCIL: FROM 1

“I would really recommend that we would try to get an EMT into a position so that we have them running at all times during the day,” said Vikturek. “I want to have time to train the person because there’s a lot of stuff. Until it comes in, you kind of forget to talk about it sometimes.”

Asked if she needed anything from the Council and Vikturek mentioned that she just wants consideration for a full-time position for her job.

“The budget, I’m not sure what you want to do. I do have a couple people that are interested. The one said she needs to make at least at what she’s making now at her other job. I don’t know about like benefits-wise what you’d want to do,” said Vikturek. “I have an idea of wage I’ve given to John (Ott) and you guys can go from there. It’s going to be more than what I get.”

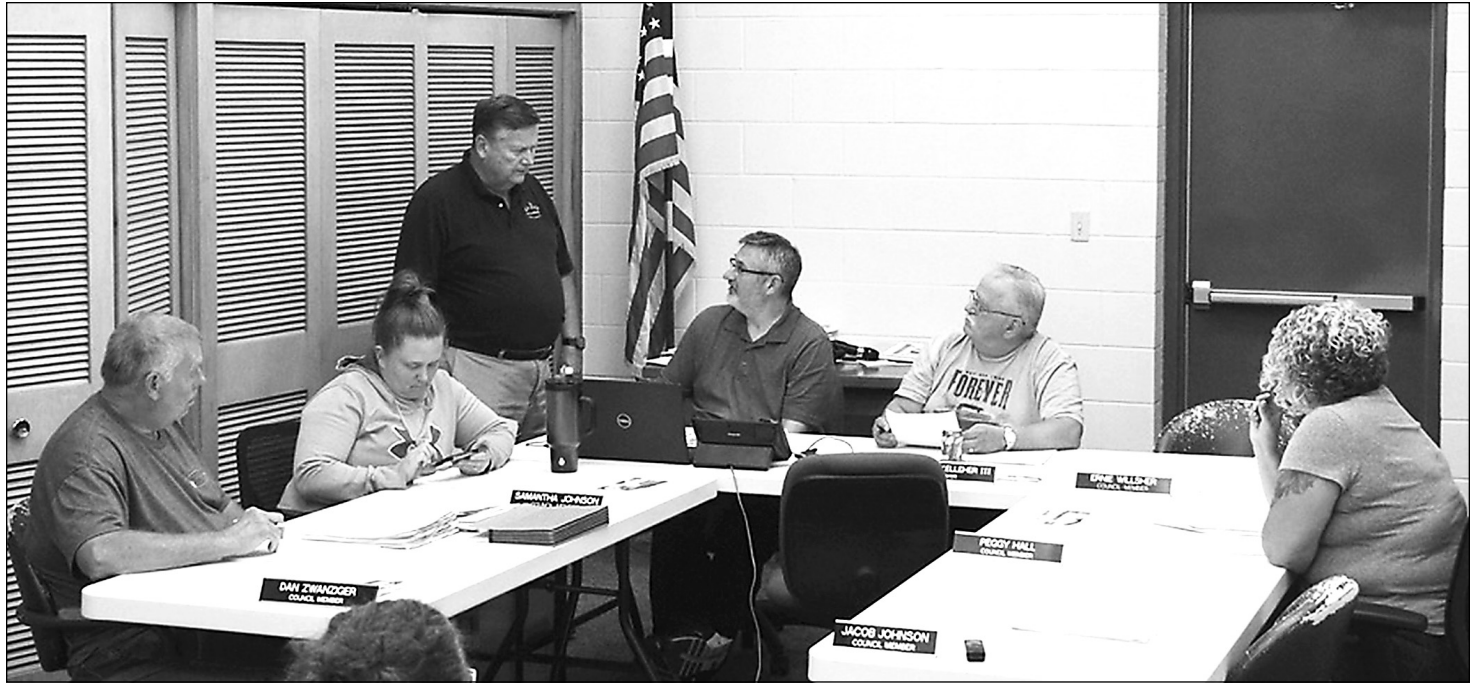
Nashua Water/Wastewater Superintendent Nick Henningsen is a tad perplexed when it comes to the city’s water usage and the corresponding revenue that is coming in from

payments for that service. “The water usage – I don’t understand this and Lisa (Berends) went through it a couple times with me and we still couldn’t figure it out. We billed for \$2 million gallons in the month of June – that’s low. We billed for more than that in February. So people watering their lawns or whatever, filling stuff – you’d think that they’d be a little higher than two million,” said Henningsen.

Henningsen said the city pumped three-and-a-half million gallons of water in June.

“Technically, according to those numbers, we lost a million-and-a-half,” said Henningsen. “Do I think it’s that? No. I think some of it is, once we get to the month of June, that’s when we filled all those pools. That’s when the Splash Pad started really going and people were using it. I’m assuming that half a million was to those two places, if not a little bit more. Right now our numbers look really crappy.”

The Council voted to allow Henningsen to spend \$18,000 to purchase a 2008 Ford 350 that has 55,000 miles on it, which will be used as a city work



Kelly Terpstra/Reporter

Nashua City Attorney David Skilton (standing) talks with City Clerk John Ott during Monday night’s City Council meeting.

truck. He said the sticker price on the vehicle was \$17,800.

Henningsen said he preferred a truck with a lift gate, which will help transport a snowblower, as well as chlorine and sulfur dioxide tanks.

“I don’t want a long truck, because I still have to get into places and things like that,” said Henningsen.

The Council voted to transfer real estate at 1020 Greeley

St. to Mike Hannemann. His bid was one of three submitted and was for \$1,500. His plan is to clean up the lot, remove all existing structures on the property and build a single-family house outside the floodplain. Hannemann stated he will have the lot cleaned up in six months and the home built within three years of the property transfer.

The Council also passed a resolution that will hold an elec-

tion to vote on the city’s hotel/motel tax. The election date is November 4 of this year.

The Council also passed resolutions to accept the resignation of Library Board member Lyn Hites and appointed Gary Olson as her replacement.

Unspent library funds of approximately \$5,700 were also voted on to be transferred to a money market account. That vote passed 3-0.

An application that will be written by INRCOG (Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments) was also authorized that gives the city the chance to receive federal funding for an outdoor warning system. The cost to write that application is \$1,000.

Council members Jake Johnson and Ernie Willsher were absent at this most recent meeting.



Iowa Farm Bureau Federation

Barbara Thiessen of Nashua poses with fellow Iowa Farm Bureau delegation member Carter Patterson of St. Ansgar outside the U.S. Capitol during a recent trip Iowa farmers made to discuss policy with national leaders.

Nashua woman part of Farm Bureau delegation lobbying national leaders in Washington

To the Reporter

Two dozen Iowa Farm Bureau members from across the state, including Nashua’s Barbara Thiessen, met with Iowa’s congressional delegation last week in Washington, D.C. to discuss policy issues important to Iowa agriculture and their family farms.

The group of Iowa farmers met with Iowa Sens. Chuck Grassley and Joni Ernst along with Reps. Ashley Hinson, Randy Feenstra, Mariannette Miller-Meeks and Zach Nunn. They also met with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials and attended presentations on biofuels, interstate commerce and trade.

While some say the so-called “One Big Beautiful Bill,” signed into law on July 4, modernized farm safety net programs through 2031 and made many key tax provisions permanent, the member leaders urged lawmakers to continue to address other important policy issues, including laws like California’s Prop 12 that disrupt interstate commerce and authorizing nationwide year-round E15.

Members shared how regulations like California’s Prop 12 are already having negative impacts for farmers and consumers, and challenges continue. The group urged their members of Congress to stop regulatory overreach, like California’s Prop 12,

which dictates production methods that farmers in other states must follow to sell their products in California.

The farmers voiced concerns that if similar arbitrary laws are passed by other states, it could affect virtually every product raised by farmers, creating nationwide challenges and rising costs for both farmers and consumers.

Farm Bureau members also asked lawmakers to continue their support for biofuels, including making E15 available year-round nationwide.

A rule allowing year-round sales of E15 took effect in several Midwest states, including Iowa, starting with the summer 2025 driving season, but availability in the rest of the country continues to rely on annual waivers from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Iowa leads the nation in ethanol production, and members shared how Iowa biofuels producers are ready to meet growing consumer demand.

The group also noted concerns about the impact of trade disruptions caused by tariff negotiations aimed at reducing U.S. trade deficits. The members shared that farmers often feel the pain from tariffs and tariff retaliation that limit ag exports and drive up input prices and shared Farm Bureau’s position of ensuring free trade.

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An “aerial view” of Pa’s Playground is presented by Nashua Park Board members Kristi Hannemann and Nate Sinnwell (below during Monday night’s City Council meeting).

Pa’s Playground will be ‘park for all’

PLAYGROUND: FROM 1

“There’s been a lot of discussion about what color of tractor to put in there,” said Nashua Park Board President Nate Sinnwell, who along with Kristi Hannemann unveiled Phase 3 of the project to the town’s City Council this past Monday.

That final phase of this playground/park’s estimated cost is not exactly cheap. Hannemann currently has a bid that her committee would like to lock in at \$244,000. Sinnwell said there were two other bids to construct the playground that came in around \$300,000 and one at \$315,000.

“Of course, this kind of play structure does come with a hefty price tag,” said Hannemann. “We’re very aware of that, especially that poured rubberized surface. That is what’s going to make this stand out compared to some of the other parks in the area.”

Hannemann, who has headed a Pa’s Playground Committee underneath the Park Board, understated that funding will hopefully be completed by this time next year and construction of the playground could begin in September of 2026.

Sinnwell stated \$30,000 has been raised so far and that does not include in-kind donations, like the plot of land that the playground sits on. Of that monetary total, he said \$8,000 has been spent.

But as stated before, the funding part has essentially just begun.

Back to that tractor. “We think that it’d be fun to see who could raise more money – red or green?” Hannemann said with a smile as she referred to the potential color of tractor project organizers want to go with.

Hannemann is confident the exciting project can be fully funded by donations and the benevolence and generosity of a community that will take pride in and enjoy the playground named in honor of her uncle, Howard “Pa” Schluter.

“The thought of not raising it hasn’t entered my mind,” said Hannemann. “We’re gonna do it.”



If those funds aren’t raised the city would have to step in for the remainder of cost. City officials in attendance at Monday’s meeting seemed to be engaged and optimistic that the project will be completed and will support it. The Council has backed the project up until this point.

“I wouldn’t make any decisions today, but probably something needs to be drafted as far as what the city’s willing to pay or what they need to have in grant funding or however the Council moves forward,” said Nashua City Clerk John Ott.

The first phase of the project built the shelter – which held a dedication ceremony for the playground on Sunday, July 6. That was a day later than planned and was moved to that date because of inclement weather. The initial planned date would have been “Pa’s” 100 birthday. He was a general contractor in the area that built countless homes and barns. The playground next to the Schluter Addition on the south end of Nashua – nicknamed “Schlutererville” – will be a place where anyone and everyone can have a good time.

“This is a park for the entire community. This is a park that

we want our community to be proud of and for everyone in the community to use. It is not exclusive for one neighborhood, by any means. We don’t want that message or that feeling to be spread throughout the community. This is a park for all. The location is there because the land was given to the location,” said Hannemann.

In addition to the shelter in phase one, a walking trail, BMX “pump park” made for little bikes and scooters (non-motorized), a berm, signage and the parking lot were all done in the fall of 2024.

Construction of Phase 2 is currently ongoing and should be finished by September. That includes installation of basketball courts, along with electrical work done. Sinnwell said they’re also working on potentially getting a water station at the playground – one for humans and another for animals.

One of the key elements of this playground that

Hannemann wanted to stress is its ADA-compliant.

“Currently, there’s no playground in town that is ADA-accessible, even the school is not offering ADA-compliance with the mulch,” said Hannemann. “It’s really hard for some children who are either wheelchair bound or in need of assistance in walking to maneuver in that mulch.

Hannemann, who is the K-12 Principal at Clarksville, went on to describe more of what the playground will entail and her feelings about the project – which obviously means a lot to not only her, but the area she grew up in.

“We really want to make sure we’re doing this right, so we want to offer an attraction that is going to excite community members, families, youth and maybe even people from out of town to come visit our town,” said Hannemann.

Other features and amenities of the playground would be ADA-accessible swing sets, slides, a spin pod and a whole host of other fun and imaginative things for children and their families to take part in.

“There is a parent/child or what’s called a ‘Mommy and Me’ swing,” said Hannemann. “They’re facing each other as they swing. That really engages that eye-to-eye contact for littles.”

The playground being ADA-compliant also opens up the door for grants that could help pay for the project.

“We have a list of grants that we’re already looking into,” said Hannemann.

Sinnwell said the company Nashua is communicating with in a hope that construction starts in the fall of 2026, has visited the property twice already.

“I would think by January 1st we’ll have a lot clearer picture,” said Sinnwell about the progress of the playground.



Photo courtesy of Cedar Valley Hospice
An attendee experiences the touching moment when a butterfly lands on his shoulder at the 2024 Release & Remember.

Cedar Valley Hospice gearing up for its annual butterfly event

To the Reporter

Celebrate someone you love by dedicating a butterfly for the 14th annual Cedar Valley Hospice Release & Remember fundraiser on Sunday, Sept. 7 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the RiverLoop Amphitheatre in Waterloo. This meaningful event draws hundreds of supporters to the banks of the Cedar River for an afternoon of honoring the community’s loved ones in an extraordinary way.

All are welcome to join us at the event. Starting at 1 p.m., enjoy live music by Never The Less and family-friendly activities, followed by a short program and the awe-inspiring release of 1,000 monarch butterflies at 2:30 p.m.

Community members are encouraged to dedicate one or several butterflies as a tribute to someone important to them. For each donation, a butterfly will be dedicated in their honor. Tribute names will be displayed at the event if the donation is received by Aug. 22. Release & Remember T-shirts are also for sale online, at any Cedar Valley Hospice office and at the event while supplies last. You can also purchase a chance to open a box of butterflies on stage at the event. You must be 18 years old or older and be present at the event for this special opportunity.

At the event, wheelchair ushers will be on hand at the handicap accessible entrance to the Amphitheatre near the Phelps Youth Pavilion where handicap parking is also available.

For more information or to dedicate a butterfly, visit cvhospice.org.

ISU Extension to host program on farmland leading in August

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in Chickasaw County is hosting a farmland leasing meeting on Aug. 5 at 1 p.m., at the Chickasaw County Extension Office, 115 N. Broadway Avenue in New Hampton.

The annual meeting is offered to address questions that landowners, tenants or other interested individuals have about leasing farmland.

Registration is \$25 per individual and includes materials. Pre-registration is encouraged as an additional \$5 fee may be added if registering less than two calendar days before the meeting date. To register contact the ISU Extension and Outreach Chickasaw County office at 641-394-2174 or atupper@iastate.edu.

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Public Release for Schools Operating the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program The Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Nutrition and Health Services, has finalized its policy for free and reduced price meals for students unable to pay the full price of meals served under the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program and the Afterschool Care Snack Program. State and Local school officials have adopted the following family size and income criteria for determining eligibility:

Households may be eligible for free or reduced-price meal benefits one of four ways

1. Households whose income is at or below the levels shown are eligible for reduced price meals or free meals, if they complete an application for free and reduced price school meals/milk. Households may complete one application listing all children and return it to your student’s school. When completing an application, only the last four digits of the social security number of the household’s primary wage earner or another adult household member is needed.

2. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households, students receiving benefits under the Family Investment Program (FIP) and students in a few specific Medicaid programs are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Most students from SNAP and FIP households will be qualified for free meals automatically. These households will receive a letter from their student’s schools notifying them of their benefits. Households that receive a letter from the school need to do nothing more for their student(s) to receive free or reduced price meals. No further application is necessary. If any students were not listed on the notice of eligibility, the household should contact the school to have free or reduced price meal benefits extended to them. If you feel you would qualify for free meal benefits and received notification qualifying for reduced price benefits, complete an application for free and reduced price meals.

Households must contact the school if they choose to decline meal benefits.

3. Some SNAP and FIP households will receive a letter from the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS) which will qualify the children listed on the letter for free meals. Parents must take this letter to the student’s school to receive free meals.

4. SNAP or FIP households receiving benefits that do not receive a letter from Iowa HHS must complete an application with the abbreviated information as indicated on the application and instructions, for their students to receive free meals. When the application lists an assistance program’s case number for any household member, eligibility for free benefits is extended to all students in a household.

Eligibility from the previous year will continue within the same school for up to 30 operating days into the new school year. When the carryover period ends, unless the household is notified that their students are directly certified or the household submits an application that is approved, the students must pay full price for school meals and the school will not send a reminder or a notice of expired eligibility. An application cannot be approved unless complete eligibility information is submitted. Applications may be submitted at any time during the year. If a family member becomes unemployed the family should contact the school to complete an application. Households notified of their student’s eligibility must contact the

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Household Size	Free Meals					Reduced Price Meals				
	Yearly	Monthly	Twice a Month	Every two weeks	Weekly	Yearly	Monthly	Twice a Month	Every two weeks	Weekly
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2	27,495	2,292	1,146	1,058	529	39,128	3,261	1,631	1,505	753
3	34,645	2,888	1,444	1,333	667	49,303	4,109	2,055	1,897	949
4	41,795	3,483	1,742	1,608	804	59,478	4,957	2,479	2,288	1,144
5	48,945	4,079	2,040	1,883	942	69,653	5,805	2,903	2,679	1,340
6	56,095	4,675	2,338	2,158	1,079	79,828	6,653	3,327	3,071	1,536
7	63,245	5,271	2,636	2,433	1,217	90,003	7,501	3,751	3,462	1,731
8	70,395	5,867	2,934	2,708	1,354	100,178	8,349	4,175	3,853	1,927
For each additional family member add:	7,150	596	298	275	138	10,175	848	424	392	196

school if the household chooses to decline the free meal benefits.

Foster children are eligible for free meal benefits. Some foster students will be qualified for free meals automatically through the state direct certification process. Their host family will receive notification of these benefits. Families that receive this notification from the school need to do nothing more for their foster students to receive free meals. If a family has foster students living with them and does not receive notification and wishes to apply for such meals, instructions for making application for such students are contained on the application form.

A foster student may be included as a member of the foster family if the foster family chooses to also apply for benefits for other students. Including students in foster care as household members may help other students in the household qualify for benefits. If the foster family is not eligible for free or reduced price meal benefits, it does not prevent a foster student from receiving benefits. Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) participants may be eligible for free or reduced price meals based on a completed application.

When known by the school, households will be notified of any child eligible for free meals if the children are enrolled in the Head Start/Even Start program or are considered homeless, migrant or runaway. If any children are not listed on the notice of eligibility, contact the school for assistance in receiving benefits. If households are dissatisfied with the application approval done by the officials, they may make a formal appeal either orally or in writing to the school’s designated hear-

ing official. The policy statement on file at the school contains an outline of the hearing procedure. School officials may verify the information in the application, and that deliberate misrepresentation of information may subject the applicant to prosecution under applicable state and federal criminal statutes. Households should contact their local school for additional information.

There will be no discrimination against individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) in the school meal programs.

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fice, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant’s name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

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CHICKASAW COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS’ MINUTES July 14, 2025

The Board convened on Monday, July 14, 2025, at 1:00 PM with members Breitbach, Carter, Cervinske, Suckow, and Hackman present in the Boardroom on the second floor of the Court House, New Hampton, Iowa. Chairperson Hackman called the meeting to order. Also present were Board Secretary Sheila Shekleton, Attorney David Laudner, Bob Fenske, member of media, Terry Johnson, Board of Health members Jeremy McGrath, Joan Knoll, EMA/911 Director Jeff Bernatz, Sheriff Ryan Shawver, Land Use Administrator Raymond Arnel, Public Kyle Hennessy, Kim Hennessy, Jordan Grober, Lynn Schwickerath, Sharon Heying, Linda Gansen, Paul Gansen, Debbie Gossling, Steve Kuehn, Treasurer Matt Ysbrand, Chickasaw County Public Health Lisa Welter, Ann Knutson, Recorder Shirley Troyna, 20/20 FX, LLC Denny Unga and Jodee Unga, County Engineer Liza Harold, Safety Ranae Carey.

Motion by Suckow, seconded by Cervinske to approve the agenda for July 14, 2025. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Breitbach, seconded by Carter to approve the minutes for July 7, 2025 meeting. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Cervinske, seconded by Suckow to approve payroll check date July 11, 2025. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Breitbach, seconded by Carter to approve prior bill in the amount of \$550.00. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Cervinske, seconded by Carter to approve claims in the amount of \$906,021.38. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Motion by Suckow, seconded by Breitbach to approve the quarterly reports ending June 30, 2025 for the Emergency Medical Services and the Sheriff’s department. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Public comment: Kyle Hennessy shared the downside to the cut in Public Health budget FY 2025-2026 for him. Kim Hennessy shared the downside to the cut in Public Health budget FY 2025-2026 for her.

Consensus of the Board of Supervisors to direct the Northeast Iowa Workforce committee member, Supervisor Suckow, to vote for the merger consideration.

Discussion by concerned citizens regarding closure of the bridge on 150th Street West of V18. Lynn Schwickerath, Jordan Grober, Sharon Heying, Linda Gansen, Paul Gansen shared their experience with the closure of the bridge.

Discussion by the Board of Supervisors about the Cedar Lake Improvements Council

Agreement.

Discussion about budget amendment #1 for FY 2025-2026.

Discussion about the Data Processing Policies and Procedures with 20/20 FX LLC Denny Unga and Jodee Unga. Denny Unga will be updating the Data Processing Policies and Procedures. Consensus of the Board of Supervisors to have the EMS pay for services and computer hardware and the Assessor pay for services and hardware out of their funds, which they already were doing. Secondary Roads and EMA/911 SB will pay for their own computer hardware and be billed monthly for services by the Auditor.

Motion by Breitbach, seconded by Cervinske to approve the semi-annual report ending June 30, 2025 for the Treasurer’s department. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion about proposed Chickasaw County Ordinance VI-8 Utility Scale Solar Installations with Land Use Administrator Raymond Arnel.

Discussion and update on air conditioner at the Courthouse with Custodian Dave Gorman.

Motion by Suckow, seconded by Breitbach to go out for RFP for a cooling tower replacement for the Courthouse that are due August 8, 2025 to the Chickasaw County Auditor’s Office on the second floor of the Courthouse. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Department updates by Custodian Dave Gorman.

Discussion of House File 706, New Training Requirements for Members of Governmental Bodies.

Motion by Breitbach, seconded by Carter to go out for a RFP for a generator at the EMS Building that are due August 8, 2025 to the Chickasaw County Auditor’s Office on the second floor of the Courthouse. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion of the County Handbook and all departments job descriptions that need updated and then reviewed.

Committee Assignments Supervisor Cervinske, July 10, 2025, Heartland Insurance

Motion by Cervinske, seconded by Suckow to adjourn at 3:42 PM. Roll Call: All Ayes. Motion carried.

Jacob Hackman, Chairperson Board of Supervisors ATTEST: Sheila Shekleton, Secretary to the Board

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Miscellaneous

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Miscellaneous

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FINALLY... A Gentle Way to Slim Down and Feel Amazing These 5 natural foods help burn fat, balance hormones, and boost energy— no dieting, just real results. Free report: www.nutritiondonuts.com (mcn)

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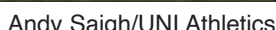
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BY KELLY TERPSTRA
Of the Reporter

“Really, my freshman year I bought into the journey and really focused on getting



SEE WINGS, 7

