

Floyd County Board of Supervisors Meeting  
March 1, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

The Floyd County Board of Supervisors met in the Assembly Room of the Floyd County Courthouse with the following in attendance: Supv Linda Tjaden, Supv Doug Kamm and Supv Roy Schwickerath.

Kamm/Schwickerath moved to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 3-0.

Public comment: none.

Updates on various boards/commissions/activities: Supv Kamm attended a Community Foundation-Floyd County Covid-19 Disaster and Area Development Corp meetings. Supv Schwickerath attended the following meetings: North Iowa Regional Housing Authority, County Social Services, E911, Central Iowa Juvenile Detention Services. Supv Tjaden attended a 1st Responders and Emergency Management Commission meetings and volunteered for a vaccination clinic. All three supervisors attended the Assessor's Conference Board meeting.

Law enforcement center/courthouse project: Brian Shindelar, Samuels Group Site Superintendent, provided contractor updates: Dean Snyder Construction is working on hanging doors and in door installing door hardware; Young Plumbing is working on plumbing behind cells, boilers and water heaters; Young Heating is working on duct work in hallways; Paulson Electric is working on putting lights in garages, ceiling grids and walls; Jennings Painting finished painting in the booking area and has moved to the kitchen and laundry room; the tile company is working on bathrooms; Shindelar Elevator should be starting installation this week; J&R is working on sealing areas; Communication Innovators is working on cabling for cameras and doors; TriCity Electric is working on laying data cable; Personified Insulation is insulating roof drains in the lobby area and waterlines in the floor bathrooms; Sweeper finished repairing cell welding issues.. There will be an Owner-Architect-Contractor meeting this afternoon and OSHA meeting next Thursday. The project schedule regarding training was reviewed.

COVID-19 update: 1) The 7-day positivity rate is 3%, there have been 1,625 total positive cases and 40 deaths. 2) Supv Tjaden mentioned many people on the call list not answering their phone or reporting they have already received vaccination elsewhere so they will likely be opening another tier and holding another call event.

At 9:15 a.m. the public hearing opened for the proposed property tax levy. Supv Tjaden commented on the valuation process, various boards/commissions who set their own budgets and provide them to the supervisors who can only reduce a bottom line, the department review process, agency request considerations and their impact on supporting the community, the law enforcement center/courthouse timeline including directive given by the jail inspector in 2013, citizens committee input, jail needs study, non-compliant elevator and restrooms in the courthouse, plans for more efficient windows and heating/cooling system in the courthouse, and addressing incorrect information. Tjaden read a statement from Doug Lindaman requesting the board take action for reckless spending on the LEC/Courthouse project and its impact on community and families paying higher taxes. Merlin Schweizer commented that voters voted for \$13.5 million which is all that should be spent. Dennis Kiefer asked why the county was 40% over budget and who he would go to for records request. Kamm responded that some of the issues are due to times and labor costs. Auditor Carr can provide records. Roxie Redmond asked how the board felt after reading Lindaman's letter; Tjaden responded that the Board doesn't take this lightly, the supervisors are dedicated, and she is doing everything she can. Kamm commented that the bids were \$4 million over, it took months to come up with a resolution and had the county waited, the project would cost more. Redmond mentioned that now the county has to hire more jailers; Tjaden stated the county is not hiring more jailers. Redmond suggested the county should not give any money away to agencies; Tjaden responded that agency requests have been cut and welcomes feedback on funding. Redmond asked about cuts in the project and if work on the courthouse was still going to be done. Tjaden responded that the board reconsidered the scope of the project and cuts were made. Kamm mentioned that the project was paired down as much as it could and part of the jail project includes penetration inside the courthouse. Keifer commented that appraisals went up, taxes are going up and questioned when the county will quit asking for more money. Wayne Lacoste commented that his Vanguard appraisal went up \$92,000 without doing anything, he lost an appeal with four appraisals, three from outside of the county, \$5,000/year taxes is too high and he doesn't understand how the board could let the project go \$4 million over. Keifer asked if there were marble finishes in the addition; Tjaden commented there is no marble. Supv Schwickerath added that many of the floors will just be cement floors or polished cement. Keifer asked why inmates couldn't be transferred to another jail such as Mitchell County. Tjaden responded that transporting inmates was one of the more costly options and what is being built is based on state code. Kamm mentioned reasons to

house inmates in other counties. Lacoste asked if jail cells are being reworked; Kamm commented that the welding on the pods was poorly done and is being reworked at Sweeper's expense. Schwickerath commented that the board looked at reducing the number of cells, not replacing the boiler and windows, not renovating the 4<sup>th</sup> floor, and the fire marshal's requirement of a sprinkler system but you can't just stop the project because these things need replaced and we want to protect and preserve this building; the county came up with a plan to pay the \$4 million with using part of its general fund balance, generating more money through the bonds because interest rates were lower, counting on earning interest on bond proceeds and fund balances which tanked but taxes are not increasing \$4 million and if we do not do this project now it will cost more down the road. Jim Howe commented that if you're out of money, you don't keep moving forward and the county cannot house an inmate arrested on a federal offence. Schwickerath responded that Bremer County went through a lot of hoops to hold inmates with federal charges. Kamm added that this jail was not intended to be a federal holding facility. Ronda Howe commented on how the project got out of control and the board should be held to its original budget. Allen Wefel suggested doing without the fancy atrium and thinks the board has lost touch with how much \$1 million is. Tjaden responded that the county is addressing compliance issues with restrooms and the elevator and atrium elevators provide safety for the public and security for inmates when transporting to court. All supervisors commented on the reduction of the size of the atrium through value engineering. Russel Frascht questioned why the board went ahead with wage increases; Schwickerath commented that the Compensation Board recommends wages for elected officials that he believes were based on social security increases and he did not feel the 1.5% increase was out of line. Steve Litterer questioned how property taxpayers are supposed to recoup this as he cannot pass this on by raising rent on his tenants who are already strapped. Frascht asked if the rates will continue for a few years and then go back down; Tjaden said that is the goal. Ronda Howe asked if information on the costs was clear and if public was informed when the bids were being considered; Auditor Carr and Tjaden commented that there were specific agenda items and Tjaden added that board minutes reflect the estimate from Prochaska which is what drove the referendum. Scott Andrews asked why the bond wasn't put out higher than \$13.5 million and if the board should have had a better number before bonding; Kamm responded that the \$13.5 referendum included estimates for all costs. Schwickerath added that he was not happy that the number was not more accurate and the board discussed at the time on how to move forward. Scott Tjaden asked if the board ever considered when it had that difficult decision if the number would have been that much higher at referendum if it would it have passed; Schwickerath commented that he couldn't say if that specific question was considered. Andrews asked when the hard date is that the county would lose its grandfathering for the existing jail. Carr responded that there is no hard date but in 2013, the jail inspector referenced 10 years. Andrews suggested the board needs to stop and hire a CPA firm to audit and obtain a full accounting of the project. Kamm responded that as long as there is forward movement on the project the inspector will continue to work with the county but if we stop it is probably the end of the jail upstairs and if the project stops and is rebid, it will cost even more money. Gordon Boge commented that the architect is suing the county; Tjaden explained there is no lawsuit. Schwickerath mentioned that the assistant county attorney is trying to negotiate with Prochaska. Carr added that the county is trying to reduce Prochaska's 10% on the increased cost which is factored in what the county would pay in FY22 and FY23. Andrews asked if Samuels Group has any deferred payments; Carr commented that there was one contractor who was deferred but that was resolved. Andrews asked what the total costs are to date and what contracts are signed; Carr responded that the expenses as of 1/25 were \$11.9 million plus last month's claim and all contracts are signed for construction, Samuels Group, and Prochaska. Andrews inquired on the percentage of completion; Carr responded that in January the overall project was slightly over 60% completed with completion in December 2021. Schwickerath indicated that the jail is about 90% complete and pausing or stopping doesn't make sense. Tjaden added that the jail is expected to be completed by May and the board is continually looking at reductions. Boge commented that the board is not representing the people who put them in office and understands it's too late to stop now because of the board's mismanagement two years ago; Kamm commented that he truly believes if the board had not found a way to complete this project it would cost more than 40% and if you put a stop on the project, it will be two years before the project starts and costs will be higher. Boge commented that it is a shame the board held this hearing in the assembly room that was too small to accommodate everyone. Tjaden apologized and explained the constraints after the notice was published in the 10 and 20 day window to change the location, the courtroom was considered when the county learned of more people attending but the room was not available and the final budget needs to be filed by the end of the month. Schwickerath added that the board will take it under consideration to hold the final budget in the courtroom or somewhere else. Andrews asked the board to table the vote on the max levy for another week and set the date for the budget hearing at a place that can accommodate more people; Kamm commented that today's action is not on setting the budget. Boge questioned why certain bridge projects have gone through and haven't been stopped in order to save \$1 million and asked why the rock resurfacing budget has been cut; Kamm

explained the federal funding for bridges, secondary roads fund being a separate fund, and rock resurfacing has not been cut. Larry Bortz asked if the tax increase is permanent in the future; Kamm commented that every year the departmental budgets and tax rates are revisited. Tjaden held up a graph of the history of tax rates that is available on the county's website. Andrews commented about the history of tax rates going down but the revaluation is going up. Brandi Schmidt, Deputy Assessor, explained the appraisal process including appraisals being contracted in 2013 for 2020 values, the Iowa Dept of Revenue recommends reassessments every 10 years, rollbacks set by the state change every year to adjust for inflation which is limited at 3% across the state, and every two years assessor's offices reappraise and reassess properties based on sales and all demographics on market areas affected in the county. A question was asked about the tax rate having a sunset; Schwickerath commented the debt levy will end when the bond is paid and Kamm referenced the various funds and budgets that the board considers every year when setting rates. Boge asked if the Board has cut any of the Secondary Roads budget and if the engineer has to go to the board to spend money; Carr mentioned what was requested for FY22 has been reduced and the county is not intending to transfer money from the General Fund to Secondary Roads. Schwickerath commented that the carryover balance will be reduce but the money is in the bank and the engineer reports directly to the board. Kamm added that the engineer's budget is reviewed in advance but discussed with the board in the budget year. Andrews suggested the process to go from three to five supervisors to have a greater cross-representation of the county; Tjaden commented that Boge has the information to do so. Robert Reams questioned money that was in a bank in Des Moines; Carr explained that the county had money in a bank during a transition of refinancing road bonds at a lower rate and the bank holding the money until the call date of the original bonds. Patricia Hockinson shared her annual expenses and concerns of not being able to pay taxes on her family farm that she was not getting credit for; Carr suggested she visit with Schmidt about the credit. Boge expressed concerns of people not having internet and not getting the newspaper so they don't get county information and suggested information get posted at places like the bar in Colwell or mailing postcards to property owners. Carr commented that info is also posted on the bulletin boards. Schwickerath stated that the board was elected to represent the people and feels they are representing the people. Tjaden thanked everyone for their comments. The hearing closed at 11:10 a.m.

Kamm/Schwickerath moved to approve Res #14-21\* Maximum Property Tax Dollars: The Board considered the proposed FY22 county maximum property tax dollars for General County Services and Rural County Services, notice concerning the proposed maximum property tax dollars was published as required in newspapers and posted on the county website and Auditor's Facebook page, and a public hearing was held on March 1; be it resolved by the Board that the maximum property tax dollars for General County Services and Rural County Services for FY22 shall not exceed: General County Services - \$4,853,764, an increase of 24.55%, and Rural County Services - \$2,119,559, an increase of 1.99%, both from the prior year. Motion carried 3-0.

Schwickerath/Kamm moved to set the FY22 public hearing for March 23 at 1:30 p.m. with a location to be determined. Motion carried 3-0.

Budget reviews: Clarification on the Conservation budget included reducing the budget an additional \$10,000 after the increases for two employees were previously reduced by 50%; Schwickerath will visit with the director and invite him to discuss this with the Board. Clarification on the Board of Health/Zoning budgets should include a reduction from 2.5% to 1.5% but keep the \$5,000 additional pay for Zoning; Kamm will visit with the administrator about the reduction. Carr reported that all other cuts previously talked about are in revised documents with the exception of Public Health's \$24,000 reduction. The Board discussed an e-mail from Charlotte Nehls regarding health insurance changes and not moving dispatch; health insurance changes will be consider for next fiscal year. After reviewing documents the board suggested the Supplemental rate be reduced to \$2.55.

Future agenda items: E911 employee position, custodial position, Washington School Watershed drainage district project on Nathan Fox's property, meeting with Samuels Group rep, landfill position, and Shell Rock watershed 28E.

Schwickerath moved to adjourn. Motion carried 3-0.

*\*This is a summary of the resolution; full text of resolutions may be inspected during normal business hours in the Floyd County Auditor's office and at [www.floydcoia.org](http://www.floydcoia.org).*

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gloria A. Carr  
Floyd County Auditor

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Linda Tjaden, Chair  
Floyd County Board of Supervisors