

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
CEDAR RAPIDS, LINN COUNTY, IOWA  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2020 8:00 A.M.

The Board met in session at the Linn County Jean Oxley Public Service Center.  
Present: Chairperson Rogers (via phone until 8:19 a.m.), Vice Chairperson Oleson and Supervisor Walker. Board members voting "AYE" unless otherwise noted.

Vice Chairperson Oleson called the meeting to order.

The Board met with Elected Officials and Department Heads to discuss the following county-related issues:

Jen Musick, Health Solutions, gave an update on the Health Solutions program and Linn County's goal for all employees to be engaged in their health and wellness.

Lisa Powell, HR Dir., gave an update on the new Time Reporting Policy due to the new payroll processing system. She advocates best practice that all hourly employees punch in and out (preferred over auto pay). Departments that do manual timesheets will have assistance during the transition.

Dawn Jindrich, Finance Dir., gave an update on the new financial system, GovSense. Go Live has been moved from Sept. 1 to Nov. 1 due to the August 10 storm.

The Board received updates from the following Department Heads:

David Thielen, LCCS Exec. Dir. - Family Services staff are working in the field again (mostly porch meetings); the Child Development Center had storm damage as well as the playground equipment; the census at the Child Development Center is slowly increasing; General Assistance is keeping in touch with residents affected by COVID and the Derecho; Home Health staff has returned to full services in the homes with precautions; OPTIONS has gone through a phase of reopening; the Mental Health Access Center is planning on a soft opening the end of October; the Juvenile Detention Center has daily changes with mask wearing; the East Central Region was awarded two grants; and making sure mental health needs are being covered in the rural area. Hoping to make an offer for the new Director by the end of the week. Annual survey of LCCS board (results were consistent with last year). Meeting with Public Health and all LCCS departments this week to review PPE and protocols.

Supervisor Oleson expressed his disappointment with the Veteran Affairs Director interview process because the majority of the value was put on people with prior VA administrative experience/working in or around VA groups. He has seen too many interview processes and gate keeping mechanisms that are keeping good people from presenting their case to the county when a position opens. There is too much emphasis put on prior like experience. Oleson stated that he knows of two people that should have been interviewed.

Supervisor Walker echoed Supervisor Oleson's sentiments. It is his hope to expand Linn County's horizons when it comes to hiring practices in an effort to not miss great candidates.

Chairperson Rogers stated that he was on the committee and they interviewed four and could have interviewed seven. He agrees with their sentiments.

A lengthy discussion continued regarding the interview process for the VA Director and it was the consensus that if it is not too late, they strongly advocate finding time to interview the other three candidates.

Dennis Goemaat, Conservation Dir. - thanked the Board for recognizing early after the August 10 storm that employees and citizens of Linn County needed help. Many projects have been impacted by the storm. The Conservation Board and Board of Supervisors will meet in joint session on Monday at the new facility at Pinicon Ridge Park. The DOT took bids to pave the trail between Center Point and Urbana; the Morgan Creek Park redevelopment is on hold; management plans continue to progress slowly (may need to make amendments); Pinicon Ridge dam project (will view on Monday); wetland planning and construction progressing; Hwy 100 trail construction; struggling with the trail by Xavier; Morgan Creek Trail to Covington is in the planning phase; and working on identifying sites to put woodchips.

Pramod Dwivedi, Health Dept. Dir. - COVID cases continue to rise in Linn County (working with two group homes with outbreaks); need more contact tracers; vaccination planning when vaccine is available; working with Planning & Development to conduct FEMA home assessments; open burning outreach and ongoing management of storm debris (receiving a lot of complaints associated with air quality). Refugee partner agency will be using an office at the Harris Building (they will need internet access).

Phil Lowder, IT Dir. - Helpdesk is normal for this time of year and budget is on target; currently have two staff vacancies; critical downtime of the county's phone system after the storm (working on a solution to allow multiple phone providers); IT staff are all in the office and working fulltime and taking precautions.

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Meeting with Mental Health Access Dir. to discuss providers using their own computer equipment and will not be on the county's network. He is looking at a localized network for them.

A lengthy discussion continued regarding Windstream and the extreme lack of customer service.

Adjournment at 9:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JOEL D. MILLER, Linn County Auditor  
By: Rebecca Shoop, Deputy Auditor

Approved by:

BEN ROGERS, Chairperson  
Board of Supervisors