

**Supervisors Room, Courthouse
Pocahontas, Iowa
January 28, 2025**

The Board of Supervisors of Pocahontas County, Iowa, met for a regular session pursuant to adjournment. Members present: Chairman, Clarence Siepker; Supervisors, Peter Seehusen, Louis Stauter, Kyle Smith, Brent Aden; Nita Hinrickson, Auditor. Others present: Erin Sommers, Reporter, Dave Hallberg, Princess City Solar, Kevin Wells, Jan & Mark Johnson, Kalista Wagner, Assessor. Telephonic: Chris White, Attorney.

Motion by Smith, seconded by Aden to approve the minutes from January 21, 2025 as presented. Ayes all, motion carried.

Motion by Seehusen, seconded by Stauter to approve the agenda as posted. Ayes all, motion carried.

Dave Hallberg, local rep for Princess City Solar personally invited the Supervisors to attend the Public Information Meeting tonight, Tuesday, January 28 from 5-7 p.m. in Fonda. Seehusen had a few questions regarding the Solar project. To start off with, Seehusen requested Stauter to publicly announce that he would abstain from voting on any decision the Board would have regarding the Solar Project. Stauter advised he has before and acknowledged again that he would abstain.

Seehusen then posed questions to Hallberg regarding drainage relief, ROW concerns and foreign ownership concerns. Hallberg advised that those would be great questions to ask at the meeting tonight. Kevin Wells requested Princess City Solar have a town hall meeting to answer questions. Jan and Mark Johnson also voiced concerns. Hallberg advised that he would let the owners know their requests.

Hinrickson presented the updated Drug & Alcohol Policy and Consequences Policy. Initially the policy was directed specifically for Secondary Roads and now is county wide for anyone with a CDL. Conservation Director Brian Reis, Smith & Siepker along with Tate Schmeling, Engineer, John Runneberg, Roads Superintendent and Robin Moore, Office Manager were included in the review of the policies. Motion by Aden seconded by Seehusen, to approve both the Drug & Alcohol and Consequences Polices. Ayes all, motion carried.

Nita Hinrickson, Auditor informed the Board that they received a thank you letter from Upper Des Moines Opportunity for their donation the past year.

Midstate is working diligently with the electric furnace company to get new motors that were originally specified for the project. Collin Klingbeil sent an email advising that he met with IA DNR, Aaron Wright last Friday and he helped identify and mark some trees and left some as questionable with further research. After further discussion, Collin plans to update maps on trees to be left or cut down and send letters out to landowners with trees to be cut giving them one last chance to provide additional information.

Seehusen asked if there needed to be a late payment penalty clause in the extended 28E agreement. Siepker advised that the City initially had questions regarding the first invoice but that has been worked out. Seehusen asked Sheriff Nelson if he felt that there should be a clause and he advised no, that they had already received payment for December. Motion by Stauter seconded by Aden, to approve the extended 28E Agreement with the City of Laurens for Law Enforcement. Ayes all, motion carried.

Motion by Smith seconded by Stauter, to approve the Treasurer's Quarterly Report. Ayes all, motion carried.

Motion by Aden seconded by Stauter, to acknowledge Manure Management Plan (1) Mark Wells – ID# 64298 SW NW, Section 18, Colfax Township Mark Wells as owner & contact person (2) Cummins North– ID# 65111 SE SW, Section 16, Cummins Township Hawkeye Partners LLP as owner & Scott Jacobsen as contact person (3) Cummins South– ID# 65112 SE SE, Section 32, Cummins Township Hawkeye Partners LLP as owner & Scott Jacobsen as contact person (4) PI-251– ID# 65720 NW NW, Section 21, Powhatan Township Prestage Farms of Iowa LLC as owner & contact. Ayes all, motion carried.

Motion by Smith seconded by Aden, to approve claims as presented. Ayes all, motion carried.

Alliant Energy	Utilities	497.16	1
Amazon	Supplies	895.70	8
Axon	Service	96.00	1
C Bailey	Engineering expenses	125.19	1
L Bailey	Expenses	63.18	1
N Birkey	Expenses	402.48	1
B H Energy	Natural Gas	906.15	3
Bolton & Menk	DD Engineer	8419.50	1
Bomgaars	Supplies	143.98	1
CCDA	Dues	100.00	1
Century Link	Line Chg	68.45	1
Collision Center	Supplies/Repairs	200.00	1
Des Moine Stamp	Stamper	73.00	1
DeWall Const	Service	300.00	1
DeWall Const	Services	101.00	1
Nicholas J Dirks	Safety	150.00	1
Farm & Home	Supplies	96.42	1
City-Fonda	Utilities	316.10	1
Gordon Flesch	Lease	324.64	1
Heart of IA	Allocation	2750.00	1
Dereck A Hebert	Phone Reimb	100.00	1
Mara L Hingson	Mileage	251.55	1
B Hinners	Postage	27.94	1
N Hinrickson	Expenses	311.36	1
B Hetrick	Expenses	353.93	1
M Hoyt	Expenses	318.83	1

IA DOT	Education	120.00	1
IA DOT	Maintenance-Eng	364.00	1
INOA	Training	650.00	1
IA Prison Ind	Sign Materials	2038.72	1
IA Workforce	Unemployment	133.78	1
IHCA	Training	875.00	1
Insight	Update	326.33	1
IA Lakes Elec	Electricity	371.00	2
IA Lakes Elec	Utilities	6134.47	1
ISAC	Training	420.00	2
I & S Group	Drainage	4216.14	1
I & S Group	Outside Engineering	2850.00	1
ITsavvy LLC	Update	1043.00	1
Kakacek Lawn	Service	900.00	1
KC Nielsen	Parts	215.51	1
Laurens Golf	Service	1480.79	1
Lifeline	Lifeline	297.00	1
MJ Litwiller	Expenses	221.93	1
Machine Shop	Materials	6351.08	1
Martin Marietta	Rock	657.20	1
Mid Iowa GP	Service	500.00	1
MSOCIC	Dues	100.00	1
MidAm Energy	Utilities	143.48	1
MGB	Service	250.00	1
Comm First	Parts/Materials	139.70	1
L Nehman	Safety Reimbursement	150.00	1
NW Comm	Line Chg	158.99	1
Office Elements	Supplies	463.19	3
On Point	Grant	418.03	1
Pitney Bowes	Lease	170.43	1
Po Co Home Care	Aides	6350.00	2
PO CO IT Dept	Service	222.79	3
PO CO IT Dept	Services	95.28	1
Postmaster	Postage	121.20	1
Poca St Bank	Rent	400.00	1
Poca Comm Hospital	Service	3596.26	2
Poky Fiber	Service	856.37	3
Poky Fiber	Services	94.95	1
Wyatt C Rahn	Supplies	768.19	1
Record Dem	Minutes	1026.34	1
Rehab Visions	Service	690.53	1
E Ahlrichs	Mileage	346.32	1
Schmillen Con	Materials	18636.84	1
Will A Schultz	Reimbursement	34.50	1
SCI Comm	Service	442.26	1
IA SOS	Notary	90.00	1
Seiler Appl	Service	3567.50	2
K Seiler	Expenses	225.24	1
Solutions	Service	5145.00	1
A Stern-Domek	Mileage	360.95	1
D Trexel	Mileage	12.87	1
US Cellular	Phone	56.98	1
Verizon	Phone	127.91	1
Verizon	Services	240.06	1
R Vosberg	Postage	9.96	1
J Watson	Mileage/Meals	376.32	1
Woods	Supplies	129.01	4
P Zaugg	Mileage	18.72	1
Grand Total		93594.68	

Seehusen inquired about the Wage Matrix. He has heard a lot of complaints regarding it. Hinrickson will be working on getting wage information and will also be discussing at the next Department Head meeting. Consensus was that it needed to be revamped. It is a good tool for new employees but doesn't really take longevity into consideration. It is in place currently and is what should be utilized for the time being until other information is gathered.

Seehusen also asked about the Midas Comprehension Plan. The Executive Director is retiring and is concerned on where we will be at. Aden advised they are working on getting it done and that they should only have one or two more meetings left. We have come too far to jump ship now. We do need to review every 3 to 5 years so we don't get behind again.

Weekly meetings: Seehusen- Solid Waste, Midas, Drainage Concerns; Stauter- YES; Siepker- Drug & Alcohol Policy; Smith- Drug & Alcohol Policy and Jail and Aden- Solid Waste, Midas.

Upcoming events: January 28 – Solar Open House Informational Meeting – Fonda, January 29 – Pocahontas County Foundation Meeting, February 3 – Farm Bureau Meeting.

Chris White joined meeting telephonically due to other meetings he is involved with.

Motion by Stauter seconded by Aden, to go into closed session pursuant to IAC 21.5 (1)(c) to discuss matters presently in litigation. Roll call vote: ayes Seehusen, Stauter, Siepker, Smith, Aden. Nays – none. Motion carried.

Motion by Seehusen seconded by Smith to come out of closed meeting. Ayes all, motion carried.

Siepker asked for a motion to resolve all issues in litigation with Jamison Underwood and Devetta Weist for \$150,000 as recommended by and paid by the County's insurance carrier solely to avoid the costs, expenses and attorney fees of ongoing litigation and not because there was any wrongdoing on the part of the County, Deputy Watson or anyone else with the County. All alleged wrongdoing is expressly denied in the settlement documents to be signed by Jeremy Watson and Devetta Weist. Motion by Seehusen seconded by Stauter. Roll call vote: ayes Seehusen, Stauter, Siepker, Smith, Aden. Nays – none. Motion carried.

At 11:10 a.m. with no further business, motion by Aden seconded by Stauter to declare the meeting adjourned. Ayes all, motion carried.

At 1:00 p.m., the Board of Supervisors of Pocahontas County, Iowa, held a workshop to discuss the FY26 budget and Wages.

Members present: Chairman, Clarence Siepker; Supervisors, Peter Seehusen, Louis Stauter, Kyle Smith, Brent Aden; and Auditor, Nita Hinrickson. Amy Johnson, Treasurer; Cathy Frerk, Recorder; Kalista Wagner, Assessor; Tate Schmeling, Engineer.

Budget discussion:

Mental Health – Alison Hauser is working on a grant. She is checking with Humboldt County then will bring to Pocahontas’s Board.

PCEDC – Nita met with Mary Jo Litwiller last week and went over the budget together. Hinrickson told the Board that she took out the line item out to pay Auditor. Litwiller asked if she would take single insurance if the Board would let her use \$3,000 - \$4,000 back in budget for Educational Training and Marketing. After discussion the Board approved Hinrickson to let Litwiller know that she could get \$1,000 for Educational Training and \$2,500 for Marketing. The Supervisors also discussed an additional \$40,000, if the budget allows for FY26 only and will be reviewed again next year.

Wage discussion:

Hinrickson reminded the Board that the Compensation Board recommended 6% for elected officials.

Sheriff - Hinrickson passed out a copy SF2442 along with amounts for comparison addressed in the SF.

Wagner asked if the Board will decide today on the wage increase so she would have the amounts for her Board meeting next Tuesday.

After discussions, the Board proposed the FY 26 wages increase of 4% for elected officials, 3% with no movement on the wage band for employees and 2.5% for Supervisors. Formal motion will be made at the February 4, 2025 Board of Supervisors meeting.

Stauter stated that looking at salary survey was deciding factor for percentage of increase.

Next budget workshop will be Tuesday, February 4, after the regular Board meeting.

Workshop ended at 2:45 p.m.

Clarence Siepker, Chairman

Nita Hinrickson, Auditor