

# PEN CITY CURRENT

It's **Black & White** and **Read** all over

Wednesday, November 4, 2020 | 8 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 201



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# REPUBLICANS SWEEP



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

A voter fills out her ballot Tuesday afternoon at the Fort Madison Christian Church. Republicans won all contested races in Lee County.

## ELECTION: Seyb, Jr., Graber win first elections, Reichman unseats Taylor

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – Absentee balloting fizzled like a balloon with a leak for Lee county democrats Tuesday night.

With just over 9,400 absentee ballots being reported in Tuesday night's general election in Lee County, and more than 16,000 ballots total cast in the county, Republican's Garry Seyb Jr., Jeff Reichman, and Martin Graber all unseated incumbent Democrats for county

and state offices.

"I would definitely say that, obviously, if you were predicting results this would be a shocker," said Graber who knocked off first-term State Representative Jeff Kurtz for the 83rd District State Representative's seat.

"But at the same token I'm not really shocked. The Lee County Republican team has been out doing their work and running the headquarters. This is a multi-year effort. The challenge now is to make sure we go

See ELECTION, page 3

## SUPERVISORS

# Fedler wants digital spend put to vote

*\$5.7 million for first responder upgrade finds debate at Tuesday supervisor meeting*

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – Lee County Board Chairman Ron Fedler is hoping to put a \$5.7 million digital public safety upgrade in front of voters.

At Tuesday's regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Fedler said the expense of the upgrade is too high for him to feel good about the board making the decision.

The board can approve bonding for the money because it falls under emergency services, and if the public is opposed to the bonding, individuals can gather signatures and petition the board for a special election to approve borrowing the money.

"I'm not saying we don't need this and I think we do," Fedler said.

"But look at what's happening in the economy. We have a tremendous amount of retired people living on a limited income and they pay taxes and if those keep going up too much we could end up putting them in a very serious financial situation."

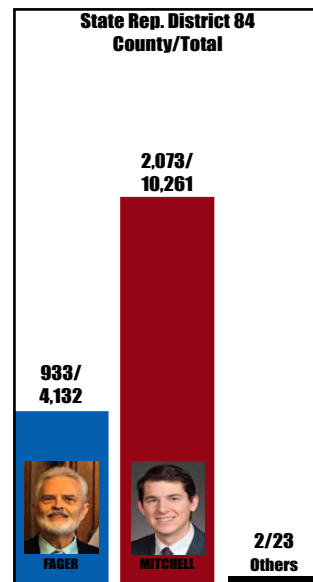
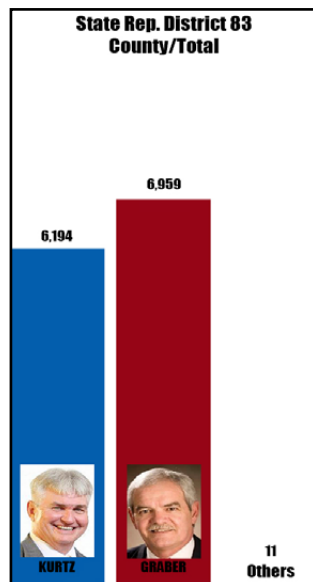
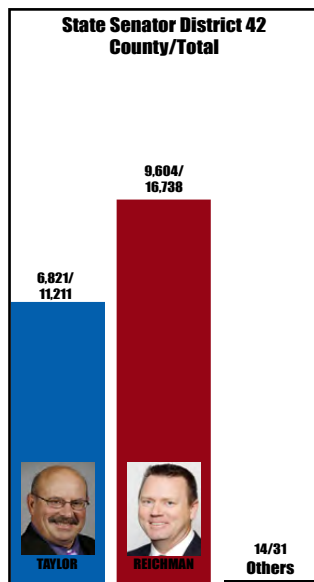
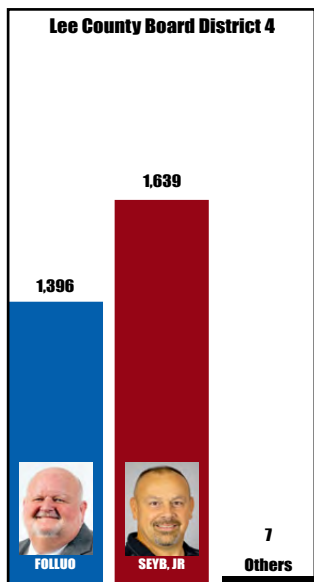
Fort Madison Fire Chief Joey Herren said he pitched the upgrade and its cost to city councils throughout the county and he said all of those public bodies have provided letters of support for the upgrade.

Fedler said he hadn't heard of nor seen any letters. Herren said he handed the letters to the supervisors at the meeting.

Supervisor Gary Folluo said the county needs to deal with this now, or they will deal with it later.

"Dealing with digital radios, I don't know what price you put on some-

See DIGITAL, page 7



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## WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap  
 WED 04 Nov.....Scattered Clouds, 69° F/ 53° F  
 THU 05 Nov.....Clear and Warm, 71° F/ 52° F  
 FRI 06 Nov.....Clear and Warm, 70° F/ 51° F

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LUCKY FOR LIFE 11/02.....7 24 26 33 42, Lucky Ball: 11  
 PICK 3 11/02 MIDDAY.....817  
 PICK 3 11/02 EVENING.....955  
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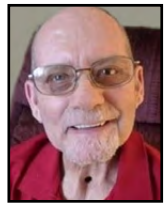
# Obituaries/For the Record

## OBITUARIES

### IRWIN R. WADE, JR

Irwin R. "Sonny" Wade, Jr., 74 of Hamilton, IL died Saturday, October 31, 2020 at his home.

He was born April 2, 1946 in Keokuk, IA the son of Irwin R., Sr. and Gwendolyn Mae Phillips Wade. Sonny graduated from Central Lee High School in Donnellson, IA.



WADE, JR.

On September 4, 1966 he was united in marriage to Linda Bell in Keokuk. She survives.

Other survivors include two daughters, Traci Hollerud (Randy) of Andalusia, IL and Kerri Huffman (Shaun) of Key Largo, FL, one son, Scott Wade (Brenda) of Cedar Park, TX, five grandchildren, Andrew Wade of Riverton, IL, Skylar Wade of Cedar Park, TX, Abby Hollerud of Andalusia, IL and Bella and Izaak Huffman both of Key Largo, FL. He is also survived by one brother, Ron Wade (Diane) of Keokuk, three sisters, Kathy Rader of Keokuk, Debbie Wade and Melinda Plowman (Jeff) both of Hamilton, IL, one brother-in-law, Jeff Johnston of IA and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, his parents, one brother, Don Wade, one half-brother, Dick Rickert and one great-niece, Carissa Horton.

Sonny had worked several factories through the years, including Henkel and Stone Container. For twenty-five years, he had worked at Pizza Hut in Keokuk and will be remembered by many in the tristate area for his friendly delivery of hot pizzas to their door.

Sonny was a faithful member of First Baptist Church in Keokuk and was a member of Bridge to Heaven Ministries.

Sonny enjoyed collecting eagles and watching his favorite television shows, Gunsmoke and The Waltons and also liked watching Hallmark movies. He found great strength in his Bible and daily devotions.

Visitation will be held after 1 p.m., Thursday at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA with family meeting with friends from 6-8 p.m. Social distancing requirements will be in place and masks are required.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to First Baptist Church or Bridge to Heaven Ministries.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at [www.vigenmemorialhome.com](http://www.vigenmemorialhome.com).

## OBITUARIES

### WANDA M. MCCLELLAN

Wanda M. McClellan, 94, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 1:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 3, 2020 at Fort Madison Community Hospital. She was born on January 25, 1926 in Fort Madison, IA to Oscar & Juanita Patterson Mitchell. She married Merle L. McClellan on July 26, 1946 in Kansas City, MO. He preceded her in death on December 1, 1976. She was a member of the First Christian Church and enjoyed doing yardwork.

Wanda is survived by: 2-sons: Craig McClellan of Fort Madison, IA & Curt (Beth) McClellan of Fort Madison and 4-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband & 1-brother, Wayne.

Cremation has been entrusted to the care of King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory and no services are planned. Burial will be held at Soldiers' Circle in Oakland Cemetery. Online condolences to Wanda's family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: [www.kinglynk.com](http://www.kinglynk.com).

## For the Record

### Fort Madison Police Report

11/02/20 - 1:34 p.m.

- Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1500 block on Avenue H.

11/02/20 - 3:41 p.m.

- Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the Fort Madison area.

11/02/20 - 7:06 p.m. - Fort

Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 3800 block of Avenue O.

11/02/20 - 8:06 p.m.

- Fort Madison Police arrested Amari N. McCutcheon, 221, of Fort Madison in the 2300 block of Avenue M, on a charge of disorderly conduct.

She was released on a promise to appear.

11/02/20 - 8:06 p.m. - Fort

Madison Police arrested Ashley J. McGowan, 28, of Fort Madison, in the 1900 block of Avenue J, on a charge of disorderly conduct. She was released on a promise to appear.

### Lee County Sheriff's Report

11/02/20 - 1:05 p.m.

- Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Justin Wayne Trout, 42, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

11/02/20 - 4:39 p.m.

- Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Taylem

Brett Brown, 38, of Westfield, Mass., on a charge of 4th-degree criminal mischief. He was taken to Lee County Jail.

Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

### Fort Madison Fire & Rescue Report

10/31/20 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to three medical calls and one motor vehicle accident.

11/01/20 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to one dumpster fire, one truck fire, one brush fire, one medical call, and one lift assist.

11/02/20 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to four medical calls.

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# Election 2020

## Republicans get mandate from county for change

**ELECTION** - Continued from Page 1

and get something done.

"I want to say thank you to all the people who supported me either financially or with time. Without them we wouldn't have been victorious."

Graber defeated Kurtz by about 800



GRABER

but the Republican in-person turn out was too much to overcome with Graber winning in every single precinct in the county.

Reichman knocked off District 42 State Senator Rich Taylor, who was trying for a fourth term and is currently an Assistant Democratic Leader and ranking member of the



REICHMAN

16,738-11,211. Lee County voters chose Reichman 9,604-6,821.

Reichman said he was called and congratulated by Gov. Kim

Reynolds at about 11 p.m. before the county's absentee results had been published.

"How exciting was that. I get a call from a friend who's sitting with former Gov. Terry Branstad, who congratulated me, and then Gov. Reynolds calls," Reichman said.

"Should we say a referendum on the Democratic party?," Reichman said. "They've revealed how far left they've gone. I'm about manufacturing and helping out labor and the working man to increase his standard of living and succeed."

"That really says something for Lee County. I think people are sick of sticking their finger in light socket and made a change. Now we need to deliver something positive in Lee County. Get some growth and turn this county around and make a positive."

First time candidate Garry Seyb, Jr, unseated County Supervisor Gary Folluo for the District 4 County Supervisor seat. Seyb was unavailable for comment late Tuesday.

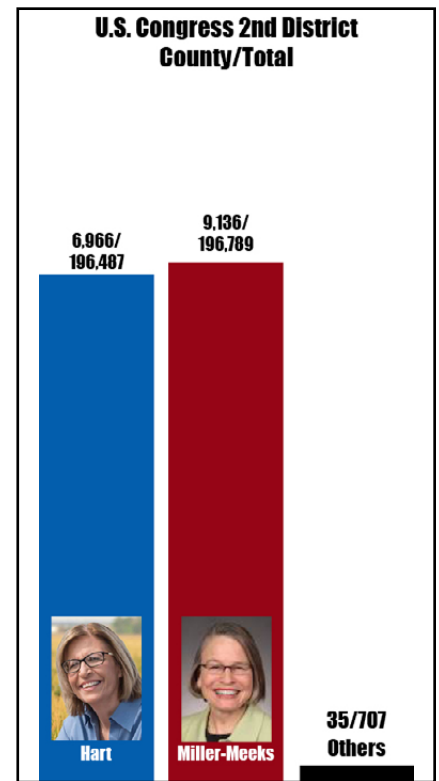
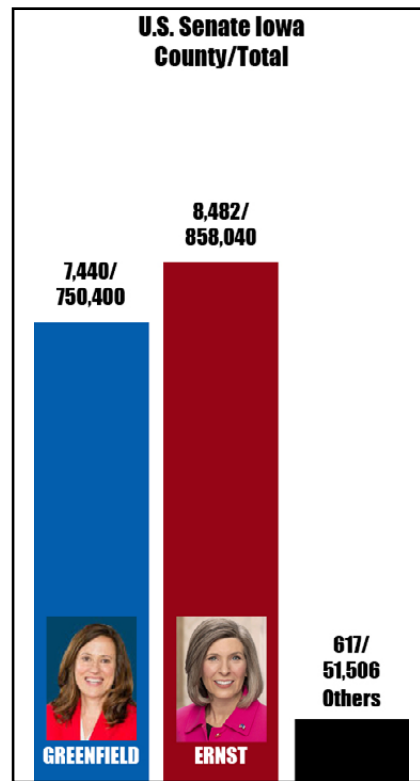
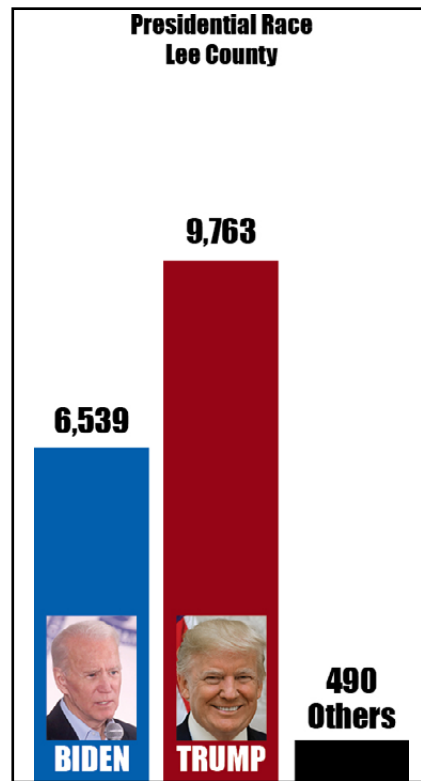
The District 84 State Representative was retained by Joe Mitchell

See **VOTES**, page 5



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Lee County Republicans gear up for a night of election returns at the Republican Headquarters on Avenue H in Fort Madison. The party was getting started just after 7 p.m. with Joe Biden holding a 44-26 electoral lead over Trump in the early returns.



## FMCH Pediatrics Welcomes Dr. Bryan Blacker



Fort Madison Community Hospital is pleased to welcome Dr. Bryan Blacker. Dr. Blacker is a Board eligible Pediatrician and will join the FMCH Pediatric Clinic on Monday, August 3, 2020.

Dr. Blacker is coming to FMCH after completing his Pediatric Residency at the University of South Dakota. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Nutritional Sciences from Brigham Young University and his Doctor of Medicine degree from the University Of New Mexico School Of Medicine.

Pediatricians specialize in the health care of children from preventive to diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic diseases. They collaborate with the child's parent or guardian to deal with the physical, emotional and social development of their children.

Dr. Blacker will see patients from newborn through the teenage years in the clinic along with Dr. Kolleen Burnett, Dr. Libby Balbort, Dr. Greg Gorski and Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, Susan Holtkamp.

*"I love to watch my patients grow, learn and change from year to year. The most rewarding part of my day is empowering and educating parents. Most parents work hard to be the best they can and do the right thing for their children. My job is to help give them the tools and knowledge to keep their kids healthy."*  
- Dr. Bryan Blacker



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## Local News/Lee County News

# Wine & Beer walk to go on as planned Nov. 20th

Submitted article

FORT MADISON – The Fort Madison Wine & Beer Walk will, in fact, take place Friday, November 20th from 5 p.m. to 8 .pm.

“We’re celebrating our 11th year doing this event” says Tim Gobble, Fort Madison Partners Executive Director.

“With 2020 being such a strange year, we will be implementing safeguards for the patrons as well as the vendors serving up regional flavors for you to enjoy at a variety of locations in the Historic Downtown Avenue G District. We are encouraging all to adhere to the CDC and LCHD guidelines to make the event safe and fun for all – vendors and patrons alike.”

More information about vendors and locations will be on the Wine Walk Facebook pages and event listing.

Different than past years, The “Early Bird Glass Sale Event” will be held at the Partners office – located at 614 7th Street- from 5 p.m.-7 p.m. on Wednesday, November 18th. This will be the only night to get your commemorative 2020 (which has a special 2020 logo) glass at the \$10.00 price. After the 18th, the glasses will be available at the Partners office during business hours for \$15.00.

“There is a limited number of the 2020 Wine & Beer Walk commemorative glasses with the special year logo on them” Gobble continues. “So, if you’re that collector of Wine Walk glasses this in one you may want to make sure and get early”.

The Wine & Beer Walk makes for a perfect evening with loved ones or a bubbling night with friends and family. If you have been here before, we know you will come again.

If you haven’t attended the award-winning Fort Madison Wine & Beer Walk, see for yourself how the event puts the spirit back into iconic Avenue G in downtown Fort Madison for the holiday season. All proceeds benefit Fort Madison beautification projects.

**LEE  
CHD**

LCHD is reporting **12** additional cases added to the total case count in the last 24 hours.

Total Positive Cases (as of 3:30pm 11/3/2020)	1116
Total Cases Reported as Recovered	704
Current 14-day average Positivity Rate (number of people tested positive/number tested in last 14 days)	13.5%

LCHD continues to encourage the public to practice social distancing, wash your hands, avoid large

## LCHD administrator again urges public to stay vigilant against virus

LEE COUNTY - Lee County Administrator Michele Ross is reminding the public of the importance of continued public health mitigation strategies every day in this fight against COVID-19.

This includes social distancing by at least six feet apart from those outside your own household, wearing a face mask or covering when out in public or outside your own home, washing your hands frequently with warm soap and water, staying home when ill away from others of if you have been exposed to COVID-19, and avoiding crowds or gatherings of people especially if they are not taking extra precautions to protect you or others. public or outside your own home, washing your hands frequently with warm soap and water, staying home when ill away from others of if you have been exposed to COVID-19, and avoiding crowds or gatherings of people especially if they are not taking extra precautions to protect you or others.

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**Election 2020**

# Miller-Meeks win over Hart is just 282 votes

**VOTES** - Continued from Page 3

(R-Wayland) in another easy win for the 23-year old, who was the youngest representative in the House the past two years.

Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber received 13,970 votes in an uncontested race. Lee County Auditor Denise Fraise received 13,180. Lee County Supervisor Matt Pflug got 2,275 votes and Supervisor Ron Fedler got 3,100 votes again in uncontested races.



SEYB

In a crazy race for the District 2 Congressional seat vacated by Dave Loeb sack, Republican Mariannette Miller-Meeks (Ottumwa) held a slim 282-vote lead. That vote could be challenged due to the slim margin of victory over Democrat Rita Hart.

Hart (D-Wheatland) opened a quick lead over Miller-Meeks in early returns, but the trend turned as heavy returns came in. The absentee additions pushed the race to almost a dead heat. Lee County voters broke 9,136 to 6,966 in favor of Miller-Meeks.

In the 1st District, Abby Finkenauer had doubled up Republican Ashley Hinson early on, but trailed by 10,700 with just two counties to report at 12:30 a.m.

The 3rd District race between Republican David Young and Democrat Cindy Axne was close the whole night, but Axne pulled away a bit and held a 6,200 vote lead with just two counties left to report.

In District 4 J.D. Scholten gave Republican Randy Feenstra a run in the conservative northwest portion of the state early, but Feenstra ran away as precinct reporting came in and took 62% of the vote in that district.

Joni Ernst will hold her seat despite a valiant run from Democrat Theresa Greenfield. Ernst pulled away in late voting with a 858,040-750,400. Lee County voters went 8,482-7,440 in favor of Ernst.

In the presidential race, Lee County voters again circled the oval for President Donald Trump, 9,763 to 6,539. That race had not been finalized before publication.

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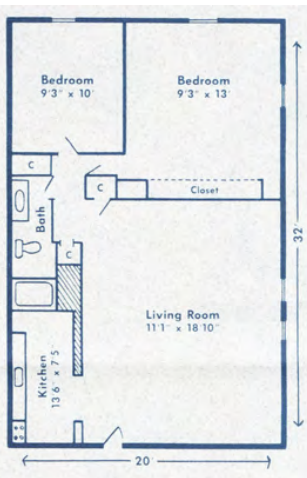
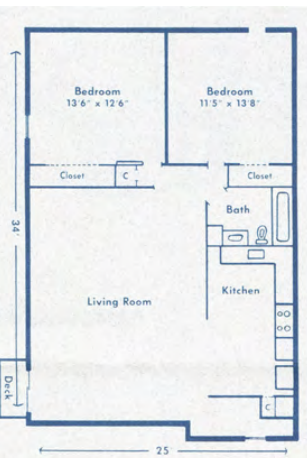
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# County board could put bond issue on agenda in two weeks

**DIGITAL** - Continued from Page 1

one's life, but I tend not to go there. And I tend to always err on the side of safety and safety costs money," Folluo said.

Supervisor Rick Larkin asked Brian Flynn, a Motorola representative, what other people around the country have been doing to pay for the upgrades.

Motorola provided a proposal under a request from the 911 board, and is the provider poised to handle the upgrades if and when the financing has been secured.

Flynn said all the other counties Motorola has worked with paid for the upgrades with bonds.

"To your point, over the last five years or so as the ISICS (Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications System) statewide has been built out, several counties have done exactly what your doing," Flynn said.

"It is bonding for that amount. It will never be, nor has it ever been, in the budget to pay for something like this. That's a bunch of pancakes being flipped and it won't happen."

On Thursday, the E911 Board approved a \$600,000 payment to the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) board to offset a projected \$6.3 million cost to the project. That brings the bonded amount down to \$5.7 million. The total amount being financed could get closer to the \$6 million mark if engineering costs for the third phase of the project are factored in.

Fedler said the county has also recently upped jail staffing, repaired jail showers, and just took out \$1 million in bonds to pay for new jail cameras and additional maintenance work in other county facilities.

Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber said most of those repairs are maintenance repairs and the some of the work was caused by improper planning during construction.

"I appreciate these repairs were done in my facility, but the showers should have been built right in the first place," Weber said. "The camera system is under the maintenance budget which falls to Auditor Denise Fraise and she's said these things need done."

Fedler said in his eight years on the board he has been very supportive of law enforcement and said the comments aren't popular, but need to be brought up.

"I agree with everything you say and everything that is needed. The problem is \$5.7 million is all taxpayers dollars and we've never had anything come up as a special item that the cost has been this much money," Fedler said.

"I really think that even though we, according to (Budget Director) Cindy (Renstrom), can approve this as an emergency item and don't have to let taxpayers decide, I'm just not in favor of not letting them decide. Then it's really final and we have the approval."

County Auditor Denise Fraise said the item will be put on the Nov. 17 Supervisor's agenda for a possible vote. It couldn't go on next Tuesday's agenda as that will be a canvass of general election ballots.

Weber said currently the county can get through to dispatch or other deputies about 35% of the time out in the county. The new upgrade would guarantee 95% coverage throughout the county and would replace and upgrade all radios and support infrastructure.

"It's gotten so bad fire trucks in Keokuk at a scene can't talk to firefighters in a basement of a home. It's real life problem shared with me by the Keokuk Fire Chief," Weber said.

Herren said he had a situation Tuesday night where a resident passed out at City Hall following the Fort Madison City Council meeting and he couldn't communicate with anyone on his body radio. Someone else in attendance had to call 911 with a cellphone.

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## Iowa News

# Hospitals, health depts. to get more CARES funds

*Reynolds puts aside \$28M to help facilities*

BY PCC STAFF

DES MOINES – Governor Kim Reynolds announced today that she is allocating an additional \$28 million in direct relief to Iowa’s hospitals and local county health departments to help manage increased needs due to

COVID-19. The funding comes from the \$1.25 billion in federal CARES Act funds allocated to the state.

“As COVID-19 continues to impact Iowans, it is putting strain on both staffing at our hospitals as well as local public health departments,” Gov. Reynolds said. “These added funds will provide much-needed relief to hospitals to support their staffing needs in this critical time. They will

also support Iowa’s county health departments, which are facing continued and ongoing increases in workload.”

Of the direct relief announced today, \$25 million will be allocated to hospitals to address staffing needs. The funds will be allocated prorated based on average hospital census over the months of September and October. An additional \$3 million will be distributed to local county health depart-

ments based on a per capita basis.

“All across the northern United States, we are seeing a consistent uptick in new cases of COVID-19,” said Gov. Reynolds. “It’s especially important that Iowans take every precaution possible to slow the community spread of COVID-19, whether that means wearing a mask in public, social distancing or simply staying home. We all need to do our part to curb that spread.”

# Dept. of Labor disaster grant to help with derecho

DES MOINES - Governor Reynolds announced Iowa will receive a U.S. Department of Labor Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant for up to \$3 million to assist the state’s response to the severe storms of August 2020. An initial award of \$1 million will create disaster-relief jobs to address debris clean-up and the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those affected by the storms. The project will focus efforts in the following 16 Iowa counties: Benton, Boone, Cedar, Clinton, Dallas, Jasper, Johnson, Jones, Linn, Marshall, Muscatine, Polk, Poweshiek, Scott, Story, and Tama. Iowa can request additional funds up to a total of \$3 million once the initial award has been expended.

“Iowans have demonstrated their resilience and ability to come together to overcome obstacles,” said Gov. Reynolds. “The Disaster Recovery Grant Funding will provide significant assistance to Iowans impacted by the derecho.”

National Dislocated Worker Grants temporarily expand the service capacity of dislocated worker training and employment programs at the state and local levels by providing funding assistance in response to large, unexpected economic events that cause significant job losses. Iowa Workforce Development will serve as the lead statewide agency to administer the Iowa Disaster Recovery Employment Program and pass through National Dislocated Worker Grant funds to implement response efforts in partnership with local areas.



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