

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Thursday, August 5, 2021 | 10 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 149



www.pencitycurrent.com

Riverfest kicks off today



Photo by Krystal Grogan for the Pen City Current

The Connor Family Amusement company is again on grounds for the Shearer Carnival Midway at the 2021 RiverFest on the Mississippi River front in Fort Madison. The festival kicks off today with carnival and music getting underway at 5 p.m.

THURSDAY LINEUP: Lit, Blessid Union Of Souls highlight Thursday entertainment

BY PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON - One of the largest outdoor rock festivals in the Midwest kicks off again tonight with RiverFest 2021 getting under way at 5 p.m.

Lit, a 1990s rock band will be one of two featured acts on the Frank Millard Main Stage Thursday night.

Lit's "My Own Worst Enemy" moved up the charts in 1999 off the album A Place in the Sun. The California group will perform following another 90s super group Blessid Union of Souls.

The Cincinnati-born band had its biggest hits in "Hey

Leonardo (She Likes Me for Me) and "I believe".

English rockers Flannel open the Main Stage entertainment at 5 p.m. followed by Far Out 283, the winner's of the RiverFest Battle of the Bands held at Vinnie's Longbranch in Fort Madison.

Four-day VIP tickets are \$79, while a 4-day general admission ticket is \$49. Thursday only tickets are \$36 with doors opening at 4:05 p.m. and the music starting at 5:05 p.m.

Friday tickets are \$38 for the night with doors open at 4 p.m.

See LINEUPS, page 2

DEPOT PROJECT

City still has work to do before Amtrak move

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - A congressional mandate that apparently didn't land on Fort Madison officials radar has the city back to its original signed agreement with Amtrak in relocating the depot to

Riverview Park.

At Tuesday's City Council meeting, Fort Madison Mayor Matt Mohrfeld said he was "embarrassed" that his information was out of date on a ticketing mandate from the Federal Railroad Association that required a manned ticketing presence in the new depot.

Mohrfeld had been looking forward to being the first to step off onto the new depot next month, but that may be delayed as the city looks to complete its agreed upon renovations for Amtrak passenger services at the new location.

See AMTRAK, page 8

PANDEMIC

Staffing and vaccination rates worry SIRMC chief

Dr. Michael McCoy agrees unvaccinated will get COVID

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

BURLINGTON - Dr. Michael McCoy said he's not concerned about having sufficient beds for another outbreak of the pandemic. He is however very concerned about having enough people to staff them adequately.

In an interview with Pen City Current on Tuesday, McCoy said his biggest concern is staffing. And then his next biggest concern is vaccination rates.

"Either we're going to get the vaccine, or we're going to get COVID. There's not a lot of in between," McCoy said.

The stern message follows on the heels of a report from the Polk County Public Health Director who told the Des Moines Register essentially the same thing.

"If you remain unvaccinated, you will get COVID," Helen Eddy told the Register.

"The only question is how sick you will become."

McCoy said the unknown of how deeply the Delta variant will penetrate the population, coupled with the short staff of not just SIRMC campuses in Burlington and Fort Madison, but around the region and nation, paints a concerning picture for the next few months.

"Health care providers have already gone through one very stressful pandemic, and some of them retired if they had the chance, or suffered major burn out, or are having difficulties working too much and not having enough colleagues to give them a break," McCoy said.

"So in addition to what's going on with



McCOY

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WEATHER

THU 05 Aug.....Light Rain, 72° F/ 60° F
FRI 06 Aug.....Light Rain, 83° F/ 64° F
SAT 07 Aug.....Overcast, 83° F/ 66° F

OpenWeatherMap

IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 08/03.....10 15 18 41 45, Lucky Ball: 10
MEGA MILLIONS 08/03.....19 17 27 34, Mega Ball: 24
MegaPlier: 2
PICK 3 08/03 MIDDAY.....5 3 3
PICK 3 08/03 EVENING.....6 4 8
PICK 4 08/03 MIDDAY.....0 3 9 3
PICK 4 08/03 EVENING.....6 4 3 2

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RiverFest 2021

Theory of a Dead Man highlights Saturday lineup

LINEUPS - Continued from Page 1

Friday's entertainment is headlined by 1990s Seattle band Candlebox. Candlebox hit the scene quickly and scored with single "Far Behind" which reached Top 20 status. Other singles from the self titled 1993 album "You" and "Cover Me" helped propel the band to the front of the west coast scene.

Other performers on Friday start with 90's Daughter, who will finish up the night in the Buffalo61 Bar and Grille Entertainment Tent. In between their sets is returner Cole Hollow and Sponge, who was late fill in when Local H had to back out.

Saturday's music features platinum recording artists Theory of a Dead Man and local favorites Ghost of Judas. Burden of the Sky and Blacktop Mojo fill up the river-front with music before Theory takes the stage.

Sunday night is headlined by Saul. Fidelio, Stars in Toledo and the Mendenhall Experiment and round out the four-day festival.

Mendenhall Experiment is rock band with a message for those living with disabilities. Front man Brandon Mendenhall was born with cerebral palsy but playing the guitar helped him overcome some of the debilitating effects of the disease.

Tickets for RiverFest 2021 can be purchased through Etix at the following link: <http://riverfestfm.com/get-tickets>.

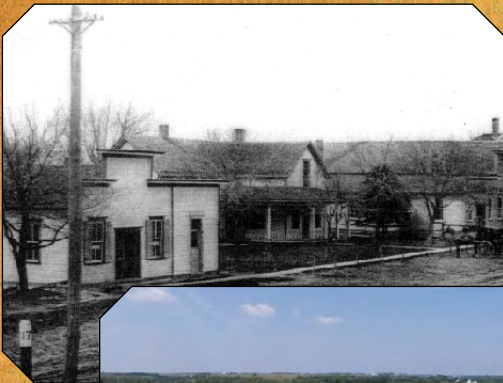


Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Wednesday saw workers with Connor Family Amusement finishing the set up on Shearer's Carnival Midway in Riverview Park in preparation for Thursday's start of RiverFest 2021. Wristband times this year are from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Music starts Thursday with Flannel, Far Out 283, Blessid Union of Souls, and Lit on the Frank Millard Main Stage starting at 5 p.m.



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Pilot Grove Savings Bank was established on May 12, 1911 when 23 investors pooled \$10,000 to meet the banking needs of the local community. Since that day, the Bank has continued to grow and prosper, serving customers in Southeast Iowa and the tri-state area as well as many other locations across the country. With customer loyalty on its side, Pilot Grove Savings Bank has prospered throughout the years. Now, with 14 offices, more than 100 employees, over \$760 million in assets and some of the most technologically advanced banking systems available, Pilot Grove Savings Bank's main goal remains as it was in 1911 – to serve the customer well.

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Founded in 2016
P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

For the Record

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

07/29/21 – 12:43 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 07/29/21 – 6:58 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 1100 block of Avenue F.
 07/29/21 – 7:52 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 400 block of Avenue D.
 08/02/21 – 9:14 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the 2800 block of Avenue O.
 08/02/21 – 10:03 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2500 block of Avenue G.
 08/02/21 – 1:06 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of property damage accident in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 08/02/21 – 3:21 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2200 block of Avenue H.
 08/02/21 – 3:41 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 08/02/21 – 4:36 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 08/02/21 – 4:51 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Adam James Huss, 32, of Donnellson, on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 08/03/21 – 5:32 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism on Florence Court.
 08/03/21 – 11:46 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Dustin Michael Damico, 38, of Fort Madison, in the 2300 block of Avenue D, on a warrant for voluntary absence from custody. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 08/03/21 – 11:57 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Stefan Gregory Nicodijevic, 26, of Fort Madison, at the police station on a

charge of simple assault.
 08/03/21 – 4:07 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 08/03/21 – 5:06 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 500 block of 12th Street.
 08/03/21 – 7:43 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1100 block of Avenue G.
 08/03/21 – 8:25 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 4800 block of Bluff Road.
 08/03/21 – 8:27 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft reported at the police station.
 08/03/21 – 9:52 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 600 block of Avenue H.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

07/29/21 – 1:03 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Payton Wrage VanPelt Vice, 25, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff's office on a charge of assault on a law enforcement officer. She was taken to Lee County Jail.
 07/29/21 – 3:59 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Rowdy Jo Alton Mortimer, 24, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office, on a warrant for violation of probation. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 07/29/21 – 4:15 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Kody Michael Saar, 27, of Carthage, on warrants for forgery and failure to appear. He was taken to Lee County Jail.
 07/29/21 – 10:25 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Penny Flores, 46, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff's office, on a judgment hold. She was taken to Lee County Jail.
 07/31/21 – 11:39 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a report of a one-vehicle accident in

the 3600 block of Johnson Street Road. According to the report a vehicle driven by Hunter Kraus, 17, of Keokuk, lost control and struck a utility pole causing damage to the vehicle and pole. No injuries were reported. Kraus was cited for driving while suspended.
 08/03/21 – no time listed – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Christopher Michael Gollither, 34, of Farmington, at the sheriff's office, on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to Lee County Jail and released on bond.
 08/03/21 – 10:50 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Vincent Ray Bell, 51, on Country Club Lane in Fort Madison, on a warrant for domestic assault. He was taken to Lee County Jail and released on bond.
 08/03/21 – 12:39 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Toni Jo Messenger, 43, of Keokuk, in the 300 block of Belknap Place on warrants for voluntary absence from custody and a judgment hold. She was taken to Lee County Jail.
 08/03/21 – 3:00 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Jason William Barnes, 43, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office, on warrants for voluntary absence from custody and a judgment hold. 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

08/01/21 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to four medical calls and one lift assist.
 08/02/21 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to four medical calls, two assists, and two canceled in route.
 08/03/21 – Fort Madison Firefighters responded to six medical calls, one assist, and one burn complaint.



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we'll be right back!

Pen City Current will not publish an e-Edition Tuesday, August 10 due to a long weekend celebrating the boss' birthday! The e-Edition will resume Wednesday, August 11.

Thank for reading!

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Sports/From the Front

Thurman named 3rd team all state by print sports writers

BY PCC STAFF

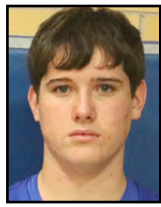
FORT MADISON – The Bloodhounds’ came up short in their quest for an appearance at the state baseball tournament after bowing out to DeWitt Central in the substate semis.

But the individual awards keep coming in.

Senior shortstop Jason Thurman was named to the Iowa Print Sports Writers Association 3rd team all-state in Class 3A as an infielder.

Thurman hit .433 on the year in 104 plate appearances driving in 30 runs and led the Hounds with 45 hits on the year. He also fielded at a .983 clip committing just two errors in 61 attempts playing most of the year at short and in relief on the mound.

Thurman also threw 41 innings allowing



THURMAN



JOHNSON

just a 1.69 ERA and just 0.97 Walks/Hits per inning pitched, the best on the Bloodhounds.

Thurman, along Tate Johnson, was also named 1st Team All-District for Class 3A in the Southeast District.

Sophomore Kane Williams, junior Landes Williams and senior Vasin Thurman were all named 2nd team All-District.

Johnson led Fort Madison in RBI with 38 on the year and tie for 2nd in Class 3A in the state with seven triples. He had 11 doubles on the year and hit. The junior hit .380 on the year second only to Thurman’s .433.

SIRMC Volunteers honored by Reynolds

WEST BURLINGTON – Four Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center volunteers recently received Governor’s Volunteer Awards. The awards were presented virtually by Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds and Lt. Governor Adam Gregg.

The four volunteers were recognized for their dedication to the Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP), a service offered at the hospital’s Fort Madison and West Burlington campuses. With training from the State of Iowa In-

surance Division, SHIIP volunteers help seniors and their families find answers to questions about Medicare, supplemental insurance, long-term care insurance, other health insurance issues and Medicare prescription drug coverage.

The recipients and the Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center campus at which they help patients were:

- Herb Pauly, Fort Madison
- Cynthia Reppert, West Burlington
- Robert Shores, West Burlington
- David Ure, West Burlington

SIRMC chief doctor wants extra vaccines used as boosters

COVID - Continued from Page 1

other industries with staffing shortages, for health care workers there is that add-on.”

He said the only way out of the current staffing issue is for people to get vaccinated. McCoy said the virus isn’t going to go away, but if the area had a higher rate of vaccinated people the impact to the health system would be reduced.

The health system is moving forward with the goal of keeping patients, the public, and the hospital staff safe.

“We are continuing to use (Centers for Disease Control) and (Iowa Department of Public Health) guidance to do that. We still try to be really careful and I know it’s a dynamic moving as information comes in,” McCoy said.

“CDC and IDPH guidance changes and sometimes those changes are hard to make sense of. It’s very fluid and we get direction that seems different than it was yesterday... and that’s because it is.”

Before the announcement came that Fort Madison Community Hospital and Great River Medical Center were joining into one entity, both hospitals had relaxed some of the additional pandemic mitigation efforts. But McCoy said they are back to meeting weekly with the Incident Command and are scheduling COVID committee meetings again, both things they had stopped as numbers diminished.

He said the system is looking again at policies that were in place during the fall because vaccination rates are steady at just under 40%. Those were numbers that places like Missouri were seeing before the hospitals began to get overrun again.

“There were a lot of places in Missouri where vaccinations rates were lower and they were getting overwhelmed. To think we aren’t going to see the same thing when our rates are similar...that just doesn’t make sense,” he said

“We will tighten up again as the variant

and it’s prevalence rate dictates – to keep everyone safe. Could we get back to where we were in the fall? We could, but we just don’t know yet. We’re taking policies we were using in the fall, and haven’t used for a while, and dusting those off and taking a look again.”

Iowa’s coronavirus data site coronavirus.iowa.gov is showing 158 patients currently hospitalized with a primary or secondary diagnoses of COVID. McCoy said that number was in the 70s two weeks ago.

“It’s doubled in the last two weeks and that’s exactly what we’re predicting.”

The site also shows Lee County at 38% of people fully vaccinated and Des Moines County at 39%.

McCoy said statistically the vaccine has been one of the most effective vaccines he’s seen.

“That’s been a nice surprise. I’m convinced that this is a highly effective vaccine.”

He also said some vaccines are already being wasted and he believes there should be guidance to allow those overstocked vaccines to be used as boosters for anyone that wants them.

McCoy said there should be a priority for anyone who hasn’t received one to get one first, but if vaccines are close to being destroyed there should be an avenue to use them for people who want a booster. There is no time requirement between initial vaccine and getting a booster.

“Pfizer has already come out and talked about boosters increasing antibodies and immune levels, especially for those immunocompromised, which will help with future strains,” McCoy said.

“We have to waste doses now and as soon as we get some guidance from CDC and IDPH, I would love to be able to give those to people who want a booster as long as we’re not taking it away from those unvaccinated who want one.”



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- ⇒ You may have side effects after vaccination. These are normal and should go away in a few days.
- ⇒ It typically takes 2 weeks after vaccination for the body to build protection (immunity) against the virus that causes COVID-19.
- ⇒ If you are fully vaccinated, you can resume activities that you did before the pandemic.

We are making progress in putting COVID-19 behind us, let's keep it up!
#SleevesUpLeeCounty

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Wednesdays 12:00pm-4:00pm
Specialty clinic times & locations can be found on LCHD website and Facebook page

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Opinion

Norman Borlaug and Dolly Parton: Two peas in a pod

It is hard to imagine Norman Borlaug ever joining in singing “Jolene” or “9 to 5.” I can’t picture him harmonizing in a heart-tugging rendition of “I Will Always Love You.”

This is not a knock against this kid from Cresco, Iowa.

He excelled in other ways — like saving upwards of one billion people from starvation through the revolutionary plant-breeding work he did in the decades after World War II. Borlaug developed new, high-yield, disease-resistant varieties of wheat, maize and rice that are still feeding people around the globe today.

He also established the World Food Prize 35 years ago to honor people who devote themselves to trying to rid the world of the scourge of hunger.

A bronze statue of the late scientist stands in Statuary Hall inside the U.S. Capitol. It shows him in his work attire — khaki pants and shirt, rumpled hat to shield him from the sun, and a clipboard for jotting notes during inspection of fields.

When the statue was unveiled in 2014 on Borlaug’s 100th birthday, the nation’s assembled leaders joined in a remarkable tribute to this modest man. They sang the “Iowa Corn Song,” a tune he and his classmates enjoyed during the 1920s in their one-room country school in Howard County.

I am confident it was a tribute Dolly Parton would heartily approve of. While she might not have an obvious connection with the farm boy from Iowa, the two super stars do have similar traits that are worthy of our appreciation, admiration and recognition.

Even before he was chosen for Statuary Hall, Borlaug was honored by the United States in a couple of other important ways. He received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977 from Gerald Ford and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2006 by order of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Those awards were presented in appreciation for his distinguished and meritorious achievements and contributions to the people of the United States and the world.

Back to Dolly Parton:

There was another reminder in the news last week that her talent as a singer and songwriter — as well as fondness for sequins and big hair — often overshadows the amazing humanitarian side of her.

This girl grew up in poverty in a tiny cabin in the hill country of eastern Tennessee, and she has been on a lifelong quest to raise up those who need a boost along life’s journey.

In that regard, Norm and Dolly are two peas in a pod.

Parton appeared on Andy Cohen’s interview program on the Bravo cable television network last week. Before the conversation turned to one of her most famous songs, “I Will Always Love You,” she estimated she has 365 hairpieces she can choose from.

Cohen asked what her favorite purchase was with some of the estimated \$10 million

in royalties she has received from Whitney Houston’s recording of the song for the 1992 movie, “The Bodyguard.”

Without hesitating, she said it was a strip mall she bought in a Black neighborhood in Nashville. Parton’s purchase ignited redevelopment efforts that have turned the rundown area into one of the city’s hottest neighborhoods.

Nashville historian David Ewing told the Washington Post, “Dolly Parton could have built and bought any piece of property in Nashville. But you would have to have gone out of your way to buy in the 12 South neighborhood, because no Realtor would have shown Dolly that lot to buy.”

Throughout her career, Parton has confounded people who tried to stamp her as a blonde bimbo. She has listened to her own heart with her philanthropic investments, too.

Last year, she gave \$1 million to the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville to help pay for its work to develop a Covid vaccine. Those of you who have received Moderna vaccinations this year have been benefactors of Vanderbilt’s work and Parton’s gift.

She paid for construction of a hospital in Sevier County, Tenn., where she grew up. She gives college scholarships to every high school graduate there.

She established a “buddy” program that pairs seventh- and eighth-graders to study together and encourage each other to stick with school. Each one receives \$500 when they graduate.

That program alone has cut the high school drop-out rate in Sevier County from 35 percent to 6 percent. That’s amazing progress, although the drop-out rate is still twice as large as Iowa’s.

Parton’s father never learned to read and write, and that has always gnawed at her. In 1995, she began donating one book a month to youngsters in Sevier County from their birth until their first year in school.

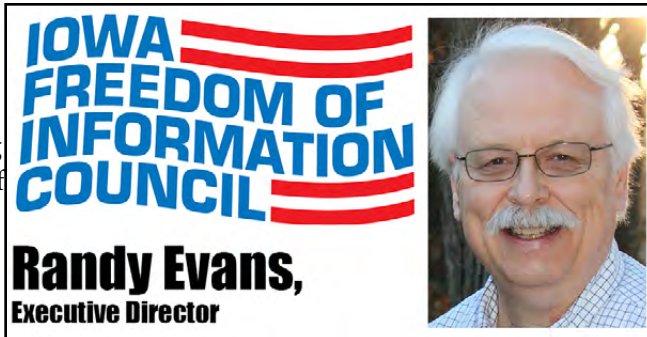
She has taken that program around the United States, into Canada and overseas. To date, she has given away more than 160 million books.

“When I was growing up in the hills of East Tennessee, I knew my dreams would come true,” she said. “I know there are children with their own dreams. The seeds of these dreams are often found in books.”

It is difficult to get Americans to agree on much these days. Surely, we can all acknowledge that the irrepressible Dolly would be a worthy recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom or maybe a Congressional Gold Medal.

Even if she’s never publicly performed the “Iowa Corn Song.”

Randy Evans is the Executive Director of the Iowa Freedom of Information Council and can be reached at DMRevs2810@gmail.com. Pen City Current is a member of the IFOIC.



5 MILLION AMERICANS COULD HAVE T1D

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES NEW CONSTRUCTION ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice to Bidders
Iowa Department
of Natural Resources

Sealed bids will be received by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Engineering Bureau, at the Wallace State Office Building, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034 until 11:00 A.M., August 19, 2021 for the public improvement projects listed below, at which time they will be opened publicly. In addition to attending the bid opening in person, interested parties may also call in to the following number to listen to the bid opening:

Conference call number: (617) 675-4444
PIN: 144 768 110 7295#

In order to improve sound quality, please mute your phone by pressing *6. If you have questions, you can unmute your phone by pressing *6.

Please Note: emailed bids will no longer be accepted; all bids must be submitted via hard copy originals

If you intend to hand-deliver your sealed Bid Proposal and Proposal Guarantee Bond,

you will need to enter the Wallace Building through the main entrance/front doors. This is the only entrance open to the public. Upon arrival, please use the phone by the sliding glass doors that lead to the front elevators, to call the front desk and a DNR Receptionist will come down to obtain the sealed bid documents and to date and time stamp them. On the bid opening day, a DNR Receptionist will be available in the lobby to receive sealed bid documents and to date and time stamp them upon arrival. No bids shall be accepted by FAX OR EMAIL. After the bid opening, information concerning bid results may be obtained by visiting the Department's website at www.iowadnr.gov.

Note: The United States Postal Service (USPS) does not deliver mail or packages directly to the address provided above but rather to the Capitol Complex Mail Room. Extra time should be allotted for proposals sent by the USPS. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources shall not consider bids if they are not received by the Department of Natural Resources, either at its mail room or at its Fourth Floor Reception Desk, by the time and date described in this Notice to Bidders, regardless of whether the bid was

mailed prior to that time and date or whether the bid was received at the Capitol Complex Mail Room or other state government location prior to that time and date.

Project documents, including drawings, specifications, proposal forms and addenda items for the project are available at Beeline and Blue, at 2507 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50312. Please visit www.beelineandblue.com or contact (515) 244-1611 for more information. Alternatively, Bid Documents can be viewed or printed online at <https://programs.iowadnr.gov/engreal/projectlist.asp>

The Department shall comply with all public improvement procurement laws, as outlined in the plans and specifications and including but not limited to: Iowa Code chapter 26 related to public construction bidding; Iowa Code chapter 73 related to preferences; Iowa Code chapter 573 related to labor and materials on public improvements; rules promulgated by the Department of Administrative Services – General Services Enterprise as they may apply; rules promulgated by the Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Commission,

as they may apply; and any federal statutes, rules and/or executive orders that may be associated depending on funding sources. Bidders shall comply with these laws to be considered and are encouraged to be familiar with public improvement procurement requirements and the bidding documents before submitting a bid.

Each bidder shall accompany the bid with a bid security as defined in Iowa code section 26.8. The bid security must be in an amount set forth in the bidding documents and made payable to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Failure to execute a contract for the proposed work and file an acceptable Performance Bond in an amount equal to 100% of the contract price and a certificate of liability insurance within thirty (30) days of the date of the award of the contract will be just and sufficient cause for the rescinding of the award and the forfeiture of the bid security.

NO. 21-02-77-04

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Paving Overflow Park-

ing

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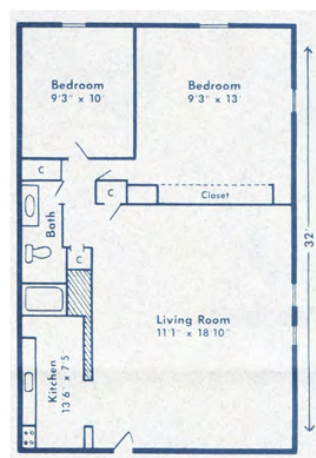
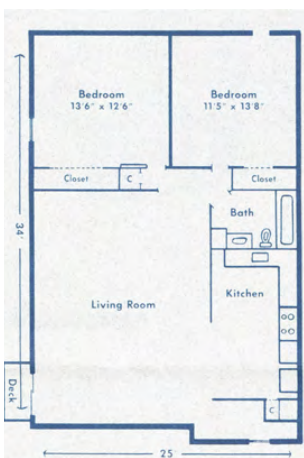
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From the Front

Mohrfeld says city will have to spend on commitments

AMTRAK - Continued from Page 1

The agreements that have been signed between the city and Amtrak have always included a staff for ticketing, including the necessary IT space, passenger counters and amenities, including a waiting room for up to 31 people.

Marc Magliari, a spokesperson for Amtrak, said Amtrak personnel are currently working with city officials on how the building can be used for all the entities involved, including the North Lee County Historical Society.

However when upgrades were done over the past several years to the NLCHS building to accommodate the new depot, counters weren't installed and there wasn't room allocated for baggage storage and increased Information Technology infrastructure, or security spaces.

City officials were operating under the impression that Amtrak wasn't going to staff the Fort Madison depot and it would just be a kiosk stop, as it has been for the past three years at the current location.

But last week Mohrfeld

met with Amtrak officials on the project to update the agreement with new plans and was told the station would indeed be a staffed ticket station. The mayor was looking to include other options for the space if it wasn't needed for ticketing operations.

The city started remodeling the depot about a decade ago in preparation for the relocation.

Mohrfeld said he'd like to see the depot also be the city's new welcome center and was going to talk about reducing the original agreements specs to allow other things to be done with that space.

"If it's not going to be a ticketed station, let's rethink the original deal. If we're not checking baggage, there's no need for a room. No need for a safe room, no IT room and no ticket counter," Mohrfeld said Wednesday.

"So we bring all these people together and I start that conversation and they tell me we are mandated to make that a ticketed counter...and I was just dead in the water. And I have to take ownership of some of the miscommunication. I

don't like saying that, but I have to."

Mohrfeld said the outcome is still a good outcome for the city. But some additional renovations will have to take place now at the depot, which will, in all likelihood, delay the opening of the depot.

"This is good. We're going to have a fully ticketed station," Mohrfeld said.

"Right, wrong, or indifferent there will have to be a little more money spent. When they did the remodel we didn't put door openers and the ticket counter never got built, and I don't have any background on that thought process."

ADA compliance and additional passenger service construction will be required before operations can begin including some grading issues on depot entry points, as well as operational improvements agreed to between the city and the passenger rail line.

Mohrfeld visited another historic depot in Mattoon, Illinois last week and said Fort Madison's depot should carry that same century feel to it.

"We want it to be a cen-



tury experience. We need to integrate displays from the museum in a secure fashion, and I think that needs to be our welcome center, too. Co-mingling those operations would be a win-win for everyone."

Mohrfeld said he understands the disappointment of the historical museum people and said the city should have been reviewing everything six months ago.

"What we've had here is an unfortunate set of circumstances. Reality is we got our hopes up with reconfiguring the design, and they were disappointed in having to go back to the original agreement," Mohrfeld said.

The current Amtrak depot hasn't had an agent since 2018. Local legislators and city officials met with Amtrak at that point to keep the ticketing office

staffed, but the change took effect.

Mohrfeld said that no longer fits the F.R.A.s model and the new office will have to be ticketed.

Magliari said about three years ago, he and Ray Lange, another Amtrak regional representative sat in a Fort Madison meeting with people from the city who were upset that Amtrak was closing the ticket window services.

"Since then Congress mandated that we restore ticketing at stations where we had withdrawn it. We and the city have been in discussions about how to manage that in view of the lease signed by the city with us," he said.

"We've had a team of people in town twice in the last two weeks talking to the city and Historical Society about how we can all do well in that building. But the fact is that there was always going to be a waiting room and that room is fully occu-

pled with exhibits from the historical society. We need a ticket counter and those were in the original plans with the city. We need a place for them to work, and for the engineers to work."

He said currently Amtrak isn't taking cash for tickets, but some officials want that restored and if that becomes a mandate as well, a secure space will be needed for handling cash. He said they will also need what he called a data closet for ticketing and passenger information, all amenities that were included in the original agreement the city has signed.

Magliari said they have been trying to fill the position in Fort Madison.

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