

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Thursday, December 2, 2021 | 7 pages | Volume 5 • Issue 217



www.pencitycurrent.com

Bump proposed for sheriff

COMPENSATION BOARD: "Back the Blue" law ties panel's hands in salary calibration

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

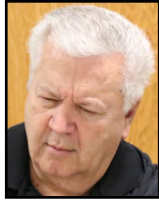
LEE COUNTY – The Lee County Compensation Board recommended Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber get a 45% raise, and all other county elected officials get a 10% increase beginning July 1, 2022.

A state law signed earlier this year nicknamed "Back to Blue" spelled out a change in how compensation boards were to set the salary of county sheriffs. The law didn't issue mandates for any other county employees.

The law, Senate File 342, changed the wording of Iowa Code from the compensation board "should consider setting" the sheriff's salary comparable to other law enforcement command officers in the state, to the board "shall set" the sheriff's salary comparably.

The move amounted to a mandate for the recommending boards to increase the salaries in the command structure of the county sheriff's departments.

However, the law stops short of mandating that county Boards of Supervisors follow the recommendation, and as Supervisor Ron Fedler told the panel Wednesday night, the Lee County Board of Supervisors has the final say in what those



FEDLER



WEBER

salary increases look like.

Fedler said he talked with Jamie Cashman, who is a government relations manager for Iowa State Association of Counties, who gave clarification that the compensation board is mandated to do what the law

says, but the law does not take away supervisors' authority to lower whatever the compensation board recommends.

"They are not mandated. The board of supervisors under home rule has the authority to lower (the recommendation). We can't raise it, but we can lower it," Fedler said.

Supervisors are obligated, however, to reduce the recommendations the same amount across all departments. In other words, any percentage the supervisors lower the recommendation for the sheriff would have to be applied to all elected officials equally.

Fedler said he has backed the needs of the sheriff's department for five years including additional staffing and computer equipment, but the county has other elected officials that have

See **SALARY**, page 4

CONSERVATION NEWS

Viehl tapped to fill in at LCCB on interim basis

Board handles long agenda at Unsworth's last meeting as director

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – With Lee County Conservation District Director Nathan Unsworth just two days from leaving his post, the LCCB board reviewed plans and budgets in his last meeting.

Unsworth's last day is Friday as he will be leaving to take an assistant director's post with Scott County Conservation.

The board approved the hiring of Caroline Viehl as the interim director to fill in until a new director can be found and hired.

"We will have a period of time without any director, we thought it would be better to have someone to facilitate things over the next few weeks before we have a new director. We hope that will be coming.



UNSWORTH

"We came to the conclusion that Caroline would be our choice to be interim director and she has agreed that she would be willing to serve as interim director during this time," said board president Liza Alton.

The motion was approved 5-0.

Viehl has been with the conservation board for about four months as an assistant to Unsworth.

The board also discussed plans to demolish some structures at the Denning Conservation Area in northwest Lee County between Houghton and St. Paul just west of Hwy. 218.

The district will be taking down some of the older structures on the property, but leaving up some histori-

See **PARKS**, page 4



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Playground plans

Members of the Lee County Conservation Board look over plans for a new playground layout for Wilson Lake that is set to go up next spring. The playground will cost about \$82,000 and will be paid for out the Conservation Board's trust fund which is replenished with park revenue.

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WEATHER

OpenWeatherMap
THU 02 Dec..... Scattered Clouds, 61° F/ 47° F
FRI 03 Dec..... Partly Cloudy, 56° F/ 41° F
SAT 04 Dec..... Broken Clouds, 48° F/ 36° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LUCKY FOR LIFE 11/30..... 9 25 29 40 42, Lucky Ball: 14
MEGA MILLIONS 11/30..... 7 8 26 30 39, Mega Ball: 17
Megaplier: 2
PICK 3 11/30 MIDDAY..... 9 6 4
PICK 3 11/30 EVENING..... 0 18
PICK 4 11/30 MIDDAY..... 8 2 5 1
PICK 4 11/30 EVENING..... 7 8 4 3

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Obituaries/Business News

OBITUARIES

BETTY J. SCHWARZ

Betty Jean Schwarz, 93, of Keokuk, passed away Sunday November 28, 2021, at her home in Keokuk.



Betty was born on January 24, 1928, in Keokuk, the daughter of Irwin and Viola (Carter) Peterson. She was united in marriage to Dr. Harold Schwarz on May 27, 1960, at the Baptist Church in Carthage, Illinois.

Betty was a homemaker and a member of the First Lutheran Church in Keokuk, where she was an active member of the women's groups. She volunteered much of her time for local drives and PTA fundraisers. Betty enjoyed league bowling, cooking, gardening, and spending time with her family. Betty was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother.

Survivors include her two sons; David Schwarz and his wife Marlene of Keokuk, Craig Schwarz and Patti Morgan Egley of Keokuk, granddaughter: Kimberly Schwarz and her husband Satakal Khalsa, of San Diego, California, and grandsons; Jeffrey Schwarz and his wife Cara, of Laguna Hills, California, Craig Schwarz Jr. and his wife Jessica of Whitmore Lake, Michigan, Todd Dawkins and his wife Lea of Prescott, Arizona, and several nieces and nephews.

Betty is preceded in death by her parents, her husband Harold, sister Cletra Cone, and brother Irwin Peterson.

Funeral services will be held at 1:00 pm on Saturday December 11, 2021, at DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home in Keokuk with Pastor Underwood officiating with burial to follow at Oakland Cemetery in Keokuk. Visitation will be held at the funeral home on Saturday, December 11, 2021, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm prior to the funeral services.

Memorials may be made to First Lutheran Church of Keokuk or to the Hoerner Y. Tributes and condolences may be left at www.dejongsfuneralhome.com. DeJong-Greaves-Printy Funeral Home of Keokuk is in charge of arrangements.

Pen City Current obituary policy

Pen City Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes. Reposting of obituaries due to changes can only be requested by the submitting funeral home and will be assessed a \$15 reposting fee.

OBITUARIES

RONNIE L. CHRISTOPHER, SR.

Ronnie Lee Christopher, Sr., 81, of Montrose, passed away on Monday, November 29, 2021 at 8:15 PM at the VA Medical Center in Iowa City.



He was born on June 7, 1940 to Joseph and Doris Patterson Christopher. Ronnie married Maggie Billing and they later divorced. He was a retiree from Dial Corporation. Ronnie proudly served in the US Army during the Vietnam Era. He loved to hunt, fish and spending time at the hunting lodge with his brothers and friends.



Survivors include his brother, James Christopher of Cedar Hill, MO; two granddaughters, Megen and Mariel; nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and two children, Julie and Ronnie, Jr.

The family will receive friends from 10-11 AM at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory on Friday, December 3, 2021. A graveside service will follow the visitation at 11 AM at Soldiers' Circle, Oakland Cemetery with Rev. Pete Hagglund officiating. Military rites will be performed by the Ft. Madison Veterans Honor guard.

Online condolences may be left at www.kinglynk.com.

FunCity Resort to host grand opening celebration Dec. 14

BURLINGTON - FunCity Resort will be hosting a grand opening celebration on December 14, 2021. The public is invited to celebrate the occasion and experience the opening and remodel of the former Pzazz! hotel firsthand. The event will start at 11:45AM at the main entrance of FunCity Resort Hotel, including a ribbon cutting with the Greater Burlington Partnership and a brief reception to follow. A champagne toast with snacks and light appetizers will follow, and tours of the new facility will be offered to everyone!

About FunCity Resort Hotel: FunCity Resort Hotel offers 95 newly renovated rooms and suites with a variety of affordable options for families. Our family friendly hotel is part of the FunCity Resort, adjoining FunCity and Huck's Harbor Water Park. Guests will enjoy KingPins Bowling Center, laser tag, go-carts, arcade, multiple dining options, Catfish Bend Casino, full-service Spa and more!

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Charles Vandenberg, Editor

(319).371.1670
charles.v@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager

(319).371.4125
lee.v@pencitycurrent.com

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From the Front

Supervisors have final say on pay

SALARY - Continued from Page 1

equal value.

The board approved a 45% increase for Weber, which will also trigger increases for Chief Deputy Will Conlee, Capt. Craig Burch, and Jail Administrator John Canida, who are tied by policy to Weber's salary. The board also approved a 10% increase for all other elected officials in the county.

So now the ball is in the court of the supervisors who have to balance a budget while considering those recommendations. Under Iowa Code, if Supervisors drop the recommendation for the sheriff by half that would be a 22.5% increase in his salary, he would see a \$22,250 raise per year. All other county elected officials would see a 5% increase in their salaries.

Last year the board approved a 3% across

the board increase. If they stick to that number again this year, all elected officials aside from Weber, would get a 3% increase, and he would see a 15% increase or \$13,500. Conlee, Burch, and Canida would also see a 15% increase in pay.

All raises have to be approved by the March 15 budget deadline and would go into effect July 1, 2022. Supervisors enter budget hearings in January and February.

Fort Madison attorney Rich Fehseke, who represents Weber on the Compensation board, said he pulled 2019 salary and population data from a total of 10 cities and counties that were closest in population to Lee County and then included the salaries of command officers with the Iowa State Patrol and the DCI. He then av-

eraged those salaries and came up with a figure that represented an increase of 45.5% to Weber's current salary of \$90,000 per year.

"It's a problem from a budgetary standpoint because it's a very significant increase, but it's not from a PR standpoint because our discretion's been whittled down. We're very narrow in what we're allowed by statute," Fehseke said.

Compensation Board member Teresa Murray said she didn't agree with the code, but admits it's a mandate.

"I really don't agree with this part because it specifically states chiefs employed by cities similar in population to Lee County, and you're not the administrator over Keokuk and Fort Madison. But that's not what the code says and we have to go by what the code says," Murray said.

Weber said his department regularly provides services to Keokuk and Fort Madison, in addition to serving warrants and holding criminals from

Fehseke said the formula being used gets the Lee County Sheriff's administrators' wages to a level that makes their jobs attractive and helps keep the best people.

Board chairman Larry Kruse, a former Lee County Supervisor, said the county has maxed out its general fund tax levy so they can't increase that to compensate for the additional salary request. He said the county would have to find cuts elsewhere or face reductions in staffing.

Other elected officials including Lee County Treasurer Chris Spann, Lee County Attorney Ross Braden, Auditor Denise Fraise, and Recorder Nancy Booten all made cases for their departments and the staffing crunches they are facing, and challenges from relative legislative changes in elections, licensing, as well as the effects of the pandemic.

Braden's assistant county attorneys are tied to his salary as well.

County plans for demolition work at Denning area

PARKS - Continued from Page 1

cal structures to be part of the conservation area.

Staff wants to be able to go in and take some of the boards and other materials from some of the structures before they are demolished including some old wood peg boards and supports that can be used in other areas of the county.

The board approved a bid from CCS Contracting Services to remove some of the buildings at a cost of \$22,800.

New Playground equipment at Wilson Lake was also part of the discussions Wednesday night. The board is looking at an \$82,000 project to put the new playground at the lake. That price could go up slightly if the conservation board adds a few more swings.

Unsworth said the park will be located on the northeast side of the lake near the large shelter house and parking lot.

The new playground will be funded out of the Conservation Board trust fund which gets revenues from park usage throughout the county.

Unsworth said some additional work may need to be done in preparing for the new equipment, but it should be completed by May.

Park Ranger Clint Oldfield said the new addition will make Wilson Lake a destination playground that will attract people to the park, not just an amenity for those that are already at the park.

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Classifieds/Public Notices

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PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE
AGENDA
FORT MADISON
PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
Date: Thursday,
December 2, 2021
Time: 5:30 P.M.
Place: Sheaffer Meeting
Room and Online

Electronic Meeting (Pursuant to Iowa Code Section 21.8)
An electronic meeting is being held because a meeting in person is impossible or impractical for the health and safety of Library Board members, library employees and the public presented by COVID-19. You can participate in the meeting via telephone and can comment on an agenda item by joining the Zoom meeting. Using your telephone, dial (312) 626 6799 and enter the meeting ID (870 8919 3347) when prompted. If you have trouble connecting to the meeting, please call (319) 372-5721.
Strategic planning workshop to review community feedback, select service responses and set goals and objectives.
Next Meeting December 16, 2021 at 5:30pm

**PUBLIC NOTICE
FORT MADISON
COMMUNITY SCHOOL
DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SPECIAL MEETING**
December 6, 2021
6:00 P.M.

Note: To view this meeting please see the link on the FMCSD Website Calendar or click on the link below
<https://zoom.us/j/94718756578?pwd=MEIxT2VObmZNaX-VuazIEchIDS3pNQTO9>

AGENDA

I. Call meeting to order and determination of a quorum

II. Recognition of guests
III. Approve the agenda
IV. Board Policy – Action
Chronological
• 603.1 Basic Instruction Program - **ACCEPT CHANGES**
• 603.4 Multicultural/ Gender Fair Education - **ACCEPT CHANGES**
2nd Quarter IASB
• 206.1 President - **ACCEPT CHANGES**
• 206.2 Vice-President - **ACCEPT CHANGES**
• 213 Public Participation in Board Meetings (OLD) - **DELETE**
• 213 Public Participation in Board Meetings (NEW) - **ADOPT**
• 302.5 Superintendent Evaluation - **ACCEPT CHANGES**
• 904.1 Transporting Students in Private Vehicles - **ACCEPT CHANGES**
V. Resolution Appointing Paying Agent, Bond Registrar, and Transfer Agent, Approving the Paying Agent, Bond Registrar and Transfer Agent Agreement and Authorizing the Execution of Same
VI. Approval of Tax Exemption Certificate
VII. Approval of Continuing Disclosure Certificate
VIII. Resolution Authorizing the Terms of Issuance and Providing for and Securing the Payment of School Infrastructure Sales, Services and Use Tax Revenue Bonds.
IX. Approve the Request for Modified Supplemental Amount from the SBRC for Excess LEP costs for serving English Language Learners during the 2020-2021 School Year in the amount of \$9,918.
X. Open Enrollment Out Not on Prior Year's Headcount. Authorize Administration to submit a request to the School Budget Review Committee for a modified supplemental

amount of \$424,994.40 for open enrolled out students who were not included in the district's previous year certified enrollment count.
XI. Approve Election Canvass Summary and Abstract of Votes from Election held on November 2, 2021.
XII. Public Comments
XIII. Selection of chair for organization meeting
XIV. Adjourn for 2021-2022 Board sine die

**FORT MADISON
COMMUNITY SCHOOL
DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ORGANIZATION
MEETING**

I. Call meeting to order and determine a quorum
II. Administer oaths and election of officers
A. Oath of office to new Board members
B. Election of president
C. Oath of office to president
D. Election of vice-president
III. Consider Board appointments
A. Sandra Elmore, Board secretary / treasurer
B. Emily Ellingson - Lynch Dallas, PC, school district attorney
C. Daily Democrat, official publication
IV. Adopt meeting rules, procedures and committee assignments
A. Establish time, day and location for regular meetings
B. Determine seating arrangement
C. Determine finance review teams
D. Selection of County Conference Board representative (1)
E. Selection of negotiations committee representative (2)
F. Selection of vocational program representative (1)
G. Selection of SIAC representative (1)
H. Selection of audit

committee (2)
I. Selection of community foundation group (1)
J. Appoint LAN member
K. Appoint Delegate assembly member
V. Consider approval of Financing Option for Middle School and High School Additions and Renovations
VI. Announcements
December 20, 2021, 6:00 p.m. Regular Board Meeting, Board Room, Central Office
VII. Adjourn

**PUBLIC NOTICE
Minutes for the Lee
County Conservation
Board Meeting**
October 27, 2021
Lee County Extension
Office
414 N. Main St
Donnellson, IA 52625

Started 9:00 a.m. and ended at 2:30 p.m.
Roll Call: Alton, Pollpeter, Moore, Mullan, VanPelt present.
Staff Present: Unsworth, Veihl, Pawling, Oldfield, Steele, and Schreur
1. Workshop-Strategic

Planning With Staff
Board and staff reviewed strategic plan and started developing new action plans.
Liza Alton, Lee County Conservation Board President
Caroline Veihl, Lee County Conservation Board Secretary

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Obituaries/Sports

OBITUARIES

CHRIS M. KAVALLIEROS

Chris Minas Kavallieros, 72, of Ft. Madison, IA, passed away on Monday, November 29, 2021 at 4:16 PM at his home.



KAVALLIEROS

He was born on June 19, 1949 in Chicago, IL to Minas and Mary Simeonidis Kavallieros. On January 7, 1978, he married Lennice E. Rathmann in San Diego, CA. Chris was a Maintenance Engineer at Dial/Pinnacle and retired in 2014 after thirty-five years of service. He also served in the US Navy and retired as Commander after twenty years of service



on the San Rayburn and DSRV II. Chris enjoyed hunting, target practice, tinkering around the house, and doing home projects. He loved spending time with his family and was the greatest Husband, Dad, and Papou anyone could ever ask for.

Survivors include his wife, Lennice Kavallieros of Ft. Madison; his children, Minas (Crystal) Kavallieros and their daughter, Genevieve of Johnstown, CO; Renita Kavallieros of Key West, FL and Quinn (Thuy Duong Truong) Kavallieros and their daughter, Sophia of Boise, ID; one sister, Irene Klikas of Chicago; several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and a brother-in-law, Anthony Klikas.

Friends may call after 2 PM on Friday, December 3, 2021 at King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory where the family will meet with friends from 4-5 PM followed by a short service at 5 PM with Mark Miller speaking. A funeral service will be held at St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Chicago and burial will be in Elmwood Cemetery in Chicago following the service in Ft. Madison.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established in his memory and online condolences may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

Pen City Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes. Reposting of obituaries due to changes can only be requested by the submitting funeral home and will be assessed a \$15 reposting fee.

Crusaders doubled up by WACO

BY JOHN BOHNENKAMP
PCC SPORTS

FORT MADISON – It was clear early that this was not going to be a good beginning of the season for Holy Trinity’s boys basketball team.

That’s why coach John Hellige wanted smaller victories.

The 58-29 loss to WACO on Tuesday was more about the little things, because Hellige knows this is a long season.

“We talked in the huddle about, OK, let’s win this possession,” he said. “Let’s win this defensive play, or let’s win this offensive play. It’s going to be a building process.”

Half of the Crusaders’ roster are freshmen, and with the lack of experience there will be nights like these.

WACO opened the game with a 26-4 run that lasted into midway through the second quarter.

“It’s just a big stage to expect this out of freshmen and sophomores,” Hellige said. “Typically these guys are enjoying JV success, but they’re forced to play major league here right off the bat.”

WACO’s biggest lead was 50-19 in the fourth quarter, but the Crusaders were able to avoid the 35-point deficit that triggers the running clock for the rest of the game.

Luke Hellige and Connor Gehling each had eight points for the Crusaders.

“There are a lot of positives to take away from here tonight,” John Hellige said. “I told the boys it’s a long season, we just need to nibble away here every day, and keep working hard to improve.”

Ross pours in 27 in Lady Hounds’ win

BY PCC STAFF

BLOOMFIELD – Senior Malarie Ross had 27 points and six other Lady Hounds scored as Fort Madison downed Davis County 58-43 Monday night.

Anna Lynk had nine points, while Camille Kruse and Irelynd Sargent each added six in the win. Kruse also led the Hounds with 10 rebounds and seven steals. Sargent had eight rebounds and five steals

Ross had six rebounds and six steals to go with her game-high scoring. Lynk had eight boards in the win.

Fort Madison also got five points from Aija Jenkins, three points from Alaina Simpson and a bucket from Coree James.

The Hound are 2-0 on the year and travel to Mt. Pleasant for a Southeast Conference clash Friday night.

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