

PEN CITY CURRENT

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

Wednesday, September 2, 2020 | 8 pages | Volume 4 • Issue 161



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HUD reps visit FM downtown

HOUSING REPS TOUR BUILDINGS Say local governments need to update ordinances

BY **CHUCK VANDENBERG**
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – A federal housing official stopped in Fort Madison Tuesday afternoon to look at some rehabilitation projects that have added housing stock to the city.

Jason Mohr, Housing and Urban Development's Great Plains Regional Director, toured the old Lee County Bank upper floor apartments, the Cattermole library, and the converted Fort Madison Middle School.

Mohr was accompanied by representatives from the Iowa Economic Development Authority representatives, Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission, and Fort Madison Partners.

He was also joined by Steve Eggleston, HUD's Field Office Director out of Des Moines.

Mohr had a round table discussion with the state and local officials about the struggles they are encountering with housing.

Sara Hecox, a housing grant administrator with Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission, talked about building opportunities SEIRPC is involved with, including programs that build homes from the ground up with Central Lee Community Schools and Southeastern Community College, as well as grants for home rehabilitation.

See **HOUSING**, page 7



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg

Fort Madison Partners Executive Director Tim Gobble talks with, from left to right, Barker Financial Property Manager Wes Holtkamp, Iowa HUD director Steve Eggleston, and Great Plains HUD Regional Administrator Jason Mohr Tuesday at the old Lee County Bank building in Fort Madison.

FORT MADISON MARINA

City Council approves marina upgrades, study

BY **CHUCK VANDENBERG**
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – City officials took steps Tuesday night to improve portions of the city's marina at cost of about \$85,000.

After discussion on long-term visions for the marina, Fort Madison Mayor Matt Mohrfeld asked for a motion to approve repairs to the jetty wall, dredge the marina, and pay \$15,000 for a hydraulic study looking at water flows in and out of the marina.

Mohrfeld got pushback from Councilman Mark Lair on the price. Lair initially balked at the idea of including the study, but voted in favor of the combined motion

See **MARINA**, page 2

LEE COUNTY

LCHD mulls regulation to mandate masks

BY **CHUCK VANDENBERG**
PCC EDITOR

LEE COUNTY – Lee County officials are carefully eyeing a potential move to mandate masks through an enforceable health regulation.

At a workshop following Tuesday's regular Board of Supervisor's meeting, Lee County Health Department administrator Michele Ross said she would bring the idea to the Board of Health at their meeting on Thursday.

Supervisor Gary Folluo asked Ross and Lee County Attorney Ross Braden to look into possible county regulations for masks to help reduce the substantial spread locally.

"What we've done in the past has helped but certainly hasn't gone far enough. And

See **MASKS**, page 8

CITY COUNCIL

Vacant building ordinance aimed at beautification

BY **CHUCK VANDENBERG**
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – In two weeks, city officials will meet with residents to talk about a proposed ordinance that would require all vacant properties to be registered with the city.

The move, spearheaded by City Building Director Doug Krogmeier, will give the city a list of properties that are sitting idle or vacant within the city limits.

Property owners would also be charged a fee as part of the registration process, based on the size of the building and the time it's been sitting vacant.

A meeting has been set for Sept. 16 at 5:30 p.m. at the Fort Madison Public Library's

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WEATHER

TUE 02 Sep..... Hot, Partly Clouds, 86° F/ 62° F
WED 03 Sep..... Scattered Clouds, Warm, 82° F/ 57° F
THU 04 Sep..... Sunny, Warm, 82° F/ 53° F

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LUCKY FOR LIFE 08/31..... 3 9 14 18 25, Lucky Ball: 11
PICK 3 08/31 MIDDAY..... 0 4 3
PICK 3 08/31 EVENING..... 9 2 1
PICK 4 08/31 MIDDAY..... 0 3 7 5
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Obituaries/From the Front

OBITUARIES

TONY JACOBSMEIER

Tony Jacobsmeier, 52, of Honolulu, Hawaii, formerly of Mt. Hamill, Iowa, passed away Thursday, August 27, 2020, as a result of a fatal car accident.

He was born on May 17, 1968, the son of Joseph and Irene (Joachim) Jacobsmeier.



JACOBSMEIER

In May 1996, he enlisted in the United States Air Force and was honorably discharged after his retirement.

Survivors include his wife: Kanchana; one son: Max; mother: Irene of Mt. Hamill, Iowa; one brother: Mike Jacobsmeier of Mt. Pleasant; three sisters: Pat (Richard) Hatfield of Houghton; Jane (Randy) Morrow of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa and Angie Kruse of Burlington, Iowa; seven nieces and nephews: Zach Jacobsmeier, Kayla Scott, Chris Hatfield, Ryan Hatfield, Jacob Morrow, Jesse Morrow and Ashley Lemke. He is also survived several great nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents; father: Joseph; nephew: Issac Jacobsmeier; brother-in-law: Don Kruse and sister-in-law: Linda Jacobsmeier.

A memorial service will be at a later date.

A memorial has been established in his memory and can be mailed to the family at: Schmitz Funeral Home, P.O. Box 22, West Point, Iowa 52656.

Schmitz Funeral Home of West Point is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences may be made to the family at www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

The 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.

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PEN CITY CURRENT
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FEMA funds picking up most of the marina tab

MARINA - Continued from Page 1

for all three expenditures.

The city still has access to some FEMA 2019 flood restoration money that can be used to help offset 80% to 85% of the costs of the dredging and wall repair with the city paying about \$70,000 of the cost. The \$15,000 feasibility study fee will be at city expense.

"That's a lot of money, man. Where's the money coming from," Lair said. "You haven't shown me the money. (City Manager David) Varley's been telling me since I got on the council again a few years back, that we're gonna be broke in a couple years if we don't do something."

Mohrfeld said the funds could be found a variety of different ways including borrowing from the Highway 61 rehabilitation funds or other enterprise funds that could be paid back with interest.

He told Lair the marina project could hold a \$6 million price tag that would

have to be a combination of private and public investment, but none of that starts without the study.

"If you have a magic wand, that would be a \$6 million project," Mohrfeld said. "You can't move forward without knowing the cause and effect of that water. If we can't do that, let's make it a volleyball pit."

Councilwoman Rebecca Bowker, who met, along with Mohrfeld and Public Works Director Mark Bouselot, with representatives of Klingner & Associates out of Burlington, said leaving the FEMA money on the table is out of the question.

"We need to take advantage of the FEMA money. To turn our back on three hundred or four hundred thousand dollars is ridiculous. You have to spend that money to see where we're at," she said.

"I have no doubts if we improve that marina our slips will fill up."

Mohrfeld said a group has been meeting to look at what the future of the marina could be and said, "it's pretty cool."

He said visions include a two-story marina with a hospitality building featuring a restaurant group, showers, and covered docks

were part of the discussion.

"In a nutshell, this will involve private grants, maybe some (Southeast Iowa Regional Riverboat Commission) investment, and maybe some people just writing checks," Mohrfeld said.

In other action, the council:

- approved, 5-0, a second reading of a revised noise ordinance with wording to allow sponsored or sanctioned events such as music events and parades and also dropped some wording about flag desecration.

- approved, 5-0, several change orders from HR Green for work associated with the Hwy. 61 rehabilitation project totaling \$106,531 to include design work on a sanitary sewer line between 5th and 6th streets and a water main replacement for the One-Way pair project slated for next year.

- approved, 5-0, a professional services agreement with HR Green for the design and construction phase services for the next segment of the Highway 61 project from 10th to 18th Streets for \$1.15 million. That project is set to be bid in November of 2021 with work starting in 2022.

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W-2319024 11/18

Charles Vandenberg, Editor

(319).371.1670
editor@pencitycurrent.com

Lee K. Vandenberg, Sales Manager

(319).371.4125
sales@pencitycurrent.com

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PEN CITY CURRENT
It's Black & White and Read all over

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Pen City Current and www.pencitycurrent.com are products of Market Street Publishing, LLC. Pen City Current is published Sunday through Friday mornings by 6AM.

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

Lee County News/For the Record

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report
 08/24/20 – 2:53 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested John A. Wiggins, 36, of Fort Madison, at the police station on a charge of OWI-1st offense. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 08/24/20 – 9:28 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the Fort Madison Area.
 08/24/20 – 5:37 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run, reported at the police station.
 08/24/20 – 10:04 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Christopher A. Seitz, 43, of Fort Madison, in the 1400 block of Avenue G, on a charge of trespassing. He was released on a promise to appear.
 08/25/20 – 2:17 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1200 block of Avenue H.
 08/25/20 – 8:13 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1200 block of Avenue H.
 08/25/20 – 10:30 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a hit and run in the 1600 block of Avenue H.
 08/25/20 – 11:42 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1200 block of 33rd Street.
 08/25/20 – 1:27 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 600 block of Avenue E.

08/26/20 – 7:13 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1200 block of 38th Street.
 08/26/20 – 7:49 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in 1200 block of 38th Street.
 08/26/20 – 10:26 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 3400 block of Avenue L.
 08/26/20 – 1:48 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 5400 block of Avenue O.
 08/26/20 – 3:16 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1700 block of 39th Street.
 08/26/20 – 4:22 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident on Oak Drive.
 08/26/20 – 5:30 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Paul Thomas Fields, 34, of Fort Madison, in the 2700 block of Avenue K, on three counts of 3rd-degree burglary and two counts of 2nd-degree theft. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 08/26/20 – 5:55 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1700 block of 39th Street.
 08/26/20 – 8:51 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Lance Edward Meredith, 42, of Fort Madison, in the 1200 block of 26th Street on warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to the

Lee County Jail and held.
 08/26/20 – 10:02 p.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Jonathon David Isaac Horn, 20, of Fort Madison, in the 1200 block of 18th Street on a charge of driving under suspension.
 08/27/20 – 12:02 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Chevy Allen Frueh, 38, of Fort Madison in the 2600 block of Avenue I, on warrants for failure to appear, 2nd-degree theft and possession of a controlled substance.

Lee County Sheriff's Report
 08/24/20 – no activity reported.
 08/25/20 – 11:08 a.m. – Lee County deputies arrested Grady Evan Fountain, 27, at the Lee County Jail on six warrants for violation of a no contact order. He was held in custody.
 08/26/20 – 12:11 p.m. – Lee County deputies arrested Stephen Ray Miller, 26, of Carthage, Ill., at the sheriff's office on a charge of being a fugitive from justice. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 08/26/20 – 1:20 p.m. – Lee County deputies arrested Joel Douglas Duffie, 39, of West Burlington, at the Des Moines County line, on a warrant for 4th-degree theft. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and released on bond.
Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Bridges program looking for area mentors

LEE COUNTY - Sue works full time for minimum wage and struggles to make ends meet. She wants a better life but years of generational poverty has created a difficult set of circumstances. Unexpected expenses, medical challenges and lack of support have a cyclical effect on her life. Predatory lending has resulted in her car being repossessed so she now faces the additional challenge of getting her children to daycare and school. Where can Sue go for help?

Bridges out of Poverty helps people like Sue break the cycle of generational poverty through Getting Ahead workshops, community resources, and support to obtain the tools and gain the confidence she needs to overcome her challenges. Bridges does not give a hand out but rather a hand up.

Sue learns of the Getting Ahead workshops and quickly enrolls. Participants in the Getting Ahead workshops are known as 'Investigators'. As an Investigator, she attends 17 weeks of workshops where she learns about managing finances, develops a positive support system, interviews community members, and other skills to assist her on her journey to self-sustenance. Getting Ahead provides child care for her children, supper for the family, and transportation to and from the workshop location.

Once she successfully graduates Getting Ahead, she will continue with Staying Ahead. She will team up with a Mentor who will watch and help her put into practice what she learned in the Getting Ahead workshops. The Mentor provides positive, pro-social guidance with issues that may arise in her life. The Mentor and Sue will meet the first Monday of the month for a couple of hours at Staying Ahead, and then weekly via phone, Zoom or meeting in person.

So how can you help Sue and others like her? Become a Mentor! There is flexibility in the weekly visits and you will have the opportunity to impact someone's life, and the community, in a positive way.

For more information contact Shayla at sblackburn@younghouse.org or by calling (319) 371-7565. Do you know someone who may benefit from being an investigator? Refer them to Shayla.

We need you! Getting Ahead/Staying Ahead relies on donations, grants, and volunteers. We would love to have you join us in making a difference!

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Rue wins compact track Speedway championship

BY BRIAN NEAL
Pepsi Lee County Speedway

DONNELSON - It's hard to believe it's that time of the year to crown the 2020 track champions, but that is what the Pepsi Lee County Speedway in Donnellson, Iowa did on Friday, August 28th. As Buffalo 61 Bar & Grille and 101.7 The Bull brought you Throwback Fan Appreciation Season Championship Night, with all fans over the age of 11 getting into the grandstands for only \$3. And did the big crowd on hand get treated to some GREAT racing action.

The 15-lap Discount Tire & Service IMCA Sport Compact feature was first up, with Chevy Barnes and Kaycee McGregor leading the field to green. McGregor would take advantage of her starting spot to grab the lead on lap 1 over seventh place starter Brandon Reu, and sixth place starter Jared Heule. The action up front was slowed for the first time on lap 4 when David Prim got into Kimberly Abbott, who spun in turn 3 to bring out the yellow. On the restart McGregor jumped back out front, with Reu and Heule close behind. The top three driver's would race the next lap three wide for the top spot, with Heule emerging off turn 4 with the lead. But he would lose it to Reu one lap later. Heule's run up front came to an end on lap 10, as he spun in turn 1 and collected McGregor to bring out the yellow. Reu jumped back out front on the restart, with Abbott, who got spun earlier, and Prim coming from the back to follow. Coming to the white flag Abbott used the top of the track to pull even with Reu, as the two raced side-by-side around the 3/8th mile track on the final lap. Abbott would use the momentum off the top of turn 4 to edge out Reu at the line by inches to claim her first win of the season at the track. Reu with his second place finish would be crowned the track champion. Prim was 3rd, Barnes was 4th, with Cody Bowman coming from 9th to finish 5th.

Up next was the 16 lap Legends feature, with Mike Mueller and Ryan Sullivan drawing the front row. Sullivan used his draw to his advantage by grabbing the lead on lap 1 over Mueller and Parker Jones. The lead would

change on lap 2, as Mueller edged out Sullivan to lead lap 2. But Sullivan would come back to get the top spot back on lap 3. The close action up front was slowed for the first time on lap 4, as Cole O'Brien spun in turn 4 to bring out the yellow. On the restart Sullivan jumped back out front, with Mueller and Dave Eberle, who started 7th, close behind. Mueller would grab the top spot away from Sullivan on lap 7, only to have Sullivan come back to lead lap 8. But Mueller would get back by Sullivan on lap 9 to get the top spot back. Then after the lap was scored complete, Kevin Korsmo spun in turn 2 to bring out the yellow. On the restart Sullivan moved out front, with Eberle over taking Mueller for the runner up spot. The third caution appeared on lap 12, when Dalton Markhardt spun in turn 2 to bring out the yellow. Sullivan grabbed the lead on the restart, with Michael Weber, who started 8th, and Mueller close behind. Just after the lap was scored complete the final caution of the race came out, as Adam Meyer spun in turn 2 to bring out the yellow. Sullivan would jump back out front on the restart, with Weber and Mueller still following. Coming off turn 4 to the checkered flag Weber would get under Sullivan to edge him out at the line for the win. Mueller was 3rd, Eberle was 4th, with Parker Jones coming home in 5th.

Ray Raker and Darin Weisinger Jr. led the field to green in the 20 lap Shottenkirk Parts Express IMCA Late Model feature, with Weisinger Jr. using the momentum off the top of the track to lead lap 1 over Raker and Jay Johnson. While Weisinger Jr. paced the field out front Sam Halstead, who started 6th, and Tommy Elston, who started 10th, were working their way towards the front. Johnson would pressure Weisinger Jr. for the top spot over laps three thru fourteen, with Halstead and Elston making it a four car battle for the top spot. Weisinger Jr. slipped up in turn 4 coming to complete lap 15, which allowed Johnson to get by for the lead. But Halstead would over take Johnson for the top spot on lap 16, with Elston moving into second on lap 17. Elston then tried to work under Halstead over the final laps. But Halstead would hold

him off to pick up his first win of the season at the Pepsi Lee County Speedway. Mark Burgtorf came from 7th to finish 3rd, Johnson was 4th, with Weisinger Jr. rounding out the top 5. Elston's second place finish would help him to secure another IMCA Late Model track title at the track.

OFFICIAL RESULTS
Pepsi Lee County Speedway, Donnellson, Iowa Friday, August 28, 2020 - Buffalo 61 Bar & Grille and 101.7 The Bull Season Championship Night Shottenkirk Parts Express IMCA Late Models A-Feature: 1. Sam Halstead, New London, IA; 2. Tommy Elston, Keokuk, IA; 3. Mark Burgtorf, Quincy, IL; 4. Jay Johnson, West Burlington, IA; 5. Darin Weisinger Jr., Mendon, IL; 6. Denny Woodworth, Mendon, IL; 7. Dustin Griffin, Quincy, IL; 8. Ron Boyse, Kalona, IA; 9. Ray Raker, Burlington, IA; 10. Matt Strassheim, Yarmouth, IA (DNS). Heat 1: 1. Dustin Griffin; 2. Mark Burgtorf; 3. Ray Raker; 4. Matt Strassheim; 5. Jay Johnson. Heat 2: 1. Denny Woodworth; 2. Darin Weisinger Jr.; 3. Sam Halstead; 4. Tommy Elston; 5. Ron Boyse. Sonny's Super Market IMCA Modifieds A-Feature: 1. Michael Long, Fowler, IL; 2. Dennis LaVeine, West Burlington, IA; 3. Jeff Waterman, LaGrange, MO; 4. Mark Burgtorf, Quincy, IL; 5. Lance Schlicher, Fairfield, IA; 6. Blake Woodruff, Galesburg, IL; 7. Chad Giberson, Richland, IA; 8. Levi Smith, Donnellson, IA; 9. Daniel Fellows, Keokuk, IA; 10. Bill Roberts Jr., Burlington, IA. Heat 1: 1. Michael Long; 2. Mark Burgtorf; 3. Levi Smith; 4. Lance Schlicher; 5. Bill Roberts Jr. Heat 2: 1. Dennis LaVeine; 2. Daniel Fellows; 3. Jeff Waterman; 4. Blake Woodruff; 5. Chad Giberson. Donnellson Tire & Service IMCA Stock Cars A-Feature: 1. Abe Huls, Carthage, IL; 2. John Oliver Jr., Danville, IA; 3. Jason Cook, Mt. Pleasant, IA; 4. Jeremy Pundt, Donnellson, IA; 5. Mike Harward, Floris, IA; 6. Chad Krogmeier, Burlington, IA; 7. Dean Kratzer, Montrose, IA; 8. Kale Foster, Pittsfield, IL; 9. Kevin Koontz, Batavia, IA; 10. Jim Redmann, Lockridge, IA (DNS); 11. Neal Kohlmorgan, Hamilton, IL (DNS). Heat 1: 1. Chad Krogmeier; 2. John Oliver Jr.; 3. Jason Cook; 4. Dean Kratzer; 5. Jim Redmann; 6. Kevin Koontz. Heat 2: 1. Abe Huls; 2. Jeremy Pundt; 3. Mike Harward; 4. Kale Foster; 5. Neal Kohlmorgan (DNS). Roberts Tire Center IMCA SportMods A-Feature: 1. Brandon Dale, Arbela, MO; 2. Ron Kibbe, Danville, IA; 3. Joe Roller, Morning Sun, IA; 4. Dakota Anderson, Quincy, IL; 5. Josh Holtman, Quincy, IL; 6. Barry Taft, Argyle, IA; 7. Michael Benjamin, Montrose, IA; 8. Brian Bergheger, Keokuk, IA; 9. Bob Cowman, Quincy, IL; 10. Kaleb Nevers, Burlington, IA; 11. Ryan Moore, Kahoka, MO; 12. Sean Wyatt, Danville, IA; 13. Bobby Six, Warsaw, IA; 14. Blaine Webster, Ottumwa, IA; 15. Adam Birc, Canton, MO; 16. Austen Becerra, Bowen, IL; 17. Jim Gillenwater, Keokuk, IA; 18. Tom Ruble, Ft. Madison, IA; 19. Nicholas Profeta, Keokuk, IA (DNS). Heat 1: 1. Blaine Webster; 2. Jim Gillenwater; 3. Sean Wyatt; 4. Josh Holtman; 5. Barry Taft; 6. Tom Ruble; 7. Ron Kibbe. Heat 2: 1. Adam Birc; 2. Bobby Six; 3. Brandon Dale; 4. Bob Cowman; 5. Kaleb Nevers; 6. Brian Bergheger. Heat 3: 1. Nicholas Profeta; 2. Dakota Anderson; 3. Joe Roller; 4. Michael Benjamin; 5. Ryan Moore; 6. Austen Becerra. Legends A-Feature: 1. Michael Weber, Marion, IA; 2. Ryan Sullivan, Waupun, WI; 3. Mike Mueller, Waupun, WI; 4. Dave Eberle, Freeport, IL; 5. Parker Jones, Blue Mounds, WI; 6. Nelson Stewart, Avon, IN; 7. Kevin Korsmo, Atkins, IA; 8. Dalton Markhardt, Barneveld, WI; 9. Cole O'Brien, Cedar Rapids, IA; 10. Greyson Markhardt, Barneveld, WI; 11. Payton Jones, Blue Mounds, WI; 12. Paul Markhardt, Barneveld, WI; 13. Lucas Doescher, Hollandale, WI; 14. Adam Meyer, Cedar Rapids, IA; 15. Keith Meyer, Cedar Rapids, IA. Heat 1: 1. Mike Mueller; 2. Parker Jones; 3. Nelson Stewart; 4. Dave Eberle; 5. Cole O'Brien; 6. Paul Markhardt; 7. Adam Meyer; 8. Lucas Doescher. Heat 2: 1. Ryan Sullivan; 2. Dalton Markhardt; 3. Keith Meyer; 4. Michael Weber; 5. Kevin Korsmo; 6. Payton Jones; 7. Greyson Markhardt. Discount Tire & Service IMCA Sport Compacts A-Feature: 1. Kimberly Abbott, Camp Point, IL; 2. Brandon Reu, Donnellson, IA; 3. David Prim, Hamelton, IL; 4. Chevy Barnes, Keokuk, IA; 5. Cody Bowman, Mt. Pleasant, IA; 6. Ashton Blain, Burlington, IA; 7. Mike Hornung Jr., Keokuk, IA; 8. Anthony Kysar, Fulton, MO; 9. Kaycee McGregor, Ft. Madison, IA; 10. Jared Heule, Keokuk, IA. Heat 1: 1. David Prim; 2. Kimberly Abbott; 3. Chevy Barnes; 4. Mike Hornung Jr.; 5. Cody Bowman. Heat 2: 1. Brandon Reu; 2. Kaycee McGregor; 3. Jared Heule; 4. Ashton Blain; 5. Anthony Kysar

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Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE
Special Meeting
Wednesday,
August 12, 2020
5:30 PM, City Hall**

The special meeting of the Donnellson City Council was called to order by Mayor D. Ellingboe, with Council Members Schneider, Moeller, Weber, Estrada and Fraise (by PBX) present.

Motion by Schneider, second by Estrada, to approve the agenda: all ayes.

Public Hearing - Appellant Julie Walljasper, Nuisance Violation. Discussion was held regarding the numerous violations at 102 Lynn St Donnellson.

Motion by Schneider, second by Estrada that

appellant must have a contract with a contractor to resolve the nuisances discussed with in 30 days and the contractor is to meet with code official to discuss. RCV all ayes.

Discussion was held on IT Services, determined best to stay with current provider.

Due to September 7th 2020 being Labor Day the city council will hold its regular monthly meeting Tuesday September 8th 2020 @ 7pm.

There being no other business to come before the Council, Mayor Ellingboe declared the meeting adjourned.

Dave Ellingboe, Mayor Attest:
Rebecca Schau,
City Clerk

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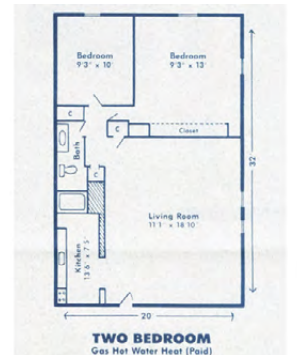
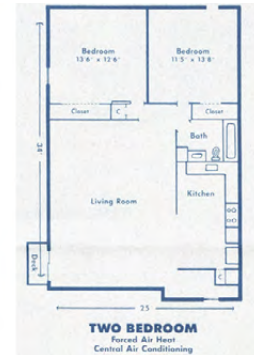
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Ag News/From the Front

Officials say cities need to revisit housing development ordinances

HUD - Continued from Page 1

She said finding property owners willing to go through the process of obtaining grants for rehabilitation and construction has proven difficult in the past.

"I've had homeowners back out of grants before the contractor starts working. I just never hear from them again."

Mohr asked why people were backing out and Hecox said there were multiple issues, including not wanting to let the state into their personal finances, to mental health issues, and scheduling.

Leslie Leeker, with the IEDA said the grant process has been streamlined to make things simpler for people to take advantage of grant programs.

While touring the downtown area, Mohr said he was impressed with what has been accomplished with the upper floor rehabs, projects that were done with HUD Community Development Block Grants and other historical tax credits.

"It's great. I love architecture and old buildings and just think of all the beautiful buildings this country has torn down in the past 100 years that maybe could have been saved," he said.

"A lot of these communities do have older homes, but the wood and craftsmanship they used back then is far superior to the products we use

now."

Mohr has a four-state region (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska) and said a common theme he sees where development struggles is outdated local ordinances.

"It kinda depends on the city and what the building regulations are and what their ordinances are," Mohr said.

"Sometimes that can be the biggest hurdle and we've even seen where that adds 25 to 30% of the cost of multi-family housing or single-family housing and builders say they're just not gonna do it."

"This administration and Secretary (Ben) Carson have focused not only on our own regulations and trying to reduce some of the red tape and barriers, but also have communities look at their own ordinances that were done 50 years ago."

During the pandemic, HUD has awarded Iowa more than \$45.1 million in CARES Act funding for entitlement programs including CDBG grants among others, to assist states and their communities through the pandemic.

Eggleston mirrored Mohr's concern for local governments to work closely with developers to help rebuild and identify needed housing stock.

But he said Fort Madison, and other towns



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison Partners' Tim Gobble chats with HUD regional director Jason Mohr Tuesday in the apartments at the old Lee County Bank.

along the Mississippi in Iowa, seemed to have a sophistication about how to get these projects done without making a lot of money.

"They have to put up with mine and the state's regulations but they get it done," he said.

"Part of that has to do with the leadership of the community. If they can't support it, it's not going to happen."

He said Fort Madison's downtown offers a lot for developers to market upper floor housing and the city seems to be having some success with that.

"There's a nice mix here of entertainment. People who live here can walk two blocks and have a beer or a hot dog and

come home and be safe without driving. That isn't always the case."

Eggleston also referred to some Asset Limited, Income Restrained, Employed (ALICE) 2016 data that showed the median household income in Lee County was \$44,568, compared to a state average of \$56,247. He also provided a snapshot of housing and transportation costs for Fort Madison as part of an affordability index, that showed those costs account for just over 50% of income, which he said is high.

The range in the snapshot was between 43 and 71% but he said HUD likes to see those numbers in the 30% range.

USDA reminds of COVID assistance deadlines

WASHINGTON, Aug. 28, 2020 - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers that the deadline to apply for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) is Sept. 11, 2020. This program provides direct relief to producers who faced price declines and additional marketing costs due to COVID-19.

"FSA offers several options for farmers and ranchers to apply for CFAP, including a call center where employees can answer your questions and help you get started on your application," said Richard Fordyce, Farm Service Agency administrator. "With only two weeks before the deadline, now is the time to check out the resources on our website and contact the call center or your local office for your last-minute questions."

Over 160 commodities are eligible for CFAP, including certain non-specialty crops, livestock, dairy, wool, specialty crops, eggs, aquaculture, and nursery crops and cut flowers. All eligible commodities, payment rates, and calculations can be found on farmers.gov/cfap.

Customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer general assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office at their local USDA Service Center.

Producers have several options for applying to the CFAP program by the Sept. 11 deadline:

Using an online portal, accessible at farmers.gov/cfap. This allows producers with secure USDA login credentials, known as eAuthentication, to certify eligible commodities online, digitally sign applications, and submit directly to the local USDA Service Center.

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From the Front

Iowa code allows health departments to make codes

MASKS - Continued from Page 1

if we can protect citizens of Lee County by doing this than I think its a good thing," Folluo said.

Braden said any regulation should be born out of the Lee County Department of Health and then approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Iowa Code 137.104 gives local health departments authority to "make and enforce such reasonable rules and regulations not inconsistent with law and the rules of the state board as may be necessary for the protection and improvement of the public health".

As of Tuesday morning, Lee County has 14-day positivity rating of 17.8%, the 7th highest in the state, and has 427 confirmed cases. The state's Iowa Department of Public Health website [coronavirus.iowa.gov](https://www.coronavirus.iowa.gov) and the Lee County Health Department both show current totals of 427 confirmed cases in the county. However, LCHD reported 53 from 3:30 p.m. Friday to 3:30 p.m. Monday, while the IDPH is showing 36 for all four days Friday-Monday.

Ross said that 1 in 80 of the 4,707 county residents who've been tested has tested positive for 9.1%.

She said the surge began in August and has a lot to do with people who are asymptomatic going about normal routines without wearing masks or engaging in social distancing.

Supervisor Matt Pflug asked Ross if she could explain why the numbers are so high currently.

"Our biggest concern is that people aren't choosing to social distance, and are not wearing masks especially in those situations when they aren't social distancing," she said.

"People continue to gather in groups of 10 or more and not social distance. We've been trying to promote to the public to avoid large crowds and large gatherings of people and choose to have responsible behaviors."

Braden said in Johnson County, another hot spot for the virus with the return to campus at the University of Iowa, the health department used its regulatory authority under Iowa code to institute a mask mandate.

"The Johnson County Board of Health exercised their regulatory authority on a perceived need in assisting in curbing the novel coronavirus in Johnson County," Braden said.

"Their health department actually exercised its authority in coming up with a regulation that was then approved by their Board of Supervisors, which is slightly different than the Board of Supervisors coming up with an ordinance."

Any regulation proposed by the county board of health would require a

public meeting and a publishing of the regulations, before it could be approved.

Supervisor Rick Larkin said he would support such a move to mandate masks in the county.

"I've had several people stop me and ask why we haven't enacted a mask ordinance requiring people to wear it, and I think there is some sentiment for us doing that no matter how it comes to us," Larkin said.

"I would support doing whatever we have to do to get it done, but I think we need to move pretty quick on it."

Braden said a regulation offered up by the health department, according to his research on the topic, wouldn't be inconsistent with current Iowa law.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Ron Fedler said law is only as good as it can be enforced and he said he believes it would be difficult for the sheriff's department to start writing tickets for people not wearing face masks.

"If this was something Lee County was looking at, in my opinion it should come from the health department as opposed to an ordinance from the Board of Supervisors," Fedler said.

"There's a legal argument that could be made that Board of Supervisors does have the authority to institute an ordinance for wearing a face mask, but it is much more genuine coming from the local Health authority through its regulatory authority."

"The Board of health would issue citations based on observations taken by law enforcement. That's about as far as we would go with it," Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber said.

Johnson County's health regulation requires every person wear a face covering when out in public where they can't stay six feet away from others. It also requires masks inside any public setting including grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores, retail outlets, schools and other public settings that aren't places of residence.

The Johnson County regulation also provides exceptions for when someone is traveling along in a vehicle or with household members, exercising, seated at a restaurant or bar, obtaining services where the removal of the mask is required or wear federal or state law prohibits wearing a face covering.

Anyone younger than 2 is also exempt and those with compelling health related issues.

Violation of the regulations are met with a minimum fine for a simple misdemeanor. Subsequent offenses are punishable by up to the maximum fine for a simple misdemeanor, under the Johnson County face covering regulation.

City hopes property registry puts homes back into use

ORDINANCE - Continued from Page 1

Sheaffer Room.

Krogmeier said he hopes to get some questions answered while providing residents with the workings of the ordinance, which is still a work in progress.

He said aside from the fee structure, there are also some aspects, such as requiring insurance on the properties that are still up for discussion.

"We do have a fee structure, but I'm not confirming that anything is set in stone," Krogmeier said Monday afternoon.

"The mayor and I worked on it and he wanted to push it up a bit," Krogmeier said. "It needs to be there, but were gonna get a lot of kick back on it. And you have to justify the program."

Fire Chief Joey Herren said the fee structure has to be set so that it has an impact on property owners who let structures fall into disrepair.

"It has to have some teeth to it to make it work," he said.

City Manager David Varley said the fee has to be reasonable to keep people engaged in the program.

The proposed annual fee structure would start at \$10 for smaller accessory buildings up to \$250 for larger buildings. The fees double the third year they are registered in the program, and then double again the fourth year.

There could also be fees for non-compliance with the registry.

The owner of any building that has become vacant has 90 days after the vacancy occurs, or within 30 days of assuming ownership, whichever is later, to register the property with the city.

Properties that are undergoing active renovations would be exempt. Properties that are part of an estate would get a 12-month waiver and properties that are actively for sale would get a six month waiver. Snow bird properties can be listed at no cost. Buildings that have suffered substantial damage would get a 90-day exemption.

Krogmeier said there are currently between 300 and 500 properties within the city limits that would meet criteria to be registered. He showed 50 properties to the City Council in June that need urgent attention.

"Those 50 we showed are the ones we're gonna have to deal with no matter what. This program isn't going to fix that, it's meant to slow it down," he said.

Varley said the program is part of the city's effort to clean up its image and will help stem to the pattern of properties sitting idle and becoming nuisances.

In the past year about eight vacant properties have burned due to squatters or other problems associated with what Herren called "absentee ownership".

"Four of those we paid to get cleaned up recently. One lady cleaned up her own, but we don't get that very often," Herren said.

Herren said residents need to know that right now the taxpayers are shouldering the burden of cleaning up those properties that need mitigation, such as the \$80,000 that was spent out of the city's general fund to clean up the abandoned building that was razed in 2016 in the 1100 block of Avenue H.

Registrations would include a description, address, legal description, names, addresses and contact information for all owners and authorized agents, including mortgage lender account representative contact information, and all liens holders.

If owners live outside of Des Moines, Henry, Lee or Van Buren counties, a contact person designated to act on behalf of the owner would be included in the registration.

Registrations would also be required to include a plan of action for the building, which will be approved by the a city building official. Plans have three options including demolition plans, plans to ensure security and maintenance, or rehabilitation plans.

An initial property inspection would take place within 12 months, with an annual inspection in following years.

Registration would also include an authorization appointing the Fort Madison Police Department as an agent of the owner to allow police to remove trespassers.

Krogmeier said one issue that is still being debated is whether or not to require insurance. Krogmeier said insurance could be a deal breaker for some as the amount of insurance policies could run people from the program.

"We've got these kind of buildings they aren't going to be cheap just to insure. Even if they can get insurance on them. It has to qualify for what we want. But people will walk away from the program if they have to pay \$500 to \$900 in insurance."

Herren said the insurance would give the city money to demolish the property if it catches fire or falls down. He said most policies hold demolition money back for the city and then release the rest to the owner after the city confirms the building has been cleaned up.

Krogmeier said if the ordinance works properly, property owners would be required to keep the property at minimum standards which could eliminate the need for the insurance.

"We're kind of doubling down there," he said.

"If they're in the program and they bring it up to minimum standards, meaning windows are in place and not boarded up, doors are locked and secured, and someone's checking on the property and maintaining it, we may not need the insurance because nobody's getting in it routinely."

Herren said people would be surprised at the number of homeless people in Fort Madison who move around squatting in properties. He said those people typically strip wiring in the structures and sell the copper and then move on.

"Those homes have absolutely no value after those people get ahold of them," Krogmeier said.

He said the ordinance would help the city catch up on dilapidated, vacant buildings and could improve a lot of properties making them inhabitable again.

"They're gonna have to get things cleaned up a bit anyway, so maybe some of these owners can get it to the point where they could rent it again. That's really the goal here."

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