



Pen City Current

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Voters reject area school bonds

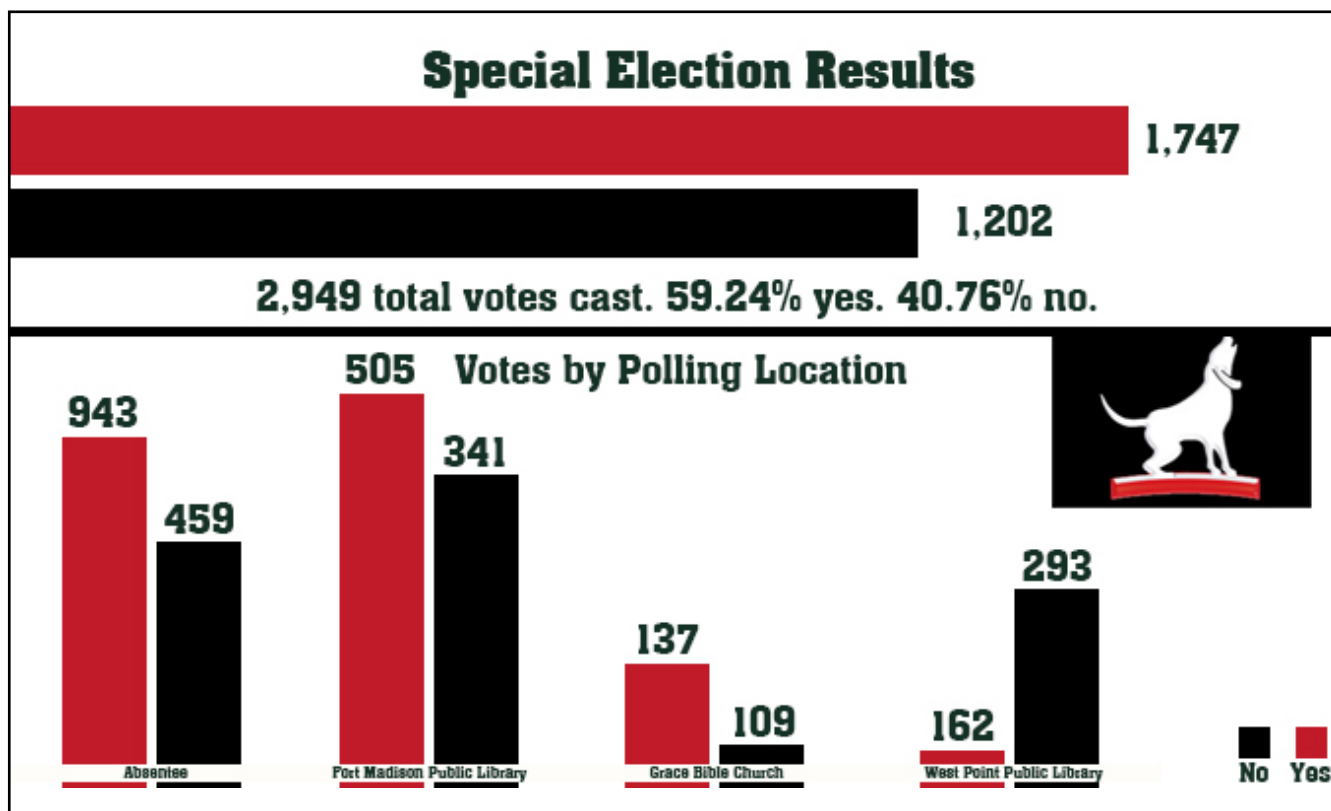
BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Voters in southeast Iowa shot down two attempts to improve school facilities for area students on Tuesday.

The third time wasn't charming for Fort Madison School district residents hoping to secure funding for a new \$30 million Prek-3 elementary school. Voters just missed approving the bond with a 59.2% approval. State law in Iowa requires a 60% plus one vote. Total votes for the issue were 1,747 yes and 1,202 no votes.

Absentee ballots were up almost 600 from the last referendum attempt in 2017 with 1,402 ballots cast at 67.3%, but Superintendent Erin Slater said she was hoping for a higher percentage in that effort.

Fort Madison voters on election day at the Fort Madison Public Library



numbered 846, and missed approving the measure at that polling location with 59.7% voting for the new building. West Point voters split at 35.6% to 64.4% against the effort. And Grace Bible Church in Wever reported with 246

ballots cast with 55.7% in favor of the new building. In the Central Lee referendum effort, which was for \$9.8 million, 1,243 votes were cast with only 56.4% of voters in support of the new facilities. The district got 308

absentee ballots, which was 64.6%, but on Tuesday's polling only 53.4% of district residents who cast a ballot voted for the measure. The district was looking to expand the high school building, add common

areas, improve entry ways in both district buildings to improve security, create a new childhood center, and improve parking conditions. Fort Madison Superintendent Erin Slater and Board President Tim

Wondra said the election was close enough that they may ask the county to recount the ballots.

"You know when you get that close of a margin with that voter turnout, I think it makes sense to take another look at it," Slater said.

Wondra said he wasn't done fighting whether that comes in the form of a recount or another shot at passing a referendum.

"I think that's close enough to take a look at it," Wondra said. "I'm not done fighting this yet."

Slater said she was specifically disappointed in the absentee performance and that the Fort Madison voters didn't carry the election. West Point voters have continued to vote heavily against the district getting a new school and Fort Madison school officials were hoping absentee and local voting would help offset the West Point

See ELECTION, page 6

County mental health official parsing new law

Gov. signs law Thursday without funding mechanism

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - A Lee County official overseeing regional mental health services said a new state law takes strides to help those needing assistance, but it's still shrouded with funding uncertainty.

Ryanne Wood serves as Lee County's Mental Health and Disability Services Central Point of Coordination Administrator, and CEO of Southeast Iowa Link, an 8-county regional mental health services group. She addressed the Lee County Board of Supervisors at

Tuesday's regular meeting.

Wood said under the new law, the state is mandating the creation of six new core areas of service including sub-acute centers, six regional access centers, assertive community treatment (ACT) teams, intensive treatment programs, a state 24-hour crisis line, and a cross-occurring system across all five cores.

She said the sub-acute centers would look like a nursing facility, but serving people in mental health crises. The six access centers would be for people suffering mental health crises, but not needing hospitalization. Wood said the closest access center initially is being planned for Marion in Linn County.

"The sub-acute is very much like a nursing-facility

See LAW, page 3

City OKs \$1.42M storage tank rehab

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - What was projected to be a \$1.87 million project to rehab the city water facility on Denmark Hill has been whittled down to a \$1.42 million project.

The project has a base cost of \$1.3 million but city officials added about \$115,000 in additional bid options including a one year anniversary inspection and an 8" French drain around the base of the tank to

See PROJECT, page 6

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Obituaries/For the Record

OBITUARIES

PATRICIA RUTH DENNING

Patricia Ruth Denning, 86, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 7:40 p.m. on Monday, April 2, 2018 at the home of her daughter in law in Burlington, IA. She was born on February 9, 1932 in Fort Madison, IA to Carl R. & Marie E. Freitag Holterhaus. She married Robert L. Denning on June 16, 1951 in Fort Madison, IA. He preceded her in death on December 20, 2003. She worked at Kern Insurance in Fort Madison from 1949 to 1994. She was a member of Ss. Mary & Joseph Church and enjoyed riding horses.



DENNING

Pat is survived by: 1-son: Randy (Paula) Denning of Webster City, IA; 4-grandchildren: Jason (Tara) Danner of Noblesville, IN, Shannon Danner of Huxley, IA, Brad (Mandy) Spencer of Burlington, IA & Carrie (Jeff) Nudd of Burlington, IA; 8-great grandchildren: Tessa Danner, Collin Danner, Lauren Danner, Reese Danner, Caitlin Spencer, Jack Spencer, Adam Nudd & Jacob Nudd; 1-sister: Donna Anderson of Burlington, IA; 1-niece: Pamela Stevens of Wever, IA and 1-daughter in law: Pamela Denning of Burlington, IA. She was preceded in death by: her parents, husband & 2-sons: Greg R. Denning & Kyle P. Denning.

Cremation has been entrusted to the care of King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory. A graveside service will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, April 6, 2018 at Soldiers' Circle in Oakland Cemetery with Rev. Mark P. Spring officiating. A memorial has been established for Lee County Hospice. Online condolences to Pat's family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police report

04/02/18 - 11:28 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny/theft in the 1900 block of Avenue H.
04/02/18 - 6:06 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary on 28th Place.

Lee County Sheriff's report

04/02/18 - 4:25 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Cory Jacob Porter, 24, of Fort Madison in the 2000 block of Business 61 on a warrant for failure to appear and charges of driving under suspension, no insurance, speeding, and posses-

sion of a controlled substance. Those listed above should be presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue report

04/02/18 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls.

OBITUARIES

BERNADETTE ANNA STAMBAUGH

Bernadette Anna Stambaugh, 68, of Donnellson, Iowa, passed away at 4:39 p.m. Saturday, March 31, 2018 at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City, Iowa.



STAMBAUGH

Born January 15, 1950, in Norristown, Pennsylvania, the daughter of Benjamin and Rose (Marcelli) Costa. On December 2, 2000, she married Hughie Stambaugh in West Norriton, Pennsylvania.

Survivors include her husband Hughie of Donnellson, Iowa; one daughter: Tracy (Joel Kriebel) Ferrizzi of Oreland, Pennsylvania; one step-son: Justin Stambaugh of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; four grandchildren: Sgt. Patrick M. Cassidy, USMC of Jacksonville, North Carolina, Alyssa Rose Cassidy of Newton, New Jersey, Angel Noel Ferrizzi of Norristown, Pennsylvania and Rachel Marie Ferrizzi of Norristown, Pennsylvania; two step-granddaughters: Jewel Stambaugh of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Nia Stambaugh of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; three great grandchildren: Gianna Joy Rosario of Newton, New Jersey, Benjamin Rosario IV of Newton, New Jersey and Giovanni Dominic Rosario of Newton, New Jersey.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

Bernadette was a 1967 graduate of the Upper Merion High School in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. She accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior and has been active in church for the last couple of decades, with current membership at the First Christian Church of Keokuk, Iowa. Other than the certainty of eternal life in the kingdom of Heaven, nothing brought her greater joy than spending time with her daughter and grandchildren, especially interactions of any kind with her BFF Alyssa Rose. She was tremendously proud of her 100% Italian heritage and was able to document her grandparents voyage from Italy to America as well as their path to becoming U.S. citizens. She enjoyed watching football and was a lifelong fan of the Philadelphia Eagles. She loved animals of all kinds and despised anyone who mistreated them.

Her body has been entrusted to Schmitz Funeral Home for cremation.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. Saturday, April 7, 2018 at First Christian Church, 3476 Main Street, Keokuk, Iowa with Pastor David Turner officiating. Burial will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers memorials may be made in her memory to a local animal shelter. Schmitz Funeral Home in Donnellson is assisting the family with arrangements. On-line condolences to the family may be left at www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com.

Spring Cleaning

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From the Front/Lottery Numbers

No state, federal funding in mental health law

LAW - Continued from Page 1

type organization with a medical director, RNs, social work coordinators on staff, and that's a very high-end cost service to provide to folks," Wood said. "Access centers are very much an amalgamation of different services embedded within them. The rule-making process is just getting started and the Department of Human Services and the commission of Mental Health and Disability Services are creating subcommittees as they relate to all six of the new services identified in the legislation. So the rules aren't even made yet."

She also told the board that officials are anticipating further reductions in Department of Human Services funding, including reduced funds to the state's two remaining

Mental Health Institutes.

The new law also specifies that state public schools provide suicide prevention training.

But Wood said the state has not offered a way to pay for the additional service requirements, other than using up fund balances that some counties are carrying in their MHDS allocated funds.

Lee County, who along with Des Moines, Keokuk, Van Buren, Henry, Louisa, Jefferson and Washington counties, make up the Southeast Iowa Link regional group, has about \$1 million to spend down prior to July 1, 2021 as part of a law passed last year. She said the current legislation provides for no funds from state or federal sources to establish or maintain current

programs, nor the new service requirements.

"Nothing was done with funding mechanisms for our system on-going," she said. As you all know, we're under pressure to spend down the fund balances and deal with levy asking issues."

She said SEIL has equalized their tax asking at a maximum of \$46.20/per capita determined by annual census re-assessments, but some of the counties have very little fund balance left, while others like Lee County have a surplus.

In Wood's department there was no property tax levy as she worked to reduce the fund balance and just used those funds for operations. However, supervisors are cautious that the landscape could change and the entire cost

of the MHDS services could fall on the county, which would inevitably require a boost in property tax asks in the future.

Supervisor Ron Fedler clarified that nothing in the new laws will result in the reopening of mental health facilities across the state that were closed under past legislation.

Wood said from her perspective all the new services identified will be reviewed on a statewide basis so applications of each service will be standardized across the state.

CURRENT-LEE

Lee County Bridges group to hold April 16 meeting

The steering committee is hosting the next community-wide Bridges out of Poverty training in Keokuk on April 16th from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the First Lutheran Church located at 1101 Blondeau Street. The Public is invited to attend

Glo Crazy for Education run set for April 7

FORT MADISON - A 5K run/walk will be held on April 7 at Baxter Sports Complex beginning at 8 p.m. Proceeds from the event will go to the Elliott Test Kitchen in Fort Madison. The event is being put on by Fort Madison service clubs including Fort Madison Kiwanis, Lions and Rotary clubs as well as the Fort Madison High School key club. Registration can be done at www.pencitycurrent.com/glo-crazy/.



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Pick 4 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 4 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm



4/3
4 29 39 42 62
Lucky Ball: 14
Megaplier: 2



4/3 MID-DAY
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8 5 5



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Sports/ Classifieds

FMHS drops first tennis outing 3-6 to Muskies

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - In what Fort Madison High School Head tennis Coach Dean Hogan called one of the top three coldest matches he's ever been a part of, the Hounds dropped their first match of the season at Muscatine 3-6 Monday night.

All other local high school events were postponed Monday due to weather.

The Hounds did well at the upper seeds with wins at No. 1 and 2 singles and No. 1 doubles, but couldn't come up with wins at the lower seeds to carry the win.

At No. 1 seed, HTC junior Sam Avery dropped the Muskies' Trayton Fuegen 6-0, 6-3. Senior Austin Krueger then handled Muscatine's Drew Wester 6-2, 6-1 at No. 2.

At No. 3 the Muskies' Samuel Weiskamp knocked off HTC freshman Jason Thurman 6-4, 6-4 and then senior Blake Feuerhammer fell 0-6, 2-6 to Luke Zobel at No. 4.

HTC freshman Vasin Thurman took Ethan Heth into a tie-breaker in the first set but fell 7-6 (7-1), and then forced a

seventh game in the second set before falling 7-5 at No. 5 singles.

Sophomore Gage Hind couldn't get anything going against Muscatine's No. 6 James Solt falling 6-2, 6-3 to wrap up the singles matches with the Hounds down 2-4.

In doubles action, Avery and Krueger put away Fuegen and Wester 6-4, 6-2. The Thurman brothers won the first set of their doubles match with Weiskamp and Zobel 6-4, then lost 4-6 in the second set forcing a tie-break set which went 6-6 before the Muskies' duo won a 7-4 first-to-seven tiebreaker to take the set 7-6 and the match 2-1.

"We played good in a match in very, very cold conditions. But Muscatine had to deal with that as well," Hogan said. "It was a good experience for the players."

Feuerhammer and Hind lost the No. 3 doubles action 6-2, 6-2.

In junior varsity play, freshman Bryce Workman lost to Muscatine sophomore Ricardo Pena 5-7, but came back in a second single-set match to down sophomore Hunter Randleman 6-1.

The Hounds are 0-1 on the season and travel to Keokuk in Monday.



Photo courtesy of Carousel Preschool

Preschool PAW donation

Carousel Preschool collected food for the PAWS animal shelter and visited the animal shelter to end our Pet Study. The group is accepting registrations for the 2018-2019 school year. For more information contact the preschool at 372-1424

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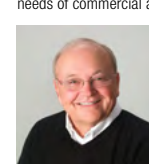
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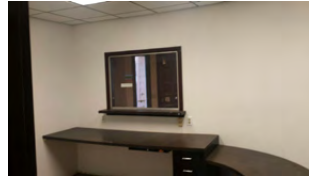


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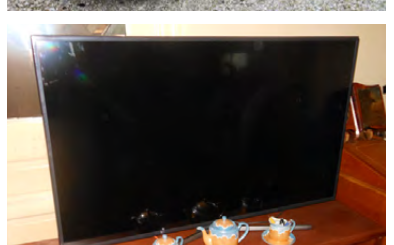
Take a look at this spacious two story home built in 1890 with 1,888 sq.ft. on two levels. The main level features a kitchen with refrigerator & electric stove, spacious living room and an adjoining bedroom with washer/dryer hookups and updated carpet. Also on the main level is a handicap accessible bathroom.

The open stairway leads to two bedrooms and a bath. The attached breezeway has a workshop area which attaches to the single car garage. The garage also has a storage room. All situated on a 75'x123' corner lot.

VEHICLE: 2011 Chevrolet Impala LT, 106,305 miles, 4dr, V6 Flexfuel, automatic

ANTIQUE FURNITURE: Secretary with glass front bookcase; Glass front pie safe; Kitchen cabinet w/ flour bin; (4) Glass front sectional bookcase; 4 drawer dresser w/ mirror; 3 drawer dresser w/ mirror; Vanity w/ mirror; Accent table; 6 gal. crock; Antique pictures; Antique wall phones; Stamp collection

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From the Front/Weather

Work could start on storage facility in May

PROJECT - Continued from Page 1

help surface water runoff.

At Tuesday's regular City Council meeting, the council voted 6-0, in favor of the motion.

A report from HR Green, Inc, the city's consultant on the project, indicated they had a final cost opinion of \$1.877 million and seven bids were received for the work, but after several were sent back with math errors, the lowest responsible bid came from Utility Services Co., Inc. out of Perry, Ga.

I would assume that would start this May," said Larry Driscoll, the city's public works director.

"The original plan was to be \$1.7 million. We did eliminate some of the alternatives to get as low as we could. We're gonna have a meeting with the contractor to get everything signed and talk about doing some more cost reduction, but it turned out good."

Councilman Rusty Andrews asked about resurfacing the drive, at a cost of \$800, but Driscoll said the city worried about abuse to what was there and then getting stuck with the cost of redoing the road.

Andrews also asked if it was a good idea to put a \$2,400 logo on the tower that isn't very visible.

"I love the idea of branding on it," he said. "I just wonder if you're going to be able to see it. But in a \$1.5 million project, \$2,400 isn't that much.

Driscoll said the alternative could still be pulled from the bid.

City Manager David Varley said he thought it would be appropriate to have an identifier as people come into the town.

"How about we come back with some options to scale on that and put it on there so you can look at and have an idea what it will look like and you decide if you want to put it on. It's kind of hard if you don't have something to look at," he said.

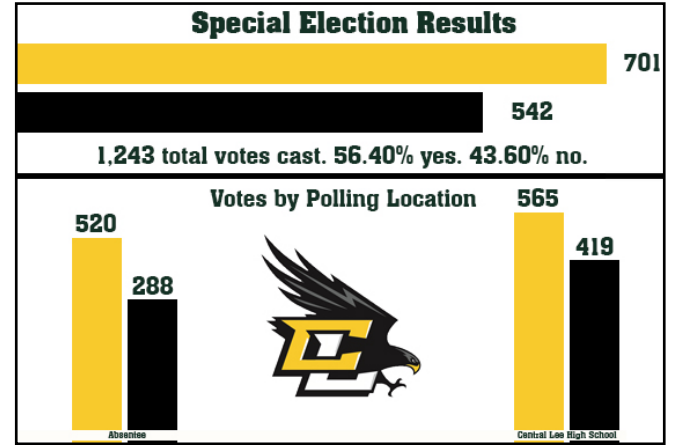
City Councilman Bob Morawitz asked if any Iowa contractors were considered for the bid. Driscoll said it was bid according to laws and no Iowa firms bid on the work. However, some area contractors are listed as vendors on the work.

In other action, the council:

- voted 6-0 to approve a subdivision plat of survey and waiver for Virginia Walker for property located at 2096 180th Street.
- voted 6-0 to approve Corey Fraise and Larry Wright to the City's Planning and Zoning Commission with terms expiring March 31, 2021.
- heard Mayor Brad Randolph read a proclamation setting April 3 as Fort Madison Employee Appreciation Day.

FM district may ask for a recount

ELECTION - Continued from Page 1



vote. Holy Trinity Catholic in West Point recently raised private funds to construct a new \$6 elementary addition, which will begin construction towards the end of the school year.

"We could have shown better in Fort Madison. We actually anticipated, with the higher number of absentee ballots, that this percentage would be higher for our yes returns. That was surprising to us. We had about 800 last time with a 64%, but with the increased numbers we thought that would be better."

"We all know that a strong public school system is the best for everyone," she told the crowd after the final numbers were posted. "Just for some history and perspective, Fort Madison hasn't passed a bond to raise taxes in 30 years and we were asking for less than \$3/month from the average homeowner. It's difficult to understand how any good person can vote against the safety of our children and the well-being and future of Fort Madison."

"We're disappointed that we fell short of the 60%, but we're grateful for those who rallied, posted, wrote letters, made phone calls, and most of all those who did vote for our kids. We will rally around and we'll come back around and tap you on the shoulder. We'll continue to fight for what's best for our kids and our community. This doesn't start and stop. Get used to it."

Wondra said it paints a picture of a me-first society. "I remember growing up and my grandparents and parents wanted better for the kids than they had themselves," he said. "We've become such a me-first society. And it starts with the oldest generations out there. We're not setting a good example for our kids, here."

Wondra thanked the community and said in any other election except state school bond referendums, the group would be celebrating.

"I'm very disappointed, I gotta thank everyone who stepped up to help," he said "We had a lot of community support - 59.2% anywhere else we're jumping up and down and shouting 'Yes.' We're down, but we're not out. We're gonna come back for more. Our children deserve better. We gotta do better for our kids."

Board member Gayla Young said she was disheartened that people who voted no didn't take advantage of the opportunities to have questions and concerns addressed by school staff, officials, and board members.

"We had tours, we had meetings, and our emails are public. Do you know how many people emailed me for information - zero. I can't believe that there are people out there that don't want what's best for these kids."

Emily Settles, the principal at Richardson, said she thought the results indicated that people just haven't been really exposed to the problems that exist in the current elementary schools.

"I would say that we just haven't had enough people in the buildings to understand the reality of what's really happening. The invitation is always out there to come and see us, I just don't think they understand what's going on," she said.

Slater said the next steps are to, again, evaluate the results sitting with the board, and look at state election regulations to see what options are out there to have the referendum considered again.

"We still believe this is the right thing for Fort Madison and the younger students. We need to figure out how to correct the misinformation voters used to vote no," she said.

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

WED 04 Apr _____

Light Snow
High- 30.9° F | Low - 27.1° F

THU 05 Apr _____

Snow
High- 37.9° F | Low - 35.1° F

FRI 06 Apr _____

Snow
High- 26.0° F | Low - 16.7° F

SAT 07 Apr _____

Light Snow
High- 28.5° F | Low - 27.6° F

SUN 08 Apr _____

Snow
High- 33.9° F | Low - 33.0° F

[OpenWeatherMap](#)

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