



Pen City Current

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New airpacks to aid FM firefighters

Grant process
saves city
about \$26K

BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Sometimes the best way to protect the people of your community, is to make sure you're safe first.

The Fort Madison Fire Department can now take another step in protecting firefighters inside burning and smoke-filled buildings with new airpacks purchased with Federal Emergency Management Agency grant money.

Fire Chief Joey Herren said the new packs will go onto the trucks on Friday. He said the department has been training on the new airpacks for about 3 weeks in addition to being able to use a model to compare to the former Scotts air packs the city has been using.

"Our airpacks are supposed to be changed out every 15 years, especially the bottles. Then they changed the standards on the rest of the packs. Those carbon fiber bottles they only have a life span of 15 years," Herren said. "We were in a dilemma



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

New gear

Above, at top, Fort Madison Firefighter Chad Hannum dons one of the department's new MSA G1 self-contained breathing apparatus. The new airpacks were purchased with about \$100K in Federal Emergency Management Agency grant money and a 5% match from the city. Above are the new packs and at right is a close up of the new equipment which will go on trucks on Friday.

on the budget crunch that was going to cost me to replace all the bottles at about just under \$900 apiece. I had 32 bottles so that was going to be in

the \$32,000 range just to replace bottles and we'd still have (National Fire Protection Association) standard 2001 air packs because we've updated

those three or four times. So we applied for the FEMA Firefighters grant program and they awarded it to us this year."

Herren said he knew

the tanks were coming to the end of their life cycle and started working on the grants three years ago.

"I've applied for it three times. I did it in 2013, 2014 and 2015. We were turned down the first two years and we went ahead and wrote it again through the grant company and they gave us the grant on the 3rd year," he said.

Herren said the biggest change was going from Scotts, the previous airpack manufacturer, which everyone wore for the past 20 years and what Herren wore as a volunteer, and now they're changing companies.

"So we've taken about 3 weeks of training. They have some more sensors and alarms on them. With the old standard we were alarmed at 25% air to get out of the building and now the alarm goes off at 33%. But these MSA's do have a pass device, if you're not moving...even if you're just standing there and not moving it alarms pretty loud to let them know where you are."

Herren said the department has a 2-in-2-out rule so firefighters always go into a structure with a partner.

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LCHD may set bond vote in May

BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

MONTROSE - 'Tis the season to be thinking of referendums.

At Tuesday's Lee County Board of Supervisors, board members heard

discussion on putting a referendum on the ballot for a new health dept. building.

Board member Matt Pflug said the health building committee would like a commitment from the board on the property.

"Actually, we have an opportunity for two pieces of land, but if we go right here by the sheriff's office, we would be saving taxpayers roughly \$55,000. So we're looking at bringing the bond back

See **VOTE**, page 2



PFLUG

County board setting plans for building renovations

Courthouses, North Lee County building now on maintenance plan

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

MONTROSE - The referendum to build a new centrally located courthouse was soundly defeated in November and now Lee County Supervisors are looking at the best options for upgrading those current facilities.

At Tuesday's Lee County Board of Su-

pervisors' meeting, supervisors heard from Ed Soenke of Design Partners and John Hanson of Midwest Construction Consultants of Houghton, on how to best go about rehabbing the north and south Lee County courthouses and North Lee County County Building.

The south courthouse building has some issues in the belltower and other locations throughout the building, but the supervisors asked Hanson to come up with a complete estimate on the work for all three of the locations so the board could have the numbers going into budgeting sessions which start in about three weeks.



HANSON

the 27th.

Hanson said he could have a plan and some numbers together by that meeting or just after the holidays.

"First thing to do is get the tuck pointing

See **BOARD**, page 2

Supervisor Chair Ron Fedler said the board usually won't meet in the week following Christmas, but he said there are too many issues in front of the board to do an electronic meeting and they would have to meet on

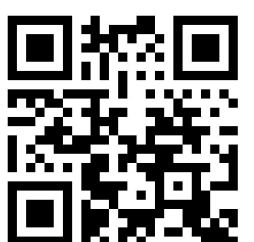
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From the Front

City only footed the bill for about 5% of cost of new equipment

TANKS - Continued from Page 1

He said with the Scotts manufacturer, you could buy a tracking device that had a wand that let you know you were getting close.

"We had the process of playing with both of them at our training facility and all but two guys said they liked the MSAs over the Scotts. Nothing wrong with Scotts, but MSA does have a lighter face and the speaker is on the shoulder piece. It's very clear and that's one of the things we like about it."

As far as cost to the city, Herren said these grant's paid for 95% of the costs of both the new airpacks and 16 new radios that can wirelessly connect to a signal on the new airpacks.

"This cost us about \$2,000 for the airpacks and even some of that is

"This cost (the city) about \$2,000 and even some of that came back."

-Joey Herren,
FM Fire Chief

paid back. This came to \$108,176. The cost to the city was about 5% so we paid about \$6,000 for all this equipment. So I was looking at \$32,000 on the budget hit on the replacement bottles compared to \$6,000 for the entire airpacks so that's how much of a saving we had to the city."

"It's a good deal...now these things and all the

parts have a 15-year warranty and that's the life of them."

Herren said he also wrote the cost for 16 new handheld radios into the latest grant proposal.

"I also wrote a grant for radios. My total was \$131,595. I'm gonna get 16 new radios with this, too. They were also at the 15-year mark. We got a grant in 2001 when Chief Clatt was here in 2001 and we were able to get new radios at that time. So basically we're getting about \$131,595 for about \$8,000. Those radios are another \$30,000 on top of these airpacks."

"It's been a good deal for us budget wise."

See the Featured Video section on our website to watch a demonstration of the new airpacks.

County looking at lot by Sheriff's office for new health building

VOTE - Continued from Page 1

on May 2 is what the board of health would like to do." Pflug said.

Pflug said other locations considered were right behind Comfort Inn and Suites in Fort Madison and behind the Fort Madison Community Hospital. He said the hospital location would be a more costly option.

"I think they were open to that, however, they would probably be looking a ways back (from the hospital) and a lot of prep work. The other two you would have utilities right there plus the concrete road is right there," he said.

"If the county jail ever wanted to expand we would want that in this area as well," Fedler said. "If the (health dept. building) committee considered OK'ing this it would have to be down at the far west end of the property so we had room for expansion if this ever needed to expand. It seems that when it was originally built they wanted to rent out cells to other counties, and here we are full most of the time."

"As far as being responsible to the tax payers if we own the property and there's nothing on it now, we should consider it," Pflug said.

"Again when we were looking at the two properties, the owner was going to raise the price some again. We haven't talked to him again, and you're probably looking at \$55,000 to \$60,000 for that property."

Board member Gary Folluo asked if the building would have a basement.

"This area has a water table and there's an extra cost associated with dealing with that," Folluo said.

Julie Schilling, Lee County Health Department administrator, said the basement would be for storage and HVAC and furnace type area for your equipment. Pflug said it would also provide a safe haven for customers in the event of a storm and designs would include a ramp to the basement for ADA compliance.

"We have looked at facilities in the past and others when they are brought up to us, and we are looking at another this week," Schiller said. Some are too

small and some are larger than we need, some aren't handicap accessible and some need quite a bit of work.

Folluo asked Schilling if finding a suitable existing building to replace the current health department building at the Kensington could come in under the \$2.2 million the bond would seek.

Schilling said that would be totally dependent on any potential building and what work would need to be done and hard estimates would have to be in place. She also said current plans are for an approximate 11,000 square foot building that did include a basement.

"It seems like we've been talking about this for years," Board member Rick Larkin said.

"The need is there. It's not just that we're out-growing The Kensington, but I think it's time we let the people decide if we should pull

the trigger on this," Pflug said.

"The backup plan is we still have an ongoing agreement with The Kensington to be in there, but if we did this 20 years ago this would be bought and paid for... It's important that your health dept. has that professional look, and it's a premiere health department in the state of Iowa."

Fedler asked the committee to bring back some additional information.

"I think we need to see some drawings and a plan so we can get a more informed look as to how much property it's going to take and right now we really don't know."

The board will meet again on Tuesday, Dec. 27.

"If the (health dept. building) committee considered OK'ing this it would have to be down at the far west end of the property."

-Ron Fedler
Board chair

Plans for three county buildings to be presented

BOARD - Continued from Page 1

done and get that sealed, and then get the other items taken care of. We have budgeting coming up next month and it would be good to have some estimates on that going into that budgeting time," Fedler said. "What we need to do is make sure we fix it and we fix it right so we don't have water going in there."

"I'm here to offer my services. I'm not involved in the project, but I thought we could offer our services to get estimates put together and also to look at the different construction that needs to be done in all the locations...cleaning out basements...plaster...security and put those numbers together for you," Hanson said. "I guess I was offering my services if you wanted them and if we had a project we could negotiate a fee or work on an hourly basis."

"I think you're looking at more than one building and having a plan together and estimates of costs and give you an idea of what projects need handled first."

The conversation focused heavily on

tuck-pointing on the south courthouse and possibly sealing. Soenke said sealers can extend the life of the joints and mortar and could extend the life in the long run.

"The three-year maintenance plan they've got here, they've got tuck-pointing on both buildings, waterproofing and glazing," said board member Gary Folluo.

"Maybe a package deal you could get a better price," Soenke suggested.

"I can tell you want to take a closer look at a complete plan of action. You want to know what the cost is vs. doing something else," Hanson said.

"I would foresee that we would go in there and look at construction items and report to the board.

Plus give you more of an action list and a probable cost and develop a five-year plan or whatever you want to do. I can put something together on an hourly basis if approved by the board, which might be fair. But if we get into a bigger project we can put in what we could do for developing front-end specifications and soliciting bids from contractors

and masons."

"I would caution you, John, on that this thing doesn't get crazy," Supervisor Matt Pflug. "We know there are certain things that need to be done, but coming in with a list two miles long."

Hanson said he didn't think that would be appropriate.

"I think what you're looking at is general-wise. I've always been working for the board so I think we'd decide as a group what you would want me to look into. I would coordinate efforts with (county maintenance staff)."

Fedler said the board didn't need to get everything done this year, but take it by priority and then spread it out over the next year or so.

Board member Matt Pflug turned the conversation to security and asked Hanson what his thoughts were on the security.

"We could come and talk to them and come up with some positions as we move forward," Hanson said.

The board will meet again at 9 a.m. Tuesday at the Lee County offices in Montrose.



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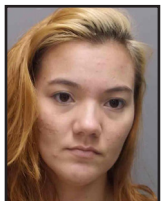
For the Record/Local News

County Task force nabs FM woman

Law enforcement also gets Keokuk man after short foot chase

PEN CITY STAFF

FORT MADISON - The Lee County Narcotics Task Force reports the



MORTON

arrest of a Fort Madison, Iowa woman on felony and misdemeanor drug

charges.

Lisanne Marie Morton, 27, of 1804 Avenue D, Fort Madison, Iowa was arrested on Tuesday after a traffic stop on felony and misdemeanor drug charges. Morton is charged with Possession With Intent To Deliver Methamphetamine In Excess Of Five Grams Within 1000 Feet Of A School, a class B felony, Drug Tax Stamp Violation, a class D felony, two counts of Possession Of A Controlled Substance (methamphetamine and tramadol), a serious misdemeanor, Maintaining A Drug House, an aggravated misdemeanor, and Possession Of Drug Paraphernalia, a simple

misdemeanor. If convicted, Morton faces up to 39 years and 30 days in a state correctional facility.

The arrest of Morton stems from an investigation by the Lee County Narcotics Task Force into allegations that she was involved in the use and distribution of illegal narcotics in the Lee County area. A search warrant was served in connection with this investigation and items that support the charges were discovered.

The Lee County Attorney's Office and the Fort Madison Police Department assisted the Lee County Narcotics Task Force in this investigation.

KEOKUK ARREST

The Task Force also reported the arrest of a Keokuk man on felony and misdemeanor drug charges in an unrelated investigation.

Preston Kash Ingram, 28, of Keokuk, Iowa was arrested on Friday at Victory Park in Keokuk on felony and misdemeanor drug charges. Ingram is charged with Possession

With Intent To Deliver Cocaine Within 1000 Feet Of A Public Park Second Or Subsequent Offense, a class C felony with enhancements, and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia, a simple misdemeanor. If convicted, Ingram faces up to 45



INGRAM

years and 30 days in a state correctional facility.

The arrest of Ingram stems from the Keokuk Police Department arresting Ingram on an outstanding felony warrant after a short foot pursuit. During the arrest of Ingram, items that support the charges were discovered.

The Lee County Attorney's Office and the Keokuk Police Department assisted the Task Force in this investigation.

The defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The Lee County Narcotics Task Force is funded in part by the U.S. Department of Justice and the funds administered by the Iowa Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

12/19/2016 - 4:10 a.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Ashley Ann Erb, 33, 1516 Ave C, Fort Madison, in the 300 block of 15th Street on a warrant for 5 counts of probation violation, 1st degree theft, two counts of 5th degree theft, and voluntary absence from custody. Erb was held at the Lee County Correctional Center.
 12/19/2016 - 7:57 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a property damage accident at the intersection of 30th Street and Avenue N.
 12/19/2016 - 9:10 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a property damage accident at the intersection of 24th Street and Avenue G.
 12/19/2016 - 9:44 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to

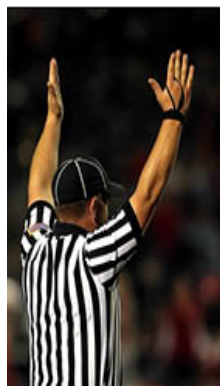
a property damage accident in the 1700 block of Avenue H.

12/19/2016 - 10:11 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 800 block of Avenue E.
 12/19/2016 - 1:20 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a property damage accident in the 1300 block of 48th Street. Ivan Gale Nichols, 69, of 2901 Avenue M, Fort Madison was cited for failure to yield from a stop sign.
 12/19/2016 - 2:09 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a property damage accident in the 1200 block of Avenue H. Tricia Theresa Frait, 33, of 819 Avenue G, was cited for no insurance/no driver's license.
 12/19/2016 - 4:09 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a property damage accident in the 1400 block of 48th Street.
 12/19/2016 - 6:35 p.m. - Fort

Madison police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the Fort Madison area.

12/19/2016 - 8:38 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Jilvone Sherlon Lee Watts, 18, of 2207 Charles Street, Burlington in the 800 block of 13th Street, on a warrant for assault causing bodily injury. Watts was transferred to the Des Moines County Sheriff's Dept. at the county line.
 12/20/2016 - 6:04 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 700 block of Avenue D.
 12/20/2016 - 7:47 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a burglary in the 400 block of Avenue D. A criminal charge is merely an accusation and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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SCORE!

Beat our Editor in the Pigskin Pick 'Em and you could win your choice of \$50 in Chamber Bucks or a \$50 gift card to a local business

<https://www.pencitycurrent.com/fbcontest/>

Rules: Contest runs for three weeks, Sunday, December 18 through Sunday, January 1. Correct picks from each week will be combined and all players that have picked more correct games than the editor will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 prize to be determined by the winner. If no one beats the editor, we're keeping the money! Week 2 picks must be submitted by 11:30 a.m. Saturday, December 24th.

Enter now to win!



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There's Snow Place Like Home for the Holidays

The Pen City Current will not publish a pdf issue Friday, December 23 through Monday, December 26. However, breaking news will be posted to our website during this time. Publication of the pdf issue will resume on Tuesday, December 27.

As we enjoy the holidays with our family, we thank you for your support and patronage and wish you all a very Merry Christmas!

Pen City current