



Pen City Current

Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2019 | 14 pages | Volume 3 • Issue 27

County budget draft goes over \$30 million mark

County's assessed valuation up more than \$158 million

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

MONTROSE – A proposed budget for Lee County expenses for the fiscal year 2020, beginning on July 1, has expenses for the county at more than \$30 million. Lee County Budget Director Cindy Renstrom submitted the proposed budget at a workshop following the regular meeting of the Lee County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday.

The budget shows total revenues at \$28.5 million and expenses at \$30.5 million. However that amount would likely slide back under the \$30 million mark, as a bridge replacement project has been budgeted heavily due to unknown contributions. The Mental Health -Development Disability fund, which has to be spent down to 20% of expenses, is showing an ending balance at the end of the 2020 fiscal year of \$301,894. The fund had \$1.5 million in it, and no new revenues are allocated to the fund. The \$301,894 represents 25% of expenses, so the county has almost met obligations under Iowa law requiring the spend down. Renstrom has the county levy preliminarily set at \$10.388/\$1,000 assessed valuation, which is the same

property tax rate for the current tax year. The levy will generate \$13.56 million in the fiscal year off a county valuation of \$1.48 billion and a debt service valuation of \$1.52 billion. The county is allowed to assess a levy for debt service on valuations abated by tax increment financing, which represents the difference in the two figures. The levy remains at its lowest rate in at least the past 15 years. Renstrom said the county has seen some substantial increases in rural valuations with the Iowa Fertilizer Co. and the Dakota Access Pipeline. "(IFC's) taxable valuation is now \$63,516,825. The year before it was \$6 million so that went up and the

See VALUATIONS, page 5

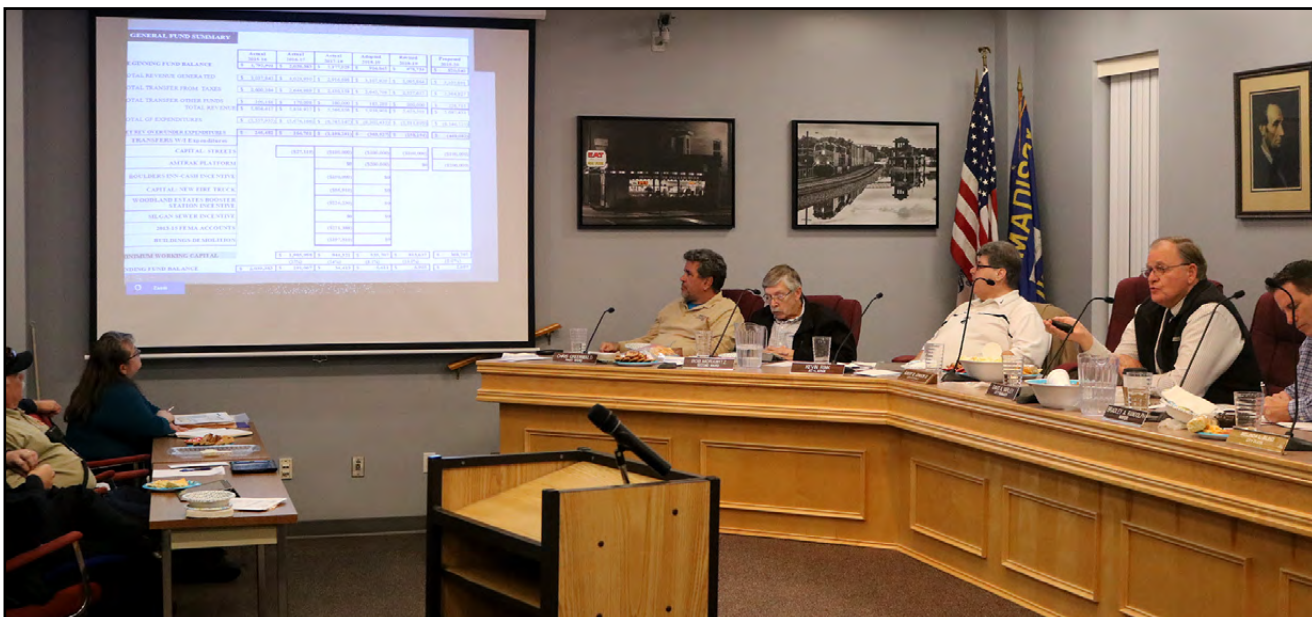


Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison City Manager David Varley, second from right, updates the City Council at a budget workshop Tuesday night about the status of the general fund and what options the city has to get it healthier.

City leaders take hard look at financial picture

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – The Fort Madison City Council spent about two hours after Tuesday's regular council meeting grinding out ways to possibly begin to rebuild the city's general operating fund. City Manager David Varley indicated at the meeting, that the city's working capital will be so low going into the next fiscal year that it may not cover a month's work of operations. Varley said the city has capital projects they can look at cutting back on but then it falls on operations.

"We've got capital projects and then once we get past that, then you have to look at operations and people, and no one wants to hear that," he said. Councilman Matt Mohrfeld suggested the city look at pulling the capital improvement projects at Riverview Park including the Amtrak Depot and the improvement costs for prepping a dock for the potential of Viking Cruise lines. He said those costs could be bonded and then the city could pay those back over time and not hit the budget so hard in one fiscal year's general fund.

See CAPITAL, page 5

Chamber planning St. Patty's Day celebration

PCC STAFF

FORT MADISON – The Fort Madison Area Chamber of Commerce is planning a St. Patrick's Day Celebration to be held on Saturday, March 16th, 2019. The day will begin with a parade through downtown Fort Madison at 10:30 am. We encourage all businesses and groups to enter a fun and festive float/entry into the parade. The parade will start on 5th Street and work its way west on Avenue G ending at Horan's Cabaret. They will be serving Irish food beginning at 10 am. At noon, "Blame Not The Bard" will be performing in the beer garden behind Horan's Cabaret. This family-friendly event will feature, food, music and fun! So throw on your green and be Irish for a day! Parade entry forms can be found on the Fort Madison Partners website under the St. Patrick's Day event on the calendar, picked up at the Partner's office at 614 9th St., The Cabaret, or have one sent to you by calling 319-372-5471. All parade entry forms should be returned to the Fort Madison Chamber no later than March 8th. The Fort Madison Area Chamber of Commerce is an affiliate organization of Fort Madison Partners. Fort Madison Partners is the umbrella organization which oversees the Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce, Riverfront Business District, Fort Madison Economic Development and Fort Madison SIRRC. It serves to facilitate and coordinate efforts, services and resources of each individual organization as well as share strategic goals, working towards the common goal of making Fort Madison a great place to visit, live and work.

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Obituaries/Current-Lee

OBITUARIES

ETHYL M. MONTGOMERY

Ethyl M. Montgomery, 98 of Keokuk, IA died Sunday, January 13, 2019 at River Hills Village in Keokuk.

She was born February 25, 1920 in Roswell, S.D. the daughter of Harry and Flora Andrews Kohlmorgan. On June 25, 1945 she was united in marriage to Richard Montgomery in Keokuk. He preceded her in death on November 30, 1981.

Ethyl was a member of First Christian Church in Keokuk.



MONTGOMERY

Ethyl enjoyed being outdoors gardening and planting flowers. She loved pets and had several fox terrier dogs over the years. Above all, Ethyl loved watching her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and made a lifetime of treasured memories that will last forever.

She is survived by three sons, John Montgomery of Maplewood, MN, Keith Montgomery, of Wayland, MO and Hal Montgomery (Betty) of Land-O-Lakes, FL, three daughters, Pam Katsumes (Ted) of Keokuk, Soni Montgomery of Keokuk and Julie Montgomery (Larry Helfrich) Keokuk, fourteen grandchildren, eighteen great-grandchildren, one brother, Wilbur Kohlmorgan of Keokuk, one sister, Arlene Young of Mesa, AZ, many special nieces and nephews and one special friend, Ana King (Don) of Keokuk.

Besides her husband, she was also preceded in death by her parents, two brothers, Harry and Earl Kohlmorgan and three sisters, Wilma Kohlmorgan, Hazel Lemon and Pearl Kohlmorgan.

A funeral service will be held at 10:30 a.m., Thursday, at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA with Pastor David Turner officiating. Burial will be held in the St. Patrick Cemetery in St. Patrick, MO at a later date.

Visitation will be held after 1 p.m., Wednesday, at the funeral home with family meeting with friends from 6-8 p.m.

Memorials may be made to the Keokuk Humane Society.

Online condolences may be left for the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

CURRENT-LEE

Comedy Night at the FM Elks Club Rescheduled

Due to the impending weather, the Fort Madison Elks Lodge Comedy night has been rescheduled for Saturday, February 15 at 8:30 p.m. The show will feature two comedians – Tim Sullivan and another act to be named – and is Adult Humor. Tickets are \$15 in advance/\$20 the day of the show. Limited seating is available. Call 319.372.3724 or stop by the lodge for tickets today. Food available 5:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Pen City Current will list your event in this highly visible CURRENT-LEE section in increments of 25 words for \$15. Add a photo for \$5. Non-profit organizations are eligible for the reduced rate of \$10 per 25 words and \$3 per photo. To place your listing, click here or call Lee at (319)371.4125.

OBITUARIES

MARY ELIZABETH SWEEZER

Mary Elizabeth Sweezer, 90 years, of Fort Madison, Iowa died at 7:05 am Monday, January 15, 2019 at The Madison. Mary was born April 30, 1928 in Marceline, Missouri, the only child of Homer and Mary Agnes (Boyd) Sweezer. She was a 1946 graduate of La Plata High School, La Plata, Missouri. She moved to Fort Madison after high school and lived here the rest of her life. Mary accepted Jesus Christ at an early age. She worked at Sheaffer Pen Company for more than 40 years.

Mary never married. She is survived by cousins and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Her body has been cremated. A graveside service and burial will be held at a later date at the Hillcrest Cemetery, Fort Madison, Iowa. Online condolences to the Sweezer Family may be made at www.barrmemorialchapel.com. Barr Memorial Chapel is in charge of arrangements.

LOUISE MARIE SHULTZ

Louise Marie (Walkowiak) Listebarger Shultz, 90, of Fort Madison, Iowa died Tuesday morning, January 15, 2109 at her home. She was born on June 6, 1928 at Elba, Nebraska, a daughter of Michael J. and Agnes (Jasnoch) Walkowiak. On January 30, 1955, she married Billy Kirk Listebarger in Fort Madison, Iowa. He preceded her in death on October 16, 1979. On May 28, 1983, she married William Arthur Shultz in Fort Madison, Iowa. He preceded her in death on August 1, 2007.

For over 30 years, she worked for Western Union Telegraph Company. She enjoys crafts and ceramics. She was a member of the Fort Madison United Methodist Church.

She is survived by one son, Kirk Listebarger of Harvard, Illinois; one daughter, Mary Ann Gomez of Chesapeake, Virginia; two sisters: Irene Peters of Nebraska; LeAnn Ayres of Gladstone, Illinois; five grandchildren, 2 step-grandchildren, three great grandchildren (plus one on the way) and numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, both husbands, three brothers: Hubert, Arthur and Leonard, two sisters: Margaret Svoboda and Lorraine Walkowiak, and one granddaughter, Erica Listebarger.

Per her wishes, her body has been cremated. Her family will greet friends 9:30 – 10:30 am Friday, January 18, 2019 at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. A memorial service will follow and begin at 10:30 am Friday at the funeral home, with Pastor Lanette Van officiating. Burial will be at Soldier's Circle, Oakland Cemetery, Fort Madison, Iowa. A memorial has been established, contributions may be made at the Barr Memorial Chapel, Fort Madison. Online condolences to the Listebarger Shultz Family may be made at www.barrmemorialchapel.com.

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Pen City Current
Founded in 2016



P.O. Box 366 | Fort Madison, IA

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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.

For the Record/Lottery Numbers

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

01/10/19 – 11:30 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2100 block of Avenue G.
 01/10/19 – 1:17 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a shoplifter in the 1900 block of Avenue H.
 01/10/19 – 8:32 p.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Manuel Santiago Martinez, 21, of Fort Madison in the 800 block of Avenue C, on a charge of 3rd-degree sexual abuse. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/11/19 – 10:51 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a larceny theft in the 4800 block of Avenue O.
 01/11/19 – 11:18 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1400 block of Avenue H.
 01/11/19 – 12:51 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2600 block of Avenue L.
 01/11/19 – 3:41 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1800 block of Avenue H.
 01/11/19 – 6:31 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 3900 block of Avenue O.
 01/12/19 – 12:36 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in progress in the 1700 block of Avenue D.
 01/12/19 – 5:00 a.m. – Fort Madison Police cited Dustin Alan Beckman, 19, of Fort Madison in the 3100 block of Avenue L for under aged consumption. He was released upon citation.
 01/12/19 – 5:11 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Thomas Wayne Davis, Jr., 19, of Fort Madison in the 3100 block of Avenue L, for public intoxication. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/12/19 – 2:59 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1800 block of Avenue L.
 01/12/19 – 4:35 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 800 block of Avenue F.
 01/13/19 – 2:24 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 1500 block of 34th Street.
 01/13/19 – 11:21 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 3400 block of Avenue Q.
 01/13/19 – 2:35 p.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 2000 block of Avenue E.

Sheriff's report

01/09/19 – 6:01 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a report of a two-vehicle accident at the intersection of 255th Street and Hwy. 218. A vehicle driven by Dimitrios Roosevelt Royal, 49, of Farmington was headed westbound on 255th Street and collided with a vehicle driven by Bridget Phyllis Morrison, 40, of Donnellson, which was headed northbound on Hwy. 218. Royal was cited for failure to yield upon entering a through highway. Royal was also transported to Fort Madison Community Hospital for minor injuries.
 01/10/19 – 11:28 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Melissa Jo Bode, 49, of Keokuk, in the 3300 block of Lake Road in Keokuk, on warrants for violation of probation and contempt of court. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/10/19 – 11:33 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Antwan Lawrence Brewster, 19, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for probation violation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/10/19 – 1:37 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Elijah Joseph Burris, 25, of Keokuk, in the 2600 block of Belknap Blvd in Keokuk, on a warrant for 3rd-degree theft.
 01/10/19 – 4:53 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Laurenn Elaine Beach, 26, of Burlington, at the North Lee County Courthouse, on a court-ordered hold. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/10/19 – 10:01 p.m. – Lee

County Sheriff's deputies arrested Chad Michael Vice, 43, of Fort Madison on charge of drug trafficking – 5 grams to 100 kilograms of methamphetamine. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/11/19 – 1:18 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Justin Robert Bowden, 37, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for contempt of court. He was released on a promise to appear.
 01/11/19 – 6:45 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Paul Alan Hileman, 48, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for failure to appear. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/11/19 – 7:53 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Dwight Lee Glasgow, 56, of Houghton, in the 300 block of Denning Street in Houghton, on a charge of domestic assault. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and released on bond.
 01/11/19 – 8:11 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a one-vehicle accident in the 3000 block of 260th Avenue. A vehicle driven by Jarrod Ray Hagmeier, 38, of Winfield, lost control on snowy roads and entered a ditch striking a tree. Hagmeier was ticketed for operating a vehicle with expired license, failure to use or maintain safety belt, and failure to maintain control. He was also taken to Fort Madison Community Hospital by Lee County EMS for injuries.
 01/14/19 – 8:30 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Tiffany Rhome Jones, 47, of Elvaston, Ill., in the 2400 block of Carbide Lane, on a charge of OWI-1st

offense. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/14/19 – 10:45 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a one-vehicle rollover on Perkins Road. A vehicle driven by Ricky Allen Ridenhour, 63, of Wever, slipped into a ditch on snow conditions and rolled onto it's side. No injuries or citations were issued at the scene.
 01/14/19 – 1:39 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Adrian Cayle Elliott, 18, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a charge of violation of probation.
 01/14/19 – 3:38 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Christina Inez Adams, 30, of Wayland, Mo.,

on warrants for contempt of court, voluntary absence of custody and a judgment hold.
 01/14/19 – 5:37 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Payton Wrage Van-Pelt-Vice, 23, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff's office on a judgment hold. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/15/19 – 1:10 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Whispy Ray Brown, 26, of Fort Madison, in the 21000 block of 330th Avenue on charges of no violation of a no-contact order and domestic abuse assault. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 01/15/19 – 2:06 a.m. – Deontrey Jakerion McClenan, 25,

of Washington, in the 2100 block of 330th Avenue in Fort Madison, on a charge of violation of a no-contact order, and domestic abuse assault. *Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue report

01/12/19 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to four medical calls,
 01/13/19 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to two medical calls
 01/14/19 – Fort Madison firefighters responded to two medical calls, one carbon monoxide check, one false alarm, and one lift assist.



IOWA LOTTERY WINNING NUMBERS

Lotto Drawings

Game	Draw Days	Sales Cutoff Time	Approx. Drawing Time
Lucky for Life®	Mon & Thu	8:30 pm	9:38 pm
Mega Millions®	Tues & Fri	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
Powerball®	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	9:59 pm
Lotto America™	Wed & Sat	8:59 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 3 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 3 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm
Pick 4 - Midday	Daily	Noon	12:20 pm
Pick 4 - Evening	Daily	9:40 pm	10:00 pm



1/14
 11 13 18 29 42
 Lucky Ball: 3



1/14 MID-DAY
 5 4 1
 1/14 EVENING
 9 5 6



1/14 MID-DAY
 1 7 5 6
 1/14 EVENING
 2 2 7 3

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

WED 16 Jan

Partly Cloudy
 High– 25.9° F | Low – 24.9° F

THU 17 Jan

Light Snow
 High– 29.7° F | Low – 12.4° F

FRI 18 Jan

Snow
 High– 22.0° F | Low – 18.3° F

SAT 19 Jan

Light Snow
 High– 17.9° F | Low – 4.4° F

SUN 20 Jan

Clear
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Lee County

[OpenWeatherMap](#)

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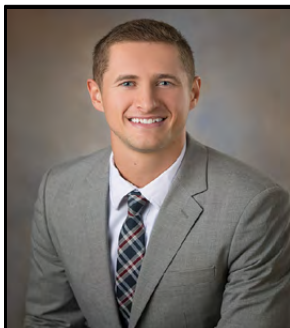
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Sports/From the Front



Courtesy photo

Elks Hoops winners

Winners of the annual Elks Hoops Shoot were announced this week. From left to right: Dayonna Davis (girls 10-11); Natalie Randolph (girls 12-13); Kailey Louck (girls 8-9); Dane Butler (boys 12-13). Reece Huey (boys 8-9), and Layne Rung (boys 10-11). The students qualified at their respective schools before advancing to Sunday's shoot at Holy Trinity Catholic. The winners will now travel to the district shoot in Keokuk Saturday.

City's revolving fund may be on the chopping block

CAPITAL - Continued from Page 1

"I don't like to borrow money," Varley said. "But if we did do it we should do it very short term and it might be best to borrow it from the Highway 61 fund and then pay ourselves back. It would be a little cheaper that way as we could save on interest and bonding costs."

Mohrfeld said he liked that idea, or event working with local banks to secure a short-term loan with a good rate.

Another idea kicked around included instituting a 3% franchise fee on city utilities. Councilman Bob Morawitz said a franchise fee isn't fair to the low income people because they don't have the resources to keep those rates down.

Varley said the franchise fee would eliminate the Local Option Sales Tax.

"If we did it, it would have to be one percent less because we can't levy both taxes," Varley said. "If we do a franchise fee, the Local Option Sales Tax has to go away."

City Finance director Peggy Steffensmeier said the franchise tax would have to be proposed at 2 percent, if the local sales tax were to still be collected.

Another idea was to eliminate the city's revolving loan fund, that was set up as an incentive to encourage business growth in the city. The fund has about \$176,000 in it, and the maximum loans available are \$25,000.

"In that fund there is a \$176,000 sitting there and it was established by council so it would take council approval to get it back and I'm recommending we grab that money back. It's with Southeast Iowa Regional Planning (Commission), and we, for the time being, shut that program down because of its infrequent use," Mayor Brad Randolph said. "Then take the lion's share or all of that money and restrict it back for beautification and nuisance abatement."

Varley said he would like to rebuild the general fund's working capital to a minimum of \$800,000, but said it may be four or five years. He said a strong budget would have working capital of closer to \$1.2 million to help with sudden drops in revenues or emergencies.

One of the problems the city is facing is sharp drop in sales tax revenues. He said the city revenues from the Local Options Sales Tax, which is administered and distributed by the state, dropped about \$300,000 this year.

Mohrfeld asked if the state provided any information as to the specifics of the drop. Varley and Steffensmeier both said the state not forthcoming with specifics about what sector of the economy is suffering so the city can't point to where the problems are.

Morawitz also suggested the city may look at eliminating the 3-year tax abatements on improvements to property within the city.

"It was an incentive for people to do the work, but I think they're going to do the work anyway. When I'm doing a remodel I'm not going, 'Let's see what kind of tax abatement can I get if I do this,' I'm thinking I've got this project to do and I'm going to do it."

The city will have another budget strategy session in February before having to certify the budget to the county and state.

Rural valuations give county a bit of a boost

VALUATIONS - Continued from Page 1

pipeline, which is new this year, is \$60 million. Between those two things, our rural valuation went up quite a bit. And on railroads, Burlington Northern went up \$7 million," Renstrom said.

"That's kind of why our fund balances are doing ok, because of that increase in valuations."

The Iowa Fertilizer Co. is paying the county a set amount of money annually in lieu of property taxes on the facility. Those set payments are for the first 20 years and currently, the county receives \$222, 278 per year.

The budget cuts into the county's carryover balance about \$2 million, reducing the fund balance to \$8.1 million from \$10.1 million. In 2019, the fund balance is estimated to drop about \$1.9 million from \$12.1 million. In 2018 the fund carryover fell \$1.3 million and in 2017 the fund dropped \$70,000.

Renstrom said she was also getting bond rates for a \$5 million bond to pay for the digital upgrades for county emergency services. Lee County Sheriff Stacy Weber said he believes the project will cost around \$1.5 to \$2 million. Renstrom said she wanted to get a look at the rates, but would reissue bids for the bond when the time gets closer for the upgrades.

The Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) board is handling the transition for all county emergency service providers.

The county budget has to be certified by March 15 and follow up meetings are being planned after regular Tuesday board meetings to continue to fine tune the budget.

Secondary roads shows an operating budget shortfall of \$1.25 million, but Renstrom said County Engineer Ben Hull found an additional \$500,000 after she had generated her reports that should have been put in revenue. She said Hull has also overbudgeted for bridges because those funds could be paid in two separate fiscal years, creating a savings of whatever money may be pushed into the next fiscal year.

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Derek Breder, M.D.



Brent Woodbury, M.D.



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