



Pen City Current

Wednesday, Feb. 20, 2019 | 9 pages | Volume 3 • Issue 52

Freeze to foster: PAW blessed by arctic blast

Thirty dogs find homes after deep freeze forces officials to offer two-week foster event

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – What could have been a tragedy, turned into a triumph for the P.A.W no-kill animal shelter in Fort Madison.

With the wicked winter air that descended on south-

east Iowa at the end of January, Sandy Brown, the director of the shelter, started worrying about all the dogs that were penned outside at the shelter.

She said they have had situations with cold before, where the animals were brought inside for warmth. But this was something different.

“We had over 50 dogs that lived outside. Our concern was keeping them warm. We can do that at 20 or 30 degrees but with windchills of -45, we were very concerned about keeping everyone warm,” Brown said Tuesday.

So the shelter put a message out to the community asking if anyone would be willing to foster a dog for

two weeks. Brown said if they were able to get even 10 people who would take 10 dogs, they could make sheltering work during the arctic blast.

The next day, people were lined up at the door filling out paperwork and waiting for a dog to take home. Brown said the families that came in didn't even get to pick the animal, shelter workers assigned animals based on information provided on the paperwork.

“We had no idea we'd get this type of response. People came in and filled out paperwork. We looked at their paperwork and we picked the dog for them,” Brown

See **ADOPTIONS**, page 9

City levy to drop almost a quarter



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

It was standing room only for the first time in a long time at the Fort Madison City Council meeting on Tuesday night. Many of the close to 50 in attendance wore buttons showing support for the city's depot relocation project that had been on the chopping block.

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – After an informal vote last week to pass the Amtrak Depot relocation project by, the Fort Madison City Council has backed up on that decision.

In a 7-1 vote on Tuesday night, the council approved the 2019-20

fiscal year budget, which begins on July 1. The budget includes the depot project completion.

City Councilman Matt Mohrfeld voted against the budget, not because he was against the depot project, but because he said the budget wasn't balanced and wouldn't support it.

After the last budget workshop

put the status of the depot project in jeopardy, Mayor Brad Randolph and Chris Greenwald started dialing up anyone and everyone that could possibly help with additional funding and shook loose possibly \$400,000 from the Iowa Department of Transportation's Iowa

See **BUDGET**, page 9

DOT official says precedent there for extra funds

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – A director with the Iowa Department of Transportation confirmed Monday that the DOT is recommending a \$400,000 expenditure from an Iowa Transportation Commission passenger rail fund to help offset costs associated with moving the Amtrak depot in Fort Madison.

Stuart Anderson, the director of the Planning, Programming, and Model Division of the Iowa Department of Transportation, said approval for the additional money would come from the Iowa Transportation Commission. He said Monday that although the additional depot funding isn't guaranteed, the commission awarding the money has precedent for the move.

City officials, in an informal poll several weeks ago, dropped the depot relocation to Riverview Park in the North Lee County Historical museum due to tightening city funds.

But Mayor Brad Randolph, who at the meeting said maybe it was time to put the relocation on hold, and City Councilman Chris Greenwald started working the phones to see if additional funds could be found to keep the project moving forward.

One of those calls was to Anderson's staff at the DOT.

“One of the funding sources that is available at the DOT is the Passenger Rail Service Revolving Fund and that fund is usually used as a funding source for

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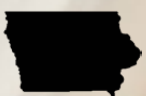
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Obituaries/Education News

OBITUARIES

WILLIAM "BILL" HOSKINS

William "Bill" Hoskins, 85, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away at 10:38 a.m. on Monday, February 18, 2019 at The Madison. He was born on October 29, 1933 in Kansas City, MO to Frank & Luella Belle Hays Hoskins.



HOSKINS

He served as a medic in the U.S. Navy during the Korean Conflict. He graduated from Northeast Missouri State Teachers College with a masters degree in education. He married Beverly J. Hills on August 22, 1959 in Brookfield, MO. He was a teacher and coach at the Fort Madison Community School District for more than 35 years. He taught social studies and coached boys basketball and girls softball for many years. He was an honorary referee for the Fort Madison Relays and also for the Mick Pickford Wrestling Tournament. He was a member of the Fort Madison Elk's Lodge, Knights of Columbus, Holy Family Parish, the Bloodhound Booster Club and the Fort Madison High School Hall of Fame as a coach. The Fort Madison High School softball field is named in Bill's memory. He loved to cook, especially chili & pies. He also canned, loved to garden and was an avid Iowa Hawkeye, St. Louis Cardinal and Fort Madison Bloodhound fan.



Bill is survived by: his wife: Bev Hoskins of Fort Madison, IA; 1-daughter: Libbie (Chris) Adam of Jef-

erson City, MO; 2-sons: Jeff (Deb) Hoskins of Baxter, IA & Gregory (Linda) Hoskins of Geneva, IL; 7-grandchildren: Scott (Steffi), Danielle & Stephanie Hoskins, Mark & Matt Hoskins, Liz & Caroline Adam; 1-great granddaughter: Sawyer Rae Hoskins; his fraternal twin brother: Bob (Virginia) Hoskins of Sedalia, MO; 5-sisters: Sandra (John) Burns of Brookfield, MO, Donna Davis of Laclede, MO, Marilyn Cary of Washington, IL, Luzella Bradley of Chillicothe, MO & Bonnie (Buzzy) Noah of Chillicothe, MO & more than 90 nieces & nephews. He was preceded in death by: his parents, 1-sister, & 3-brothers.

The family will receive friends from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 21, 2019 with a funeral mass to immediately follow at Ss. Mary & Joseph Church with Rev. Mark P. Spring officiating. A memorial has been established for the Bloodhound Booster Club. Online condolences to Bill's family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com. King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory is assisting the family with the arrangements. The family will receive friends from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 23, 2019 at Wright Funeral Home in Brookfield, MO with burial to immediately follow at St. Michael's Cemetery in Brookfield, MO.

Avery qualifies for chamber at debate nationals



Students Sam Avery and Wyatt Hellman attended the Debate Forensic League Competition in Bettendorf with coaches Mr. Alfred and Mrs. Beyer on Monday the 18th. Wyatt competed in the Senate chamber. Sam competed in the House and achieved the National Speech and Debate Tournament Qualifier Award, which means he has earned a place in the debate chamber at Nationals in Dallas, Texas in June. They each participated in two sessions lasting three and four hours, respectively.



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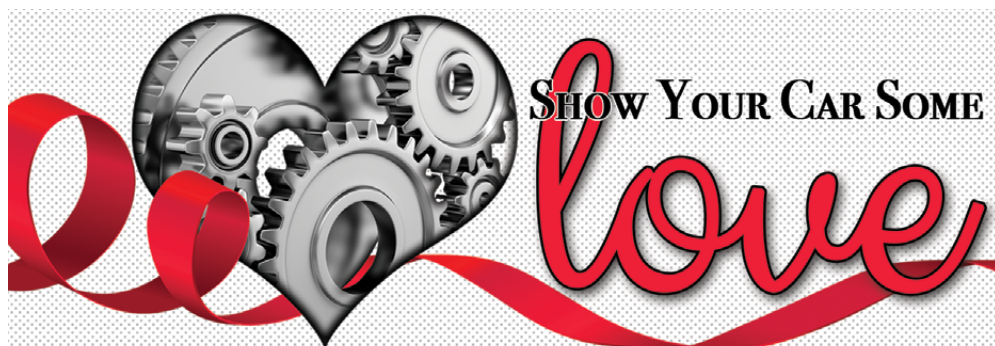


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Sports

Bloodhounds bow out in loss to Washington

**BY CHUCK
VANDENBERG**
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – The Bloodhounds chased and nipped at the heels of the Washington Demons Monday night in Class 3A substate boys basketball, but couldn't come up with the right play at the right time.

The Hounds bowed out of the 2017-18 season with a 54-50 loss in Washington in the Substate 5 bracket. The Demons now face a loaded Oskey squad Thursday that features 7'0" junior Xavier Foster and 6'10" Cole Henry.

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Fort Madison ends the season 7-14 and lost three times to the Demons including a 73-60 loss on Dec. 18, and 73-



WILSON

“*They just pounded us off the dribble in the first half. Whether we were in man or zone - and we're better than that. We have to get better at those things.*”

-Ryan Wilson,
FMHS Head Coach

64 loss on Feb. 1.

The Bloodhounds trailed by as much as eight in the game, but at five different points trailed by just a point, the last time with 1:58 left in the third period when junior Jayden Fedler converted a bucket on a rebound of his own shot.

The bucket forced a full time out by Washington to regroup. After the time out, Demon junior Brock Sobaski got loose inside and missed a three-footer, but rebounded his own shot and scored on a put-back to extend the lead to three.

Senior Brandon Keester, who led the Hounds with 18 points

on the night, coughed up the ball in transition and Washington's Trevor Quigley scored down under for a five-point advantage 43-38 at the end of three.

Hounds freshman Dayton Davis missed after getting clear off the dribble from the left side to open the fourth period and the Demons got a bucket from senior Cade Hennigen.

But the Hounds weren't finished. Fedler scored in the post on the next possession and junior Parker Denning would follow that up with a bucket after Fort Madison's Logan Rashid blew through the Demons' press and gave



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison junior Parker Denning drives on the Demons' Brock Sobaski Monday night. The Hounds ended their season with a 54-50 loss to Washington in Oskaloosa.

a no-look offering to Denning on the fly down the left side that made it a one-possession game again with about five minutes left.

Denning and freshman Miles Dear would commit back-to-back personal fouls giving the Demons two-of-four at

the free throw line before Davis would counter with 4:01 left to cut it again to a three-point game 47-44.

Junior Luke Turner would score for the Demons off a dribble drive through the Hounds match-up zone, but Keester would counter

with his fifth 3-ball on the night to make it 47-49. The Hounds pressure would force a steal, but Fort Madison couldn't convert in transition.

After a full-timeout by Washington to settle things down, Turner

See **HOUNDS**, page 5

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Sports

Hounds were within one point five times against Demons

HOUNDS - Continued from Page 4

would hit again with 1:54 left and a 51-47 lead. Fedler would get a bucket inside after working his way down from the free throw line. The Hounds would get another Demon turnover inside the Fort Madison pressure up front from Rashid and Davis, but would then turn it back over, and Turner scored again in transition to make it 53-49.

Fedler and Turner each would get a free throw in the final :45 seconds, but Fort Madison couldn't catch fire before the buzzer.

"We only had four turnovers at halftime," Wilson said. "That was a big focus and we did those things, but we didn't do other things like offense rebounds. We just had to be better tonight at all those things."

Despite finishing three games under .500, Wilson said he never questioned the heart of his seniors.

"I told Brandon and Logan, you never had to question their character... you never questioned their commitment. They came to open gyms, hit the weight room and they did what they needed to do to be successful. I have no question they will be successful in the game of life, too. It's not just basketball we coach. They're gonna go on and do great things," Wilson said.

Aside from a 2-2 tie in the opening moments, Fort Madison trailed the entire game. The Demons opened up a five point 17-12 first quarter advantage with Turner hitting inside again off the dribble in the lane and drew a foul from Keester.

In the second period the teams traded buckets to a 24-16 Washington lead, but the Demons would miss their next six straight shots. Meanwhile Keester would lace one from about 23 feet just right of the top of the key, and Rashid would follow with a 3-ball of his own to cut the lead to two.

Both teams would commit turnovers in the next two possessions. Fedler would then get the ball down low and miss the inside move, but draw the foul. He'd make one of the two freebies to make it a 1-point game. With 1:10 left in the half, the Demons' Ethan Hunt broke up the cold shooting with a bucket to keep Washington in front 26-23.

Davis would score for the Hounds off the dribble to get within one again. Sobaski would counter and Rashid would score again for Fort Madison on a running 12" floater at the buzzer to make it one point game at the half 28-27.

Head Coach Ryan Wilson said the Hounds got beat badly off the dribble in the first half.

"They just pounded us off the dribble in the first

half. Whether we were in man or zone - and we're better than that. We have to get better at those things," Wilson said.

Rashid said the game came down to giving the Demons too many boards on their side of the floor.

"We were right there the whole time. The whole week we had a good game plan and we executed it, but in the end they just got more rebounds," Rashid said after the game. "I think that's why they had the lead at the end of the game, they just got so many second opportunities. It's a tough pill to swallow."

Keester agreed it was the Hounds lack of rebounding that ultimately decided the game.

"We were scoring, but our defense wasn't very good and what killed us was our offensive rebounding. I think they had 13 or 14 total. Rebounding better would have won us the game," Keester said.

Fedler finished with 16 for Fort Madison, Rashid had ten on the night, while Davis added four and Denning had two.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Above, Brandon Keester (11) gets Washington's Brock Sabaski (20) up in the air on a pump fake. Keester scored 18 points, including five 3-balls to lead Fort Madison. At left, Head Coach Ryan Wilson tells the Hounds they need to limit Washington's offensive rebounds during a time out.



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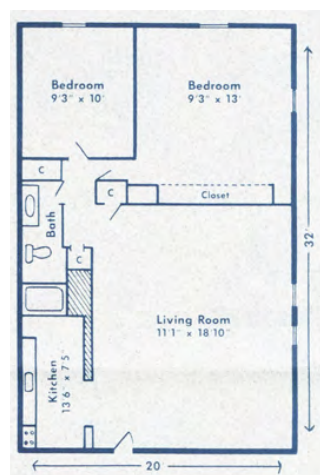
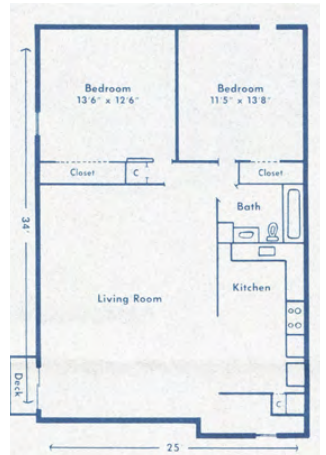
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Pen City current



For the Record/Weather

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

02/11/19 - 10:59 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in the 1600 block of Avenue H.
 02/11/19 - 2:00 p.m. - Fort Madison Police cited Joshua Charles Corcoran, 37, no address listed, at the police station, on a charge of trespass. He was released upon citation.
 02/12/19 - 4:20 a.m. - Fort Madison Police cited Jeremy Gilbert Miller, 27, of Burlington in the 3200 block of Avenue L, on a charge of driving under suspension. He was released upon citation.
 02/12/19-9:59 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident at the intersection of 20th Street and Avenue D.
 02/12/19 - 10:01 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2000 block of Avenue G.
 02/12/19 - 7:54 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Sheldon Shonta Robinson, 31, of Fort Madison, in the 2600 block of Avenue L, on a warrant for violation of probation - possession of a firearm by a felon. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/13/19 - 7:57 a.m. - Fort Madison Police respond-

ed to a report of a hit and run on Joan Court.
 02/13/19 - 12:21 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 5400 block of Avenue O.
 02/13/19 - 1:56 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a shoplifter in the 2800 block of Avenue L.
 02/13/19 - 8:38 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Brandon Ray Raszler, 27, of Fort Madison in the 1100 block of Avenue E on a warrant for parole violation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/14/19 - 11:14 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report a larceny/theft in the 2600 block of Avenue D.
 02/16/19 - 12:12 a.m. Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a property damage accident in the 2100 block of Avenue A.
 02/16/19 - 1:57 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report a larceny/theft in the 1800 block of Avenue H.
 02/16/19 - 2:28 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report a property damage accident in the 3300 block of Avenue D.
 02/16/19 - 7:28 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Anthony Durrell Smith, 32, of 1500 block of Avenue B on charge of 1st-degree harass-

ment. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/18/19 - 11:48 a.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Damien Ray Pope, 21, of Fort Madison, at the police station on warrant for probation violation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/18/19 - 12:19 p.m. - Fort Madison Police arrested Raul Garci, 69, of Fort Madison, in the 1900 block of Avenue H, on a charge of driving while barred. He was released on a promise to appear.
 02/18/19 - 9:42 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report larceny/theft in the 1200 block of Avenue H.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

02/11/19 - 2:06 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Joshua Wayne James, 35, of Burlington, at 3630 Bauer Driver in Burlington, on a warrant for violation of probation. He was taken to Lee County Jail and held.
 02/11/19 - 1:34 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a two-vehicle accident. A vehicle driven by Wayne Edward Purchase, 50, of Wyaconda, Mo., was headed north on Hwy. 61 when it was allegedly struck by a vehicle driven by Savannah Elizabeth

Meyers, 24, of Montrose. According to the report, Meyers was attempting to cross Hwy 61 at Ortho Road and did not yield the right of way striking Purchase's vehicle causing the vehicle to spin and roll down the ditch coming to rest on it's top. Meyers was cited for failure to obey stop sign and driving while suspended. No injuries were reported at the scene.
 02/11/19 - 6:00 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies cited Patricia Lynn Lamma, 31, of Keokuk at the sheriff's office on a court-ordered hold. She was released upon citation.
 02/12/19 - 2:11 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a report of a one-vehicle accident in the 1300 block of Hwy. 27. A vehicle driven by Megan Spurgeon, 31, of Keokuk, lost control due to slippery road conditions, striking a snow pile and going airborne. The vehicle came down on a wrong way traffic sign and slid to a stop in the north bound lane. Spurgeon allegedly left the scene and was contacted by phone.
 02/12/19 - 11:38 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Ryan Wade Siegrist, 40, of Fort Madison at the sheriff's office on five warrants for failure to appear. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/13/19 - 8:17 a.m. - Lee

County Sheriff's deputies responded to a report of a two-vehicle accident on 223rd Avenue. A Lee County grader driven by Zachariah Shawn Fuller, 41, of Keokuk slid on icy roads and turned sideways. Another vehicle driven by Erin Jaden Hornung, 15, of Montrose, came around the curve on 223rd and lost control due to ice, striking the grader. No injuries were reported and no citations were issued.
 02/13/19 - 9:49 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies responded to a report of a one-vehicle accident in the 2200 block of Carbide Lane. A vehicle driven by Jeffrey Bruce Coppler, 45, of Keokuk, lost control on a slippery road and slid into the north ditch, hit an embankment and went through a wire fence before tipping over on the driver's side of the vehicle. No injuries or citations were reported at the scene.
 02/14/19 - 11:30 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Shannon Lynn Watts 26, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on warrants for possession of a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia. She was released on bond.
 02/14/19 - 1:22 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Ruben Joseph Bowman, 40, of Burlington, at the sheriff's office on a warrant for contempt

of court. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/15/19- 7:15 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Anthony J. Casady, 55, of Bonaparte, in the 200 block of Texas Street on a warrant for contempt. He was taken to Lee County Jail and released on a court order.
 02/17/19 - 4:28 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Kevin Lynn Tripp, Jr., 32, of Keokuk, in the 3300 block of 243rd Avenue in Montrose, on a warrant for 3rd degree theft. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and released on a pre-trial release.
 02/18/19 - 11:17 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Matthew Cameron Crews, 28, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a charge of assault with bodily injury. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 02/18/19 - 11:20 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Joseph Daniel Cass, 31, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a charge of simple assault. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. All persons in these listings are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

WED 20 Feb

Snow
 High- 34.5° F | Low - 21.9° F

THU 21 Feb

Partly Cloudy
 High- 28.0° F | Low - 13.0° F

FRI 22 Feb

Clear
 High- 29.5° F | Low - 22.5° F

SAT 23 Feb

Light Rain
 High- 37.7° F | Low - 37.5° F

SUN 24 Feb

Light Rain
 High- 34.5° F | Low - 16.8° F

[OpenWeatherMap](#)



Welcome Winter

“Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is time for home.”

- Edith Sitwell

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 current**

CURRENT-LEE

FORT MADISON – The following is a list of events and happenings going on in Fort Madison as submitted to en City Current.

State Farm – Thomas Klann Agency announces February “Quotes for Good”

State Farm – Thomas Klann Agency is excited to help out another Non-Profit Organization in our community. In February 2019 we will be giving back to Lee County K-9 Association by donating \$5 for every new Auto Insurance Quote in the month of February 2019. So tell all your non-State Farm family/friends/coworkers to reach out to us for a quote and share this event to spread the word! If you are a current State Farm



CURRENT-LEE

auto insurance customer, reach out to us for a Life Insurance or Disability Income conversation and we will donate \$5 for that also. Contact Jess or Sam at 319-372-5982, 2623 Ave L Fort Madison, or email: jess@fortmadi-soninsurance.com or samantha@fortmadisoninsurance.com.

Local artist on display at SCC

Lori Illner Greene will have her art work on display at the Southeastern Community College Art Gallery, 1500 W. Agency Road in West Burlington from Jan. 28-Feb. 15. The gallery showing will feature her “Raptors and Other Birds of Prey” series.

Fort Madison Partners Annual Dinner

The Fort Madison Partners Annual Dinner will be held Feb. 22 at McAleere Hall in Fort Madison. A night of gaming, food and fun has been planned. Contact Partners at 372-5471 for more information.

Caregivers Connection at The

Kensington

The Kensington hosts this monthly gathering to help educate attendees about all dementia types. Held at noon the 4th Tuesday of every month in The Kensington’s private dining room, 2210 Avenue H in Fort Madison. Call 319-372-4233 to RSVP or for more information. The next luncheon will be held January 22, 2019.

Senior Community BINGO at The

Kensington

Each month on the second Wednesday of the month, The Kensington hosts Senior Community BINGO at 2 p.m. in their dining room at 2210 Avenue H in Fort Madison. All seniors are welcome and cash prizes are awarded.

Gov. Reynolds signs funding boost for state schools

DES MOINES – Today, Gov. Kim Reynolds signed HF 306 and HF 307, historic preK-12 education funding at the Iowa State Capitol surrounded by education advocates and students from North Polk Community Schools. HF 306 and HF 307 were the first bills Gov. Reynolds signed this year.

“This new education funding helps us get our young people ready for the challenges of a 21st century economy,” said Gov. Reynolds. “I commend lawmakers for their quick action on school funding this session, which will help school districts prepare for the next school year. Education is and will remain a top priority for my administration.”

HF 306 and HF 307 adds nearly \$90 million in new money for preK-12 and it amounts to \$19 million for transportation equity funding and \$2.9 for per pupil funding. With this new legislation signed into law, the state of Iowa has invested \$845 million of new money in preK-12 education since 2011.



New Year. Fresh Start.

Thank you to all our customers who worked to reduce their environmental footprint last year.

We’re looking forward to helping you continue your efforts and to educating our communities on more ways to help this year.

Here are just a few ways you can help:

- Don’t put plastic bags in recycling bins
- Rinse & clean all food jars & cans before recycling
- Flatten empty boxes for better storage & volume reduction
- Place all recyclables loose in bins
- Don’t recycle wrapping paper
- Properly dispose of all electronics and household hazardous waste



Ft. Madison Main Office: 2092 303rd Ave Fort Madison, IA 1-319-372-6140
 Keokuk Transfer Station: 111 Carbide Lane Keokuk, IA 1-319-524-6175

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CAUTION
 POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

From the Front

Amtrak ups the ante by picking up caretaker costs

BUDGET - Continued from Page 1

Transportation Commission.

The funds aren't guaranteed, but DOT officials have said there is support and precedent for the commission awarding funds to this type of project, especially when cities are in a financial crunch.

"This is a victory for the city," Greenwald said after the meeting. "Last week I went home and had a pity party. I almost cried. I'm not embarrassed to say that. But I regrouped, said a prayer, and it was answered."

City Councilman Chad Cangas said last week that he was ready to wash his hands of the Amtrak depot because there was no commitment from Amtrak to the city, and there was not enough money to finish the project.

Prior to the budget discussions, Randolph pulled three agreements with Amtrak from discussion because he got news at 4 p.m. Tuesday, that Amtrak had decided to continue to provide caretaking services at the depot, so the city wouldn't have to pay for those services.

The city will still be responsible for ongoing maintenance, upkeep of the platform, and snow removal.

City Manager David Varley presented the budget, which included recommendations from the council's last budget workshop, with a city levy at \$15.39/\$1,000 taxable valuation, down slightly from the \$15.56 the previous year. The \$15.39 could drop another couple of pennies when the Lee County Emergency Management Agency support levy is adjusted to factor out personnel costs.

The LCEMA board voted last week to move that levy to a countywide levy. Randolph, who sits on the LCEMA board made the motion at that meeting last week to go from a per capita support to the countywide levy to take the burden off city budgets. In the next budget it would have cost Fort Madison close to \$10,000.

The current levy is made up of an \$8.10 general fund levy, which is the state maximum: a \$4.99 employee benefits levy; a \$3.00 ag land levy; a \$1.71 levy for the city's debt service, a \$0.27 special emergency levy to help support emergency services when the city is at the \$8.10 general fund max; and a \$0.25 levy for city insurances.

The levy is expected to generate approximately \$4.6 million in revenue for the fiscal year. Right now properties in Lee County are assessed at a rollback rate of about 55% of assessed valuation. The rollback went into effect in 2013 when state legislators passed the reduced assessments and promised to back fill local government coffers. Those backfills have been a focus of cuts at the state level in the past two years.

The budget is also based on sales tax revenues of \$1.1 million compared to the 2018-19 budget which was adopted at \$1.4 million. However, state figures only resulted in \$1.09 million in revenues for the city, which is about \$357,000 less than projected for the year and \$213,000 less than actual numbers for the prior year.

Varley also showed that the general fund will operate in a net negative position of about \$136,283 with revenues anticipated at \$5,773,842 and expenses projected at 5,910,125.

The general fund is projected to have an ending balance of just \$15,000 at the end of the year, but includes a working capital fund of about \$680,000. which is down 2.5% from actual figures in the previous year

Funds wouldn't be guaranteed until April

FUNDING - Continued from Page 1

studies such as a Chicago to Iowa City route," Anderson said. "That's been the primary use in the past. But eligible activity also includes activity to improve and support rail services at depots and stations."

Anderson said the fund gets revenue from legislative appropriations and it doesn't get money every year, but currently there is about \$2 million in the fund.

A Feb. 2, 2018 fund status report showed \$2.84 million, but that report doesn't reflect any expenditures since that date.

"There have been several phases to this project and there has been federal transportation enhancement funding that has been awarded over time. The commission and the DOT have been partners in this because we believe Amtrak long distance service is important to the state," he said.

"There have been financial challenges to the third and final phase and, because we're so close to getting a sign off from the partners on this project, we went back and took another look at how we could help."

Anderson said the funding has not been committed, but it's a real possibility and the commission has awarded money from that fund for projects like this before.

"It's tough for me to say because we haven't had any conversations with the commission yet. But I guess what I can say is that in the past the commission has felt this type of project was important enough to award funds to these projects," he said.

"Our plan right now, assuming the city moves forward considering this project, is to visit with the transportation commission when they have their workshop in March. That would be our first discussion with them at that point."

Nothing would be formal until the commission reviews and acts on it. Anderson said the DOT is comfortable recommending up to \$400,000 but if costs exceed the approximate \$400,000 the city is short, the city may have to find that money.

"We don't feel the Transportation Commission should cover 100% of the shortfall, but \$400,000, based on numbers we're aware of, should cover Fort Madison's projected shortfall."

He said the DOT hadn't considered putting that money on the table until they realized that the project was at risk.

"The commission already has money in the project, so it's not like the state wasn't involved until now. When we became aware the project was at risk, we felt the need to go back and think outside the box a bit."

Outside the poor financial condition of the city due to sales tax revenue decreases of close to \$330,000 per year, was the concern that Amtrak wasn't committed to keeping the Fort Madison stop open.

Anderson also said his staff has had conversations with Amtrak as well.

"Amtrak, as an organization, feels these long distance services are important. But at the end of the day, Amtrak is subject to appropriations. So I guess that would be the potential risk down the road. But every conversation we've had with them shows support," Anderson said.

With the Fort Madison annual budget ready for approval at tonight's City Council meeting, City Manager David Varley created an "Option B" budget that includes the projected additional revenues. The original budget however, has the depot project removed per the council's direction at the last meeting.

Fostering could take on larger role at shelter

ADOPTIONS - Continued from Page 1

said. "Everyone was patient and wonderful. It was just amazing how easily it went and how many people stepped forward. They were kind... they were patient... and they were very considerate knowing what kind of crunch we were in."

She said four dogs went to a boarding house in Mt. Pleasant, 3 were held at another rescue, and nine went to Country Pup Boarding near Keokuk.

"A total of 62 dogs left the shelter before those frigid temperatures hit and nobody was left outside," Brown said.

What's even greater, she said, is that 30 of those dogs have found forever homes because of the opportunities brought on by the two-week fosters.

"Thirty were adopted by either the people that fostered them, their friends, or people who saw the animals during the fostering time," Brown said. "These are big dogs. Not the cute 10 or 14 pound dogs. These are big-headed dogs that are almost always outside, that have found their homes."

Only one dog, Ruby, who was featured and followed on Facebook as rescuers tried to locate her, escaped from her foster home and ran loose. But Brown said even that had a happy ending as Ruby found a friend "Moses" in her two-day travels and the two are now both being adopted at the end of the week.

Even businesses like Jay's Auto in West Point and River City Motors Plus in Fort Madison offered their garages as a safe haven for kenneled animals during the cold.

"This community really stepped up and now we have a great story to tell," Brown said.

She's calling the event the "Freezer to Foster Care Forever" movement and said fostering is something that the shelter is going to take a closer look at in the future.

She said the shelter is licensed to have a fostering program that augments the adoption, but with the large number of animals and what that entails on a daily basis, there hasn't been extra time to get the program up and running.

Despite the outpouring of support and the high number of adoptions that took place, there are still 110 dogs and 56 cats at the shelter.

"I don't want anyone to think we don't have dogs waiting for homes, but a lot of big headed dogs got to go home. At home, they are so much better than at the shelter. They know...they just curl up with you and are so much happier."

Typically fostering requires the families to provide fully for the animal including food and any medical requirements, but during this fostering to get the animals out of the life-threatening cold, the shelter offered food and even kennels if the families needed them.

"One person took us up on a kennel and no one took us up on the food," Brown said.

"I'm sure we we'll be doing much more fostering. We need to sit down and figure out what our program we'll look it."

Brown said shelter continues to be blessed by the communities it serves.

"We want to thank everyone who stepped up and supported us. We are very blessed. We deal with a lot of rescues from communities where they don't have the support we do," she said. "We want people to know that doesn't go unnoticed."

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