



Pen City Current

Monday, October 15, 2018 | 8 pages | Volume 2 • Issue 233

Council to discuss depot options Tuesday

Amtrak wants another look at agreements before approving

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - For over a dozen years, the city has been kicking around the idea of moving the Amtrak rail depot back to Riverview Park.

Former mayors John Wright and the late Steve Ireland and now Brad Randolph have championed the idea. Randolph has said he wants to see the project to completion to honor Ireland's work on the project.



RANDOLPH

After many grants, drawings, proposals, etc, the city decided to move forward with the projects after getting a multitude of agreements in place in just about a year ago.

City Manager David Varley has put the issue up for discussion again at Tuesday's City Council meeting. Varley, in his discussion memo's to the Fort Madison City Council and mayor, outlined where the city is at in the relocation of the depot, including a \$1.3 million new passenger platform.

Varley told the council he's looking for a discussion on the pros and cons of



VARLEY

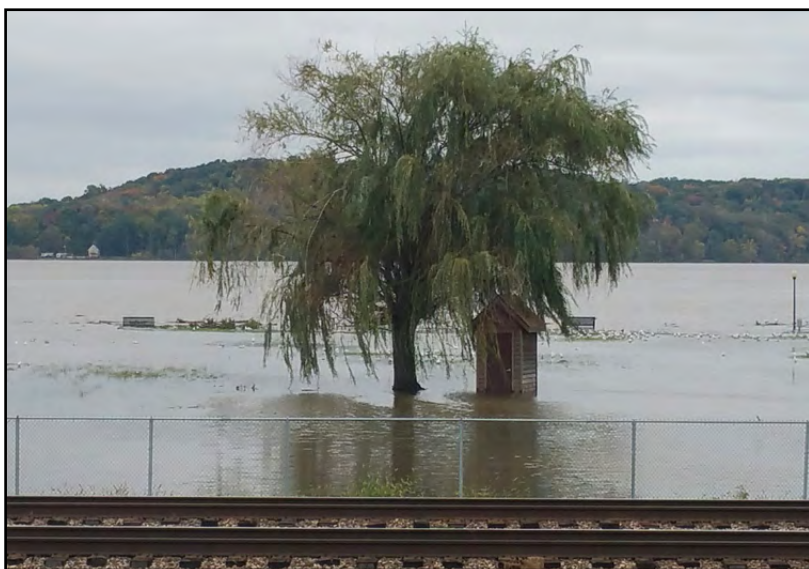
moving forward with the project.

On Nov. 6, the City Council approved three agreements that outlined the lease-owner relationship between the city, Burlington Northern Santa Fe, and Amtrak. The agreements consisted of the city building and paying for the the platform with the assistance of grants.

Once completed, the platform BNSF would take over ownership and lease it back to Amtrak for its use. Amtrak would in turn lease the platform back to the city, which would be responsible for maintenance of the platform year-round.

Varley is projecting the depot to operate at a deficit

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Above, a flock of gulls scatter around the grass "beach" that has been created off of the Old Fort Madison Saturday afternoon. Flood waters have surrounded the fort and are expected to crest today, but not start to recede until Tuesday morning, according to the National Weather Service out of the Quad Cities. At left, water is shown almost to the railroad fence on the north side of Riverview Park.

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

EMPTY NEST

By Curt Swarm



Political signage a target for vandals

Anyone traveling on US Highway 34, between Mt. Pleasant and Fairfield in the last few years, has no doubt noticed the political signs. They're sort of belligerent, in your face, crude, and to be honest, compared to the natural beauty of the Skunk River bottom, an eyesore, or what is now popularly called, "eye pollution." But, hey, this is America. We have First Amendment rights of free speech and press. I don't have to look at these signs, albeit it's hard not to, and whether I agree with them or not, makes no difference.

The signs were, what should I say, anti-Hillary, with the usual bromide of "Lock Her Up!" and "Hillary for Prison." One thing I'll say for farmers, they don't mince words when it comes to expressing political views, or any view for that matter.

So, recently, when traveling the same stretch of US Highway 34, I noticed the sign now said, "Trump for Prison," I just about drove off the road. What happened? Did this farmer have a tectonic shifting of political parties? My imagination went wild. (Writers have a

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Obituaries/Opinion



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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



10/13
34 36 40 41 42
Star Ball: 7
All Star Bonus: 3



10/13
11 14 32 43 65
Powerball: 15
Power Play: 3



10/13 MID-DAY
1 2 8
10/13 EVENING
1 1 6



10/13 MID-DAY
4 5 5 4
10/13 EVENING
5 7 7 2

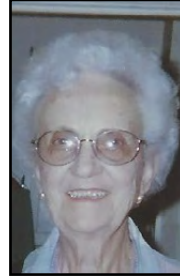
Pen City Current encourages you to play responsibly.

OBITUARIES

EARLAINE EVELYN HOOVER

Earlaine Evelyn Hoover, 94, of Bettendorf, IA died October 11, 2018, at the Good Samaritan Nursing Home in Davenport, IA.

She was born February 23, 1924 in rural Alexandria, MO the daughter of Earl and Ethel Winnie Koeber Leggett. She graduated from Wayland High School in Wayland, MO.



HOOVER

On September 29, 1948 Earlaine was united in marriage to Harold D. Hoover in Lancaster, MO. He preceded her in death in September 10, 1987.

She was an active member of the 1st Baptist Church in Bettendorf, IA. Earlaine had been a faithful volunteer at the Iowa Masonic Nursing Home in Bettendorf, IA for 50 years.

She enjoyed making ceramics, working on puzzles and word searches, and reading. She enjoyed being a homemaker and was devoted to caring for her family. Earlaine was always ready to take care of anyone who needed help. She will be remembered for her kindness and generosity.

She is survived by one son, Dan Hoover and his wife Shirley of Davenport, IA, two grandsons, Richard Hoover and his wife Christine and Michael Hoover, one grand-daughter, Melissa Sineath and her husband Keith, two great-grandsons, Parker and Hunter Hoover, nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, four brothers, Frederick, Paul, Wayne and Claude Leggett and one sister, Darlene Gorham.

Visitation will be held on Thursday from 10 am – 11 am at the Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, followed by a graveside service at Sunset Memorial Garden in Keokuk.

Memorials may be made to the American Heart Association.

On-line condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

The Current runs obituaries at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes.

Sign of the times is political vandalism

SWARM - Continued from Page 1

vivid imagination.) “It’s the tariffs,” I told myself. “Corn and soybean prices are in the tank. Even with subsidies, farmers are losing money, and there may be another Farm Crisis. This farmer has switched parties.”

I decided I would stoke up my courage and go talk to this farmer, tell him that I had noticed the change in his sign, and ask him if it was because of commodity prices. Being a former door-to-door insurance salesman, I’ve knocked on many a strange door. It’s not something I particularly relish, but I haven’t been shot yet, and know when to turn tail and run.

The house along side the highway was quite pleasant looking. It was well cared for, the yard was neat and trim, and there were a lot of yard ornaments that indicated cheery people resided here. I knocked on the door and, lo-and-behold, I knew the fellow. He had been a plumber before he retired, and had actually been on a service call at our house. He informed me that the sign was not his, it was his brother’s, who lived in the house behind his. To get to his brother’s house, however, I had to take the gravel road around.

I made this circumvention and found the brother’s house. He welcomed me in and was a friendly fellow. No, he had not switched political parties. A vandal had come along, and painted out the word, “Hillary” and spray-painted in “Trump.” In fact, vandals had destroyed a couple of his signs, even taking an ax to one. He now had a solar powered camera on the sign post. However, the person who had changed names on this sign, knowing the camera was there, had been wearing a hoody. Things were getting dicey. The farmer explained that he had, in addition to receiving complimentary letters and phone calls about his signage, also received anonymous threats. If people would just talk to him, he would like to have a civil conversation about differing political views.

I asked him about commodity prices, and he said it was just something the farmers were going to have to live with temporarily. Over the long run, he felt, President Trump’s tariffs would be beneficial. He was on his way out to repaint the sign, and was just going to paint over the “Trump” and not put a name there.

As I left, the 1970 tune “Sign” from Five Man Electrical Band, kept playing in my head. “Sign, sign, everywhere a sign, Blockin’ out the scenery, breakin’ my mind, Do this, don’t do that, can’t you read the sign?”

We’ll see how long the sign remains nameless.

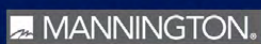
Have a good story? Call or text Curt Swarm in Mt. Pleasant at 319-217-0526, email him at curtswarm@yahoo.com or find him on Facebook. Curt’s stories are also read at 106.3 FM in Farmington.



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Scene Around Town/For the Record



Tanks a lot

Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Students at Fort Madison Middle School got a lesson from the Fort Madison Fire Department on fire safety and protective equipment, including this tank from firefighter Chris Eastin that was a bit heavier than 4th grader Torey Potter expected Friday afternoon. State Farm sponsored the event and handed out red fire hats to students. A smoke house was originally planned for the day, but poor weather stopped that facility from coming down to Fort Madison.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Reports

10/11/18 - 9:53 p.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of vandalism in the 2700 block of Avenue N.
 10/12/18 - 7:56 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of personal injury accident in the 5000 block of Avenue O.
 10/12/18 - 8:02 a.m. - Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a shoplifter in the 1800 block of Avenue H.

Lee County Sheriff's Report

10/11/18 - 10:10 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Jerrod Wayne Dodson, 33, of Keokuk at the intersection of 240th St and 263rd Avenue in Fort Madison, on charges of driving under suspension, violation of a new contact order and

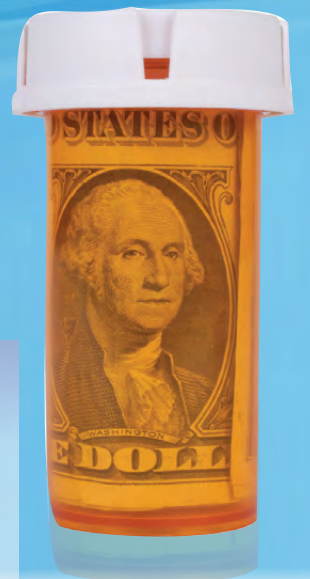
possession of drug paraphernalia. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 10/11/18 - 10:36 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Robert Hayden Watts, 32, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a court-ordered hold. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.
 10/11/18 - 3:01 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested David Michael Omiattek, 19, of Keokuk, at the Lee County Jail on a warrant for a controlled substance violation. He was held in custody.
 10/11/18 - 3:42 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Brandon Lee Manning, 20, of Fort Madison in the 2500 block of Hwy 2 in Donnellson, on a warrant for 5th degree theft. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

10/12/18 - 2:53 a.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Brittany Marie Goldie, 24, of Keokuk, at the sheriff's office on a charge of interference with corrections/assault. She was taken to the Lee County Jail and held. *Those listed above are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*

Fort Madison Fire & Rescue report

10/11/18 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls.
 10/12/18 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to two medical calls, one two-car accident, one false alarm, one motor vehicle accident no injury
 10/13/18 - Fort Madison Firefighters responded to three medicals and one smoke alarm

ATTENTION SHOPKO PHARMACY PATIENTS

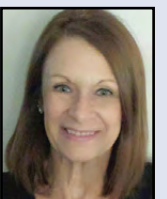


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5-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

MON 15 Oct

Partly Cloudy
High - 42.2° F | Low - 28.3° F

TUE 16 Oct

Scattered Clouds
High - 45.3° F | Low - 38.9° F

WED 17 Oct

Clear Skies
High - 57.0° F | Low - 34.3° F

THU 17 Oct

Clear Skies
High - 48.2° F | Low - 35.1° F

FRI 19 Oct

Light Rain
High - 55.9° F | Low - 47.9° F

OpenWeatherMap

Southeast Iowa fishing good despite higher water levels

LEE COUNTY - The following is the weekly fishing report for southeast Iowa from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for the week ending Oct. 17, 2018.

Big Hollow Lake

The rain has kept most away. Black Crappie - Fair: Picking up a few crappies out from shore around the flooded timber in 6 to 8 feet of water. Bluegill - Fair: Starting to pick up some decent bluegills around the rip-rap around the jetties and islands and the old road bed. Muskellunge - Fair: Anglers are catching a few muskies; some are getting over the 40 inch size.

Environmental Discovery Park North Pond

The fall trout release will be Oct. 27th at 10 am; 1000 trout will be released with 100 trout tagged for prizes. Rainbow Trout - Excellent: Two weeks to go until the release

Iowa River (Columbus Junction to Mississippi River)

A couple feet above Major Flood Stage; NOAA is forecasting to stay above Major Flood Level until sometime mid-next week.

Lake Belva Deer

Lots of extra water in the lake; was about 1 foot above normal level on Tuesday. Water clarity is suffering due to all the rain. Water temperature is 66 degrees. Black Crappie - No Report: Weather is too unstable to forecast what the crappies are going to do. Large-mouth Bass - Slow: Picking up a few bass in the more shallow water along the rocks and gravel bottom areas.

Lake Darling

7+ inches of rain since last Friday. Water clarity is down to 8 inches. Water temperature is 67 degrees. Lake



was about 1.5 feet higher than normal midweek. Channel Catfish - Good: Try fishing in the back eddies behind the in-lake silt dams. Honey Creek above the lake is really moving right now.

Lake of the Hills

The fall trout release of 2000 trout is scheduled for Oct. 20th at 10:30 am; there will be 200 tagged trout for prizes.

Skunk River (Coppock to Mississippi River)

Well above flood stage.

Wilson Lake

The fall trout release is scheduled for Oct. 27th at noon; 1000 trout released with 200 tagged for prizes.

Mississippi River Pool 19

Tailwater stage is 15.96 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and is forecast to reach 17.1 feet by Sunday. Flood stage is 10 feet. River level at Burlington is 20.38 feet and is forecast to reach 21.2 feet by Sunday. Flood stage at Burlington is 15 feet. River level at Fort Madison is 531.17 feet and flood stage is 528 feet.

Recent heavy rains has the river above flood stage and is forecast to rise through the weekend. Main channel water temperature is around 60 degrees and water clarity is poor. Fishing has been slow due to the high water. Most boat ramps are under water due to the flooding conditions. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

For more information on the above lakes and rivers, call the Lake Darling Fisheries Office at 319-694-2430.

CURRENT-LEE

LCHD offering October flu clinics

Lee County Health Department will be holding Flu Clinics throughout the month of October at various locations throughout Lee County. Flu clinics are open to the public, and offered to anyone ages 6 months or older. Medicare Part B, except Humana Gold choice, will be accepted for billing Medicare. Bring your Medicare card to the clinic. Flu vaccines for people without Medicare Part B will be \$25.

Complete Flu Clinic Schedule: Oct. 15, 8:00 am – 11:00 am – Montrose Public Library, 200 Main St., Montrose, IA; Oct. 16, 8:30 am – 10:00 am – Hoerner YMCA, 2126 Plank Rd., Keokuk, IA; Oct. 17, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm – Donnellson Public Library, 411 S. Main St., Donnellson, IA; Oct. 18, 8:30 am – 9:30 am – Hotel Iowa, 401 Main St., Keokuk, IA; Oct. 18, 10:00 am – noon – Heritage Center, 508 Main St., Keokuk, IA; Oct. 18, 9:00 am – 10:00 am – Eagle Bluff Apartments, 2803 Ave. A, Fort Madison, IA; Oct. 23, 8:30 am – 10:00 am – Rose Michael Gardens, 4516 Ave. L, Fort Madison, IA; Oct. 23, 10:30 am – noon – Parkview Apartments, 507 Iowa Joe St, West Point, IA; Oct. 25, noon – 5:30 pm – Lee County Health Department, #3 John Bennett Dr., Fort Madison, IA. Visit Lee County Health Department's website here to learn more: <http://www.leecountyhd.org/index.php/flu-schedule/>.

Veteran's Breakfast at Sunnybrook

Each month on the third Tuesday of the month, Sunnybrook Assisted Living hosts a Veteran's Breakfast from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. at 5025 River Valley Road in Fort Madison.

Heels & Wheels Car Care Clinic

Griffin Muffler & Brake Center invites you to their Women – Heels & Wheels free car care clinic, Saturday, October 20, 10am-1pm, 535 Avenue G, Fort Madison. Come learn about many topics including:

What's under the hood -How to check your oil - How your brakes work - Fuel saving tips - Shock absorbers and struts - Check engine lights - What regular maintenance is really necessary for your car

Learn about tires: How to check tire pressure - How to measure tread depth - How to find the tire size for your car.

Boost your car care confidence with this free clinic and enter for door prizes and other gifts! Refreshments will be served. Seating is limited, so call 319.372.2478 to reserve your seat today!

YMCA's Trunk or Treat

This event had more than 600 children through the parking lot of the YMCA in 2017 and it's back for another year on Friday, October 26 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Vehicles can arrive at 5 p.m. for decorating. There is no charge for the event and businesses can decorate their car and handout candy as little goblins walk through the parking lot to receive goodies purchased by the businesses. Registration forms can be picked up at the YMCA and need to be returned by Friday, Oct. 19.

Witches Walk

Fort Madison's Main Street will be hosting a Witches Walk October 26th from 5 to 7 p.m. in downtown Fort Madison. For more information contact the Partner's offices at 319-372-5471. Wear your witches costume and shop downtown.

Ghost Hunt

The Fort Madison Partners are sponsoring a Ghost Hunt on Oct. 26-27 with Iowa Paranormal conducting investigations at some of the most haunted homes west of the Mississippi. For more information or tickets contact the Partners office at 319-372-5471.

Key Club Halloween Carnival

The annual Fort Madison High School Key Club and Fort Madison Kiwanis Halloween Carnival will be held on Oct. 27 from noon to 2 p.m. at the high school with games, costume contests and prizes.

PORT Boo-Athlon

The Fort Madison PORT Trail committee will be holding it's annual Boo-Athlon on Saturday, Oct. 27 at the Baxter Sports Complex. A 5K Walk/Run, a 10-mile bike ride and Duathlon will start at 9 a.m. Registration forms can be found online at www.fortmadison-ia.com under the Community tab/PORT; on the PORT of Fort Madison Facebook page or by calling Kathy Benda at 319-470-7848. and are due by Oct. 13 to guarantee a t-shirt.

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.

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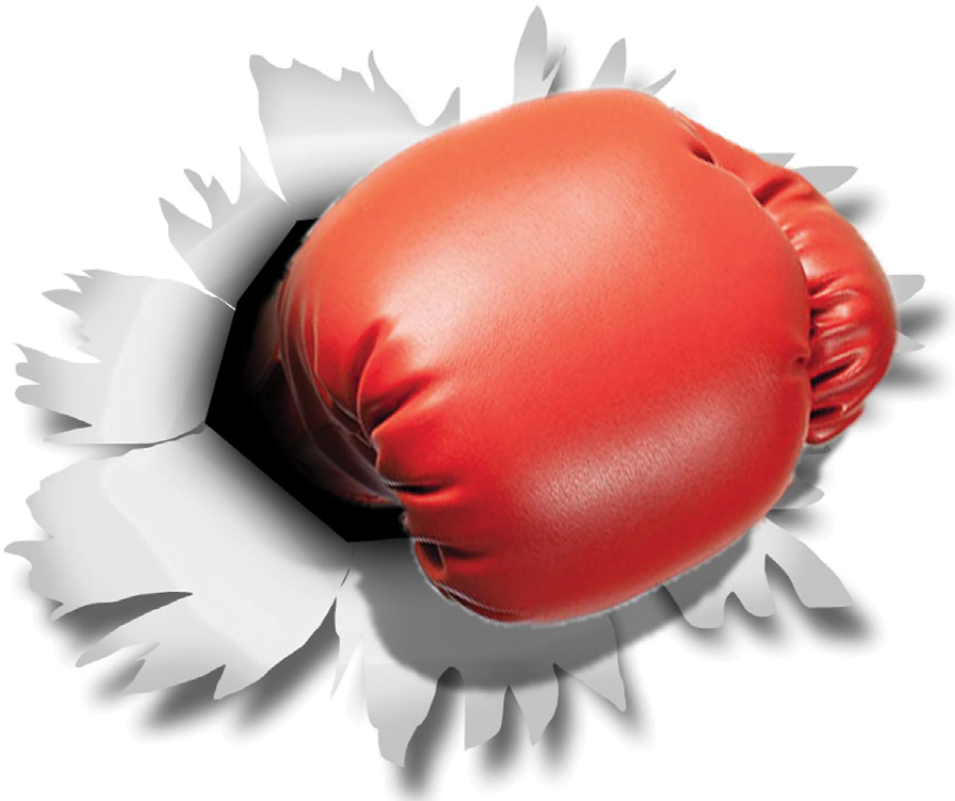
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fight the FLU

GET YOUR FLU SHOT

Lee County Health Department 2018 Flu Clinic Schedule:

10/15 Montrose Public Library
8:00am-11:00am

10/16 Hoerner YMCA Keokuk
8:30am-10:00am

10/17 Donnellson Public Library
11:30am-1:30pm

10/18 Hotel Iowa Keokuk
8:30am-9:30am

10/18 Heritage Center Keokuk
10:00am-Noon

10/18 Eagle Bluff Apts. Ft. Madison
9:00am-10:00am

10/23 Rose Michael Gardens Ft. Madison
8:30am-10:00am

10/23 Parkview Apts. West Point
10:30am-Noon

10/25 LCHD (#3 John Bennett Drive) Ft. Madison
Noon-5:30pm

11/1 McAleer Hall Fort Madison
10:00am-2:00pm

Please bring Medicare card to clinic

Private Pay cost \$25

Any questions please call (319)372-5225
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From the Front

Mayor says time is money on new depot

DEPOT - Continued from Page 1

each year with annual costs of \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year, but he's said that's an estimate because this would be a new venture for the city.

The agreements also include a \$400 monthly rent check from Amtrak.

Varley said in December all the approved agreements with Amtrak were sent to Amtrak for signatures and the city has not seen them since. During that time BNSF has for additional chang-

es to one of the agreements, and the city made that change, approved it, and sent it to Amtrak again.

In September, city officials has a conference call with Amtrak to get things finalized and to the Department of Transportation which would be responsible for bid letting on the construction.

"Amtrak had about five to six people participate in the conference call. Only about two of them were people we have been working with for the past several years and were part of the group when we came to a consensus on the three required agreements," Varley wrote in his memo.

"Most of the people were new folks who are not familiar with this

project and all the discussions we have had with Amtrak during the past few years."

He said another attorney wants to review the documents again and any changes would need city council approval and a resubmittal to Amtrak.

Fort Madison Mayor Brad Randolph said he wanted the issue back on the agenda just to get everyone up to speed on the project and the what's been happening over the past six months.

"I thought it was necessary to pull back and regroup everybody," he said. "I know the documents passed in the fall, but on the last call there were three or four different Amtrak people in the group. now they're putting a different spin on it and that's extremely frustrating from that

aspect of it. But with the new councilor on we need to have this conversation again about the issues that are beyond our control which is Amtrak."

Randolph said the other part of the conversation is sales tax revenues are off for the city, referencing another agenda item for Tuesday to discuss contributions to the Lee County Economic Development Group.

"Another twist is that our sales tax revenue is down substantially. When you look at the numbers and you think although we do have it budgeted, is it something that the council and the community are all in on."

He said recent conversations he's had with an Amtrak boardmember who lives in Illinois, have been promising and he doesn't see the delays as

impacting the decision to move forward.

"I guess I don't think so. We're in the final throws. I think they have the engineering piece solved in terms of construction," Randolph said. "What concerns me at this point is because it's taken so long, rules and regulations have changed, the scope has changed and all of those things add up to higher cost to the project. that's what bothers me the most. Now it's morphed into this mammoth project in size and scope that require different aspects that we wouldn't have encountered 10 years ago."

Another issue working against the city would be Amtrak's future plans with the Southwest Chief that runs through Fort Madison eastbound and westbound.

Varley wrote that BNSF is abandoning a portion of track in the southwest that would only be used then by Amtrak. With no safety or maintenance being done on that section, Amtrak may also have to abandon that line and move passengers by bus around that portion, or have a gap in service.

He said that change may result in a drop in riders on the Chief. Amtrak has already taken steps to reduce costs in this area with staffing.

"On top of all this, there has been some talk of Amtrak having to reduce their costs and there is speculation that could affect the stop in Fort Madison," Varley wrote last week.

"The bottom line is that we don't know how this will play out at the federal level and what impacts it could have for Fort Madison and the future Amtrak service here."

Original costs of the platform were estimated at \$785,000, but now the price tag with the additional professional services and revised construction costs have the price at \$1,285,780.

Funding would come from a \$686,000 in remaining federal grants, a Southeast Iowa Regional Riverboat Commission grant of \$100,000, a \$150,000 contribution from Amtrak, and then \$367,000 from the city's hotel/motel funds, general funds and a Quality of Life Bond money.

If the city were to dispose of the project, the city would have to repay \$63,500 in federal grant money.

Got a news tip? Call Chuck (319)371.1670



GRRWA's 3rd Annual pReserve Day

Recycling Event

Wednesday, October 24, 7am-4pm

Open to all residents of Lee, Van Buren, & rural Henry Counties
Commercial & Business

Household Hazardous Waste

Fertilizers, herbicides, household & Auto cleaning products, insecticides, oil based paints, paint thinners & solvents, pesticides, pool chemicals, motor oil, antifreeze. All batteries and lightbulbs; propane tanks & more!

Latex paint will not be accepted. Latex paint is not hazardous. Mix it with kitty litter, sawdust, or dirt and it can be placed in your regular trash.

Eye Glasses

Only those in reasonable condition
Sponsored by the Fort Madison Lions Club



General & Paper Recycling

Accepting : glass, plastics, tin cans, aluminum cans, office & shredded paper, newspaper, corrugated cardboard, magazines, phone books, paperbacks and hard cover books. Rigid plastics (i.e. riding toys, buckets, plastic lawn furniture, etc.

Appliances & e-Waste (Electronics)

All household appliances will be accepted. Electronics is anything that plugs into a wall or takes batteries. There is a fee for Appliances and any screened electronics (computer monitor, TV, laptop, tablets, etc.) During this event, GRRWA will accept any combination of four (4) appliances/screened electronics, per vehicle, at no cost! There will be a fee for any additional screened electronics/appliances. Vehicles can only come through ONCE with electronics/appliances.

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