

PEN CITY CURRENT

It's **Black & White** and **Read** all over

Wednesday, March 29, 2023 | 13 pages | Volume 7 • Issue 62



www.pencitycurrent.com

Iowa Wesleyan to close

BOARD LOOKS AT REYNOLDS: Lack of ARPA funding from Governor cited as one of reasons for closure

BY PCC STAFF

MT. PLEASANT - Iowa Wesleyan University's Board of Trustees unanimously voted today to close the university at the end of this academic year. The decision is based on a combination of financial challenges – increased operating costs due to inflationary pressures, changing enrollment trends, a significant drop in philanthropic giving, and the rejection of a proposal for federal Covid funding by Governor Reynolds.

Calls to Iowa Wesleyan officials went unreturned Tuesday morning.

This decision follows an intensive analysis of Iowa Wesleyan's financial operations and considerable exploration of all feasible strategic alternatives. The vote to close comes as the university has been experiencing unprecedented enrollment growth, improvements in student retention, and success with efforts to address economic and workforce development challenges throughout Southeast Iowa, including the formation of a unique partnership with Southeastern Community College. While the university's overall enrollment has

See **COLLEGE**, page 8

Gov. Reynolds responds to IW closure

DES MOINES – Gov. Reynolds released the following statement in response to the announced closure of Iowa Wesleyan University:

"Today, my thoughts are with the students, faculty, and staff who are stunned by this announcement, and the people of Mount Pleasant who have long revered the university as a pillar of their community. The state is committed to supporting them during this time of transition. I have directed the Iowa Economic Development Authority and Iowa Workforce Development to reach out to community and business leaders, and work together to keep the local economy strong.



REYNOLDS

"It wasn't until February 3, 2023, that my office received a request from the university for \$12 million for ongoing operating costs. As I've said many times, we endeavor not to spend one-time federal dollars on ongoing expenses. To better understand their request and the financial health of the university, my office engaged an independent, third-party accounting firm to conduct due diligence. The firm reported that Iowa Wesleyan had a \$26.1 million loan from the USDA, using their campus as collateral, that could be recalled in full as early as November 2023. Additionally, Iowa Wesleyan's auditor cited ongoing concerns about the university's fiscal health, stating "significant operating losses and reduced liquidity raise substantial doubt about its ability to continue as a going concern." The firm also highlighted that while enrollment at Iowa Wesleyan has grown over the past

See **REYNOLDS**, page 8



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Senior Jacob Pothitakis smokes the game winner past a Williamsburg goalie in a penalty kick overtime session giving the Bloodhounds a 2-1 win. The Hounds won the penalty kick session 4-3.

SEASON OPENER

Hounds hold off Williamsburg with overtime special

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Yes... and no. That was Fort Madison boys' soccer coach Kevin Wellman's answer to a bevy of questions after the Hounds pulled out a 2-1 win over Williamsburg

Tuesday night in the season opener at Baxter Sports Complex.

The Hounds won in a 4-3 penalty kick session after senior Jacob Pothitakis, who missed about half of last season with a torn ACL, blew a shot into the upper left corner for the win.

Oliver Santiago's save with the penalty kick session tied at 1-1 helped give the Hounds the upper hand.

Was this the type of game he wanted to open the season for the Bloodhounds?

See **HOUNDS**, page 5

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WEATHER

WED 29 Mar.....Mostly cloudy, 42° F/ 30° F
 THU 30 Mar.....Partly sunny and breezy, 61° F/ 54° F
 FRI 31 Mar.....Rain with possible thunderstorms, 70° F/ 34° F

IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 03/27.....20 37 46 49 52, Star Ball: 10 All Star Bonus: 3
 LUCKY FOR LIFE 03/27.....13 24 26 36 47, Lucky Ball: 5
 PICK 3 03/27 MIDDAY.....5 4 0
 PICK 3 03/27 EVENING.....8 8 5
 PICK 4 03/27 MIDDAY.....0 6 9 0
 PICK 4 03/27 EVENING.....4 7 7 9
 POWERBALL 03/27.....19 26 36 43 58, Powerball: 14 Power Play: 3

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Obituaries/Local News

OBITUARIES

DALE E. PATTON

Dale Edward Patton, 68, of Fort Madison, IA, passed away on Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at his home. He was born on July 31, 1954 in Fort Madison, IA to Robert & Marian Buxton Patton. He was a self-employed locksmith and also worked at the paper mill in Fort Madison for many years. He served in the U.S. Navy and enjoyed working with computers, watching movies and fishing.

Dale is survived by: 1-daughter: Dalynn Peitz; 2-grandsons; 1-Niece: Georgina (Donnie) Lincoln of Oakville, IA; several nieces, nephews, great nieces & great nephews. He was preceded in death by: his parents, 2-brothers: Harold & Joseph & 1-sister: Carolann Holland.

Cremation has been entrusted to the care of King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory and no services are planned. Online condolences to the Patton family may be left at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: www.kinglynk.com.



OBITUARIES

ROBERT G. GERHARDT

Robert Gene Gerhardt, 82, of Sutter, Illinois, passed away on Sunday, March 26, 2023, at Blessing Hospital in Quincy, Illinois.

Gene was born on December 12, 1940, in Quincy, Illinois, the son of Fred and Edith (Kropp) Gerhardt. He graduated from Warsaw High School in 1958, and was united in marriage to Lucille Gooding on January 14, 1961. She preceded him in death on December 20, 2018.

Gene was self-employed as a farmer for most of his life, and also worked for Quintron and the Hamilton and Warsaw school districts as a bus driver throughout the years. He also served on the Warsaw school board. Gene's faith was evident throughout his life.

He read his Bible daily, served as a youth leader for fifteen years in Sutter and Tioga, served as an Elder for years at Sutter Salem Bible Church, and spent every Christmas Eve reading the Nativity story to his family. Gene's family meant everything to him, and he loved to attend his grandchildren and great-grandchildren's sporting and musical events. Throughout their lives, Gene and Lucille fostered over one hundred children, mostly troubled teen boys. In his free time, Gene enjoyed hunting, fishing, gardening, and solving Sudoku puzzles.

Gene is survived by three sons: Rick (Teresa) Gerhardt of Sutter; Rueben Gerhardt of Sutter; and Roger (Abigail) Gerhardt of Macomb, Illinois; four daughters: Renee (Jeff) Connor of Tennessee, Illinois; Rachel Gerhardt of Hannibal, Missouri; Rebekka Sigmund of Warsaw; and Rita Gerhardt of Keokuk; three daughters-in-law: Kathy Gerhardt of Michigan; Gena Palmer of Wayland, MO; and Cheryl Gerhardt of Mendon; eighteen grandchildren: Jeremiah (Dusty) Gerhardt, Monette Gerhardt, Johnathan Gerhardt, Joez Gerhardt, Alyssa (Joe) Craven, Aaron Gerhardt, Alayna (Kallin) Crile, Alicyn Gerhardt, Ricky Gerhardt, Addyson Gerhardt, Brayden Gerhardt, Ryan (Megan) Brotherton, Ashley (Jake) Jackson, Cole Connor, Eric Sigmund, Thea Sigmund, Jack Garrett and Brentlee Gerhardt; six great-grandchildren: Olivia Brotherton, Charlotte Brotherton, Haizel Jackson, Creed Jackson, James Robert Craven and Harrison Craven; his sister Sandy (Steve) Pieper of Quincy; his brother Wayne (Kathy) Gerhardt of Cambria, California; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Gene is preceded in death by his parents; his wife Lucille; two sons Randy and Robert Gerhardt; his foster son Scott Kelly; and four siblings: Pauline Jenkins, Willis Gerhardt, Gwendolyn Schmitt and Dorothy Scheuermann.

Gene's life will be celebrated with a funeral service at 10 am on Thursday, March 30, 2023, at Printy Funeral Home in Warsaw, Illinois, with burial to follow at Bethany United Church of Christ Cemetery in Tioga, Illinois. Visitation will be held on Wednesday, March 29, from 2 to 7 pm, with family meeting friends from 4 to 7 pm at Printy Funeral Home in Warsaw.

Memorials may be directed to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Printy Funeral Home of Warsaw is in charge of arrangements.

Pen City Current obituary policy

Pen City Current runs obituaries one time 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. Reposting of obituaries due to changes can only be requested by the submitting funeral home and will be assessed a \$15 reposting fee.

City set Spring Clean-Up dates

The Fort Madison Public Works Department announces residents who pay for City of Fort Madison trash pickup will be issued two (2) vouchers allowing them the opportunity to haul two loads of trash (pickup size loads) to Great River Regional Waste Authority, 2092 303rd Avenue, Fort Madison at "no charge" from April 17th through April 29th, 2023. Vouchers will be available for pickup at City Hall beginning Monday, April 3, 2023

ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED DURING TRASH VOUCHER PROGRAM Televisions, tires, radios, VCR's, construction and demolition materials (bricks, concrete, asphalt shingles, lumber, siding, dry wall) liquids (antifreeze, waste oil, paint - paint cans will be accepted ONLY if the lid is off and the contents are either dried or absorbed by saw dust, cat litter, etc.); hazardous materials (explosive materials, volatiles and flammables, poisons); any substance which may present a hazard to collection personnel and materials that are normally taken under the city yard waste program.

Voucher MUST be submitted to clerk upon entry to landfill. Loads must be tarped. City clean up and landfill rules apply. For more information or if you have any questions please call 372-7700.

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PEN CITY CURRENT

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Obituaries/Iowa News

Zieman to lead Consumer Advocacy at IUB

DES MOINES – Today, Attorney General Brenna Bird appointed Lanny Zieman as Consumer Advocate. In this role, he will lead the Consumer Advocate Division of the Iowa Attorney General's Office, which is responsible for representing the interests of consumers and the public in utility regulation proceedings before the Iowa Utilities Board and in court.

"As an Iowa farm kid at heart, I'm honored that Attorney General Bird has trusted me to be Iowa's next Consumer Advocate," said Zieman. "I look forward to working with the rest of the Consumer Advocate team to speak up for Iowans' interests in reliable and affordable energy."

Zieman currently serves as an attorney for the Iowa Division of Labor and as an Assistant Staff Judge Advocate in the 132nd Wing of the Iowa Air National Guard. While previously serving on active duty with the United States Air Force Judge Advocate General Corps, he spent two years representing the Air Force in utility regulation proceedings across the country.

"I'm excited that Lanny has stepped up to serve Iowans in this important role," said Attorney General Bird. "Lanny is a strong advocate and leader who has devoted his career to service. He will be an effective and practical voice for utility consumers."

Zieman's appointment is effective March 31 and is subject to confirmation by the Iowa Senate.

Zieman has served as an attorney for the State of Iowa since September 2018, first for the Iowa Insurance Division and currently for the Iowa Division of Labor. During this period, he has also served as Assistant Staff Judge Advocate in the 132nd Wing of the Iowa Air National Guard.

Before returning home to Iowa, Zieman served on active duty with the U.S. Air Force for six years. For part of this time, he served as a utility litigation attorney representing the Air Force before utility regulators across the nation. He has also previously worked in private practice in Amana, Iowa and served as an enlisted member of the United States Marine Corps Reserves and the Iowa Air National Guard.

Zieman is an Iowa native who grew up on a farm near Luana and currently lives in Ankeny. He's a graduate of Mount Mercy College and the University of Iowa College of Law.

OBITUARIES

GENERAL GRANT FRANKLIN

General Grant Franklin, 79, of Montrose, IA, died Saturday, March 25, 2023 at his home.

He was born April 9, 1943 near Batavia, IA, in a place called "Turkey Stretch", or so he said, the son of Robert and Guida Mae Brewer Franklin. He graduated from Van Buren High School with the class of 1960.



FRANKLIN

General was a veteran of the United States Air Force and proudly served his country from 1961-1965. He had been self-employed as a farmer and carpenter for many years.

General enjoyed the outdoors. He also enjoyed woodworking and could fix nearly anything. General loved stopping at the local coffee shop to visit with his close friends but above all, he loved spending time with his family.

He is survived by his former wife Arlene Sather Johnsen, his children, Lee Franklin (Nichole) of Burlington, IA, Tom Franklin (Julia) of New London, IA and William Franklin (Misty) of Bakersfield, CA and numerous grandchildren, one

great-grandchild, and numerous nieces and nephews. He is also survived by one brother, Gary Franklin (Sharon) of Douds, IA. General was preceded in death by his parents, four brothers, Richard Franklin, Leo Franklin, Robert Franklin, John Franklin and one grandson, Pearson Franklin.

Burial will be held on Wednesday, April 5 at 11 a.m. in the Keokuk National Cemetery in Keokuk, IA.



In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to the Iowa City VA Medical Center, 601 Highway 6 West, Iowa City, IA 52246-2209 or they may be sent to the Vigen Memorial Home at 1328 Concert Street, Keokuk, IA 52632.

Help for veterans is available. Dial 988 then press 1 or dial (800) 273- 8255 to reach the Veterans Crisis Line.

The Vigen Memorial Home in Keokuk, IA is assisting the family with arrangements.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

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Sports

Bloodhounds 2nd, Hawks 3rd at Falcon Relays



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Central Lee's Tommy Eschman leaps to a top mark of 20'-5" to win the long jump at the Falcon Relays Monday night.

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG,
PCC EDITOR

WEST BURLINGTON – Fort Madison got another strong showing to start the outdoor track season Monday night with a second-place showing at the Falcon Relays in West Burlington.

Central Lee racked up a 3rd place finish in Class B behind some strong sprint performances and a long jump title from Thomas Eschman.

Eschman took the gold medal in the long-jump in class B with a leap of 20'-5". He also took 3rd in the 100-meter dash at 11.77 and 2nd in the 200 with a time of 23.90.

Fort Madison earned several 1st place finishes with Dayton Lamar taking first in the high jump at 5'-8". Nolan Guzman also cleared 5'-8", but was awarded 2nd place based on attempts.

The distance medley team of Kane Williams, Tate Settles, Cade Packard, and Guzman took 1st with a mark of 3:55.08.

The Hounds got another 1st place finish when the shuttle hurdle relay team threw up a sparkling 1:04.36 behind Henry Wiseman, Adam Sobczak, Kiawante Smith, and Kane Williams.

Fort Madison's Hayden Segoviano was second in the 200 in Class A with 24.69. The Hounds' 4x400 team of Packard, Payton Lambert, Mason McLey, and Guzman earned 2nd place with a time of 3:45.90. The 4x200 team of Sobczak, Lamar, Smith, Segoviano took 2nd in Class A with a 1:36.71.

Central Lee's Brody Fuller took 2nd in the shotput with a heave of 38'-1", while the Hawks' Grant Myhre took 2nd in the 400-meter run with a mark of 53:49.

Fort Madison scored 106 points behind Washington's 150. Mt. Pleasant was third with 103 in Class A. Burlington, West Burlington, and Keokuk rounded out the six Class A schools.

Central Lee finished 3rd in Class B with 86 points behind Mediapolis with 189 points and Danville with 97.

Complete results are as follows. Fort Madison ran in Class A, while Central Lee ran in Class B. (Top-5 finishers are indicated)

100-meter dash
FM – Julian Dear 11:46 (5th), Tate Settles 11.93, Nick Fullenkamp
CL – Thomas Eschman 11.77 (3rd), Grant Myhre 12:01 (4th), Will Ferris 12.63.
110-Hurdles
FM - Henry Wiseman 16:73 (5th), Kiawante Smith 19.00, Gavin Callahan

19.61
CL – no entry
200-meter dash
FM – Hayden Segoviano 24.69 (2nd), Brody Cashman 27.54.
CL – Eschman 23.90 (2nd), Brayden Wyrick 25.63.
400-meter run
FM – Peyton Lambert 56.23 (3rd), Dane Butler 59.13, Calvin Johnson 1:02.75
CL – Myhre 53.49 (2nd), Aden Ross 57.60, Riley Salter 1:04.26.
400-hurdles
FM – Nolan Guzman 1:06.96, Gavin Callahan 1:10.87, Butler 1:13.11.
CL – Kegan Damico 1:05.22 (4th), Ethan Bergman 1:06.10
800-meter run
FM – Mason McLey 2:19.27 (5th), Evan Richmond 2:34.25.
CL – Noah Gerber 2:51.54, Anthony Galati 2:57.89.
1600-meter run
FM – Cameron Shutwell 5:44.65, Kallib Heidbreder 6:37.08
CL – Grant Anderson 5:46.73.
Sprint Medley Relay
FM -Segoviano, Adam Sobczak, Packard and McLey 1:45.44 (5th)
CL – Wyrick, Bergman, Ferris, Ross 1:50.08 (5th).
3200-meter run
FM – Shutwell 12:10.44 (3rd)
CL – Anderson 11:52.22 (3rd), Ward Fraise 11:54.40 (4th), Gerber 16:57.09
4x100 relay
FM – Kane Williams, Dayton Lamar, Settles, Dear 45.52 (3rd)
CL – Eschman, Myhre, Damico and Wyrick 47.45 (3rd)
Shuttle hurdle relay
FM – Wiseman, Sobczak, Smith, Williams 1:04.36 (1st)
CL – no entry
4x200 relay
FM – Sobczak, Lamar, Smith, Segoviano 1:36.71 (2nd)
CL – Mulligan, Barnhardt, Kruse, and Ferris 1:50.66 (4th)
4x400 relay
FM – Packard, Lambert, McLey, and Guzman 3:45.90 (2nd)
CL – Ross, Mulligan, Salter, and Kitzman 5:01.40 (5th)
4x800 relay
FM – Johnson, Heidbreder, Lightfoot and Richmond 10:38.19
CL – no entry
Distance Medley Relay
FM – Williams, Settles, Packard, Guzman 3:55.08 (1st)
CL – Arrowood, Damico, Hayes, Fraise 4:36.45 (5th)
Discus
FM – Cory Arnett 107'-7", Brayton Schneider 107'-4", Luke Hellige 87'-8"
CL – Brody Fuller 80'-4", Owen Krogmeier 81'-11", Braedon Barlow 77'-7"
High Jump
FM – Dayton Lamar 5'-8" (1st), Nolan Guzman 5'-8" (2nd)
CL – no entry
Long Jump
FM – Chandler Fullenkamp 18'-5" (5th), Gavin Callahan 16'-10"
CL – Eschman 20'-5" (1st), Wyrick 18'-8" (4th), Myhre 17'-8.5"
Shot Put
FM – Caden Barnes 46'-8.5" (3rd), Ike Thacher 39'-4.25"
CL – Fuller 38'1" (2nd), Barlow 24'-8"

IT'S TIME



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From the Front

Santiago, Pothitakis make game-savings plays to preserve win

HOUNDS - Continued from Page 1

“Yes...and no,” he said. “No because it’s nail-biting and no, because it’s our first game. But yes, because now we’re a lot more seasoned.”

Santiago held the Raiders scoreless until a ball got away from the Hounds’ defense off a header and was picked up on a break down the left side. A shot from left across the front of the north goal slipped past Santiago and into the right side of the net for a 1-0 lead with 10:26 left in the game.

Fort Madison would answer when senior Xander Wellman, who was also sidelined his junior year with an ACL injury, fired a shot from about 20 feet out center on an assist from Pothitakis to tie things up at 1 at the 4:28 mark.

Both teams would go scoreless the rest of the way through the regular session forcing a 10-minute overtime session. Neither team would score in the first session or a second 10-minute session, which led to the penalty kick shoot-out.

Fort Madison took an early 3-1 lead with Leif Boeding, Henry Graham, and Xander Wellman all scoring on the first three kicks in the OT session. Santiago would step out of the keep after blocking one of the Raiders’ shots to take his own penalty kick, which would go wide left.

Williamsburg would score on a soft shot to Santiago’s upper left to tie things at 3-3 in the session.

Kevin Wellman said he had given a lot of thought to having Santiago not only keep during the penalty kick session, but also shoot.

“I thought about it, but he’s a strong shooter. Was his attention divided a bit? Maybe, but he didn’t miss by much, I think he went wide left, so next time he’ll be more confident and dialed in a little better. So again, yes...and no.”

Fort Madison’s Pothitakis had the last shot to win it for Fort Madison and knew he was going. “Before I shot, I told myself I was going left and stuck with it into the upper left corner,” Pothitakis said.

The senior battled cramps most of the second half and said it was mostly due to lack of conditioning and fluids.

Several Hounds battled cramping on the field, including Xander Wellman and Henry Graham.

“It’s just conditioning,” Pothitakis said. “We need to do better getting more fluids in.”



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison’s Oliver Santiago gets a block on a penalty kick in a sudden victory penalty kick session Tuesday night at Baxter Sports Complex.

He said the win was a great way to start the season. “This is huge with all the injuries and everything we’ve had to go through. It’s big for our team and we couldn’t have done it without every single person out here.”

Kevin Wellman said the defense played much better than expected considering the lack of chemistry on that side of the field.

“Layne Rung played center back and he and Nathaniel Swigart, our veteran back there tonight, had good chemistry. That helped a lot. Noah Swigart playing left back most of the game, had really good chemistry with Jacob Shottenkirk at the outside mid. Lots of really

good passes there,” Wellman said.

“It was a complete team effort. We played really well at all positions, and everybody played selfless, with strong confident passes.

Wellman said the cramping did bother him a bit.

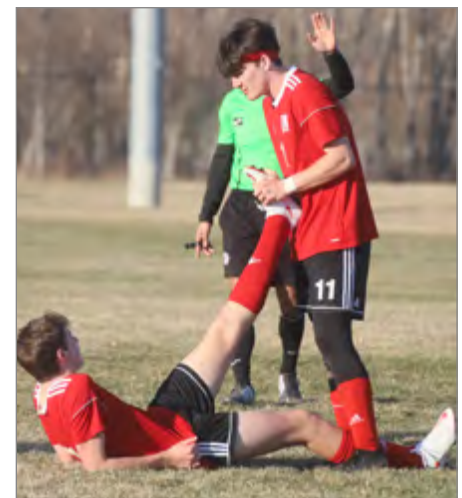
“It does concern me a little, but Xander and Jacob haven’t done a lot since last season. There’s things you can do with diet and fluids. They are multi-sport athletes and sometimes I think they just forget.”

Xander Wellman said he remembers two years ago against Burlington Notre Dame his first game on varsity at home.

“I got the ball, like, first half and turned and missed it wide, which would have won the game for us. So it feels really good to be able to equalize in this game and start the season above .500 for the first time in, like, eight years,” he said.

Santiago had nine saves on the night in 70 minutes of work. Connor Gehling had 30 minutes and two saves. Wellman had two goals on the night.

The Hounds are 1-0 (0-0) and host Burlington Notre Dame on Monday at Baxter Sports Complex.



Cramping was a common occurrence Tuesday night as the temperatures dropped at Baxter Sports Complex.

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1. Called to Order at 4:02 p.m.
Roll Call: Alton x Pollpeter x Moore x Patrick x VanPelt x
Staff Present: Huebner, Oldfield, Jacobs, Steele, Risser

Supervisor: Holmes
2. Approval of Agenda Motion by VanPelt to approve the agenda
2nd: Patrick Motion Carried
3. Oath of Office Sara Helenthal performed Oath of Office for Liza Alton to re-up to the LCCB for an additional 5 years.
4. Approval of Minutes from December 13 and 21, 2022 Motion by Alton to approve the minutes
2nd: Patrick Motion Carried
VanPelt abstained from

voting since absent from December 13 meeting
5. Public Input None
6. Approval of Bills Alton asked about food bill for Jack. Huebner explained it was for his food during academy. Alton questioned about the Denning drains. Jacobs explained they needed replaced as they were ran over by a tractor.
Motion by VanPelt to approve the bills
2nd: Moore Motion Carried
7. Approval of Financial Report

Motion by Alton to approve the financial report
2nd: Patrick Motion Carried
8. Discuss and Take Action on LCCB Bylaws Huebner said that all updates were made based on the suggestions made during the December meeting.
Motion by Moore to approve bylaws
2nd: Alton Motion Carried
9. Elect Board President Motion by Alton to nominate Richard Moore for President

2nd: VanPelt Motion Carried
10. Elect Vice President Motion by Van Pelt to nominate Jim Patrick for Vice-President
2nd: Moore Motion Carried
11. Discuss and Take Action on Setting Public Hearing Date for Pollmiller Trail
Stephen Pedrick, representative from French Reneker presented the final specs and drawings of the Pollmiller Trail and discussed the cover letter that sums up the project. The Bids will be due at the LCC office by noon on February 14th, 2023. The public hearing date will be set for February 14, 2023 at 4pm. The LCCB meeting will follow the public hearing. The completion date is set as June 2, 2023. Discussion was had regarding this date. Patrick was concerned about the tight timeline and this causing contractors to inflate prices due to this. Huebner discussed the tight timeline is due to waiting to hear back on confirmation of the LWCF grant, that did not come until late fall 2022. This caused the delay to get the engineers moving on the drawings and specs. Patrick also concerned about the liquidation damages at \$600 per day if the date of completion is not met.
Pedrick said that this could be a point of negotiation if delays are caused by factors outside of control, i.e. weather. Alton was in favor of keeping the liquidation damage amount and the timeline and board agreed.
Motion by Moore to fix the public hearing on the proposed drawings, specifications, form of Contract, and estimated cost for the construction of the Proposed Recreational Trail Improvements - Pollmiller Trail for 4:00 PM on February 14, 2023 at the Lee County Conservation Center, 2652 Highway 61, Montrose, Iowa
2nd: Alton Motion Carried
12. Staff & Director Reports
Steele gave the EE report highlighting 53 programs, the most ever completed in December and 884 contacts made.
Oldfield gave the parks report highlighting 11 cabin nights.
Huebner gave Director report stating that she presented the FY24 budget and will hear back in March most likely on changes or acceptance. She has viewed the online survey results and will be presenting to the

board at the March board meeting. Huebner stated that we did not get the entire ask from the Fish Habitat Grant of \$65,000 but did get \$38,600, which is the amount left over after funding the Des Moines Co. project. The \$38,600 should cover Phase 1 of the Wilson Pond project which constitutes engineering fees, survey fees, etc.
13. Board Member Comments
Pollpeter stated that a Board of Supervisor asked about the Deer Hunting Drive Rules that LCCB enforces while at the Budget Hearing meeting. Huebner stated that the board and staff should use the next few months to talk to citizens and get input regarding these rules. No one who was on the board when they implemented this policy is here now and a conversation should be had. Pollpeter also stated that Pflug inquired about another river access on the Des Moines River. Huebner stated that more investigating would happen on that front.
14. Adjournment
Motion by VanPelt to adjourn the meeting at 4:47 p.m.
2nd: Alton Motion Carried
Richard Moore, LCCB President
Caroline Veihl, LCCB Secretary

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2nd: Alton Motion Carried
12. Staff & Director Reports
Steele gave the EE report highlighting 53 programs, the most ever completed in December and 884 contacts made.
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2nd: Alton Motion Carried
Richard Moore, LCCB President
Caroline Veihl, LCCB Secretary

Classifieds/Public Notices

PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICES

Motion by Patrick to adopt the drawings, specifications, and form of contract as now on file

2nd: Alton

Motion Carried

Moore thanked the contractors for taking the time and effort to prepare bids for the project. The bids were opened by Huebner, reviewed by the engineer, Pedrick, and read by Moore. JJD bid \$334,009.15 for the project, and Jones Contracting bid \$329,777.00 for the project. Pedrick stated upon initial review that Jones Contracting was the lowest bid. Pedrick took the time to check the computations on each bid. After this review, Pedrick stated that there were no errors with either bid.

Motion by Pollpeter to award the contract to Jones Contracting contingent upon them providing proof of insurance and performance and payment bond.

2nd: Alton

Motion Carried
Pedrick wanted to make note that the project deadline had been revised to September 30 since the last Board meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes from January 10, 2023

Motion by Alton to approve the minutes

2nd: Patrick

Motion Carried

5. Public Input

None

6. Approval of Bills

VanPelt asked how many employees attended the Winterfest Conference. Huebner responded that 6 employees went. Moore asked what the mower repair bills were for. Pawling responded that they were PTO shaft repairs.

Motion by Alton to approve the bills

2nd: Pollpeter

Motion Carried

7. Approval of Financial Report

Motion by Alton to approve the financial report

2nd: Patrick

Motion Carried

8. Discuss and Take Action on Seasonal Hire Process

Huebner stated that the Board of Supervisors put the county on a hiring freeze from March 1 to September 30. Huebner will now have to formally request to hire the seasonal positions that have been budgeted for.

Motion by Alton to begin the seasonal hire process contingent upon Board of Supervisors approval

2nd: Patrick

Motion Carried

9. Discuss and Take Possible Action on Pheasants Forever Membership

Motion by Patrick to re-up the Board's yearly Pheasants Forever Membership for \$250

2nd: Alton

Motion Carried

10. Discuss and Take Action on Mow Contracts

Huebner stated the lowest bids came from Blades of Green for \$1060/cycle for the main parks, and B2B Mowing for \$610/cycle for the satellite areas.

Motion by Alton to award the 3 year mowing contracts to Blades of Green for the main parks and B2B Mowing for the satellite areas

2nd: Pollpeter

Motion Carried

11. Discuss and Take Action on Pollmiller Phase 2 Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 2023- 001

AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION FOR THE WELLMARK GRANT FOR THE POLLMILLER PARK TRAIL PHASE TWO PROJECT

WHEREAS, Lee County is a duly recognized municipal corporation acting under the laws of the State of Iowa, and appoints a County Conservation Board per Iowa Code Chapter 350 to have the custody, control, and management of all real and personal property of the county for conservation purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Lee County Conservation Board recognizes that there is a significant need

to reroute existing bike and pedestrian infrastructure trail to have an entry point across from the existing parking lot to ensure the safety of its users; and

WHEREAS, the filing of an application is in the best interests of the citizens of the Lee County, and should be approved.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Lee County Conservation Board fully supports the project to reroute the trail that extends from the existing trail and will route it around the arboretum and prairie and come out across from the parking lot, assures a minimum local funding match of 50%, and agrees to adequately maintain the trail for its intended use and hereby authorizes County staff to submit an application for funding this project

Motion by Patrick to approve this resolution

2nd: Alton

Motion Carried

12. Staff & Director Reports

Steele gave the EE

report highlighting a successful Eagle Days event in Keokuk, with increased numbers from previous year.

Oldfield gave the parks report highlighting 7 camping nights and 10 cabin nights, along with the near completion of the new Wilson Lake playground.

Huebner gave her director repost highlighting working on a trash and property line issue on a property bordering Wilson Lake, working on cost effective projects like the natural playground at Heron Bend Conservation Area, and beginning the planning stage of enhancing the Conservation Center.

13. Board Member Comments

Pollpeter asked if Huebner is working with the County Attorney on the Wilson Lake Property issue. Huebner stated that the County Attorney is involved.

14. Request for closed session to evaluate the professional competency of an individual whose

appointment, hiring, performance, or discharge is being considered when necessary to prevent needless and irreparable injury to that individual's reputation and that individual requests a closed session. Pursuant to the provisions of section 21.5(1)(i), Code of Iowa 2021.

Motion by Patrick to enter closed session at 4:34 p.m.

2nd: Patrick

Roll Call: VanPelt - Aye, Pollpeter - Aye, Patrick - Aye, and Alton - Aye

Motion by Alton to leave closed session at 4:56 p.m.

2nd: Pollpeter

Roll Call: VanPelt - Aye, Pollpeter - Aye, Patrick - Aye, and Alton - Aye

15. Adjournment

Motion by 4:57 to adjourn the meeting at Alton p.m.

2nd: Patrick

Motion Carried.

Richard Moore, LCCB President

Caroline Veihl, LCCB Secretary

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IWC Closure

Board was “disappointed” in lack of support from state

COLLEGE - Continued from Page 1

increased post-pandemic, it is still not yet at a threshold needed for financial stability.

“It is with deep sadness that we announce the Board of Trustees has made the heartbreaking decision to close our beloved Iowa Wesleyan after 181 years as an educational pillar in this community,” said Christine Plunkett, president of Iowa Wesleyan University. “Our focus is now on assuring our over 850 students have a smooth transition to another educational opportunity.”

Iowa Wesleyan has secured four teach-out agreements with William Penn University, Upper Iowa University, University of Dubuque, and Culver-Stockton College so students can complete their degrees. The teach-out plans ensure the students can complete their program on time and for a comparable cost to Iowa Wesleyan. Additional teach-out agreements may be added.

“We know our action will be felt deeply by all Iowa Wesleyan University faculty, staff, students, families, alumni, donors, Mount Pleasant, and the entire region of Southeast Iowa,” said Robert Miller, chairman of the Board of Trustees.

“Like many colleges and universities nationally that have recently announced closure, IW has been confronted with many headwinds including increasing operating costs, declining numbers of high school graduates nationally and insurmountable inflationary pressures. We have worked tirelessly to find solutions at all levels but to no avail.”

Iowa Wesleyan submitted a proposal for money from the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that were provided to the state of Iowa. As a primary employer in Southeast Iowa that provided a wide range of educational, economic, workforce, social, and cultural opportunities, Iowa Wesleyan requested \$12 million from Governor Kim Reynolds aligned with her Empower Rural Iowa Initiative.

“As a higher education institution that serves rural Iowa, we are disappointed in the lack of state support for this effort. All our indicators have been trending in a positive direction, but we needed funding to buy some additional time,” says Miller. “We are just heartbroken.”

When the university closes on May 31, the physical campus will become the responsibility of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Reynolds says one-time funding infusion was not enough

REYNOLDS - Continued from Page 1

three years, their financial health has continued to deteriorate over the same period. “Based on this and other factors, the independent accounting firm determined that providing one-time, federal funds would not solve the systemic financial issues plaguing the university. If the state would have provided the federal funding as requested and it was used to finance debt or other impermissible uses according to US Treasury guidelines, the state and taxpayers could have been liable for potential repayment to the federal government. Moreover, the state has separately received \$122 million in requests from other universities and community colleges across the state.

“With this information, I made the difficult decision to not pursue the university’s funding request.”

SCC’s Ash weighs in on IWC closure

WEST BURLINGTON, Iowa – Everyone at Southeastern Community College is saddened by today’s news of the Iowa Wesleyan University Board of Trustees decision to close the university.

I can only imagine how difficult a decision it was for the board to make. Closing a respected institution of higher learning with a 181-year history was not something they took lightly.

Our two institutions have been strong community partners over the decades providing area residents access to quality higher education without having to venture far from home.

Many SCC students have been preparing to transfer to IW over the past two years to take advantage of the SCC & IW Southeast Iowa Higher Education Alliance transfer program. SCC student advocates will work with them to make alternate arrangements to continue their educational path after SCC. We also stand ready to serve any IW students in search of a new plan to reach their educational goals.

While I am disappointed that our efforts weren’t enough to turn the tide, I am proud of the work that was done by the dedicated teams at SCC and IW to form the Southeast Iowa Higher Education Alliance. This partnership enabled each institution to bring the best of what each had to offer for the benefit of our students and our region. We explored novel ways for public and private institutions to work together for the benefit of the students and the institutions, and were pleased that our efforts were starting to bear fruit as cost-saving measures went into effect and more students chose to take advantage of the program. Even though the partnership as we know it will end, we were able to show what was possible when two motivated institutions come together to work to improve college access.

Our thoughts and prayers are with IW and the Mount Pleasant communities as they navigate the coming months.

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Thursday, March 30
Fried Chicken Dinners

Friday, March 31
Fish & Shrimp Dinners