

# PEN CITY CURRENT

It's Black & White and Read all over

Friday, December 15, 2023 | 8 pages | Volume 8 • Issue 4



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# SEIRPC hits 50th year

**LONGEVITY:** Director says relationships and adaptation recipe for longevity

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

WEST BURLINGTON – Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Mike Norris has been around for about 40% of the 50 years the economic development group has been functional in the area.

But it's not hard to see how that 40% has impacted the group's four-county functionality in terms of planning, transportation, housing, and anything else that area leaders reach out for.

Norris said the SEIRPC has been helping local agencies for five decades and the commission had morphed based on what the area needs.

"We're kinda built more to react because we're a service provider. The restaurant can plan and have the food, but they don't know what you want until you ask for it."

The group held a 50th anniversary celebration a week ago at its offices in West Burlington on Gear Avenue on the former Raider Precast Concrete site.

SEIRPC's origins can be traced back to the late 1960s' Iowa Office for Planning and Programming. That group, created by the state legislature, was aimed at serving groups like community colleges, workforce agencies, and transportation groups.

The original plan created 16 planning regions with the south-

See ANNIVERSARY, page 8

# IUB rolls out redesign of agency's EFS

**FILING SYSTEM:** Upgrade to system will highlight the agencies rebranding

PCC STAFF

DES MOINES – The Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) will launch a redesign of its electronic filing system (EFS) on December 18, 2023, at [efs.iowa.gov](https://efs.iowa.gov).

In addition to a cleaner look that visually aligns with the IUB's website and new agency branding, the enhanced site will feature upgrades that make it easier for industry stakeholders, utility customers, and the general public to submit or search filings with quicker results.

The new EFS homepage will feature navigation options to browse the daily filing summary, search docket information, or submit filings.

Topics will now be grouped together to improve the user experience in searching for dockets, filings, tariffs, companies, or electric franchises. The redesign is intended to improve the user experience and provide resources when experiencing issues including "How to Search" or "How to File" and other common questions regarding EFS.

Users can also file a comment, objection, or letter of support in an open docket pending with the IUB, or contact IUB Customer Service staff to file a complaint about utility service. Links are included to IUB 24/7 and the IUB's website.

The refreshed site will continue to be mobile responsive to adapt the display to any user device, whether desktop, smartphone or tablet.

The current EFS site will be unavailable starting at 7 p.m. Friday, December 15, through Sunday, December 17, for the transition.

For questions about the enhanced EFS site, contact IUB IT support by calling (515) 725-7337 or emailing [ITsupport@iub.iowa.gov](mailto:ITsupport@iub.iowa.gov).



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Fort Madison's Caleb Bolander capitalizes on the advantage just seconds before recording a pin in Thursday night's dual win over Mt. Pleasant. The Hounds won 66-18 in the Southeast Conference meet.

## SPORTS

# Hounds take dual on eve of 20-team Invitational

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG  
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – The Fort Madison boys wrestling team is turning things around.

The Bloodhounds knocked off Mt.

Pleasant 66-18 in a Southeast Conference dual on the eve of the annual Fort Madison Bloodhound Invitational which runs Friday and Saturday this week.

More than 20 teams will descend on Fort Madison's Hound Dome for the

two-day event.

The Hounds will likely be without senior Ike Thacher who was ranked in the top 10 in Class 3A at 190 lbs. Thacher took to the mat for the first time in an

See WIN, page 4

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## WEATHER

FRI 15 Dec.....Partly sunny & cool, 51° F/ 37° F  
SAT 16 Dec.....Rain likely, 46° F/ 33° F  
SUN 17 Dec.....Mostly sunny, 44° F/ 29° F

## IOWA LOTTERY

LOTTO AMERICA 12/13.....4 25 34 38 46, Star Ball: 6 All Star Bonus: 2  
LUCKY FOR LIFE 12/13.....28 30 31 34 45, Lucky Ball: 17  
PICK 3 MIDDAY 12/13.....3 9 4  
PICK 3 EVENING 12/13.....6 8 2  
PICK 4 MIDDAY 12/13.....6 4 8 2  
PICK 4 EVENING 12/13.....3 4 4 4  
POWERBALL 12/13.....3 8 41 56 64, Powerball: 18 Power Play: 2

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# Obituaries

## OBITUARIES

### THELMA J. KRUSE

Thelma J. Kruse, 92, of Hillsboro, Iowa, passed away at 11:59 a.m. Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at her home.

She was born on October 13, 1931, in Salem, Iowa, the daughter of Bernard and Cecilia (Moeller) Stukerjurgan. On October 2, 1954, she married Sylvester Kruse at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church in Houghton.

Survivors include her husband: Sylvester; four children: Edward (Patty) Kruse of Hillsboro, LeAnn (Ben) Lund of Johnston, LouAnn (Gary) Nichting of Mt. Pleasant, and JoAnn (Joe) Adam of Fairfield; eleven grandchildren; twenty eight great grandchildren; three great-great grandchildren; two brothers: Ron (Carol) Stukerjurgan of Houghton and Leroy (Carrol) Stukerjurgan of Sun City, Arizona; three sisters: Justine (Ray) Conrad of Tempe, Arizona, Agatha Rudy of Solon, and Lucille Damhorst of Carbon Cliff, Illinois. Also surviving are several nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents and brothers: Omer and Don Stukerjurgan.

Thelma was a member of St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, the American Legion Auxiliary, Circle Eight Square Dance Club, and a euchre card club. She tended to the flower gardens at St. John's Catholic Church for thirty-five years, she enjoyed her flowers, gardening, canning, square dancing, and playing cards.

A visitation will be held from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. Monday, December 18, 2023, at St. John's Catholic Church in Houghton, where the family will receive friends from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. A parish rosary will be recited at 3:30 p.m. and a Christian wake service will be held at 5:30 p.m.

A Mass of Christian burial will be held at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at St. John's Catholic Church in Houghton with Father Dan Dorau as celebrant.

A memorial has been established in her memory for St. John's Catholic Church or St. John's Cemetery.

Schmitz Funeral Home of West Point is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences may be made to the family at [www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com](http://www.schmitzfuneralhomes.com).



KRUSE

## OBITUARIES

### RUFINA MARTINEZ

Rufina Martinez, 93, of Fort Madison, IA, died at 7:45 a.m. on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at Birkwood Village in Fort Madison. She was born in Fort Madison on July 18, 1930, she was the daughter of Vincente & Maria Fuentes Mendez. On September 15,



MARTINEZ

1950, she married Leonard Martinez in Fort Madison, he preceded her in death on February 16, 2003. Rufina was a homemaker and had worked at Sheaffer Pen in her early years. She was a member of Sacred Heart Church & Guadalupanas and volunteered at the LULAC Club, Aquinas (HTC) and elsewhere rolling tacos. She enjoyed cooking, gardening and especially spending time with her family & friends. She would reminisce of the times she and her mother would grind corn by hand for tamales and they would sing their favorite songs while they worked.

She is survived by: one daughter: Laura (Sam) Lozano of Fort Madison; five sons: David (Pat) Martinez, Dominic Martinez, Eric (Donna) Martinez, Mark Martinez & Jeff Martinez, all of Fort Madison; 17 grandchildren; numerous great grandchildren; 2-sisters: Sally (Santiago) Hernandez of Fort Madison & Anna (John) Luna of Galesburg, IL; 3-brothers: Abie (Julia) Mendez of Fort Madison, Roger Mendez of Fort Madison, Jerry (Irene) Mendez of Livermore, CA and numerous nieces & nephews. Besides her husband, she was preceded in death by her parents, three sisters, five brothers, and one daughter-in-law.

A rosary will be recited at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, December 18, 2023 at Sacred Heart Church immediately followed by a visitation until 11:00 a.m. The funeral mass will be held at 11:00 a.m. at Sacred Heart Church with Fr. Gary Beckman officiating. Burial will be held at Sacred Heart Cemetery. A memorial has been established in Rufina's memory and contributions may be left at the church during the services. Online condolences may be left for the family at the King-Lynk Funeral Home & Crematory website: [www.king-lynk.com](http://www.king-lynk.com).

### 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.

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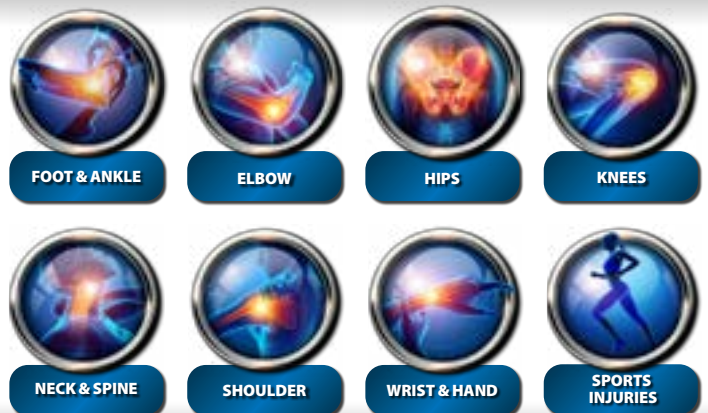
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**Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center, Fort Madison**  
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 319-376-1135

**Henry County Health Center**  
 407 S. White St.  
 Mount Pleasant  
 319-385-5374

**Keokuk Clinic**  
 3285 Main St.  
 319-524-6274



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# PEN CITY CURRENT

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**From the Front**

# Thacher gets on mat for first time this season

**WIN** - Continued from Page 1

official match since he finished fourth at the IHSAA State Tournament in February.

Thacher downed the Panthers' Payton Walker with a pin at the 1:41 mark for his first win of the year after tweaking his elbow in a preseason practice.

Smith said the holiday break will give Thacher an opportunity to get back to full strength.

"He got the green light from the doctor," Head Coach Smith said. "But I didn't want him to wrestle this weekend, but now I would like to see him get two more weeks of some therapy and getting it stronger," Smith said.

Thacher said the elbow felt good and he was happy to get back on the mat.

"It felt really good to get out there. I missed the competition and it felt good today," Thacher said.

"There's always nerves and that's not a bad thing, but when I get out there it's flushed and it's just a match."

Smith said things are clicking better with the Hounds and they are moving in the right direction.

Thursday's match started at the lightest weight with Cole Quittem taking a loss out of the gate for the Hounds with a fall just two seconds prior to the end of the third period. Smith said Quittem was given up about 15 pounds in the match, but put up a good effort.

"The effort was there, he was giving up 10 or 15 pounds and he was giving him a good battle, but got caught in a tough situation, but can't fault that effort," he said.

Brody Bolander scored a quick pin over the Panthers' Sawyer Fulton in just :26. Noah Swigart suffered a pin at 126, but then the Hounds ripped off three straight wins sparked by Logan Pennock's at 132. Nolan Riddle scored a pin at 157 after medaling at last weekend's Liberty Invitational in Wentzville, Mo.



Photo by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Senior Ike Thacher gets the upper hand on Mt. Pleasant's Payton Walker in the 190 lb. match. It was Thacher's first match of the year.

Riddle is ranked at 157 lbs. in 3A and fell short of the podium in last season's state wrestling tournament.

Riddle said this year he trained harder in the offseason to build on last season's run.

"This is my senior year, my last ride, so I'm just going in to have fun and dominate and try to score some points," Riddle said after the win.

"Training-wise, I have a better diet and I got in better shape before the season. I've just tried to put in more

work."

One of the more impressive wins of the night was junior Cade Goodrich's win at 144 lbs. Goodrich and Mt. Pleasant's Keegan Birdsell exchanged takedowns and escapes through the first two periods, racking up 7 points each, and were tied going into the third period. Goodrich was able to wear down Birdsell in the first minute of the third period and was able to wrench the Panther over for a pin in his first varsity match.

"He wrestled as a youth. I asked last week who wanted to wrestle for a varsity spot and he stepped up, won his match, and then beat this kid. That's what we're looking for. We need that competition at every weight. I don't like that a kid gets a spot because he makes weight. I like that he has to beat at least one teammate to get the job."

Gavin Callahan scored a pin at 175 and Aaron Warner got a late pin in a hard-fought match at 215 before Teague Smith won by forfeit at 285 in the final match.

The results of the girls dual match weren't available as of this posting.



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## Classifieds/Public Notices

# PEN CITY CURRENT CLASSIFIEDS

### PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE  
MINUTES OF THE  
BURLINGTON, IOWA  
CITY COUNCIL  
INFORMAL  
WORK SESSION  
October 9, 2023**

The Burlington City Council met in an informal work session at 4:30 p.m. in the Thomas J. Smith Council Chambers, City Hall with Mayor Billups, Council Members Critser, Graham-Murray and Maupin present. Council Member Wilson arrived at 4:45 p.m.

Items discussed at the informal work session are listed on the work session agenda on file in the office of the City Clerk. No action was taken.

Adjournment: 5:15 p.m.  
Approved: October 16, 2023

Chad Bird, City Manager

Jon D. Billups, Mayor

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

*Subject to change as finalized by the City Clerk. For a final official copy, contact the City Clerk's office at (319) 753-8124.*

**MINUTES OF THE  
PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
BURLINGTON, IOWA  
CITY COUNCIL  
Meeting No. 44  
October 16, 2023**

The Burlington City Council met in regular session at 5:33 p.m. in the Thomas J. Smith Council Chambers, City Hall, 400 Washington Street, with Mayor Billups, Council Members Critser and Graham-Murray present. Council Member Wilson arrived at 5:39 p.m. Council Member Maupin was absent.

**BURLINGTON CITY COUNCIL**

**COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE:** Gary Richards of 102 Harrison Avenue stated that there is noticeable methane gas smell in his neighborhood he feels is related to the sewer separation that has not been completed yet. He requested an updated time line for completion in his area. He also stated that he has concerns relating to the condition of the road in front of his home being in disrepair and dangerous for vehicles. He also stated he has concerns about the safety of his neighborhood and mentioned there are vehicles that drive by late at night and was a break in on

one occasion. Mayor Billups commented that the appropriate departments would reach out to him with some answers to his questions. Lisa Walsh of 6172 Nikonha Place read an email received from Mark Falzone of Scenic America congratulating Burlington on receiving a \$1.07 million grant for Cascade Bridge from the National Federal Highway Association. Fred Starling of 517 South 7th Street stated that he was grateful for former Police Chief Denney and he would like to see a new Police Chief hired within the department.

**TENURE AWARD:**

\*Lois Blythe, Senior Librarian (Information Technology) - 35 Years

**PROCLAMATIONS:**

Friends of the Library Week - Anita Wagner

\*Red Ribbon Week

- Police Major Adam

Schaefer

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

To the Public:

All matters listed under Item I., Consent Agenda, having been discussed were considered to be routine by the City Council and were enacted by one motion. There was no separate discussion of these items. If discussion was desired, that item was removed from the Consent Agenda and was considered separately.

Introduced By: Critser

Seconded By: Wilson

**MOTION:** To approve all items listed under Item I., Consent Agenda.

**DISCUSSION:** Mayor Billups reviewed the items listed on the consent agenda to the viewing audience. All present had opportunity to speak and nothing additional was filed in the office of the City Clerk.

(VOTE: 4 - "AYES")

**CARRIED**

**HEARINGS:**

1. Statement: Consideration of an Ordinance Amending Various Sections of Chapter 161 Housing Code of the Burlington Municipal Code

**COMMENTS:**

Eric Tysland, Development and Parks Director, stated that the primary change being considered is frequency of inspection of the one and two unit rental units, bringing them to the same cycle as multi-family units. The current cycle is a five year inspection for single family and duplex units, the update would bring all units to a three year

cycle. He stated that this would bring more consistency to the schedule and the increased frequency would allow city inspectors to perform a thorough inspection on the properties more often to address safety issues.

Chad Bird, City Manager, added that these changes were created in a response to the current Council goal to improve housing stock and safety in the community.

Doug Ziegler, 156 Golf Lane, stated that he is a landlord and has concerns that the increased frequency of inspections would not solve the problem the Council is seeking to address. He stated that the increased frequency would be costly to him over the span of his number of rental properties in both fees and time. He stated that he feels he is adding value to properties in the City of Burlington and that this change would make it difficult for him to continue to do so. He suggested leaving the frequency the same and continue doing complaint driven inspections on rental properties.

Mayor Billups commented that he believes some tenants do not make complaints for fear of retaliation.

Council Member Annie Wilson added that she looked at a home to rent that was not in a condition reflective of minimum housing standards.

Stephanie Wilson, 11596 Woody Lane (West Burlington), stated she has rental properties in Burlington. She stated that in the past she has had tenants cause damage to units or remove smoke detectors from their unit. She stated that the city should better distinguish between what is tenant versus landlord responsibility for enforcement on the inspections. She stated that in some cases the damages that tenants cause is greater than the amount the property owner could make on the rental unit.

Dawn Kalo, Owner of EZ Mac Properties, stated that she attended the meeting last year when the city considered increasing the frequency. She stated that she feels that increase costs fall to rental property owners and feels it is not equitable to not treat owner occupied homes in the same way in terms of

beginning to charge for nuisance inspections and requiring smoke detectors in all homes. She stated that she wants her tenants safe but would like the cost to be shared with all homeowners.

Robert Berndt, Fire Marshal, stated that there is a smoke alarm program in the City of Burlington sponsored by the American Red Cross. The Fire Department will install up to four regular smoke detectors in a home. He clarified that these detectors were not combination smoke and carbon monoxide detectors as would be required by code in a rental unit. He stated the importance of having a carbon monoxide test in a property as it has been effective in detecting harmful levels of this gas.

Ron Brozene, 1001 Oak Street, stated that the city updated the building code to require 100 amp electrical service and wanted to clarify why that was necessary. He stated that he does not agree with requiring combined smoke detectors.

Doug Ziegler stated that another requirement he does not agree with is that all new rental units need to have two off-street parking spaces. He stated he feels the cost to own rentals in Burlington continues to increase.

Dawn Kalo stated that she would like to know the city's cost of the inspector to provide the inspection.

Chase Gibb, 5178 Deerfield Drive, President of Southeast Iowa Property Owners Association, stated that there was a housing study done and he offered to join a committee but has not

heard anything of the results or follow up from the organization who hosted the study. He stated that the increase to the fees is substantial, close to 66%. He stated that he would like to know if any cities with increased inspection frequency have data to support safety of the tenants. He stated he would like to know what data is being used to support an increased inspection cycle. He stated that he would like information on the cost for the rental inspection portion of the Development Department.

Doug Ziegler stated he has questions on illegal rentals and what is being done to take care of these.

Kyle Eslami, 108 Cutter Place, stated he is a rental property owner and is having issues on 658 and 644 Higbee. Both of these properties have passed inspection and have active rental permits but the owner occupied home in between these properties is causing pest issues for both of his rentals. He has invested time and money into resolving the issue. The homeowner of the other home is not taking care of this so it continues to be an issue.

Ron Kelley, address not provided, stated that he believes the combination detectors are less effective.

Robert Berndt, Fire Marshal, returned to the podium to address this and explain that carbon monoxide does rise and these detectors are effective.

Stephanie Wilson returned to the podium to ask what is being done to address illegal rentals and

to specify the code.

Eric Tysland stated that follow up is done when inspectors are made aware of illegal rentals. He clarified that if the homeowner does not live at the property, it needs a rental permit, regardless of familial status or lack of rent being charged.

Larry Caston, Chief Building Inspector, addressed the property owners in attendance. He stated that the codes are written based on tragedies that occur to prevent them from happening in the future. He stated the City of Burlington typically adopts the IRC and IBC (International Residential Code and International Building Code) every other cycle to prevent so many changes for these owners at the frequency they are released. He stated that there is an upcoming code change he has reviewed that requires detectors that are interconnected. He stated that the State of Iowa distinguishes homeowners differently than rental owners as rental owners have higher responsibility as they are tasked with keeping others safe, not only themselves. He stated he and staff are following up on illegal rental complaints when they come in and urges those in the audience to continue letting staff know when these come up.

He stated that there are a limited amount of code sections that are up to the City of Burlington's discretion but if that occurs, the city then assumes liability for issues that may arise due to those tragedies that may occur.

Luke Caston, 12348 Flint Bottom Road, Owner

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### PUBLIC NOTICES

of CB Properties, stated that he had an incident occur with a property he sold on contract that was time consuming to resolve. He stated that he contacted the rental inspection office but they were not able to provide the help he was hoping for. He stated that there is a large expense involved in renovating a property and managing it. The proposed increase to inspections would really impact his business.

Ross Haeger, 2600 Cliffwood Dr., stated that the people who spoke previously reflected his opinions. He stated that he feels Larry Caston has been an asset in his position. He stated that with Larry's upcoming retirement, he hopes the city will have candidates that handle things in a similar manner, in the education of the codes and empathy for the those doing the work.

Mayor Billups stated that there is a lot of work that will need done to improve this for the community and property owners. He stated that he would like to close this first reading of the hearing and work on things.

Council Member Critser

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suggested that a committee made up of property owners would be helpful.

Eric Tysland, Development and Parks Director, submitted an email he received from Christopher Madigan stating he is against the increase in inspections due to the time it would take and ultimately cost for that time.

All present had opportunity to speak and nothing additional was filed in the office of the City Clerk.

Introduced By: Critser  
Seconded By: Wilson  
Motion to Close  
CARRIED

Introduced By: Critser  
Seconded By: Wilson

Motion for Preliminary Adoption of the First Reading of an Ordinance Amending Various Sections of Chapter 161 Housing Code of the Burlington Municipal Code  
DISCUSSION: None.  
(VOTE: 4 - "AYES")  
CARRIED

2. Statement: Consideration of an Ordinance Vacating a Portion of Utility Easement within Lot 3 of the Burlington Crossing Subdivision  
COMMENTS: Eric Tysland, Development and Parks Director, stated there is an existing utility easement on the West side of the detention area off of Columbus Drive and Market Street. There are no existing utilities in this area and there are future plans for development. He stated the City Planning Commission reviewed this and voted to approve. All present had opportunity to speak and nothing additional was filed in the office of the City Clerk.

Introduced By: Wilson  
Seconded By: Critser  
Motion to Close  
CARRIED

Introduced By: Wilson  
Seconded By: Critser  
Motion to Amend  
Motion for Preliminary Adoption of the First Reading of an Ordinance Vacating a Portion of Utility Easement within Lot 3

DISCUSSION: None.  
(VOTE: 4 - "AYES")  
CARRIED

Introduced By: Wilson  
Seconded By: Critser  
Motion to Amend  
Motion for Preliminary Adoption of the First Reading of an Ordinance Vacating a Portion of Utility Easement within Lot 3

of the Burlington Crossing Subdivision to Read as Follows: For Waiver of Preliminary Consideration and Adoption of the First and Second Readings and for Final Adoption of an Ordinance Vacating a Portion of Utility Easement within Lot 3 of the Burlington Crossing Subdivision  
DISCUSSION: None.  
(VOTE: 4 - "AYES")  
CARRIED

Introduced By: Wilson  
Seconded By: Critser  
For Waiver of Preliminary Consideration and Adoption of the First and Second Readings and for Final Adoption of an Ordinance Vacating a Portion of Utility Easement within Lot 3 of the Burlington Crossing Subdivision  
DISCUSSION: None.  
(VOTE: 4 - "AYES")  
ADOPTED

3. Statement: Consideration of an Ordinance Amending Chapter 15.03 of the Burlington Municipal Code to Add a Homelessness Task Force  
COMMENTS: None.  
Introduced By: Wilson  
Seconded By: Critser  
Motion to Close  
CARRIED

Introduced By: Wilson  
Seconded By: Critser  
Motion to Amend  
Motion for Preliminary Adoption of the First Reading of an Ordinance Amending Chapter 15.03 of the Burlington Municipal Code to Add a Homelessness Task Force to Read as Follows: For Waiver of Preliminary Consideration and Adoption of the First and Second Readings and for Final Adoption of an Ordinance Amending Chapter 15.03 of the Burlington Municipal Code to Add a Homelessness Task Force  
DISCUSSION: None.  
(VOTE: 4 - "AYES")  
CARRIED

For Waiver of Preliminary Consideration and Adoption of the First and Second Readings and for Final Adoption of an Ordinance Amending Chapter 15.03 of the Burlington Municipal Code to Add a Homelessness Task Force  
DISCUSSION: None.  
(VOTE: 4 - "AYES")  
ADOPTED

15.03 of the Burlington Municipal Code to Add a Homelessness Task Force  
DISCUSSION: None.  
(VOTE: 4 - "AYES")  
ADOPTED

RESOLUTION:  
Introduced By: Graham-Murray  
Seconded By: Billups

1. Resolution Approving Homelessness Task Force Pursuant to Code Section 15.03  
DISCUSSION: Chad Bird, City Manager, stated that this resolution outlines the terms of the task force and names the appointees. All present had opportunity to speak and nothing additional was filed in the office of the City Clerk.  
(VOTE: 4 - "AYES")  
ADOPTED

Adjournment: 8:17 p.m.  
Approved: November 6, 2023  
Katie Music, CMC, City Clerk  
Jon D. Billups, Mayor  
(See recording on file in the office of the City Clerk for complete discussion and documentation.)

**PUBLIC NOTICE MINUTES OF THE BURLINGTON, IOWA CITY COUNCIL INFORMAL WORK SESSION October 30, 2023**

The Burlington City Council met in an informal work session at 4:30 p.m. in the Thomas J. Smith Council Chambers, City Hall with Mayor Billups, Council Members Critser, Graham-Murray and Maupin present. Council Member Wilson was absent.

Items discussed at the informal work session are listed on the work session agenda on file in the office of the City Clerk. No action was taken.  
Adjournment: 5:54 p.m.  
Approved: November 6, 2023  
Chad Bird, City Manager  
Jon D. Billups, Mayor

#### PUBLIC NOTICE West Burlington Regular City Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday, October 18, 2023

The West Burlington City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at West Burlington City Hall, 122 Broadway Street, West Burlington, Iowa, with Mayor Ron Teater presiding.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ron Teater, Kathy Newberry, Andy Crowner, John Johnson, Therese Lees, and Melanie Young

MEMBERS ABSENT: ALSO PRESENT: Police Chief Jesse Logan, Public Works Director Mike Brissey, and City Administrator Gregg Mandsager

CALL TO ORDER  
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL  
PERFECTING & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Lees, seconded by Johnson, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Crowner, Johnson, Lees, and Young

CONSENT AGENDA  
• Minutes from the Regular City Council meeting on October 4, 2023

• Clerk's Monthly Financial Report for September 2023

• Consider the purchase of a Squad Car for the Police Department from Karl Chevrolet

• Payment to DMC GIS Commission for 7/1/23 - 9/30/23 - \$9,176.18

• Payment to Centre State International Trucks for repairs to a Fire Truck - \$5,945.35

• Payment to Snyder & Associates for engineering services related to Phase 2 of the Gear Ave. Trail Project - \$6,280

• Payment of Claims as listed on the Expense Approval Report (1) -

\$11,775.42  
Moved by Lees, seconded by Newberry, to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Crowner, Johnson, Lees, and Young

COUNCIL & STAFF REPORTS  
PROCLAMATIONS  
Proclaiming Red Ribbon Week October 23-31, 2023

CITIZEN INQUIRIES  
No inquiries.

PUBLIC HEARING  
Council held a Public Hearing to consider the adoption of a Capital Improvement Plan for Fiscal Years 2023 through 2027.

Mayor Teater opened the Public Hearing at 6:14 p.m. No written or verbal complaints were received.

Mayor Teater closed the Public Hearing at 6:16 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS  
NEW BUSINESS

Presentation of Financial Audit for FY22-23 by Bonsack & Frommelt

Mia Frommelt with Bonsack & Frommelt reviewed the year-end audit via Zoom with the council.

Mia informed the council that the city received an unmodified opinion, which is a clean opinion and the highest level of an auditor opinion. Financial activity highlights for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 analysis included the City's governmental activities decreased by 9.7%, disbursements of the city's governmental activities increased by 30.2%, and the city's total cash basis net position increased by 23.6%. Changes to the city's internal controls and compliance with laws and regulations were suggested last fiscal year with findings of improvement to overall transparency and operations.

Discuss status of K-9 Program and consider authorizing K-9 Officer Training Police Chief Logan and Officer Men-

# Classifieds/Public Notices

## PUBLIC NOTICES

nen updated the council on the department's K-9 fundraising efforts. Council supported Chief Logan's request to send Officer Mennen and the K9 to a November 2023 training where upon completion both will be nationally certified.

Greater Burlington Partnership request for contribution to the Partnering For the Future Campaign

Della Schmidt and Jeremy Hess, with the Great Burlington Partnership, addressed the council and gave several examples of how the Partnership has lent its efforts to highlight the City of West Burlington.

The Partnership is seeking a contribution from the city of \$50,000 over the next five years as an investment to support the "Partnering for the Future" capital campaign, an increase of \$25,000 from the previous request due to rising costs and demands in our community. Hess explained, from an

economic development perspective, the Greater Burlington Partnership cannot disclose all behind-the-scenes endeavors, but West Burlington is critical in the growth of the region, and the Partnership is excited for the opportunity to continue to build a thriving community. The council will reconsider the request at the next City Council Meeting. No action was taken during the meeting.

Consider a Resolution adopting the West Burlington Capital Improvement Plan for Fiscal Years 2023 through 2027

Council considered a Resolution to adopt the West Burlington Capital Improvement Plan for Fiscal Years 2023-2027. The five-year plan is required of Iowa cities as a legislative and management tool to facilitate the scheduling, planning, and execution of a series of public improvements.

Moved by Crouner, seconded by Johnson, to approve a Resolution

adopting the five-year plan. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Crouner, Johnson, Lees, and Young

Consider amending Resolution 2023-48 concerning the sale of surplus property

Council considered amending a Resolution that authorized the disposal of surplus vehicles. Public Works Director Brissey explained to the council that the description listed of the Surplus Property in Resolution 2023-48 needed to be modified to sell a take-off bed, two tailgates, and two bumpers separately.

Moved by Lees, seconded by Young, to approve amending Resolution 2023-48. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Crouner, Johnson, Lees, and Young

Consider the first reading of an Ordinance establishing regulations for Solar Energy Systems

City Administrator Mandsager summarized the proposed ordinance and informed the council that the current code does not address uniform rules and policies for ground-mounted solar energy systems on commercial and industrial properties. Mandsager explained that the section intends to serve as a guideline to ensure solar energy systems are appropriately designed, sited, and installed. Councilman Crouner requested staff adjust the verbiage describing the minimum size of a ground-mounted solar energy system during the second reading as it is too restrictive.

Moved by Lees, seconded by Young, to approve the first reading of an Ordinance establishing regulations for Solar Energy Systems. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Crouner, Lees, and Young

Nays: Johnson

Consider a Resolution accepting a contingency agreement regarding the acquisition of title for right-of-way related to the Gear Ave. Trail Project

Council considered a Resolution acquiring property from Westland Mall Realty Holding LLC, by a Warranty Deed, for the construction of the pedestrian and bike trail for the Gear Ave. Trail Project.

Moved by Lees, seconded by Young, to approve a Resolution accepting a contingency agreement regarding the acquisition of title for right-of-way related to the Gear Ave. Trail Project.

Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Crouner, Johnson, Lees, and Young

CITIZEN INQUIRIES CLOSED SESSION ADJOURN

Moved by Lees, seconded by Young, to adjourn at 8:32 p.m. Motion carried by the following votes:

Ayes: Newberry, Crouner, Johnson, Lees, and Young

Approved  
Ron Teater, Mayor  
Kelly D. Fry, City Clerk

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General Manager

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## From the Front



Photos by Chuck Vandenberg/PCC

Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission celebrated its 50th Anniversary this year with an open house last week in West Burlington.



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## SEIRPC's path highlighted with accomplishments

**ANNIVERSARY** - Continued from Page 1

east Iowa group getting tapped as Region 16.

SEIRPC was formed in 1973 with Des Moines, Lee, Henry, and Louisa counties creating a mutual agreement.

The first regional development plan from the group was created five years later in 1978 to help drive economics, demographics, housing, and transportation within that region.

Norris said the other intent of the commission was to serve as an extension of local governmental staffs within the four-county region.

Norris said Mike Dunn, a current board member on Southeast Iowa Regional and Economic Port Authority (SIREPA), started bringing people together in the early 70s to take advantage of legislation and grants that were being rolled out for infrastructure and housing.

"Each city didn't have the staff to manage all that stuff because of lot of the grants required you have a plan in place," Norris said. "So you needed something you could scale and that became all these regional planning commissions.

"We were needed to help solve issues across boundaries and to serve as staff for all these communities where it didn't make sense to do it themselves."

The group started with offices in Burlington and Keokuk, but then consolidated the offices to Burlington in 1980. The group became involved in helping mitigate the flooding crisis of 1993, and then established the first Revolving Loan Fund in 1994. In 1995, they established an affiliation with the Iowa DOT to plan and program federal transportation funds and then grew regionally for about 10 years before starting SEIBUS, a regional public transportation system.

In 2010, SEIRPC closed on its own office space in West Burlington, where it currently stands.

Another hallmark moment for the group came in 2012 when they established the Great River Housing Trust, which has been focused on improving housing stock and assisting low-income families with home ownership and maintenance.

In 2014, the SIREPA was formed under the umbrella of SEIRPC and, then in 2019, Norris and SEIRPC ushered in the Homes For Iowa program, an offender-based home construction program in conjunction with the state's Department of Corrections. The last big addition for SEIRPC was the permanent SEIBUS garage also on Gear Avenue in West Burlington.

Currently, 28 cities and the four counties pay dues to the commission in exchange for grant writing services, grant administration, planning, technical assistance, management of public funds and programs...and just about anything else to which the region would look first to SEIRPC.

Earlier this summer, Fort Madison asked Norris and SEIRPC to help set up a structure to find a replacement for its vacant city manager position, which surprised even Norris. But since that time, another community has reached out for the same services.

"Didn't see that coming," Norris said Thursday.

"This is a wave. You're not sure which direction the wind's going to blow or how big the wave is going to be. It's always an evolution."

Norris said the group, consisting of 20 employees in five different departments, tries to be very proactive with things, but a lot of the work the group does is reactive to the requests of the agencies in the region. He said that's the service they provide and he doesn't see it changing.

"It's like looking at yourself in the mirror 20 years ago. You're still you, but that was 20 years ago. You've changed, every day changes you somehow. Each conversation, what's happening in the world. It's a similar thing here," he said.

"You have to be ready to change. What you can't change is how you develop and keep relationships. And you can't change the quality of the work and the interactions."

Asked how SEIRPC sustains the changing governmental landscape, Norris said "We just keep picking up the phone."

There's Snow  
Place Like Home  
for the Holidays.



Pen City Current will not publish an e-Edition Monday, December 25 through Friday, January 5.

Our special 2023 Year In Review editions will publish

Wednesday, January 3 through Friday, January 5.

Breaking news will continue to be published on our website 24/7.

As we take time for our family this holiday, we thank you for your support and patronage and wish you all a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

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