

Muscatine County Board of Supervisors
Monday, May 23, 2011

The Muscatine County board of Supervisors met in regular session at 7:00 P.M. with Furlong, Howard, Watkins, Kelly and Sorensen present. Chairperson Watkins presiding.

On a motion by Kelly, second by Furlong, the agenda was approved as written. Ayes: All.

Discussion was held with Information Services Director Bill Riley regarding internet connection services to replace the County's current GIS system. Riley stated that there would be an increase of \$125 per month for MME20 service with a 5 year contract. On a motion by Howard, second by Kelly, the Board authorized the Chair to execute an agreement with Muscatine Power & Water for internet connection services. Ayes: All.

Discussion was held with Zoning Administrator Jodeen Stepleton regarding the vacant Building Inspector position. Stepleton stated that many aspects of both jobs were being neglected. Stepleton said the State is coming out with new plumbing and HVAC codes and with upcoming permit changes, building codes, electrical codes, learning zoning, researching issues and updating ordinances, they would need a full time building inspector at least until she got her feet on the ground. Howard asked if she had looked into utilizing City services as a way of holding off on the position for a while. Stepleton responded that she had not spoken with City officials and that inspections had almost doubled since more homeowners are doing their own construction due to the economy.

Howard stated he is concerned about whether a full time inspector is needed. Watkins suggested a part time inspector. Kelly stated that this would be a good time to combine with the City. Watkins stated that County fees would have to be considerably higher to pay the City inspector. Kelly said that it would be the perfect opportunity to work together with the City to save money and have one department doing all the inspections by the same standards. Sorensen stated that for a short term solution the County should explore other options such as contracting with individuals or other cities and pool resources. Furlong agreed with looking into other contract inspectors. Board consensus was for Stepleton to contact the City of Muscatine to explore options and report back to the Board of Supervisors.

Stepleton updated the Board on the status of five flood-plain projects as follows:

- 403 IT (Immediate Threat) PW #10242/expended-\$239,220/ received to date-\$215,092
- 403 PHS (Public Health & Safety) PW #10561/expended \$123,377/ received to date/ \$112,151
- 404 Acquisition Demo PW #9638-1/ expended \$154,447/ received to date \$128,864
- 404 Acquisition Dr-1763-0039-1/ expended \$668,338/ received to date \$663,023
CDBG/ expended \$183,384/ received to date \$183,641

Stepleton reported that Bi-State is reviewing the County's agreement to determine if they could provide demolition oversight for the one CDGB dwelling as part of the County's membership fee or if a separate charge and contract would be required.

A monthly meeting was held with Community Services Director Mike Johannsen.

Johannsen reviewed the General Assistance Budget Update and Director's Report stating that expenditures are at 73.5% with a target of 83% and funerals are over budget.

Johannsen reviewed the Veterans Affairs Budget Update and Report.

Veterans Affairs Commission Chairman Toby Strause addressed the Board regarding the County Veterans Affairs structure, stating that with ongoing wars and more veterans coming into the system it was almost overwhelming and it's time to streamline the office. Strause said that Muscatine has always given good service and this proposal is just continuation of that service. Furlong stated that this would be a major change from how the office was set up to efficiently use office space and resources from Community Services. Watkins stated that one thing that had been a benefit over the years was being able to get assistance from the Community Service staff and budget when needed and they had always worked well together. Strause said that the issue is the chain of command; they would like Veterans Affairs Administrator Sara Creamer to answer to the Commission and the Commission answer to the Board rather than have Creamer answer to Community Services. Watkins stated that there had been other situations where the County was responsible but had no control over a department or individual and that is a concern. Strause stated that Creamer needs to be a department head, because the only focus is Veterans Affairs it would better serve the County to be a separate department and not under anybody. Furlong stated that it's working very well and they had no complaints until these tonight and as a veteran himself he is committed and feels the County has been more than generous but this is moving more money beyond what needs to be done to effectively serve the people. Kelly asked why this was back on the agenda when it was just recently decided, stating that the department had more benefits where they are, adding that on their own they would have to pay rent, receptionist and supplies which would take away money from the veterans. Furlong stated that he would like the VA commission to expand to a five person board to have more coverage and revisit the request in the future. Johannsen stated that the conversation had illuminated part of the issue, that we don't look like other counties, and the proposal is built around partnership. Howard stated that the commission has a safety net and they really need to think about what they are asking for. Strause requested that the new County Attorney give an opinion. Board consensus was to consider expanding the commission to 5 members and request a new County Attorney opinion.

Johannsen reviewed the Case Management Budget Update and CM Coordinator's Report.

Johannsen reviewed the Trust Budget Update and Director's Report.

Johannsen reviewed the CPC Budget Update and Director's Report.

Discussion was held with Maintenance Supervisor Troy Sievert regarding the purchase of a new lawn tractor and mower deck. Sievert stated that he had been looking around and it was becoming more difficult and more costly to purchase lawn tractors with hydraulics which would be necessary for pushing snow in the winter. Board consensus was for Sievert to get another bid and make his own decision.

Discussion was held regarding the scope of work to include in the Muscatine County Courthouse Main Roof and Tower Rehabilitation Project. Sievert stated that he spoke with Doug Steinmetz and he is enthusiastic about working with the County but we need to decide on a project to get an exact price. Board consensus was to bid everything listed but with certain items listed as alternates and review an update at the June 6th meeting.

Sievert requested direction as to when it is necessary to get bids and when it was okay to purchase what is needed. The Board will have an in-depth meeting with all department heads to discuss this and develop a policy.

On a motion by Howard, second by Kelly, minutes of the Monday, May 16, 2011 regular meeting were approved as written. Ayes: All.

Correspondence:

Howard received calls regarding the newspaper report on Deputy Wade.

Committee Reports:

Furlong attended a WELEAD meeting May 19th.

Kelly attended a Decategorization meeting May 16th.

Howard and Watkins attended a Wilton Chamber of Commerce Government luncheon May 19th.

On a motion by Furlong, second by Kelly, the Board accepted the May, 2011 payroll claims. Ayes: All.

Administrative Services Director Nancy Schreiber explained the proposed health and dental benefits changes which included 3 levels of coverage at different costs to the employee. On a motion by Howard, second by Furlong, the Board authorized the Chair to execute paperwork necessary to complete the July 1, 2011 health and dental benefits renewal with Wellmark, Inc. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Kelly, second by Howard, the Board approved the proposed health and dental premiums effective July 1, 2011. Ayes: All.

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On a motion by Kelly, second by Furlong, the Board approved the renewal of the County's vision insurance coverage with Fidelity Security Life Insurance Company effective July 1, 2011. Ayes: All.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 P.M.

ATTEST:

Leslie A. Soule, County Auditor

David H. Watkins, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors