

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2026

At 9:00 a.m., Chairperson Jack Seward, Jr. called to order in regular session a meeting of the Washington County Board of Supervisors which took place at Orchard Hill. Items on the agenda included the following: Pledge of Allegiance, approval of agenda, public comment related to agenda items, Kirkwood Learning Connection report and FY27 funding request, 4-H/Outreach and Extension report and FY27 funding request, personnel change requests – Sheriff's Office, personnel change requests – Secondary Roads, action regarding budget directive for FY27, Department Head comment, adjourn.

Supervisors Marcus Fedler, Bob Yoder, and Richard Young were also present. Stan Stoops was absent.

Other individuals in attendance included Kristine Bullock with Kirkwood Learning Connection, Andy Miller with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Amy Green with Washington County 4-H, County Engineer Jacob Thorius, County Sheriff Jared Schneider, Chief Deputy Sheriff Chad Ellis, Outreach Director Joe Williams, and Public Health Fiscal Administrator Peggy Wood. Various other individuals listened and/or watched remotely via Zoom.

Seward led the individuals assembled in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

All motions were passed unanimously unless noted otherwise.

On motion by Fedler, seconded by Yoder, the Board voted to approve the agenda as published.

There was no public comment.

Workplace Learning Connection (WLC) Director Kristine Bullock shared that WLC is a department of Kirkwood Community College (KCC) and covers the entire Kirkwood seven-county area. WLC formally contracts with each of the various school districts in the KCC area to provide career exploration programming for students in grades six through twelve with partial funding support provided by each county. According to Bullock the goal of WLC is to serve as a single point for connecting students and businesses for career exploration experiences and to assist students in determining their future career. With that goal in mind Bullock provided an overview of the various activities and opportunities that WLC provides which include classroom speakers, work site and industry tourism events, financial literacy training, career fairs, job shadows, apprenticeships, mock interviews, and internships. Bullock stated Washington County shows a 27% increase in participation, a 28% increase in job shadows, and a 5% increase in internships from last year. For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, Bullock asked the Board for no change in the \$2,256.50 funding that the County currently provides. The funding is used to offset the costs of the continued operation of the program, as well as expansion into more fields. The Board took no formal action.

Director Andy Miller gave an update on the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach program, stating they have a nine-member board of Washington County residents and receive funding based on the Land Grant Mission Smith Lever Act of 1914, receiving \$0.19 per thousand of tax payers' dollars. The program is instrumental in educating the general public and school age children on the importance of farming and is the introduction to the Iowa State University research base. Youth development, ag resources and training, health, well-being, and first aid classes, as well as economic development are all vital items the program brings to the county. Miller requests continual use of the county donated area for the existing Donation Garden and requested increasing the size from 25'x50' to 50'x50'. This garden produced 450 pounds of food last year which was donated to Hawkeye Area Community Action Program (HACAP). The Board took no formal action.

Youth Coordinator, Amy Green, then updated the Board on Washington County 4-H, giving a reminder of what 4-H stands for: Heart, Hands, Head, and Health. Green stated the 4-H is no longer only for farming and the goal is to give new experiences and skills to children from Kindergarten through 12th grade. Research show that participation in the program leads to more community involvement and leadership later in life. Washington County's organization is the third

largest in Iowa with 407 participants. There are currently 437 enrolled for this school year. Green provided information on many of the different clubs and activities available for children and adults, including nine summer day camps serving 197 children with over 100 hours of programming. The organization has 160 adult volunteers logging approximately 5,000 hours of service. There is no specific funding request to the county.

On motion by Fedler, seconded by Yoder, that Board approved, and authorized the Chairperson to sign, a personnel change request for the Sheriff's Office for the hiring of Blake Honeycutt as a full-time Deputy Sheriff, at the rate of \$33.97 hourly, effective January 12, 2026.

On motion by Yoder, seconded by Fedler, the Board approved, and authorized the Chairperson to sign, a personnel change request for the Sheriff's Office for the hiring of Jacob Baughman as a full-time jailer, at the rate of \$29.60 hourly, effective January 8, 2026.

On motion by Young, seconded by Yoder, the Board approved, and authorized the Chairperson to sign, a personnel change request for Secondary Roads for the termination of Mechanic Jerry Turner, effective January 2, 2026. Turner retired after three years of service.

On motion by Fedler, seconded by Young, the Board approved, and authorized the Chairperson to sign, a personnel change request for Secondary Roads for the termination of Equipment Operator Rob Johnson, effective January 2, 2026. Johnson retired after 25 years of service.

Discussion occurred regarding the county budget directive for FY27. Chairperson Seward requested the Board make a decision on holding departments to a zero percent increase and for ideas on how to lower the county cost of operating. Fedler stated that with salary increases of 2.8% the Board should look at requesting a 5% decrease in budget amounts, outside of labor costs, for the upcoming year, adding that departments need to find a way to decrease spending before the Board takes action to force it. Seward would like to see an accounting of all actual spending by departments and look for ways to reduce. Young informed the Board that a 5% decrease was attempted in the past with no results, while also acknowledging that some departments simply cannot make 5% cuts and it is difficult to determine or control outside costs. Young also wants departments to be looking five to ten years in the future to plan for upcoming expenses. Fedler stated that layoffs are a way to curb costs when departments have no other means. He wants clear direction and transparency on budgets and spending from county entities.

After further discussion, Fedler made a motion for all departments to recommend options to the Board to reduce their budgets by 5%, outside of labor costs. Young seconded this motion.

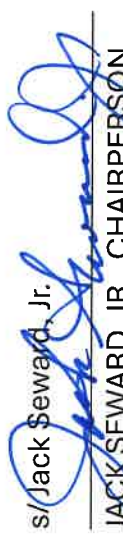
There was no Department Head comment.

At 10:11 a.m. on motion by Fedler, seconded by Young, the Board voted to adjourn.

ATTEST:

s/Tamera S. Stewart


TAMERA S. STEWART
Washington County Auditor

s/Jack Seward, Jr.

JACK SEWARD, JR., CHAIRPERSON
Washington County Board of Supervisors