

Muscatine County Board of Supervisors
Monday, March 28, 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.

Lee Miller, Chairperson of the Civil War Monument, noted that no new bids were received for the existing column of the Civil War Monument and that the only bidder is still interested. On a motion by Howard, second by Kelly, the Board approved a bid from Tom and Cindy Kautz who are agreeing to pay all expenses associated with the removal and transfer of the existing column of the Civil War Monument to their farm. Ayes: All.

Discussion was held with County Attorney Alan Ostergren regarding additional staffing for the County Attorney's Office. Ostergren presented the Board with 2009 data showing that Muscatine County had 5,176 indictable offense convictions which averaged 1,294 convictions per attorney. Ostergren stated that he would rather not have to ask for money, and wishes Dana Christiansen and Kerrie Snyder had stayed, but there is no other mission more important to the County than public safety and law enforcement. Ostergren stated he would not be doing his job if he did not inform the Board of a serious concern that they don't have the resources to achieve their mission. Ostergren stated that no matter what this Board gives him, he will do his best to enforce the law, but he cannot do all the things the community wants him to do if doesn't have the resources and that he is only asking for bare essentials to accomplish the County's mission. Sorensen asked if he has gone out looking for an experienced attorney. Ostergren stated he has not posted a position yet, but in his previous experience of hiring a replacement for Christiansen, he saw no experienced candidates. Kelly suggested that if Ostergren had not capped the salary in the ad then he might get an applicant with more experience. Ostergren stated the ad made it clear that a more qualified applicant could get a higher salary. Howard stated he has heard accusations that he may have used his position to encourage Christiansen and Snyder to leave. Ostergren stated those rumors are wrong as they are his friends and he never asked them to leave. Ostergren stated that Christiansen had an opportunity to work 10 minutes from his residence instead of commuting an hour and Snyder is taking an opportunity closer to home. Ostergren stated that both attorneys are moving to larger counties and higher salaries. Furlong stated his feeling is that Ostergren can still stay within the budget by hiring two inexperienced persons or one experienced with a half time inexperienced attorney. Kelly stated that he has an intern too. Ostergren stated the intern is scheduled through the summer and handles traffic tickets and disorderly conduct. Furlong stated bottom line he would like Ostergren to stay within budget. Watkins stated that if Ostergren hires another inexperienced attorney then he is spending a lot of time training and maybe he should advertise a position at the Snyder's salary level to see if he can get a more experienced attorney. Sorensen stated that a year ago there were five experienced attorneys and now two experienced so at a minimum Ostergren should be looking at a seasoned attorney.

On a motion by Furlong, second by Kelly, the Board authorized Ostergren to proceed with the hiring of a replacement attorney up to the salary of the person who vacated the position. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Howard, the Board authorized Ostergren to move forward with additional staffing within his current budget. Ayes: Furlong, Howard, Kelly and Sorensen. Nay: Watkins.

Discussion was held with Sheriff Dave White on a request for additional staffing in conjunction with the Jail expansion. White stated that he currently has 72 federal inmates and 60 Johnson County inmates with more on the way so the new pod has filled faster than he originally anticipated. White stated that his current inmate count is 198 with a maximum occupancy of 254. Howard asked how current staffing fits in with the original plan for the expanded Jail. White stated that his current staffing level was based on 200 inmates, but that with more on the way he would be up to 230-240 inmates by the time additional staff could be hired and trained. White requested three additional full-time and three additional part-time correction officers. White stated that Commissary traffic has exploded due to expansion of the Jail and he needs a second 29-hour Commissary employee to be paid from Commissary proceeds. The Board will act on the requested positions next week.

Discussion was held with County Auditor Leslie Soule regarding possible abatement of taxes on an unknown owner parcel that is actually owned by Balwant Rai Suri and Mark K. Suri, Co-Trustees of the Family Trust. Soule stated that the parcel in question was erroneously listed as unknown owner years ago, when it was actually owned by the Suri family. Since the property tax bills were never mailed to Suri because of the parcel's unknown owner status, Soule requested that the delinquent taxes in the amount of \$92.00 be abated. Howard stated that the property owners knew they owned the property and should have to pay the taxes. Watkins stated they did not know they were not receiving the tax bills and that most of the abatement is for penalty and interest. On a motion by Furlong, second by Kelly, the Board approved Resolution #03-28-11-01 Abating Delinquent Taxes, Interest, Fees and Costs on Parcel #13-06-276-007 owned by Balwant Rai Suri and Mark K. Suri, Co-Trustees of the Family Trust, in the amount of \$92.00. Roll call vote: Ayes: Furlong, Watkins, Kelly and Sorensen. Nay: Howard.

On a motion by Kelly, second by Howard, the Board approved Change Proposal Request #CPR-01 for the Muscatine County Courthouse HVAC Project in the amount of \$2,565.00 for use of anodized grilles in the wooden cabinets. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Howard, second by Kelly, minutes of the Monday, March 21, 2011 regular meeting were approved as written. Ayes: All.

Correspondence:

All Board members received emails and phone calls regarding proposed staffing changes in the County Attorney's Office.

Howard received several concerns regarding property taxes.

The Board received Notice of a Proposed Assessment Settlement Agreement between Warehouse Distributing and the Muscatine County Board of Review.

The Board received authorization from the Chief Jail Inspector for the Iowa Department of Corrections to begin transition into the jail addition and granting until April 1, 2011 to complete transition from the Work Release Center.

Committee Reports:

Sorensen attended a Regional Workforce Investment Board meeting March 22nd. Kelly and Watkins attended a Bi-State Regional Meeting March 23rd.

Howard attended a Conservation Board meeting March 21st.

Furlong attended a Muscatine County Solid Waste Management meeting March 24th.

Furlong attended a Muscatine County Fair Board meeting March 24th.

On a motion by Kelly, second by Howard, the Board appointed Carol Schlueter to the Muscatine County Board of Adjustment for a 5-year term ending March 31, 2016. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Furlong, the Chairperson was authorized to execute the Iowa/Byrne – Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program/RSAT/ARRA(2009) Continuation Application in the amount of \$138,749.00. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Kelly, second by Furlong, the Board approved appointing a 5-person Temporary County Redistricting Commission. Ayes: All. The action to approve the appointees will be on a future agenda.

On a motion by Furlong, second by Sorensen, the Board authorized mileage reimbursement for the Muscatine County representative to the Riverbend Transit Board of Directors. Ayes: All.

Administrative Service Director Nancy Schreiber stated she received 8 applications for the Zoning Administrator position and 14 applications for the Maintenance Supervisor position. Board consensus was for Schreiber to review the Zoning Administrator applications and for Supervisor Sorensen to review the applications for Maintenance Supervisor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

ATTEST:

Leslie A. Soule, County Auditor

David H. Watkins, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors

Muscatine County Board of Supervisors
Monday, April 4, 2011

The Muscatine County Board of Supervisors met in regular session at 9:00 A.M. with Furlong, Howard, Watkins, Kelly and Sorensen present. Chairperson Watkins presiding.

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

Administrative Services Director Nancy Schreiber informed the Board that the claims dated April 4, 2011 include a settlement payment to Travis Norton in the amount of \$2,500.

Administrative Services Director Nancy Schreiber updated the Board on a staffing plan for the County Attorney's Office. Schreiber stated the plan includes the hiring of an experienced attorney at a salary up to \$74,000 and the hiring of a Witness Coordinator. Schreiber stated that a budget amendment may be required as the FY2011-2012 County Attorney Budget was reduced by approximately \$22,000 because of Dana Christiansen's resignation and the assumption that an attorney would be hired at a lower salary than Christiansen. Watkins stated they could just approve the class specification, but not authorize hiring yet. Kelly stated she is not ready to create a brand new position as there are other departments that have positions that have never been filled because of lack of funds and she does not want to be pressured into filling this position. Sorensen stated an experienced attorney should be hired first and then the Board can look at whether or not it wants to consider a budget amendment to add a Witness Coordinator. Board consensus was to fill the vacant Attorney position and then look at its effect on the budget before deciding whether to create the position of Witness Coordinator.

On a motion by Kelly, second by Furlong, claims dated April 4, 2011 were approved in the amount of \$1,135,653.21. Ayes: All.

Discussion was held with Project Manager Stu Willits regarding change orders for the Muscatine County Courthouse HVAC Project. Willits stated that Change Order #1 is for changes in ductwork and Change Order #2 is to install backdraft dampers. Howard stated he has an issue with the change orders because the bidders should have known what equipment is available and its cost and they also knew about the fancy woodwork on the third floor. Willits agreed, but stated that when they bid it, they were bidding it tight. Watkins stated you are always going to have change orders as no one can foresee everything, but he agrees with Howard that the equipment that is no longer available under Change Order #2 should have been ordered before it stopped being manufactured. Furlong stated there is a contingency fund for these change orders. On a motion by Furlong, second by Kelly, the Board approved Change Order #1 in the amount of \$10,785.48 and Change Order #2 in the amount of \$3,503.70 for the Muscatine County Courthouse HVAC Project. Ayes: All.

Discussion was held with Sheriff White regarding proposed additional staffing for the Jail. Sheriff White stated that inmate counts are running anywhere from 198 – 212, with 79 federal inmates, which is more than they have ever housed. White stated they become understaffed at the point of 200 inmates and he is looking at the likelihood of being up in the 230-240 inmate count range by summer. Kelly asked where White anticipated the staffing level would be when the expansion was completed. White stated that he expected 170-180 with locals and federals, with staffing to handle up to 200 inmates. White stated the reason he needs more employees at this time is because he now anticipates the inmate count going upwards of 220 - 230. Howard asked what happens if they do not maintain an inmate count of 220 - 230. White stated he would layoff employees if numbers drop back down, but every indication he has is that they are going to be getting more, not less. On a motion by Furlong, second by Howard, the Board authorized the Sheriff to hire three additional full-time correctional officers and three additional part-time correctional officers. Ayes: All.

County Auditor Leslie Soule presented the Board with the Muscatine County Infrastructure Committee's Report on building conditions and usage. Soule emphasized that the options presented are not necessarily recommendations of the Committee and it is up to the Board to decide what to do with each building. Discussion ensued. The Board directed Budget Coordinator Sherry Seright to look at the possibility of replacing the HVAC at the DHS building with a geothermal system. Dan Clark, Muscatine Friends of Historic Preservations, stated that his group will meet in April to discuss the Old Historic Jail and would be interested in an opportunity to tour the building. The Board suggested they also look at the Old Sheriff House/Jail. The Board directed County Auditor Leslie Soule to pursue removal of the oil tank used with the old HVAC system for the Courthouse. The Board thanked the committee for their hard work and time commitment, especially Jim Noble and Marsha Schenkel, the two citizens on the committee. Further discussion and decision regarding the Muscatine County Infrastructure Committee's Report will be held in the future.

On a motion by Kelly, second by Howard, the Board approved the Muscatine County Treasurer's Office Report of Fees Collected for the quarter ending March 31, 2011 in the amount of \$108,107.85. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Howard, second by Furlong, minutes of the Monday, March 28, 2011 regular meeting were approved as written. Ayes: All.

Correspondence:

Howard received calls regarding roads and taxes.

Watkins received a call regarding a road that he passed on to the Engineer.

Sorensen received emails following up on County Attorney proposed staffing.

No committee reports were noted.

On a motion by Furlong, second by Sorensen, the Board authorized the Chairperson to sign an extension to the contract with the Office of Energy Independence for a State Energy Program grant for the Courthouse HVAC project. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Furlong, second by Kelly, the Board authorized the Chairperson to sign a letter allocating the tax deduction under IRS Section EPAct 179D to The Durrant Group, Inc. Ayes: All.

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

Administrative Services Director Nancy Schreiber was directed to schedule interviews with candidates for the positions of Maintenance Supervisor and Zoning Administrator as recommended by Sorensen and herself.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 A.M.

ATTEST:

Laura Perley, First Deputy County Auditor

Kas Kelly, Vice - Chairperson
Board of Supervisors