The Board of Supervisors of the County of Black Hawk, in the State of Iowa, met in regular adjourned meeting at the Courthouse in Waterloo, County Seat of said County, at nine o'clock (9:00) a.m., pursuant to law, to the rules of said Board, and to adjournment. The meeting was called to order and on roll call there were present: Linda Laylin, Tom Little, Dan Trelka, and Chris Schwartz, Chair.

Absent: Craig White.

Unless otherwise noted, all actions were approved unanimously, White absent.

Moved by Little, seconded by Trelka that the AGENDA be received and place on file with the County Auditor as approved. Motion carried.

The Board considered various aspects of the FY21 Black Hawk County Budget. Numerous employees from the court system, the County Attorney’s Office, and the Public Defender’s Office, including County Attorney Brian Williams, Chief District Court Judge Kellyann Lekar, District Court Judge George Stigler, and Clerk of Court Arnell Ernst, expressed support for increasing the presence of deputy sheriffs in the courthouse, saying that respect for the court system and its representatives has declined in the past few years, that violence and threats of violence make not only employees fearful but also juries and the public, that raw feelings come to the surface in both criminal and civil cases, that it will be more difficult to get people to sit on juries if they feel the courthouse is unsafe, that justice may not be done if jurors are influenced in their decisions by threatening behavior, and so on.

They felt that the feelings expressed on the Board that the problem was minimal and shouldn’t cause an increase in taxation were mistaken, and urged the Board to approve two deputies to patrol the courthouse. Schwartz said the county’s Security Committee would meet that day at 3 pm and would be making recommendations to the Board about security at the courthouse and Pinecrest.

Finance Director James Perry then touched on several other budget issues. He asked the Board’s direction on addressing the unequal distribution of new taxes occasioned by state valuation orders. He said that one option is to move expenses from the Rural Fund to the General Fund, and another is to reduce the amount of the annual transfer of funds from the Rural Fund to the Secondary Road Fund. The Board looked at the effect of the tentative county budget on sample farms of 100, 200, and 300 acres. Laylin said that she would want a good argument for why expenditures currently borne by the rural taxpayers should be shifted to urban taxpayers. Schwartz said that he didn’t think the increase of the county tax on such farms was enough to make those changes.

Trelka moved the following resolution seconded by Laylin.

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Rural Fund transfer to the Secondary Roads Fund be maintained at 95% of the maximum allowed.

AYES: Laylin, Little, Trelka, Schwartz.
NAYS: None.


The Board heard a presentation from Library Services on the use of libraries in the county and the benefits accruing from them. They asked for an increase from $150,000 to $169,000 to move closer to the state per capita average of county support to libraries.

Perry said that he needed to fix on figures to publish for what the maximum tax askings in the general and rural funds will be for purposes of the newly legislated preliminary public hearing. The Board discussed what amount ought to be tentatively included in the budget as a placeholder for nonprofit agencies requesting county funding.

Trelka moved the following resolution seconded by Laylin.

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED to tentatively put $100,000 in the budget as a placeholder for nonprofit agencies requesting county funding.

Schwartz said that he felt the amount should be $150,000.

AYES: Laylin, Little, Trelka.
NAYS: Schwartz.


The Board discussed security concerns at the courthouse and at Pinecrest. County Sheriff Tony Thompson said that in his proposal to increase the Utility Squad, which takes inmates to trial, moves them out of town for extraditions, and is available for additional security in trials, from six to eight, one could be paid from inmate room and board fees or a combination of that and County Attorney fine collections, but not the other. Superintendent of Maintenance Rory Geving described the door lock system being put into place at Pinecrest.

The Board discussed funding for the Grundy Road project, considering bonding for the full project or using reserves for part of it. Perry said that if reserves are used for the requested Health Department clinic, he recommends bonding for the full road project. Little said that if bond interest rates remain low it makes sense to bond. Laylin asked that Speer Financial, the county’s financial adviser firm, address the question at the February 11 Board meeting.

After a recess, the Board discussed the Health Department budget with director Nafissa Cisse Egbuonye. Then the supervisors reviewed the operating and salary and benefits requests from all county departments.

On motion and vote the meeting adjourned.