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, Craig White and Chris Schwartz, Chair.

Absent: None.

Unless otherwise noted, all actions were approved unanimously.

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

Moved by Laylin, seconded by Trelka that the TRAVEL REQUEST submitted by Chris Schwartz, County Supervisor, be approved and direct the Vice Chair to sign for same: not to exceed $3,020.03 to attend the NACo Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. scheduled for February 28, 2020 through March 4, 2020.

White asked Schwartz if his other employer could pay for part of the trip. Schwartz said that he works for Americans for Democratic Action, which is a private nonprofit organization, not a government organization. Trelka asked if he would give a report after the conference as he has in the past. Schwartz said he would. Laylin said that other supervisors may also participate in NACo and could possibly alternate. Schwartz said approval now would allow him to get the early-bird rate. Motion carried.

The Board discussed various aspects of the FY21 Black Hawk County Budget. Maintenance Supervisor Rory Geving presented the recommendation of the Building Security Committee regarding security at Pinecrest. He said the committee passed a recommendation at its February 6 meeting to use retired law enforcement officers there, but that subsequent research indicated that training and other expenses would raise the cost considerably above the original estimate. The committee met again on February 12, and after hearing from Todd Parman of Per Mar Security, the agency with the contract for courthouse security, the committee recommended that the county amend its contract with Per Mar to include 45 hour per week coverage at Pinecrest by security officers equipped to detain threatening individuals, armed with pepper spray, batons and handcuffs, at an approximate cost of $70,000 per year. He said that the Department of Human Services would pay about 18% of the cost based on its presence in the building.

The Board discussed the recommendation. White said that an officer with the ability to detain could result in greater liability to the county. Little expressed concerns about enforcing the policy on the use of key-fibbed doors. He said that a security officer responding to a first-floor incident from the fourth floor wouldn’t get there any faster than Waterloo police. Laylin said that the security arrangement should be evaluated after a time. Schwartz said that Per Mar would do a building survey after three or four months. Little said that employees surveyed would want more rather than less security. Laylin said that there should be a mechanism to track incidents.

Veterans Affairs Director Yolando Loveless said that at his staff is still shook up by the January 22 incident at Pinecrest, and there was another unstable individual at the office on February 10 that he was able to calm down, but he was indicative of a larger mental health crisis in the community.

Trelka said he would prefer to start with the less expensive option of an officer like those used in the courthouse.

Moved by Trelka, seconded by White to allocate $40,000 for unarmed security personnel at the Pinecrest office building pending approval of an amended contract with Per Mar Security and written assurance from the Department of Human Services that it would include said security personnel in its eligible building reimbursement expenses.

Schwartz said that he would vote no because he supports the Security Committee’s recommendation. He said the committee consensus was for a security officer who could detain an individual. He said such an officer could respond to a call within a minute from anywhere in the building. Geving said that security staff like that at the courthouse would not be able to detain an individual, and would need to call the Sheriff’s Office for assistance. Motion carried, Laylin and Schwartz voting no.

Finance Director James Perry shared a letter from the IRS to the County 4-H & FFA Foundation providing their taxpayer identification number, saying this was their proof of their 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. White said that taxpayer identification numbers aren’t proof of nonprofit status. Schwartz said that based on the letter and what County 4-H told him on the phone he believed their 501(c)(3) status was established.

Moved by Little, seconded by Trelka to approve

Moved by Trelka, seconded by Little to approve $3,000 of the County 4-H & FFA Foundation request for $7,530. Motion carried, White voting no.

Perry said that with the changes made today, the county’s urban tax rate would increase from $6.30363/$1000 of taxable valuation to $6.32441, or 0.3%, and the rural rate would increase from $9.87857 to $9.96666, or 0.9%. He said overall county tax assessments would increase $134,131 from $39,892,168 to $39,926,299, or 0.34%. He said that county taxes on a residential property assessed at $100,000 would decrease by $10.48, or 2.52%, and county taxes on an agricultural property would increase by $13.97, or 2.52%. He said the discrepancy was due to the uneven effects of the state-calculated rollback to the taxable value of different classes of property.

The supervisors commended past boards, each other, and other county staff for the county’s strong financial position and the good things being accomplished in the FY21 budget. Perry said that under a new Iowa law, the Board will hold a preliminary hearing on March 5, at which maximum levies for the general and rural funds must be approved. If the levies are more than 102% of the budgeted amounts for those funds in FY20, approval must be by a 2/3 vote of the full Board membership (four votes). Since the general fund is set at a 6.8% increase and the rural fund at 2.6% (the increases being largely offset by a 14.9% decrease in the mental health services fund and a 32.3% decrease in the debt service fund), the Board will need the supermajority vote, and Perry asked that the supervisors tell him immediately if any feel they can not support the budget as proposed. White said that he will be arriving back from a trip too late to attend the March 5 meeting. Perry said the final budget hearing is scheduled for March 24.

Health Department Director Nafisa Cisse Eghbouyé said she understood the Board would be holding work sessions to discuss their request for a health clinic, and wanted to know what information she should provide. Schwartz said he would schedule work sessions starting the first week in April, and the supervisors can think about their questions in anticipation of that.
Little said that he was researching some of his questions with other counties and with resources within Black Hawk County, and he wasn’t sure he would be ready by the beginning of April. Laylin said she had questions to pose in work sessions. White said that they needed to be fiscally responsible with taxpayers’ money, and he wasn’t sure that the privacy that Ighuonye said a new clinic would provide was necessary.

On motion and vote the meeting adjourned.

Chris Schwartz, Chair, Board of Supervisors

Grant Veeder, County Auditor