

WAPELLO COUNTY BOARD PROCEEDINGS

DATE: 5-17-2011

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT: Jerry L. Parker, Chair; Steve Siegel, Vice Chair; Greg Kenning, Supervisor; Jennifer Vitko, CPC; Mark Eckman, Ottumwa Area Convention Visitors Bureau; Bob Kramer; Kelly Spurgeon, Auditor; Pam Norton, Auditor's Clerk.

Chair Parker called the meeting to order. Supervisor Kenning moved, seconded by Vice Chair Siegel to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

Mark Eckman, Ottumwa Area Convention Visitors Bureau, addressed the Board. He handed out a report and gave an overview of what's been going on since his last visit. A year ago when he came, there were only two Wapello County listings in *Vacation Iowa*. Now there are 18 listings.

He said it's an ongoing process updating their website. Their website has changed from visitOttumwa.com to exploreOttumwa.com. to become more inviting and applicable to residents as well. He thanked the Board for funding their website. He said it does a lot of good and is very much appreciated.

Supervisor Kenning moved, seconded by Vice Chair Siegel to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2011 Board meeting. Motion carried.

Chair Parker said when Mark Smoot resigned the Veterans Affairs Commission, Leo Vandello was appointed for a 3-year term. He should have been appointed to complete the unexpired term. He said Iowa Code requires this to be 3-year staggered appointments. To clarify, that term will expire 2012. Also, Ward Ransford was reappointed and his term should have expired in 2013. Vice Chair Siegel moved, seconded by Supervisor Kenning to re-establish these termination dates. Motion carried.

Vice Chair Siegel moved, seconded by Supervisor Kenning to approve paying the Wapello County Sheriff's Reserves for fiscal year 2010-2011. Motion carried.

Vice Chair Siegel moved, seconded by Supervisor Kenning to approve a tax suspension under Iowa Code 427.8. Motion carried.

Jennifer Vitko, CPC, spoke to the Board regarding House File 649. It allows Wapello County to rebate their current fund balance. She recommended rebating enough of the MH/DD fund balance at or below 10% (\$370,000.00) to pull down allowed growth, targeted growth and community services money for fiscal year 2012. This needs to be

rebated and in their hands by June 1, 2011. Following discussion, Vice Chair Siegel moved, seconded by Supervisor Kenning to rebate \$375,000 fund balance. Motion carried.

Discussion followed on proposed commercial property tax reform legislation. Supervisor Kenning said he believes something needs to be done about commercial property taxes. Bob Kramer, Ottumwa taxpayer and business owner, spoke to the Board and said he thinks the commercial property taxes in Ottumwa are really high. He believes lowering them would bring businesses into town that would also pay property taxes. He said the property tax he pays prevents him from hiring any others.

Supervisor Kenning said what he would like to see happen is a local plan based on the number of employees, offering abatements or suspensions if they can keep employees for a number of years. He said he'll be the first to admit we haven't done enough for the small business owner here. Vice Chair Siegel said he thinks the Board supports property tax reform but it needs to be targeted to smaller businesses.

Bob Kramer said he really feels that we've got to attract entrepreneurs and we're not going to attract them without being more competitive. He said, generally speaking, in the past when taxes were cut those economies grew.

County claims in the amount of \$717,347.40 and payroll in the amount of \$258,117.70 were approved.

10:28 a.m. Supervisor Kenning moved, seconded by Vice Chair Siegel to adjourn. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kelly Spurgeon
Wapello County Auditor

Jerry L. Parker, Chair
Board of Supervisors