

WAPELLO COUNTY BOARD PROCEEDINGS

DATE: 8-29-2016

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Greg Kenning, Chair; Jerry Parker, Vice Chair; Steve Siegel, Supervisor; Brian Moore, Engineer; Mark Newman, Courier; Mark Miller, Sheriff; Paul Culver, IT Director; Nick Davis, KBIZ; Connie Hammersley-Wilson, Chamber of Commerce; Kevin Hardy, Des Moines Register; Andrew Morris, City Administrator; Tom Lazio, Mayor; Keith & Trudy Caviness, Mike Grooms, Joe Parker, Beth Waldon, KTVO; Lisa Kent, Recorder; Roberta Neff, Treasurer; Mike Inman, John Graham, Josh Lunt, Butch Annis, Ron Palm, Tom Shafer, Matt Dalbey, Ottumwa City Council; Jefferson Tyler & Abby Whitaker, KYOU; Paul Munley; Kelly Spurgeon, Auditor; Pam Norton, Auditor's Clerk.

Chair Kenning opened the meeting. Vice Chair Parker stated that this was not a public hearing as the agenda stated, but a public reading. With that correction, Supervisor Siegel moved, Vice Chair Parker seconded to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

SECOND READING UNDER TITLE I, CHAPTER 8, POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION FOR CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF A PROPOSED ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A WAPELLO COUNTY MINIMUM WAGE. Supervisor Siegel said that he had copies of the Ordinance if anyone wanted one. Chair Kenning opened this second reading for public comment.

Connie Hammersley-Wilson, Chamber of Commerce, said the overwhelming majority believe this will have a negative impact on our community. They believe the board of supervisors should let it be handled at the state level. Nothing was added in the proposal about the youth wage, and they thought these points should be taken into consideration.

After reading the Ordinance, Trudy Caviness said she questions why the supervisors didn't create a minimum wage advisory task force as other counties have done. She discussed the county minimum wage with Iowa Work Force. They're not taking a stand at this time, waiting for any court cases. She said under Iowa Code, any business that has less than \$300,000 in gross sales doesn't apply to them. She wondered who will be the compliance agency in the county. City of Ottumwa and all municipalities could pass an ordinance and not be a part of this. If that's the case, then increase put on the farmers and anyone else who lives in the county.

Supervisor Siegel said he doesn't anticipate any law suit. County home rule, not levying a tax, consistent with state law. Johnson County has had no lawsuit in over a year.

Vice Chair Parker said they're not setting up a new agency. The easiest way to find out those not doing it is the employees will report that. If the legislature didn't want us to have this opportunity, cities and counties have the right to do this. There's no study out there that shows more unemployment, actually economy showed slight increase.

Connie Hammersley-Wilson said Seattle study showing adverse effects. I can get that to you before the end of the day.

Vice Chair Parker said 69% of lowans say they need an increase in minimum wage.

Butch Annis asked why having this meeting during the day when people work? Should put your time in roads, streets, buildings. Is your attorney here to help you out?

Trudy Caviness asked why did you chose not to have a task force. This feels rather rushed.

Butch Annis said whatever we say here you're going to do whatever you want. I'm a small business owner. I can't afford \$10.10/hr.

Josh Lunt said a family of two below the poverty line will lose entitlements if increase to \$10.10. People don't gain any more money until they make more than that. You're not really gaining anything unless \$5.00 increase.

Supervisor Siegel said we're subsidizing business. Should we do that?

Vice Chair Parker said nobody making minimum wage came in to complain. They lose stamps when get up to \$11/hr.

Chair Kenning said he'd hoped more people on minimum wage were here to talk to us about this. For two people just barely over the poverty line, then government has to take up the slack. We see people daily who are needing some kind of assistance. Most have jobs, just need to make ends meet.

Keith Caviness said I would encourage you to have some kind of study done before you pass the final piece of legislation.

Mike Inman said I don't deny people getting \$7.25/hr, it's tough out there. You should be more focused on education.

Chair Kenning asked how would you expect people to retrain on minimum wage? It seems to me we're really getting all bent around this \$.95 an hour increase. For some people sitting here that might be a latte and doughnut. I think the increase is needed. The Iowa legislature has kicked this on down the road.

Keith Caviness asked what is your intention in having a third reading? How about the first week in October?

Vice Chair Parker said I made a suggestion to stretch out the wage increase. There's nothing to guarantee us in another month we'll have more. I think we've done plenty. We could've passed this on the first reading.

Chair Kenning said our general assembly is reluctant to take this on because they don't want to listen to your voices. Difficulty making ends meet in Ottumwa is considerable. \$9.60 living wage, less than that they're under water and turn to government to help them out. To some it might seem like we're moving too quickly. My hope is the general assembly will take some action. So far, they've not found the need to do so.

Supervisor Siegel said I don't think any of us would argue that raising the minimum wage will solve everything. To me, it's not an option to just do nothing. I don't see that as an option.

Connie Hammersley-Wilson asked if the Board would sit down with community leaders and business owners.

Vice Chair Parker said 6 people making minimum wage there also? Generally those making opposition to us make way over minimum wage.

Trudy Caviness said some small business owners don't make minimum wage. They take what's left after they've paid their employees. Some do and some don't make a

very good living. Employees go home and don't lose their home when they go home at night.

Ron Palm asked if a study's ever been done to assure ourselves that the minimum wage earner will come out ahead and not behind. I think it should be looked at for the benefit of the people. I get the feeling you've made up your mind and nothing is going to make a difference.

Vice Chair Parker said he's going to look at everything that's been presented and make a decision. This isn't a political issue, it's the right thing to do.

Chair Kenning said this isn't a sudden change by anybody up here. This is the conclusion that we've reached so far. We can certainly be open to other information. Every time there's been an increase there's this same concern that it's going to hurt the economy. That hasn't happened. This wasn't an easily reached decision on anybody's part.

Supervisor Siegel said he thinks a lot of people are raising a family on \$7.25/hr, but it's darn hard to do.

Vice Chair Parker said he's read all the studies, and they don't see losses until they reach \$11/hr. They will gain more until then.

Paul Culver said these people haven't had a cost of living raise in the last 7 or 8 years. If you don't like what's being said here, come up with something.

Vice Chair Parker moved to set September 13th at 5:30 p.m. for the next reading of the ordinance, Supervisor Siegel seconded. Motion carried. Plans are to hold it in the big court room.

Supervisor Siegel said we're not dictators, we're here to listen. If you don't like it, vote for someone else.

2:47 p.m. Supervisor Siegel moved, seconded by Vice Chair Parker to approve the second reading. Motion carried.

Chair Kenning called for a recess.

2:54 p.m. Chair Kenning reconvened the meeting.

Vice Chair Parker moved, seconded by Supervisor Siegel to approve the minutes of the August 23, 2016 Board meeting. Motion carried.

Supervisor Siegel moved, seconded by Vice Chair Parker to approve the purchase and installation of courthouse cameras. Motion carried.

Supervisor Siegel moved, seconded by Vice Chair Parker to approve Resolution #32-2016 to cancel a check issued in the previous fiscal year. Motion carried.

Vice Chair Parker moved, seconded by Supervisor Siegel to authorize the purchase of four tablets and training for the Wapello County Board of Health. Motion carried.

Supervisor Siegel moved, seconded by Vice Chair Parker to approve Resolution #33-2016 abating the property taxes for the Blakesburg Development Corporation. Motion carried.

3:00 p.m. Supervisor Siegel moved, seconded by Vice Chair Parker to adjourn. Motion carried.

ATTEST:

Kelly Spurgeon
Wapello County Auditor

Gregory M. Kenning, Chair
Board of Supervisors