

STREET:

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Project's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/DowntownOsceolaStreetscapeProject>.

Project history recap

The streetscape project has been in the works for over a decade. As stated in a [clarkecountylife.com](https://www.clarkecountylife.com/article) article,

"The genesis of the streetscape project came in 2012 from then Mayor Fred Diehl. In a city review of infrastructure for community improvement planning, Diehl, the city

council and others began documenting the deterioration of the buildings and the infrastructure around the square. With many buildings, their sidewalks, lamp posts, and the underlying infrastructure revealing their age, along with updated laws pertaining safety, the streetscape project was initiated to address these issues and help position areas for growth and sustainability.

"As part of the design, the new parking pavers will augment a storm water management feature that will absorb rain and

runoff and redirect it. The paver system, along with a resized traditional storm system, will add storm water storage during heavy rain events and help with improving the quality of the storm water that ultimately ends up in Q-Pond.

"With years of planning involved in the streetscape project, City officials were dedicated to addressing the financing for the new updates. Wheeler and the Osceola City Council reviewed and applied for various grant opportunities from the Federal and State levels to local CCDC

partnerships and were able to secure funding of more than \$100,000 through a Water Quality Storm Water Grant and another \$2 Million through the Sponsored Watershed Program. The Iowa DOT is also contributing funds for the improvements on Main Street, which is US Hwy 69."

Sanitary sewer man-hole covers will also be replaced, new street lighting will be added around the square and stop signs will be at all four intersections around the square.

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about being watched and observed by people who are somehow giving information to people outside of our school buildings," she said.

Despite no specifics were made about certain staff members, sixth-grade math teacher Gina Sickels alluded to administration in her comments.

"I'm not sure the district will withstand another turnover. This is the path that some of our district want to take. It's difficult to find a leader able to hold individuals accountable with constructive feedback and specifics and support for continued growth. Someone who leans to lead with positivity and be equally accessible to all students and staff rather than focus on a few who can further their own agenda."

Sickels said those people already exist at Clarke.

"We have a middle school principal, high school principal, AD and assistant principal who fit this criteria. These individuals cares about academic growth and emotional well-being for kids as well as their staff and accessible to everyone."

She said the middle school staff appreciates the respect from the secondary administration. She said the high school principal shared the comment, "We are not hear to just teach kids, we are her to help our kids learn." Sickels called that comment thought provocative.

After the meeting, Superintendent Kurt Devore said the district will not comment on personnel matters and provided a statement.

"Clarke Community School District is committed to providing our

students and staff the best possible educational experience. We strive to ensure strong, effective leadership in every role as part of our mission to empower students to be life-long learners and embrace the challenges of a changing world. While we cannot comment on specific personnel matters, we want to emphasize that all staffing and decisions are carefully considered in the best interests of our students and school community.

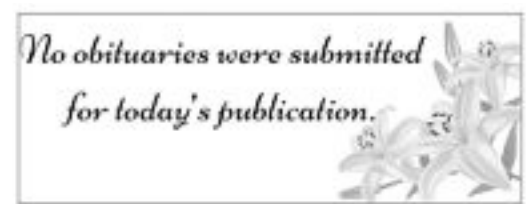
Tonight's school board meeting allowed community members to share their thoughts during public comment. While many of these topics are not expressly on the agenda, we respect the public's engagement and welcome input on matters that reference our mission and vision.

As we look toward the future, we remain focused on fostering a positive

learning environment, supporting our staff and working together with our families and community to ensure the success of our students. As a progressive district striving for educational excellence through the involvement of students, families, school staff and the community, we appreciate the community's support as we navigate the decisions that keep our students at the heart of our efforts."

Middle school math teacher Crystal Locke said everyone involved needs to be heard.

"If we are going to great lengths to remove multiple members of our leadership team and administration, wouldn't we want to hear both sides? The number of district leadership personnel being pushed out should be a giant red flag to our board members."



Positive audit presented to SWCC

Erin Henze
ehenze@shawmedia.com

Southwestern Community College's report card is showing all A's this year.

From West Des Moines, Denman and Company, LLP's Dave Ellis and Joe Sparks presented the college's 2024 audit report Tuesday to the SWCC Board of Trustees. Similar to last year's report, the school had no reported weaknesses disclosed and qualified as a low-risk auditee.

SWCC's net position increased again. Last year there was an increase of 6% or \$1.5 million. The increase this year was slightly smaller, with an increase of 4.7% or \$1.2 million. This brings the college to a total of about \$27 million in their net position.

Additionally, SWCC had no noncompliance disclosed as a result of audit procedures related to credit and contact hours.

Ellis said the company did not encounter any difficulties in performing the audit. Denman and Company has performed SWCC's audits since 2015.

Full audits of public entities can be found on the state auditor's website.

In other SWCC news...

The board approved spending up to \$250,000 for the purchase of a new shuttle bus for the college. Three shuttle buses are used by the college, one 10-year-old bus and two 9-year-old buses. Rather than trading in one of the old buses, it will be transferred to the new Transportation Training Center to assist in students obtaining their Class B commercial driver's license.

Work on the Transportation Training Center in Creston and the ORBIT Center in Osceola are nearing completion, though no official date has been announced.



Gov. Reynolds appoints State Senator Chris Cournoyer as the 48th Lieutenant Governor of Iowa

DES MOINES— Gov. Reynolds Monday announced she has appointed Chris Cournoyer as Lieutenant Governor of Iowa. Cournoyer, a resident of LeClaire, Iowa, was elected to the Iowa Senate in 2018. She chaired the inaugural Technology committee, from which position she wrote and managed the legislation that made Iowa the sixth state in the nation to protect consumer data in law. She was also Chair of the Education Budget Committee, Vice Chair of the State Government committee and sat on the Education, Natural Resources and Environment, Transportation, and Ways and

Means committees.

"I'm excited to announce Chris Cournoyer as the new Lt. Governor," Governor Reynolds said. "First and foremost, she has the character, judgment, and ability needed to serve as governor in case I were ever unable to—qualities that also make her ideally suited to support our work on a day-to-day basis. I can't wait to deploy Chris' extensive experience on key legislative committees, including Ways and Means, and expertise in technology, innovation, and artificial intelligence on a wide range of issues important to Iowans."

"I'm profoundly honored to serve as lieutenant

governor, and Iowans can be confident that I will always approach the role with all the seriousness it deserves," Lt. Governor Cournoyer said. "I couldn't be more excited to join Governor Reynolds' team and do my part to implement her bold agenda for our state."

Cournoyer has extensive experience in the technology sector, artificial intelligence, and K-12 education. She worked as a senior consultant in the Technology Division at Andersen Consulting, the Fortune 500 firm that later became Accenture. She has also built a successful business as an independent website designer and developer and holds a

Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science from the University of Texas. She is a member of the Governor's STEM Advisory Council, a former member of the Quad Cities Engineering and Science Council, and a former school board president.

Named an "Iowa Woman of Innovation-STEM Champion" by the Technology Association of Iowa, Cournoyer maintains a personal connection to the classroom as a robotics and coding teacher and an active substitute teacher in her community. She is a former reserve sheriff duty, an avid local volunteer, and a proud mother of four.

Resurgence of avian influenza in wild birds

Iowa DNR

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and its federal partners have been monitoring for the presence of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in Iowa's wild birds since early 2022. After nearly a year without detections in sick or dead birds, Iowa has seen a sharp jump in affected waterfowl across the state mostly, north of Interstate 80 since early December, spurred on by the stress of migration and the severe cold.

Avian influenza is a highly transmissible, naturally occurring virus found in certain waterfowl and shorebirds. There are various subtypes and strains, most of which cause limited harm

to domestic poultry (low pathogenic) but some of which are lethal (highly pathogenic).

The H5N1 strain that has been circulating since 2022 is the first time HPAI has affected wild birds in North America at such a large scale.

"We've learned a lot about how this virus behaves in the intervening years. Dabbling ducks are a great indicator species, and we started seeing the number of HPAI detections in apparently healthy hunter harvests ramp up in mid-November. Just a couple weeks later we started responding to sick and dead geese," said Dr. Rachel Ruden, state wildlife veterinarian with the Iowa DNR.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has an

online database tracking HPAI detections in wild birds and other spe-

cies by state at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/>

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FOR SALE:

The City of Murray is taking sealed bids for the following property until January 3, 2025 at 12pm:

829 Grant Street

- Minimum bid of \$6500
- House & shed must be removed and cleaned up within 6 months.
- Bids that specify new home construction will be completed on the lot by December 31, 2025 will take precedence. Property owner will receive 50% of original purchase price back when home is completed.

Contract requirements must be met or the property will revert back to the City and money paid for the property is forfeited.

Submit offers to:

City of Murray

420 Maple Street

PO Box 186

Murray, IA 50174

For Questions contact Denise: 641-447-2522
cityadmin@murrayia.org

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2024 Board of Directors: Richard Buesch-Owner, Banta Abstract: Kevin Emanuel-Owner, SKE & SEE Rentals: Brain Evans-CEO, Clarke County Hospital: Tish Gannon-Osceola Director, SWCC: Doug Gay-City of Osceola; Dr. James Kimball-Retired Physician; Helen Kimes-Owner/Broker, Saylor Realty; Amy Lampe-President, First National Bank; Doug Miller-Owner, Friday Insurance Agency; Dave Opie-CEO, Clarke Electric Cooperative; Dean Robins-Clarke County; Todd Thompson, Entrepreneur; Shawn Wade- Owner, Sport Wade; Sue Wilder- Owner, Wilder's Truck Service, Nathan Grismore - Manager, Altec.

Officers for 2024: President-Kevin Emanuel; Vice President- Doug Miller; Secretary- Amy Lampe; Treasurer- Dave Opie.

Executive Director - Bill Trickey

Board meets second Wednesday of each month, 9:00 a.m. at 115 East Washington
"Promoting the Economic Development of Southern Iowa"

OSCEOLA MUNICIPAL WATER BOARD

Chair: Alisha Kale Vice Chair: Larry Bishop

Members: Dr. James Kimball, Alisha Kale, Sara O'Hair, Larry Bishop, Sandra Ramos

Regular water board meetings the first Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at 208 W. Jefferson. Special water board meetings as posted at the Water Works Office and also online at www.osceolawaterworks.com.

OSCEOLA CITY COUNCIL

Thomas Kedley, Mayor

Council Members: Dr. George Fotiadis,

Jose Vargas, Dan Hooper, Sonya Hicks, Tom Bahls.

Regular council meetings the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Council Chambers, City Hall, 115 North Fillmore.

Special council meetings are posted on City Hall bulletin board.

OSCEOLA PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

Meets fourth Wednesday of each month 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers

Board Members:

Mel Miller, Lindsey Redman, Jeremy Evers, Walker Adams, Stacey Manternach

Web Site: www.osceolaia.govoffice2.com

AIRPORT MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

Miles Murphy, Les VanHeeswyk, Phil Higgins,

Gene Wilkins, Kevin Seufferer

Meets 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Osceola Municipal Airport

CLARKE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meets the 2nd Monday of the month, @5:30 p.m.,

Administrative Conference Room, 802 N. Jackson St.

To confirm, call 641-342-4969.

Board Members: Wendy Short - President, Dr. Ben Hicks,

Brad Lampe - Vice President, Ty Blackford,

Rosaura Edith Flores, Robin Galvez, Ann Lovell

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