

Waverly city budget public hearing set for Monday, March 24

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Anderson agreed with Bronner's assessment of the confusing nature of the state-required graphic, saying the graphic is "way more than kind of misleading" and in his opinion, an average person would be flummoxed by some of the data in the chart.

The document Bronner referred to is the form with "proposed property tax levy" at the top of the chart.

"The first column is accurate as the current rate and spending, etc... The second column which the State (of Iowa) creates is called the 'Effective Property Tax,' and creates a scenario that shows the growth that the City experienced but doesn't allow for any kind of spending increase as a result of the growth," Bronner explained. "It also assumes all residential properties had a 10% increase in valuation which may not be the case."

Bronner also noted that the city of Waverly "doesn't control the majority of the levies shown such as the Liability, Property & Self Insurance levy or FICA / IPERS and so on."

"This form creates a false narrative of what the city could have spent and then when you show it against the last column titled Proposed Property Tax, which is the actual amount being proposed, the increase is substantial when that is not necessarily the case depending on the valuation of each person's individual property,"

Bronner added.

"The actual increase in taxes for a \$100,000 residential property is \$28 unless the property had a valuation increase. That is an increase of 3.6% in spending and a 1.2% increase in the levy," Bronner explained. "If a residential property had a 10% valuation increase, those figures in the center column would be close, but to assume everyone did with this example is misleading."

City revenue, expenditures also explained

According to a proposed city budget document also posted to the city website with the agenda for Monday's public hearing, in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the city is expected to bring in \$39,752,158 in total revenues and other sources. The total of all city expenditures is listed at \$34,967,426.

Of the expenditure totals, capital projects — including the city swimming pool — topped the list at \$10,770,600; debt service was second at \$5,648,080; culture and recreation was third with \$4,056,868; public safety was fourth at \$3,349,307; and public works was the fifth highest expenditure listed at \$2,468,695.

On the revenue side, the city lists taxes levied on properties at \$9,897,063; a total of \$10,215,000 from other financing sources; and \$7,176,906 from charges for fees and service.

The 2025-2026 city budget is affected by numerous capital projects, including the city swimming pool project that was approved by voters in the November 2024

general election.

The swimming pool will be closed for the entirety of the 2025 season, Bronner verified, and he said construction on the pool facility is hoped to begin in June. If all goes as planned with construction, the swimming pool would reopen to the public in 2026.

"Using numbers based on a \$100,000 residence, (it was) asked if the pool was the majority of the tax increase as stated at the bottom of the document," Bronner said of a question from the Waverly Newspapers about a line at the bottom of the property tax levy graphic.

"Removing the pool debt payment would produce a reduction of \$8 per \$100,000 or a decrease of 1.0%. The levy would drop 3.3% to roughly 16.55 (cents per \$1,000 of valuation)," he added.

Anderson said the city's administrative staff along with elected officials are looking out for the best interests of Waverly, and he believes that the city has done a good job in comparison to other Iowa municipalities that are struggling with their own budgets and property taxes.

"We are setting the table now for years of growth and enjoyment for the community," Anderson added. "We are setting ourselves up well for success."

Following the public hearing at 6:45 p.m., the Waverly City Council will host their end of month planning and discussion meeting. These meetings are non-voting, and items on the meeting agenda are only heard and discussed with no action taken.

Abigail Hunemiller

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class, and make sure you don't put a lot into your schedule because then you won't be able to have any study halls or free periods. But I would say say have [fun] in high school because it goes by quickly. Also, make sure you have time for yourself.

I'm taking a year off of school and working, and then I'm going to Ellsworth Community College in Iowa Falls to study business.

Waverly Public Library staff excited about new History Club

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Kuhlmann stated that the dates of the photographs in the collection range from 1900 to around 2010.

"Over the past year as the historical photographs in the library's collection have become more accessible and visible, local community members have reached out to me and expressed interest in helping to identify dates and people in these photos," Kuhlmann explained.

The club, Kuhlmann noted, is both a way to identify photographs and gather more information, but also a form of community building and bonding.

"Not only do history clubs like this bring together a unique group of people, but they are also a way for stories and information to be gathered and shared before they are lost. History can tell us so much about the past, present and future," Kuhlmann said.

Staff at the Waverly Public Library worked on the historical photograph collection in collaboration with officials from the University of Northern Iowa over the past year.

In an online posting about the effort, library officials described the project as an accomplishment that is "incredibly exciting" but had also led to the realization that many photographs have unknown dates, people and/or locations.

The Tuesday, March 25, informational night is free and open to any and all local historians and is scheduled for from 1-4 p.m. Library staff at the meeting will gather ideas and insights to help answer "lingering questions about these photos."

The Waverly Public Library digital collection is online at: waverlyia.com/library/fortepan.

City council OKs 1st reading of parking fine increases

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and compensation as well as sick leave.

City Administrator James Bronner stressed that the changes were "not taking anything away" from city employees in regard to benefits, but the amendments would "solidify everything and make it consistent throughout" the employee handbook.

"There are times when it is clear and it is not clear," Bronner said of the previous wording and language in the handbook. "This will categorize it and (make it clearer). We got a lot of input from the city staff."

The changes do not affect the city's Police Department, he noted.

The council also voted 4-0 to approve three mayoral re-appointments and one new appointment.

Robert Frederick was reappointed to the city's Municipal Airport Commission through May 1, 2030; David Huser was reappointed to the city's Planning and Zoning Commission also to a term ending May 1, 2030; and Vicky Green was reappointed to the city's Civil Service Commission to a term ending May 1, 2030.

The city's Municipal Housing Commission got a new member, with Jeff Elenz being appointed to the body to fill a vacant seat of Kathy McClung, who resigned effective Jan. 1, 2025. Elenz's term will end Jan. 1, 2027.

| CITY NAME: NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING - CITY OF WAVERLY - PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX LEVY | | CITY #: 09-071 | |
|---|---|--|---|
| WAVERLY Fiscal Year July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026 | | | |
| The City Council will conduct a public hearing on the proposed Fiscal Year City property tax levy as follows: | | | |
| Meeting Date: 3/24/2025 Meeting Time: 06:45 PM Meeting Location: Council Chambers of City Hall 200 1st Street NE Waverly, IA 50677 | | | |
| At the public hearing any resident or taxpayer may present objections to, or arguments in favor of the proposed tax levy. After the hearing of the proposed tax levy, the City Council will publish notice and hold a hearing on the proposed city budget. | | | |
| City Website (if available) | City Telephone Number | | |
| waverlyia.com | (319) 352-4252 ext: 175 | | |
| Iowa Department of Management | Current Year Certified Property Tax 2024 - 2025 | Budget Year Effective Property Tax 2025 - 2026 | Budget Year Proposed Property Tax 2025 - 2026 |
| Taxable Valuations for Non-Debt Service | 486,811,952 | 561,869,820 | 561,869,820 |
| Consolidated General Fund | 4,008,896 | 4,008,896 | 4,492,233 |
| Operation & Maintenance of Public Transit | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Aviation Authority | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Liability, Property & Self Insurance | 222,249 | 222,249 | 289,425 |
| Support of Local Emergency Mgmt. Comm. | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Unified Law Enforcement | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Police & Fire Retirement | 365,679 | 365,679 | 382,083 |
| FICA & IPERS (If at General Fund Limit) | 500,073 | 500,073 | 538,412 |
| Other Employee Benefits | 957,715 | 957,715 | 1,106,794 |
| Capital Projects (Capital Improv. Reserve) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Taxable Value for Debt Service | 534,431,646 | 591,540,822 | 591,540,822 |
| Debt Service | 2,501,151 | 2,501,151 | 3,079,727 |
| CITY REGULAR TOTAL PROPERTY TAX | 8,555,763 | 8,555,763 | 9,888,674 |
| CITY REGULAR TAX RATE | 17.11729 | 15.00403 | 17.32465 |
| Taxable Value for City Ag Land | 2,689,342 | 2,792,842 | 2,792,842 |
| Ag Land | 8,078 | 8,078 | 8,389 |
| CITY AG LAND TAX RATE | 3.00375 | 2.89239 | 3.00375 |
| Tax Rate Comparison-Current VS. Proposed | | | |
| Residential property with an Actual/Assessed Valuation of \$100,000/\$110,000 | Current Year Certified 2024/2025 | Budget Year Proposed 2025/2026 | Percent Change |
| City Regular Residential | 793 | 904 | 14.00 |
| Commercial property with an Actual/Assessed Valuation of \$300,000/\$330,000 | Current Year Certified 2024/2025 | Budget Year Proposed 2025/2026 | Percent Change |
| City Regular Commercial | 3,501 | 4,039 | 15.37 |
| Note: Actual/Assessed Valuation is multiplied by a Rollback Percentage to get to the Taxable Valuation to calculate Property Taxes. Residential and commercial properties have the same rollback percentage through \$150,000 of actual/assessed valuation. | | | |
| Reasons for tax increase if proposed exceeds the current: | | | |
| The tax increase is due to the debt incurred for the demolition, construction, reconstruction, enlargement, improvement and equipping of the swimming pool and pool facilities which this project was passed and approved by bond referendum on November 5, 2024. | | | |

COURTESY \ CITY OF WAVERLY, VALORIE NORTHRUP

The Waverly Newspapers inquired about the document with Waverly City Administrator James Bronner, and he offered explanations of some of the information posted in the charts. Bronner stated in an email that "the document that we had to publish has some issues with the figures it is using."

Bremer County Ambulance Council holds 1st meeting

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to the EMS trust fund uses included in the original law. That expense is for salaries or wages of providers of emergency medical services care, as defined in 147A.1. Senate File 42 passed the first reading in the Senate March 10 and passed the House the same day 89-0 with 11 absent, according to the Iowa legislative website.

Legislative conversation, Nedza said, led into the conversation surrounding the goals for the Bremer County group. The meeting also provided council members the ability to discuss some of the challenges facing the EMS community as a whole, Nedza added.

Volunteerism, not just in EMS, has declined over the years as people are less able to give their time, he said. Additionally, there are more people who no longer work where they live and so during the day, there is less of a pool of people able to volunteer for their local EMS service.

To bring everyone up to date on the state of EMS in Bremer County, the membership and staffing of the ambulance services, both transporting and non-transporting, was shared with the group, which Nedza recapped.

In Bremer County there are eight total EMS services, four of which are transporting services, with four which are non-transporting first responder agencies. The call statistics were provided by the various EMS services in the county and shared with the group. The eight ser-



COURTESY PHOTO

The Bremer County Ambulance Council will continue meeting in the Tripoli Fire Department and Tripoli Ambulance Service building, 101 Second St. SE, which is pictured around 2024.

vices respond to roughly 2,500 calls for service and perform approximately 600 inter-facility transfers each year.

To keep Bremer County residents informed about the Ambulance Council, the meeting agenda and minutes will be posted at the Bremer County Courthouse and all the municipal city halls, according

to Nedza.

Some of those cities have stated that they will share information via social media. This EMS Advisory Council will be creating a Facebook page and will post information to the Bremer County EMS.

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