

# SAND

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presenting themselves as “the lesser of two evils.”

While Sand is running as a Democrat, he told the crowd he’s not a supporter of political parties. “That’s the heart of this campaign – not redder or bluer, but better and truer,” he said, adding that he would “flip the tables” of partisan politics.

Sand, 43, grew up in Decorah. He spent seven years as the chief public corruption prosecutor in the Iowa Attorney General’s Office at the start of his career. He was elected to the first of two terms as state auditor in 2018.

In June, Sand began a 100-town hall tour across Iowa to promote his campaign for governor following incumbent Republican Gov. Kim Reynolds’ announcement that she will not seek a third term in office.

Sand told those assembled in Maquoketa Oct. 7 — most of them Democrats interspersed with some Republicans and Independents, based on a show of hands — that he did not support the Republican Legislature’s voucher program in which the state gives tax dollars to private schools.

“We are not allowed to audit the private schools,” Sand said Oct. 7. “There’s just no rules of oversight.”

After Sand’s campaign stop later the same day in Clinton, private school Prince of Peace’s assistant principal Joe Brown said the school’s budget, revenue, and expenditures fall under the local oversight of a parish finance council, priest, diocese, and school board. The school’s business manager and principal must, additionally, sign off on expenditures.

“I was insulted by Rob Sand’s comments relating to vouchers. He suggested that there is no oversight of the funds,” Brown stated in an Oct. 8 email to the Clinton Herald. “This is simply not true.”

Retired teacher Roberta Rosheim asked Sand about his stance on proposed GOP changes to IPERS (Iowa Public Employees’ Retirement System). Sand said did not intend to change the IPERS program because he did not think it was broken.



Photo courtesy Jenna Blount, Clinton Herald

Iowa Auditor Rob Sand promoted his election to Iowa governor Oct. 7 at 7 Hills South brewery in Clinton.

Sand promoted his record of efficiency as Iowa’s auditor. In 2019, he launched the Public Innovations and Efficiencies (PIE) program to encourage public entities across Iowa to implement efficiency practices and reward innovative ideas to save public dollars. The program was replicated in Mississippi in 2022.

Another campaign event attendee asked Sand about his position on a 2025 state law requiring that at least 80% of students admitted to the University of Iowa medical and dentistry schools are Iowa residents. While he likes the idea of keeping Iowans in Iowa, Sand said the new law passed by the GOP Legislature was not the best way to do it.

Sand also challenged other elected officials to conduct town hall meetings that would provide the opportunity for anyone to ask questions. His comment came

after U.S. Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-Iowa) told Johnson County Republicans in August that she’ll hold town hall meetings “when hell freezes over,” according to multiple news outlets.

Another audience member asked about Sand’s stance on restoring transgender rights. He supports those rights and says he wants to stop culture wars. Such fighting only turns people away from living in Iowa, Sand said.

Former Democrat legislator Roger Stewart asked about Sand’s stance on property rights regarding carbon capture pipelines. Sand said he opposed eminent domain (the government’s power to take private property for public use, provided the owner receives “just compensation.”)

When asked, Sand said he opposed Iowa’s privatization of Medicaid. “It did not work,” he said, citing a 2021 state audit after the privatization of Medicaid in Iowa

found a nearly 500% increase in illegal denials of care.

“I’m ready to flip some tables,” Sand said. “I would de-privatize Medicaid by executive order the same way it was privatized.”

In addition to Maquoketa, Sand conducted open-to-the-public, hour-long town hall gatherings in Anamosa, Tipton, Clinton and Dubuque Oct. 7.

Other Democratic candidates currently running for the governor are Paul Dahl and Julie Stauch. Republican candidates are Eddie Andrews, Mike Bousset, Randy Feenstra, Brad Sherman and Adam Steen.

The June 2, 2026, primary election precedes the Iowa state gubernatorial election Nov. 3, 2026. In the primary, Democrats and Republicans will narrow the field to one candidate per party.

Clinton Herald reporter Jenna Blount contributed to this report.

## POLICE NEWS

- Sept. 18:**  
**Animal complaints** reported to officers at the police station and in the 100 block of Third Avenue.  
**Harassment** reported to officers at the police station.
- Sept. 19:**  
**Charged with** operating without registration was Michael May of Des Moines.
- Sept. 20:**  
**Fire** reported in the 1000 block of Fifth Avenue.  
**Suspicious activity** reported to officers at the police station.  
**Charged with** failure to have valid driver’s license and speeding was Arreana Baker of Rockford, Illinois.  
**Reckless driver** reported at U.S. 61 and U.S. 30.
- Sept. 21:**  
**Theft** reported in the 300 block of East 11<sup>th</sup> Street.  
**Animal complaint** reported to officers at the police station.  
**Non-violent domestic situation** reported in the 1300 block of 14<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Sept. 22:**  
**Criminal mischief** reported at Lincoln Park and in the 1000 block of Eighth Avenue.  
**Burglar alarm** reported in the 900 block of Sixth Avenue.  
**Animal complaint** reported in the 400 block of Fourth Avenue.  
**Disturbance** reported in the 1000 block of 14<sup>th</sup> Street.  
**Juvenile problem** reported in the 500 block of 11<sup>th</sup> Street.  
**Non-violent domestic situation** reported in the 1500 block of Silver Valley Drive.
- Sept. 23:**  
**Suspicious activity** reported to officers at the police station and the 700 block of Sixth Avenue.

# Supervisors oppose EMA restructuring

By **CHRIS BALDUS**  
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A restructuring of the Clinton County Emergency Management Agency that was approved by its governing board by one vote last week ran into firm opposition Oct. 6 at the county Board of Supervisors meeting.

The restructuring converts an hourly “plan officer” position into a salaried deputy coordinator with more responsibilities. This would establish three positions in the EMA empowered to make decisions during off-hour emergency situations.

The plan officer position is currently vacant, and advertising to fill the new deputy coordinator position was posted on the county website Monday, Oct. 6, with a salary range starting between \$57,715-\$69,633.

At the Oct. 6 supervisors meeting, EMA Coordinator Chance Kness said the new structure “is more in line with what we see across the state,” and he talked about work required both during regular business hours and beyond.

“There are two parts of what we do,” he said, “a lot of planning and training and administration during the day during the week, but then ... we have to be available for a myriad of things after hours.” The additional cost of the new position can be absorbed in the EMA budget with certain

cuts, Kness said.

The primary objection by supervisors to the restructuring was its budget implications as the county continues to face cost-cutting decisions forced by the state of Iowa.

The EMA Commission at its Oct. 1 meeting in DeWitt gave the restructuring a green light via a 7-6 vote on a motion that drew skepticism from supervisors because of the way it was structured.

“From our perspective, the vote was suspect and went against the direction that the county supervisors feel that we can continue to budget with our ever-decreasing ability to levy,” Supervisor Jim Irwin told The Clinton Herald in an email after the supervisors’ meeting Oct. 6.

Because of property tax levy restrictions placed on local governments by the Legislature in the past few years, the board has directed county departments to evaluate whether to retain, resize or remove positions as they’ve come open by attrition, according to Supervisor Chairwoman Erin George.



**JIM IRWIN**  
Clinton County Supervisor



**ERIN GEORGE**  
Clinton County Supervisor



**DAN SRP**  
Clinton County Supervisor

“There are cuts coming,” she said. “We have to lower our levy a certain amount every single year ... That does not go hand-in-hand with adding or increasing positions.”

According to its bylaws, the Emergency Management Commission is composed of a member of the Board of Supervisors or an appointed representative, the sheriff or a sheriff’s representative, and the mayor or a mayor’s representative from each city within the county.

Supervisor Dan Srp raised an issue about how the EMA is funded and referred to its bylaws.

“Under Finance Section 1, the commission may request the county and each municipality to provide in their budgets for their share,” Srp said. “We’re not doing that. We’re only requesting it of the county, but it says the commission may request the county and each municipality to provide their share.”

“That’s in our bylaws. I think in some ways our funding mechanism currently is not in line with the organization’s bylaws, because this says ‘and.’ To me that says ‘both.’ It doesn’t say ‘and/or,’ it’s ‘and.’ And especially in a situation where its representatives of the municipalities — they’re making the decision to increase the county’s levy. I think they should have that skin in the game.”

Chris Baldus reports for the Clinton Herald.