

Board of Supervisors holds public hearing on Salt Creek Wind II

MICHAEL D. DAVIS
CORRESPONDENT

TOLEDO — Last week's Tama County Board of Supervisors meeting on Monday, Sept. 8, was standing room only, with many loitering in the hall just to have an idea of what was transpiring in the main room. The crowd was mainly split into two, like a scene out of West Side Story, although lacking snapping fingers, forbidden love, and arguments you could dance to, the

Jets spoke in favor of Salt Creek Wind Phase II and commercial wind energy projects, and the Sharks opposed it all.

At times, comments and concerns involved raised voices and contentious remarks, which spurred on other citizens to pitch in their own two cents on the subject. Those with comments on the subject of the Phase II Development Agreement came up to a makeshift podium and used a microphone, mak-

ing sure all could hear their thoughts. Some had prepared written statements beforehand, while others talked off the cuff. The supervisors sat through the hourslong meeting listening to passionate citizens who were both for and against the deal.

A public forum for citizens to speak further on the possible SCW2 agreement was later held at the Toledo Bank Community Room on Thursday, Sept. 11.

During Monday's public hearing, Sheriff Casey Schmidt helped out by running the microphone around the room to those who wished to speak. Schmidt, at one point, even held the mic for a laptop and a phone. He accepted no tips for his services.

Board Chairman Mark Doland was online for Monday's meeting; as the second in line, Supervisor Heather Knebel ran the show.

As per usual, after a pub-

lic comment time, they had the Tama County Engineer, Ben Daleske, give his report, which stated that they are currently digging ditches on 370th Street between I. They are also digging ditches on 275th Street just east of C Avenue, closer to the intersection. Dust control has been applied to K Avenue between E43 and Ross Street, and they have poured curtain walls for the culvert on E43. PCI will begin on the S Avenue bridge this week. They

are working on replacing a low-water stream crossing on O Avenue between 200th & 210th. They have also been out spray patching some bridge decks.

A tax sale certificate was approved for Ramon Gruel Jr.

The supervisors also approved a resolution regarding the settlement agreement with the Central Iowa Juvenile Detention Center.

Claims totaling \$106,064.93 were approved.

TEACHER

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count U.S. Department of S***posting - Rise of the Resistance, which wrote above the image of Kirk, "Too Soon?"

"This is disgusting. North Tama Music teacher. Time to let the school administrators and school board know how we feel about this!" Allison Howard wrote alongside her screenshot of McFate's reposting.

The decision by North Tama to place McFate on leave is part of a wave of similar action taken in recent days by school districts, government entities, and businesses across the country against employees who have expressed derogatory or seemingly derogatory opinions via social media about Kirk following his murder.

Cain's Sept. 12 letter to North Tama parents and families further stated, "The safety, well-being, and success of our students remain our highest priority. We are committed to ensuring that our schools continue to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment for all North Tama students and families. Thank you for your understanding and continued support."

Public weighs in

During the North Tama school board meeting Monday evening, four individuals spoke during the public forum regarding the decision to place McFate on leave, including Marilyn Bausch, who described herself as a "lifelong educator" and Traer resident of 55 years. After thanking the school board and administrators for their service, she addressed the issues surrounding McFate.

"I understand there is anger about the post on Facebook, which I did not see, from one of our teachers. Emotions are running very high in this country and this community. We citizens have a right to express our opinions about

this. You, administrators and school board members, have an obligation to set aside emotion and follow established procedure to find a resolution [inaudible]. I believe you are already handling this in a procedural way. I thank you. I trust you to do the right thing," she stated while reading from a piece of paper.

Bausch then said she knew the "teacher in question."

"I have known her as a teacher, a community member, parents and exchange student host parents. I observed great care and respect for students and parents from her [inaudible]. It is my belief that she would never wish harm, condone harm, or knowingly spread harmful messages towards another. I've known her (for) about 10 years. She's a good music teacher. North Tama is fortunate to have her."

Bausch's husband Jared Bausch also spoke, stating that both he and Kirk "follow Jesus."

"I would encourage you to follow Jesus, practice mercy, forgiveness, the understanding that all of us, day in and day out, are in need of forgiveness, forbearance, and mercy."

Retired North Tama school counselor Teresa O'Meara also spoke in support of McFate. She began her comments by referencing the First Amendment.

"What a gift we have of free speech this evening. What an opportunity to express our beliefs and feelings in person, face to face, not through social media," O'Meara said before later turning to McFate's purported posting.

"In my understanding, the repost by the North Tama staff member did not include a personal comment nor is there any indication of the staff member's opinion ... It was simply a repost of what had been repeatedly referenced and appeared in the New York Times, National Public Radio, the BBC, the Independent, among many others."

O'Meara continued,

"This widely-posted image, which has sparked anger among some, can be interpreted in a variety of ways. One of these is the interpretation that it was paying tribute to Charlie Kirk for his willingness to knowingly risk his life for his beliefs. ... There were no words added by the North Tama staff member to indicate the specific intentions of her repost. She did not post anything to indicate her beliefs or opinion of Charlie Kirk's assassination. To act as an angry mob based upon this assumption is to act as a group of people without all the facts."

The final public comment came from North Tama parent Trudy Massman, who wanted to know what the district was going to do for students whose parents and caregivers no longer wanted their children taught by McFate.

"My assumption, as a parent, is [McFate's post] wished somebody dead. And I don't want somebody like that as a teacher around a kid. So my question to you guys is, what are you guys going to do for the children that are not going to be allowed around this music teacher? You guys have another plan for that? Because my kid's not going to be allowed in that room ever again."

Massman indicated that her opinion mirrored others in the community.

"So I just hope you guys have another plan for these students that aren't going to be allowed in that music room ever again. Because my kid and a whole bunch of other kids won't be allowed around that music teacher for their safety because I don't want my kid around somebody who wishes somebody dead," she said.

Cain then read two written comments submitted ahead of the meeting, including one from Allison Howard, who seemingly first brought attention to McFate's repost.

"Let's talk the First Amendment. Yes, it gives a person the right to speak and post without the threat

of criminal prosecution. You can make vile and disgusting comments and posts. This does not mean your vile and disgusting comments are immune from consequences for this speech," Cain read aloud in quoting Howard. "Thus it is not uncommon or unreasonable to be fired from a job where you hold the public's trust. When a teacher's first instinct after the political assassination of someone she disagrees with is a vile post appearing to celebrate - and yes appearances matter - his murder it is a bridge too far. It shows a lack of humanity and the poorest of judgment. She is entrusted with our community's greatest commodity, our children. I believe as per Iowa Code and North Tama's own employee conduct codes, she has forfeited her right to teach at this school."

The final written comment was submitted by Anthony James Harris who wrote, in part, "We need leaders who lead with integrity and adults who act like adults, especially around impressionable young minds."

While the school board did not address any of the comments directly, Cain gave a brief statement as part of the superintendent's report later in the meeting.

"I thank you for being here tonight and expressing your concerns," Cain said in addressing the room which included roughly a dozen members of the public, several North Tama staff members, Tama County Sheriff Casey Schmidt, and state Rep. Dean Fisher whose district, House District 53, no longer includes Traer following redistricting but does include parts of the North Tama County Community School District.

"Know this is a personnel issue," Cain continued, "so we will be very limited with any kind of conversation around the topic." He said that the district sent out a staff communication last Thursday "reminding them of our Board policy that references their First

Amendment rights but also holds them accountable to their workplace environment.

"Really not going to be able to say that much more except we appreciate your input, and know this is important to us and we're taking it seriously."

In response to Allison Howard's post on Sept. 11 calling attention to McFate's reposting, Rep. Fisher made several comments under the post including, "As a state legislator, I've had several people from NT contact me about this issue with McFate. I'm going to say that in my humble opinion her post by itself, while disgusting because of the thinking behind it, may not rise to be a dismissible [sic] offense. But, her comment certainly can damage the confidence in her suitability amongst the people of the district as a teacher. The citizens of NT certainly can, and should be vocal on this. Civil and appropriate methods include calling the administrators, principals and superintendents, and calling each school board member. Beyond that, pulling your child out of the classes she teaches is an even stronger statement, and well within your right and reason."

Fisher continued, "The 'nuclear option' is to disenroll your student and homeschool or open enroll to another district. I'm not sure on the timing in that last option. Disenrolling can be particularly impactful in October, there is a particular date that is used for the enrollment snapshot that determines school funding. Schools will not want to risk any funding losses."

Fisher further commented that legislators "have been chasing down many of these issues with teaching staff at high schools across the state and at the Regents colleges."

"What bothers me the most about all this is that the culture in our educational system is such that so many feel free to make such disgusting comments. The culture is sick. The

legislature has been working for years to tamp down the extremist agenda of the Left by fighting DEI, CRT, gender ideology, etc. We have much more work to do."

Investigation continues

In response to a question about the district's next steps in the investigation, Cain told the newspaper Monday afternoon, "We are in the middle of an investigation so it would be inappropriate to share any next steps at this point in time."

He said it was standard procedure to place individuals on paid leave during an investigation but that "if the investigation warrants unpaid leave, then unpaid leave is applied."

When asked who was undertaking the investigation of McFate, Cain answered, "The District."

In regard to the school board publicly addressing the situation during Monday's meeting, Cain responded, "[T]he administrative team has not completed the investigation so it is premature to have the board involved at this time."

On Sept. 11, the Iowa Department of Education posted the following statement on social media.

"There are multiple reports of disturbing comments about the assassination of Charlie Kirk that were allegedly made by school personnel. Condoning political or any type of violence is reprehensible and has no place in Iowa education. Our educators are entrusted by families with the care and development of their children. Such behavior does not represent Iowa's dedicated teachers and should be rejected in the strongest possible terms. Local education leaders are charged with investigating these reports in accordance with their local school board policies and Iowa's standards of professional conduct and ethics."

THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT FOR TAMA COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF

LARRY L. STREET, deceased
CASE NO. ESPR007459

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATORS AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TO: ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE ESTATE OF
LARRY L. STREET, deceased, WHO DIED ON OR ABOUT JULY 14, 2025

You are hereby notified that on September 9, 2025, the undersigned were appointed administrators of the estate.

Notice is hereby given that all persons indebted to the estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned, and creditors having claims against the estate shall file them with the clerk of the above-named district court, as provided by law, duly authenticated, for allowance, and unless so filed by the later to occur of four months from the date of the second publication of this notice or one month from the date of the mailing of this notice (unless otherwise allowed or paid) a claim is thereafter forever barred. Dated on September 11, 2025.

Devin Hartsoe
Administrator of the Estate
180 19th St.
Marion, Iowa 52302-4053

Kelsey Hartsoe
Administrator of the Estate

202 19th Ave. TRLR 29
Independence, Iowa 50644-1648

Bruce Reinders
ICIS# AT0006532
Attorney for the Administrators
Roan, Powell & Reinders, P.L.C.
517 2nd St.
Traer, Iowa 50675

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THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT FOR TAMA COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF

REBECCA JAYNE DAHMS-LIOI, Deceased
CASE NO. ESPR007451

NOTICE OF PROBATE OF WILL, OF APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTOR, AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

To All Persons Interested in the Estate of Rebecca Jayne Dahms-Lioi, Deceased, who died on or about March 13, 2025:

You are hereby notified that on August 13, 2025, the Last Will and Testament of Rebecca Jayne Dahms-Lioi, deceased, bearing date of April 25, 2023, was admitted to probate in the above-named court and that Christopher Lioi was appointed Executor of the estate. Any action to set aside the will must be brought in the district court of said county within the later to occur of four months from the date of the second publication of this notice or one month from the date

of mailing of this notice to all heirs of the decedent and devisees under the will whose identities are reasonably ascertainable, or thereafter be forever barred. Notice is further given that all persons indebted to the estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned, and creditors having claims against the estate shall file them with the clerk of the above-named district court, as provided by law, duly authenticated, for allowance, and unless so filed by the later to occur of four months from the date of the second publication of this notice or one month from the date of mailing of this notice (unless otherwise allowed or paid) a claim is thereafter forever barred.

Dated August 13, 2025.

Christopher Lioi,
Executor of Estate
1018 West Faith Circle
Bradenton, FL 34212

Brent L Lechtenberg,
ICIS#: AT0010982
Attorney for Executor
Bauch & Lechtenberg Law Office
601 1st St
PO Box 57
Traer, IA 50675

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TRAER MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

The Board of Trustees of the Traer Municipal Utilities met in

regular session on **Thursday, September 11th 2025**, in Traer Municipal Hall.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Stief called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM; with trustees, Renslow, Weida, Howard and Dostal present.

SWEARING IN OF NEW BOARD MEMBER

Blaine swore in newly appointed, Joe Weida, to the TMU board.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Renslow, seconded by Dostal, that the agenda is approved. Motion approved unanimously with a roll call vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION by Dostal, seconded by Weida, that the Consent Agenda is approved; Minutes of the August 8th 2025 meetings and Aug Checks (37928-37991); and 3 ACH payments (8152025, 8202025, 9092025); total expenditures of \$239,613.27. Motion approved unanimously with a roll call vote.

VEENSTRA & KIMM ENGINEERS ON WATER PLANT

Two engineers from V&K were present to introduce themselves and explain a little more about the water plant upgrade project and what the future looks like. The engineers informed all the new board members that they looked at options from rehabbing our current facility to fully replacing everything. With the age and shape of much of our equipment and overhead, rehabbing was quickly ruled out. Now we look at upgrading. They assured us that they want to work with us every step of the way to be sure we are getting the facility we need while keeping our budget in mind. Scal-

ing back and adjusting to what we are comfortable with, spending wise, can be adjusted and decided on as we continue to move forward. Next steps, the engineers will come up with an engineering contract, allowing us to move forward with them during the planning and engineering process. They hope to have a contract ready for us to review and consider at a future meeting.

CONSIDER MEETING TIME CHANGE

Last month Howard suggested we move the monthly TMU meetings to 6pm instead of 7pm on the first Thursday of the month. All board members were in favor of making the change. MOTION by Dostal, seconded by Renslow, to move the TMU meetings to 6pm instead of 7pm. Motion approved unanimously with a roll call vote.

RESOLUTION NAMING DEPOSITORIES

Blaine informed the board that this is an annual resolution that is done to name our signers, our banks and our signature policies when writing checks. Since the whole board is new and we now have a new GM, Blaine updated the resolution to reflect those changes. MOTION by Weida, seconded by Dostal, to approve RESOLUTION 09-11-25-01 Naming Depositories. Motion approved with a roll call vote.

OPENING MEETING TRAINING

As stated last month, beginning July 1st all those newly appointed to a governmental seat must complete an open meeting training class. Those classes being offered online have been very hard to get into so McEwen also

found that IAMU is offering an in-person class in late October if any of our board members would be willing and able to participate in that. Renslow has been the only member to complete the course online, but the others present would like to attend the late October class. Blaine will make sure everyone gets signed up to join.

EMPLOYEE WAGE INCREASE

Last month it was discussed that wages would be reviewed to stay competitive and retain employees. Wages and budget were reviewed and McEwen noted that 3% increases were budgeted for this current FY26, but he's proposing we raise them another 2.5% for a total of 5.5% for FY26. If approved McEwen would like to see them be effective for all employees with the next pay period. Stief suggested to the board that we retro them back to July 1st, 2025. McEwen encouraged this proposal and noted that going forward he'd really like to see raises and reviews be done in July at the start of the fiscal years, rather than the middle of the year like they have been. MOTION by Howard, seconded by Dostal, to approve a wage increase of 5.5% to all employees' retro back to July 1st, 2025. Motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Check Register attached
Pat Stief, Board Chairman
Haley Blaine, Board Secretary

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