

Monona County Board Of Supervisors Meeting  
June 3, 2025

The Monona County Board of Supervisors met in regular session at 8:30 a.m. o'clock on Tuesday, June 3, 2025, in the boardroom of the courthouse in Onawa, with Vice Chairman Tom Brouillette presiding. Other Supervisors present was Vince Phillips. Supervisor Fox was absent. Also present was Auditor Peggy A. Rolph.

The Supervisors voted to approve the agenda.

Charlie Persinger, Monona County Economic Development, was present to update the Board what he found out about the DNR and Blue Lake. There will be a public meeting either Monday, June 23, 2025, or Thursday, June 26, 2025, at the Onawa Community Center. Charlie will inform the Board which day and time the meeting will be held. No action was taken. Wray Wright was also present.

Patrick Prorok, EMA Director, was present to update the Board on emergency response hazard mitigation plan that SIMPCO has prepared for Cherokee, Ida, Monona, Plymouth, and Woodbury Counties. Discussion followed. No action was taken.

Patrick also updated the Board that the blizzard from March 19, 2025, has been declared a Presidential disaster and public assistance will be available to help with public utilities. There is no individual assistance available. Discussion followed. No action was taken. Wray Wright was also present.

Secondary Roads Engineer Charles Bechtold and Wray Wright were present for Secondary Roads business. The Supervisors voted to approve miscellaneous utility permit for Brandon Stout Winnebago pro-

posing to place 1-1 1/4" conduit at a min. of 48" deep on the north side of 340/100th Street starting on the west side of Calhoun/Aspen Avenue for approximately 14,500 feet staying within 5'0" of the property line. Conduit will contain (1) 48 ct. fiber.

Discussion items were motor graders, FEMA, hauling rock, stockpiling rock, salt fuel bids opening next week. No action was taken.

The Supervisors voted to give Peggy Rolph, Auditor, authorization to purchase election trailer from OC Trailers & RV's Inc. for a 2025 American Hauler Trailer for \$9,075.

Amy Borchardt-Sick, drainage clerk, was present for drainage business along with Caleb Rasmussen, Engineer with ISG; Luke Carpenter, Graduate Engineer with ISG and Tim Hodgson. The Supervisors approved the drainage claims. The claims are on file in the drainage office. Oliver Lake Main and Oliver Lake Lateral 1 were discussed. No action was taken.

The Board of Supervisors of Monona and Harrison Counties, Iowa, as Joint Trustees of the McNeill Inter-County Drainage District of Monona and Harrison Counties, Iowa, met on Tuesday, June 3, 2025, at 11:00 o'clock a.m. at the Onawa Public Library in Onawa. Supervisors present were: Vince Phillips and Tom Brouillette, Monona County; and Brian Rife, and Rebecca Wilkerson, Harrison County. Absent: Bo Fox, Chairman and Tony Smith. Others present were Peggy Rolph, Monona County Auditor; Amy Borchardt-Sick, Drainage Clerk; Caleb Rasmussen, Engineer, Luke Carpenter, Grad-

uate Engineer with I & S Group, and Attorney Gary Taylor.

Landowners and interested parties present were: James Alexander; Beverly Alexander; Scott Phipps; Rick Stanislav; Allen Carrier; Larry Hutchinson, David Zima, and Jason Stanislav.

Supervisor Brouillette announced this is the time and place for hearing for the proposed improvement of the McNeill Main Inter-County Drainage District Phase II project. There were no written objections filed prior to the time of the hearing. Supervisor Brouillette asked if anyone else had a written objection to file before the hearing began. No additional objections were filed.

Engineer Rasmussen stated the purpose of today's public hearing is to discuss the proposed improvements for the McNeill Inter-County Drainage Ditch cleanout, Phase II, which consists of a new channel and pipe outlet on the east side of the Union Pacific Railroad just north of Blencoe. This new channel would bypass the RR. Phase I is complete from the Monona Harrison up to this first RR crossing. The idea of the two phases was to allow time to permit the project through the RR. As of date, we have made several attempts to communicate with the RR, we did reach out to Representatives Feenstra, Sweeney, and Senator Ernst for help communicating with the RR.

We filed an official notice, per Iowa Code 468, with the RR to lower their two culverts. The notice was sent in late 2023, they had until 2024 to respond which they did not. The RR is adamant this is not a repair but an "improve-

ment" and stated they will not lower the two culverts.

Engineer Rasmussen discussed several options for repair that were all presented at the informational meeting held in December 2024 and let the landowners present know the conclusion of that meeting was to bypass the RR and construct a new channel on the East side of the RR. Plans were provided by ISG for the new proposed ditch. Rasmussen stated the district would still maintain the ditch west of the RR. When the new channel was designed, it was to avoid any wetland mitigation that is out there. Rasmussen said they would not do a design for any capacity above what is existing. That again is to avoid wetland mitigation.

Engineer Rasmussen responded to additional questions presented. Landowners concerns were asking senators for additional help, expenses of the project and what that would do to the taxes, the trusses being removed and replaced with two culverts put in by Union Pacific without any knowledge of the McNeil DD, timeframe of the project, pumping, taking the RR to court for the lowering of the two culverts, reclassification, assessment, and more.

Rasmussen stated if we did take the RR to court, the costs are assessed back to the successful party in the case. If the district was successful in court, the RR would pay the court costs. He feels we have sufficient documentation to present in court. The last case ISG was involved with taking Union Pacific to court settled in 2.5 years. One landowner suggested getting the news involved when the papers are served to the RR.

Based on discussion, it was Rasmussen's recommendation to not adopt the improvement bypass, direct ISG to proceed preparing plans and specifications for the repair cleanout, phase II and to prep documents to serve Union Pacific papers for lowering the pipe culverts under the two RR crossings.

The remaining portion of the ditch in consideration and ongoing commitment with the RR and consideration of construction dewatering, the construction would start at the second RR crossing and continue north to Onawa. The outcome of the RR would determine if we proceed with the west loop or then proceed with the new bypass channel. Per Rasmussen, the ditch would line up if we still elected to do the bypass, and for that 3/4 mile he anticipates that portion would take three months to complete if taking that route. They would level the spoils and Harrison County

stated they would be interested if we had extra dirt that needed to be hauled off.

Following lengthy discussion, the Supervisors voted to close the hearing.

The Monona and Harrison Supervisors voted to not adopt the improvement bypass, direct ISG to proceed with the plans and specifications of the repair cleanout of Phase II McNeill Inter-County Drainage Ditch, and to prep documents to serve Union Pacific RR notice for lowering the pipe culverts under the 2 RR crossing.

The anticipated timeline for this repair for Phase II would be bid letting early Fall with construction beginning early Winter of 2025 and completion being next Spring.

Rasmussen did note that they were directed to complete a reclassification of the district when this project started, they have not done that due to the proposed improvement, however now that that is not taking place, they will continue getting the reclassification completed.

The Supervisors voted to recess the meeting at 11:55 p.m. and reconvened at 12:56 p.m.

Kara Minnihan was present requesting a letter of support from the

Attorney General Bird Defends  
Rights Of Foster Parents To Practice  
Their Faith

Attorney General Brenna Bird has joined with 21 other states in supporting a couple against a state's attempt to exclude them from its foster-parent program because of their Christian faith.

A federal district court affirmed Vermont's decision to revoke the couple's licenses to foster children because of their traditional Christian beliefs. Attorney General Bird joined the Florida-led brief that urges the federal court of appeals to protect the couple's right to be both Christians and foster parents. Vermont's approach restricts the foster parents' free speech, association, and religious-exercise rights. Vermont, like other states, can respect the parents' faith while making sure that foster children have the care that they need.

Other states have created foster care systems that respect and protect parents and children alike, matching kids to homes with like-minded parents. A similar system in Vermont would allow parents with specific religious beliefs to care for children in the foster system while continuing to practice their faith. Vermont has more children

Board of Supervisors for the Onawa Public Library's Musical Sensory Garden Grant. The Supervisors voted to authorize the Board of Supervisor's signatures on letter of support for the Onawa Public Library's Musical Sensory Garden Grant.

The Supervisors voted to approve the minutes of May 27, 2025, as read and claims submitted.

The Supervisors acknowledged the receipt of resignation letter from Sharon Gries, Chief Deputy Assessor, effective May 29, 2025 and to authorize the Vice-Chairman's signature on status/payroll change form for Terri Pratt. She will be going from \$54,576 per year as Deputy Assessor to \$70,316 per year as Chief Deputy Assessor.

The Supervisors acknowledged the receipt of Manure Management Annual update for Loess Hills Poultry Facility #71250. Vote on motion: Ayes: Brouillette and Phillips. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The Supervisors acknowledged the receipt of resignation letter from Sheri Streeter, Election Deputy effective June 30, 2025 and the receipt of resignation letter from Grant Richard Jager, Sr. as Commissioner of Veterans Affairs.

The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.



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