

Exira

Continued from pageA7

Kellman said “that was not the case” but that drought conditions in eight of the last 10 years have created a situation which no one predicted.

“If they had known (then) what you know now, 20 years later, they would have probably made a different decision,” said Kellman, who has been with the association for nearly four years, referring to previous management.

Regional Water Rural Water Association has 2,600 connections and serves around 750 square miles in Shelby, Pottawattamie, Audubon, Cass and Harrison Counties.

Exira is the newest addition to the system, according to Kellman, and came on in 2005 after an engineering study revealed it would be more cost effective for the town to join the rural water district than to rehabilitate its failing water treatment system.

Meg Andersen, Exira’s city clerk, said the city of 763 people could not fund a solution without the help of funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development office which were only available if the city decided to join Regional Water, to which they signed a 40-year agreement.

“You have no option,” Andersen said. “And now all of a sudden, we’re realizing this is an unsustainable source.”

But the past three years, especially, have left the town frustrated with their perennial water issues.

“We’re not trying to fight — we want to make sure that the people in this town have water,” Andersen said. “It’s a right and a basic human need.”

Connecting to Council Bluffs

Kellman said the system has relied almost entirely on its shallow well field, which has made the most sense, given that the region does not have a surface-water source sufficient enough to tap. The association explored drilling a deep well, but found it would require drilling down between 2,000 and 3,000 feet, with just a 40% chance of striking water.

The other option, which the system decided to pursue, involves an 18-mile pipeline to connect with the system in Council Bluffs and pump water into Regional Water’s system.

Kellman said the pipeline project was approved for federal funding and construction began last October. A temporary pump for the station is projected to be completed on or about June 11th and will bring some respite to the wells and customers in the system. The permanent pump for the system should be completed by October 2025.

“We’ll be able to serve everybody without having to be in any kind of water restrictions,” Kellman said of the expected result of the pipeline project.

Council Bluffs has an abundance of water, as its source is the Missouri River.

Andersen said that while the town of Exira hopes the Council Bluffs project will be successful

in alleviating their water problems, she is skeptical.

“The questions we’ve asked in the past three years — we have never been given transparent, clear, concise answers to, and they change,” Andersen said.

Her mistrust of the association has been exacerbated by a lack of clear, or consistent communication between Regional Water and the city.

“We’re told ‘you have to communicate,’ but they don’t even give us a call when we get put into a boil advisory,” Andersen said.

She said the association has also given conflicting answers on how Exira rates would be impacted by the pipeline expansion, which makes it difficult for a city with slim margins to plan its budgets.

“We’ve said we want to work towards a solution, to negotiate these things, but it doesn’t seem like much is coming to the table from the other side,” Andersen said.

Since the town is locked into a 40-year contract with Regional Water, and its own water treatment facility has been sold, Exira is left with few options. The city sent a demand letter to Regional Water and is exploring legal options to leave the contract.

Sand says “Exira matters”

In the meantime, some residents, like Benton, who lives west of the city limits, have decided to reactivate their own wells.

Other residents, like Claire and Blake Asberry, wonder whether they’ll be able to realize their plans of opening a coffee shop and mercantile in town, or if they’ll be able to find tenants for the adjoining apartments when potable water is a question.

Sand, a Democrat from Decorah, listened to the experiences of the Exira residents and said it should be a crisis to which state leaders pay more attention.

“Exira matters,” Sand said. “I think anyone in Iowa that’s facing problems like this should have their

problems fixed. Government is supposed to work for everybody.”

Sand took issue with the expensive steps city officials said they would have to complete in order to change the current situation.

“Instead of prioritizing the process, prioritize the people,” Sand said.

Kellman said customers have been under water restrictions for the “better part of three years” and he understands the frustration.

“It gets old after a while, and I get that because I’m on this system,” Kellman said. “It’s not our intention to try and deny people water. On the contrary, we want everybody to have as much water as they need, as much water as they would like.”

The towns impacted by

the May 14 boil advisory included Avoca, Persia, Panama, Portsmouth, Westphalia, Kirkman, Tennant, Earling, Exira and Brayton.

While boil advisories for all of the impacted towns aside from Panama and Portsmouth had been lifted as of Tuesday afternoon, the customers are still under “level yellow” water-use restrictions which means they are asked to avoid watering lawns, washing cars, filling pools, cleaning streets or sidewalks, and school physical education activities that require showering.

Kellman said the system is “almost there.”

“I’d love for people to be able to fill their pools in their backyard for their kids,” Kellman said. “At some point we’re going to

be able to do that, and it’s a lot closer now than it was two years ago.”

Andersen said the Council Bluffs pipeline would be a “best-case scenario.”

“We haven’t had a best-case scenario in over three years,” Andersen said. “We’re not opposed to it working — we’re looking for a solution that ensures sustainability and longevity of a safe water source for the city.”

Iowa Capital Dispatch is part of States Newsroom, a non-profit news network supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501(c)(3) public charity. Iowa Capital Dispatch maintains editorial independence. Contact Editor Kathie Obradovich for questions: info@iowacapitaldispatch.com.

Legal Notice

NOTICE OF PROPOSED ACTION TO INSTITUTE PROCEEDINGS TO ENTER INTO A LOAN AGREEMENT IN A PRINCIPAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$600,000

The City Council of Kimballton shall meet on June 12th, 2025 at the City Library, 116 N Main Street, Kimballton, IA, at 7:00 pm., for the purpose of instituting proceedings and taking action to enter into a loan agreement in a principal amount not to exceed \$600,000 for the purpose of completing electrical utility improvements.

The Loan Agreement is proposed to be secured by the net revenues of the City’s electric utility and will not constitute a general obligation of the city.

By order of the City Council of the City of Kimballton, Iowa. Section 3. All resolutions or parts thereof in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Passed and approved on May 8th, 2025.
(Published in the Audubon County Advocate Journal, Friday, June 6, 2025)

Legal Notice

NOTICE OF SCHOOL BOARD VACANCY

In accordance with Iowa Code Sections 279.6-7, notice is hereby given that a vacancy has or will occur among the members of the Board of Directors of the Exira-Elk Horn Kimballton Community School District.

The vacancy or will occur on June 9, 2025. The remaining balance of the term of office for the vacant position will expire on November 2, 2027.

It is the intention of the remaining members of the Board of Directors to fill said vacancy by appointment. Persons interested in being considered for appointment should contact the Superintendent or Board Secretary. A person so appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold office until a successor is elected and qualified in accordance with law.

The electors of the School District have the right to file a valid petition requiring that the vacancy be filled by a special election.

Dated this 2nd day of June, 2025
EXIRA-ELK HORN-KIMBALLTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT.

By Carla Christensen, Board Secretary
(Published in the Audubon County Advocate Journal, Friday, June 6, 2025)

Legal Notice

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING - AMENDMENT OF CURRENT BUDGET				
Board of Supervisors of AUDUBON COUNTY				
Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025				
The Board of Supervisors of AUDUBON COUNTY will conduct a public hearing for the purpose of amending the current budget for fiscal year ending June 30, 2025				
Meeting Date/Time: 6/17/2025 10:00 AM		Contact: County Auditor Lisa Frederiksen		Phone: (712) 563-2584
Meeting Location: Supervisor Room-Courthouse; 318 Leroy St; Audubon, IA				
There will be no increase in taxes. Any residents or taxpayers will be heard for or against the proposed amendment at the time and place specified above. A detailed statement of: additional receipts, cash balances on hand at the close of the preceding fiscal year, and proposed disbursements, both past and anticipated, will be available at the hearing. Budget amendments are subject to protest. If protest petition requirements are met, the State Appeal Board will hold a local hearing. For more information, consult https://dom.iowa.gov/local-gov-appeals .				
REVENUES & OTHER FINANCING SOURCES		Total Budget as Certified or Last Amended	Current Amendment	Total Budget After Current Amendment
Taxes Levied on Property	1	6,121,099	0	6,121,099
Less: Uncollected Delinquent Taxes - Levy Year	2	0	0	0
Less: Credits to Taxpayers	3	178,500	0	178,500
Net Current Property Tax	4	5,942,599	0	5,942,599
Delinquent Property Tax Revenue	5	0	0	0
Penalties, Interest & Costs on Taxes	6	0	0	0
Other County Taxes/TIF Tax Revenues	7	1,654,816	0	1,654,816
Intergovernmental	8	3,795,069	0	3,795,069
Licenses & Permits	9	20,000	0	20,000
Charges for Service	10	406,690	0	406,690
Use of Money & Property	11	398,381	0	398,381
Miscellaneous	12	33,000	147,000	180,000
Subtotal Revenue	13	12,250,555	147,000	12,397,555
Other Financing Sources:				
General Long-Term Debt Proceeds	14	1,458,198	0	1,458,198
Operating Transfers In	15	1,725,800	0	1,725,800
Proceeds of Fixed Asset Sales	16	30,000	0	30,000
Total Revenues & Other Sources	17	15,464,553	147,000	15,611,553
EXPENDITURES & OTHER FINANCING USES				
Operating:				
Public Safety and Legal Services	18	2,220,309	0	2,220,309
Physical Health and Social Services	19	602,810	0	602,810
Mental Health, ID & DD	20	0	0	0
County Environment & Education	21	735,482	0	735,482
Roads & Transportation	22	5,884,615	0	5,884,615
Government Services to Residents	23	611,699	0	611,699
Administration	24	2,839,811	0	2,839,811
Nonprogram Current	25	0	0	0
Debt Service	26	1,766,509	147,000	1,913,509
Capital Projects	27	1,226,177	0	1,226,177
Subtotal Expenditures	28	15,887,412	147,000	16,034,412
Other Financing Uses:				
Operating Transfers Out	29	1,725,800	0	1,725,800
Refunded Debt/Payments to Escrow	30	0	0	0
Total Expenditures & Other Uses	31	17,613,212	147,000	17,760,212
Excess of Revenues & Other Sources over (under) Expenditures & Other Uses	32	-2,148,659	0	-2,148,659
Beginning Fund Balance - July 1, 2024	33	10,282,416	0	10,282,416
Increase (Decrease) in Reserves (GAAP Budgeting)	34	0	0	0
Fund Balance - Nonspendable	35	0	0	0
Fund Balance - Restricted	36	5,361,049	0	5,361,049
Fund Balance - Committed	37	0	0	0
Fund Balance - Assigned	38	93,405	0	93,405
Fund Balance - Unassigned	39	2,679,303	0	2,679,303
Total Ending Fund Balance - June 30, 2025	40	8,133,757	0	8,133,757
Explanation of Changes: overpayment/return of interest paid on LOC May				