

Marengo council renames ‘public forum’

‘Resident comments’ is a more accurate description, officials say

By Winona Whitaker, Hometown Current

MARENGO — The open forum portion of Marengo City Council meetings will now be called “resident comments.”

The City Council made the change to more accurately describe what is allowed during that portion of city council meetings.

According to the Iowa League of Cities, which guides city councils through Iowa open meeting laws, the city council shouldn’t discuss items other than what was on the agenda when it was posted.

The council must provide 24 hours notice to the public about what will be discussed at the meeting. If an item is added to the agenda less than 24 hours prior to a meeting or at a meeting, the public may contend that proper notice was not given.

Therefore, if someone brings up a topic during the public forum section of the meeting, the mayor or presiding officer should defer the discussion and action to the next council meeting or suggest a special meeting be called if there is an immediate need to address the issue, the League of Cities says.

It is not appropriate to move forward with action on an item that was not on the agenda.

During the last few months, residents of Marengo have confronted the city council dur-

ing open forum, asking that the council answer questions about topics not on the agenda.

The council, city administrator, mayor and police chief have answered questions asked by the residents even after City Attorney Gage Kensler advised them not to.

Mayor Adam Rabe and City Administrator Karla Marck have reminded council members before open forum that they are not to discuss topics not on the agenda.

Open forum is not the same as a public hearing, which is required by law for certain situations, such as prior to the adoption of a budget, Iowa League of Cities says. Public hearings solicit public input on specific proposed actions.

But many cities provide a time for public comment at every meeting in order to allow residents to give feedback and have input in their city government.

Cities can make rules of conduct for their meetings to ensure the meetings are orderly, the League of Cities says. The rules can permit the council or presiding officer to establish time limits for public comments.

The mayor or presiding officer is ordinarily responsible for enforcing these rules.

The City of Marengo limits comments during open forum to three minutes and requires that speakers give their names and addresses.

Marck said people seemed confused about the meaning of open forum.

With the name changed to resident comment, people won’t be shocked that the council can’t respond, Marck said. Resident comment explains it better.

Councilman John Hinshaw said the change is more respectful because it gives people their full three minutes to speak rather than having some of their time taken up by responses from city officials.

Information about open meetings laws is available at iowaleague.org/.



Marengo City Councilman John Hinshaw, City Administrator Karla Marck, Mayor Adam Rabe, City Clerk, Councilwoman Karen Wayson-Kising during a May 2024 city council meeting. (File photo)

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LEGAL NOTICES

January 27, 2025

The Poweshiek County Board of Supervisors met in regular session at 8:30 a.m. Members present Jason Roudabush, Jacki Bolen, and Jeff Tindle. Moved by Roudabush, 2nd by Bolen to approve agenda. 3 ayes. Motion carried. Moved by Bolen, 2nd by Roudabush to approve January 23, 2025 board minutes. 3 ayes. Motion carried. Board received Clerk of Court report of fees collected for month ending November 2024. Board received MMP annual update for Hudnut Farms, Jackson Township. Galyn Nook, IT Director, presented FY26 proposed IT budget request. Brooke Holder, Public Health presented FY26 proposed public health funding and pass-through grant program. Moved by Bolen, 2nd by Roudabush to enter into public hearing at 9:32 a.m. for purpose of amendment to current FY25 Hearing and Adoption of Budget Amendment. 3 ayes. Motion carried. Moved by Bolen, 2nd by Roudabush to approve Resolution #2025-20 making changes in FY25 departmental appropriations. 3 ayes. Motion carried.

Resolution #2025-20 Be it Resolved by the Poweshiek County Board of Supervisors to make the following changes in FY25 departmental appropriations: **Service Area 1- Public Safety and Legal Services + \$21,000** From: \$4,941,786 to \$4,962,786 Medical Examiner +10,000 From: \$69,530 to \$79,530 Investigations +1,000 From: \$6,000 to \$7,000 Legal Defense +10,000 From: \$25,000 to \$35,000

Service Area 3- Physical Health and Social Services + \$45,425 From: \$533,666 to \$578,091 Veterans Affairs +11,425 From: \$40,528 to \$51,953 Youth Guidance +34,000 From: \$35,000 to \$69,000 **Service Area 6- County Environment & Education + \$1,000** From: \$853,380 to \$863,380 Economic Development +10,000 From: \$75,500 to \$85,500 **Service Area 9- Administration + \$15,000** From: \$2,023,033 to \$2,038,033 Other Policy & Administration +15,000 From: \$69,300 to \$84,300 **Service Area 0- Non Program Expenditure + \$500** From: \$142,560 to \$143,060 Other County Enterprises +500 From: \$11,000 to \$11,500 **Service Area 0 - Long-Term Debt Service + \$900** From: \$1,260,748 to \$1,261,648 Debt Service - Interest (& bond fees) From: \$110,748 to \$111,648 **Service Area 0- Capital Projects + \$50,000** From: \$1,080,037 to \$1,130,037 Other Capital Projects +50,000 From: \$503,837 to \$553,837

Passed this 27th day of January, POWESHIK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Jeff Tindle, Chairman Jason Roudabush, Vice-Chairman Jacki Bolen, Member Attest: Melissa Ellander, Auditor 9:40 a.m. Simone Bates, The Record joined the meeting. Missy Ellander, Auditor presented the FY26 proposed Auditor, Elections and General Assistance budget requests. Melissa O’Neil and Sam Carrell with Central Iowa Shelter Services (CISS) met with board to provide information on CISS and the real estate feasibility study completed for Poweshiek County. O’Neil stated CISS has received funding to open an empowerment command center in Poweshiek County. The empowerment center will serve as a centralized emergency operation management system, driving coordination and streamlining the shelter’s ability to reach unhoused residents. CISS will also launch a mobile app that creates a strategic framework to help the local community navigate and tackle the unique implications of housing insecurity in Iowa. CISS indicated that this empowerment center is NOT an emergency shelter. Through this program there will be case management services, affordable housing units, long-term housing solutions, and all efforts to prevent homelessness. Lisa Wetzel, NE13A provided an update on the services provided in Poweshiek County by Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging and requested funding of \$2,600 for FY26. Tindle stated he attended Central Iowa Juvenile Detention meeting on Friday. Bolen stated she is attending a Region 6 meeting today. Moved by Roudabush, 2nd by Bolen to adjourn at 11:52 a.m. 3 ayes. Motion carried.

Melissa Ellander, Poweshiek County Auditor Jeff Tindle, Chairman **January 30, 2025** The Poweshiek County Board of Supervisors met in regular session at 8:30 a.m. Members present Jason Roudabush, Jacki Bolen, and Jeff Tindle. Moved by Roudabush, 2nd by Bolen to approve agenda. 3 ayes. Motion carried. Moved by Bolen, 2nd by Roudabush to approve January 31, 2025 payroll for \$258,136.99. 3 ayes. Motion carried. Moved by Roudabush, 2nd by Bolen to approve the following claims: Acterra Group Svc 658.50 Advanced Correctional Svc 3,858.29 All American Pest Control Svc 43.00 Alliant Energy/IPL Svc 2,163.44 Amazon Capital Services Inc Goods 313.71 American Home Finding Assn Svc 1,446.11 Angela Massengale Mil 10.40 Audas Sanitation Svc 226.55 Bailey Office Outfitters Goods 1,181.40 Bob Barker Co Inc Goods 2,099.00 Brian Paul Reimb Phone 30.00 Brooklyn Hardware Goods 337.67 Browns Shoe Fit Goods 162.00 Central Iowa Detention Ctr Svc 7,385.11 Central Sall, LLC Goods 17,188.72 Cintras Corporation Goods 162.22 Clifac Car Wash Svc 301.25 Collum Electric LLC Goods 2,715.14 Connectwise LLC Svc 414.72 Consolidated Management Co Svc 12,262.84 Const & Aggregate Products Goods 2,879.88 Cox-Smith Funeral Svc 1,500.00 Craig Kuntz Mil Reimb Goods 489.96 David D Menninga Reimb Goods 115.83 David H Care Svc 350.00 Denise Hekelvic Convey Svc 510.00 Des Moines Stamp Mfg Co Goods 74.00 Diamond Mowers LLC Goods 231.91 Ecolab Svc 195.97 Ellander Enterprises LLC Svc 98.00 Enviro Control Solutions Inc Svc 2,217.78 Fleetside Ford LLC Goods 73,500.00 French-Reneker-Associates, Inc Svc 3,140.00 Gallis Inc Goods 706.86 Galyn Nook Reimb Phone 35.97 Goodwin Tucker Group Svc 482.80 Grace Electric LLC Svc 946.93 Grinnell City Of Svc 272.70 Grinnell Firestone Svc 134.91 Grinnell Herald Register Svc 939.70 Grinnell Regional Public Health Svc 22,319.12 Hawkeve Lock & Security Svc 141.50 Heartland Shredding Inc Svc 55.00 Henry M Adkins & Son Inc Svc 1,991.59 Hickenbottom Inc Goods 342.72 Holland-Coble Funeral Home Svc 1,500.00 Hometown Hardware Goods 116.08 IDALS - State Apriary Program Svc 86.58 Iowa County Recorders Assn Svc 250.00 Iowa Dept Of Public Health Svc 2,119.00 Iowa Dept Of Public Safety Svc 1,992.00 Iowa Law Enforcement Academy Svc 150.00 Iowa One Call Svc 8.10 Iowa Prison Industries Goods 688.71 IP Pathways Svc 5,950.21 ISAC Svc 630.00 J Versteegh Septic Sewer & Drain Svc 375.00 JD Griffith Reimb Goods 12.75 Jessica Hutchcraft Mil 25.20 Jody Routier Well Closure 1,100.00 Johnson County Medical Exam Svc 322.01 Karl Emergency Vehicles Goods 64,086.19

Kenneth Desrochers Reimb Goods 20.52 Liebovich Steel & Aluminum Co. Goods 1,578.76 Mahaska Communication Group Svc 368.04 Martin Marietta Materials Goods 7,387.75 Matt Parrott/Storey Kenworthy Goods 98.12 MCI Svc 41.67 Melissa Ellander Mil 69.60 Microbac Laboratories Inc Svc 55.00 Mid American Energy Svc 90.74 Mid American Research Chemical Svc 510.30 Mid States Organized Crime Ctr Svc 150.00 Montezuma Municipal Utilities Svc 5,759.72 Montezuma State Bank Goods 14.51 NACE Svc 945.00 Norsolv Systems Environmental Svc 180.95 Peltz Cash Svc 45.34 Pitney Bowes Svc 732.57 Pumps Tire Service Inc Goods 11,552.64 Poweshiek County Sheriff Svc 573.20 Poweshiek Water Assn Svc 120.75 Premier Office Equip/RK Dixon Svc 143.13 Quill Corporation Goods 271.63 Racorn Corporation Svc 46,865.28 Ramsey-Weeks Inc Svc 2,318.00 Reliance Telephone Inc Svc 112.75 Rockmount Research Svc 3,550.06 Ryan Miller Mil Reimb Goods 236.98 Schumacher Elevator Co Svc 318.20 Sci Communications Inc Svc 718.75 Secretary Of State Svc 30.00 Snap On Tools Goods 45.50 Snook Rentals Svc 200.00 Sprayer Specialties, Inc. Goods 447.30 Stellar Services LLC Svc 2,954.37 Tifco Industries, Inc. Goods 2,033.29 TIREC Svc 216.77 Total Choice Shipping Goods 150.99 Uline Goods 417.85 United States Cellular Svc 347.24 Valsoff Corporation Inc Svc 175.00 Verizon Svc 245.26 Verizon Wireless Svc 75.00 Vesits Svc 123.96 Victor Qry Inc Goods 20,275.02 Von Bokern Associates Inc Svc 3,550.00 West Payment Center Svc 464.25 WMPF Group LLC Svc 1,596.08 Xerox Financial Services Svc 192.20 3 ayes. Motion carried.

8:41 a.m. Randy Johnson and Steve Shaffer joined the meeting. 8:50 a.m. Derek Bates, The Record joined the meeting. Chris Nolte, Veterans Affairs Director, met with board for Veterans Affairs department monthly meeting and to present proposed FY26 Veterans Affairs budget request. Poweshiek County Fair Board members Scott Sieck, Curtis Sieck, Chad Latcham, Ryan Iverson, Paul Hawkins, and Marcia Iverson met with board to present the financial report for the fair, update on completed projects and upcoming projects and to request the county FY26 appropriation for county fair. Dan Nieland, Economic Development Director provided an update for county economic development. Nieland stated Pow I-80 has applied for an assessment through IEDA’s Downtown Resource Center for the cities of Montezuma, Brooklyn, and Grinnell. Nieland should know by February 10 if they were approved and when the assessments will be scheduled. The program itself is an immersive exploration of the downtown by 3-4 experts that look at the positive attributes as well as the areas for improvement. This is based on observations as well as in-depth conversations with stakeholders throughout the community. It culminates in a community meeting that highlights their findings and there is a subsequent report that provides more information on what can be improved, how to do it, and where potential funding assistance can be found. Nieland stated Jeld-Wen closed their window plant which resulted in a lay-off of 298 employees, 96 of which reside in Poweshiek County. Bolen stated even though the others do not reside within Poweshiek County, they still buy gas, food, etc. within Poweshiek County so the county will suffer from this lay-off. Nieland stated he has coordinated with IowaWORKS for a career fair to be held February 26 from 10 am to 1 pm at Iowa Valley Grinnell Campus. Tindle inquired if anything was being pursued to find a business to go into the old Sigis Manufacturing buildings. Nieland stated that it was tricky due to the setup of the buildings, but it is something he is pursuing.

Nieland stated there have been several inquiries from businesses inquiring about locating to Poweshiek County, but those businesses are in need of larger buildings which currently are not any available and also some of the businesses require more water or electric capacity than available. Nieland is working to try and bring businesses such as a gas station to the location south of I-80 at the Malcom exit. Nieland stated he is working on business outreach with businesses in other states to market Poweshiek County, Iowa to them. Pow I-80 is partnered with Greater Des Moines Partnership to get this information out there. Nieland stated they also partner with Alliant for business outreach. Lyle Brehm, Engineer; DJ Hendrix, Assistant to the Engineer; and Eric Refer, City of Victor Mayor met with board to discuss the resurfacing of F29 (Old 6 Rd) from IA21 to City of Victor. F29 is a farm-to-market route. Where the route crosses into the corporate limits of a city, the route becomes a farm-to-market extension. Cities larger than population 500 are responsible for farm-to-market extensions, but Poweshiek County has had a policy for about 20 years where the county shares in the cost of the traveled portion of the roadway for projects. The cities are still responsible for all costs outside the traveled roadway, such as driveways, curb and gutter, utilities, etc. Engineer Brehm has prepared this project to include work within the city limits. Poweshiek County has prepared plans and will take bids through the Iowa DOT in March. The farm-to-market fund will pay the project costs upfront. The city will reimburse the county for their costs. Historically the county has allowed the cities to repay within 5 years, which includes an interest rate. The county will need to enter into a couple of agreements with the city, one agreement will be that the county is the lead agency for the project and that the city will accept our plans and execution of the project. The other is a repayment agreement. Brehm stated these documents will be prepared and provided to City of Victor. Once city signs said documents, then Brehm will present to the Board of Supervisors for approval and signature.

11:23 a.m. Moved by Bolen, 2nd by Roudabush to adjourn. 3 ayes. Motion carried. Melissa Ellander, Poweshiek County Auditor Jeff Tindle, Chairman

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Letters to the editor must be signed with the author’s name and town of residence and should include a phone number for verification purposes. The phone number will not be published.

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We will not publish letters that we deem libelous or letters that contain claims or assumptions that cannot be verified using reasonable effort, letters we consider in poor taste or letters we consider offensive to the general readership.

Letters must be less than 500 words and will be edited for grammar, style and spelling.

Only one letter from a single author on the

same subject will be published in a 30-day period.

Letters that endorse candidates will be considered ad content and will not be printed. Endorsements of ballot issues will be accepted as letters to the editor.

Letters will run at the discretion of the managing editor based on relevance, timeliness and available space. We do not guarantee that submitted letters will appear in print.

Send letters for the Marengo Pioneer Republican, the Poweshiek County Chronicle Republican and the Williamsburg Journal Tribune to Hometown Media Managing Editor Winona Whitaker at winona@hometowncurrent.com.

Iowa conifers struggle with winter burn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Iowa Department of Natural Resource foresters are anticipating reports of moderate to severe winter burn damage to arborvitae and white pine trees across Iowa.

“The ground remains frozen, but the ambient temperatures have been above freezing,” explains Tivon Feeley, DNR forest health forester. “The tree is forced to use their water reserves in the needles, but can’t absorb new water from the frozen soil. The lack of water causes the trees to dry out.”

Winter burn is common on conifers planted

in open, unprotected locations exposed to severe winter weather. Symptoms include browning or bleaching of the needles, trees losing needles and tree death.

These symptoms become more apparent as the days become warmer in late spring and tend to be worse on the side of the tree exposed to sunlight or wind during the winter months.

If needles on the tree are dead but buds are alive, new plant foliage will regrow to replace the winter burned foliage.

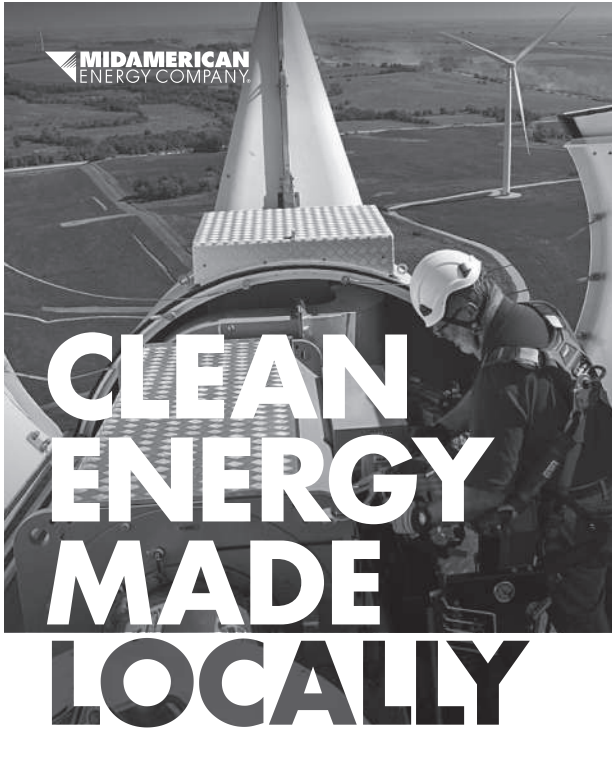
If both the buds and needles are dead, the tree will not recover. The tree will need to be removed.

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