

Knoxville, Pella Boards approve homeschool agreement

The Knoxville and Pella School Boards each approved an agreement at their respective meetings Tuesday night that will allow homeschool students to participate in extracurricular activities at Pella.

A parent requested this for a specific student. Pella does not offer a Home School Assistance Program, while Knoxville does.

The agreement will help both districts receive what the State feels is an appropriate amount of money to provide these services to the student who is not fully enrolled in either district.

Pella Board approves weight room proposal

The Pella School Board has formally approved an agreement with the Athletic Booster Club to upgrade the high school’s weight room equipment.

The Booster Club has pledged \$150,000 for the \$200,000 project. A great deal of money has already been raised and the group has been actively working with Activities Director Matt Fouch on the project.

The district hopes to sell the old equipment (via sealed bid) and put the proceeds toward the cost of the new. Superintendent Greg Ebeling believes the district’s actual costs of the equipment will be around \$30,000 from the PPEL or sales tax funds.

Weight room equipment is utilized throughout the day at the high school, not just by athletes involved in school-sponsored programs.

Pella Board reviews property insurance proposal

The Pella School Board will consider a property/casualty insurance renewal proposal with EMC at its June 23 meeting. They reviewed the proposal at Tuesday’s regular meeting, which includes an increase in the premium of approximately \$90,000.

Business Manager Katelyn Bierl said the bulk of the premium increase is due to the increased square footage of property protected, with the addition of the stadium upgrades and the Jefferson/Middle School Bridge (\$60,000). Pella also has the opportunity to join the special pool offered to school districts to reduce deductibles in the event of wind/hail damage. No decision was made whether to join this pool, as the Twin Cedars School District has. Joining the pool could reduce the deductible of \$1.6 million should the district suffer extensive wind/hail damage to \$75,000.

“There’s potential savings there, that’s the upside,” Superintendent Greg Ebeling said.

Time to Enter for Sweet Ribbons at the Iowa State Fair

Fair Sweet Fair would not be as sweet without blue ribbon competitions. Entries just opened, so now is the time to put your blue ribbon best to the test! Do you have a family recipe you have mastered, are you picking up a new hobby, did you catch the perfect photo, or have you started your backyard garden yet? You can find traditional competitions like livestock, quilting, and canning or new and innovative competitions such as Legos, gluten-free foods, miniature rooms and beer making, to name a few. The lineup is so diverse, you can be a beginner or an expert and find something to enter.

Just visit www.iowastatefair.org, choose your category and submit your entry by the listed deadline. Most entries are due by July 1, but some categories have different dates, so be sure to read the guidelines carefully for your specific entry.

For more information regarding entry deadlines, competitions or the online entry system, contact the Competitive Events Department at competitiveevents@iowastatefair.org or 515/262-3111 ext. 207.

Board of Supervisors’ notes

The Marion County Board of Supervisors met in regular session Tuesday morning. Here are a few more actions taken at that meeting.

Approved an amendment to Chapter 5 of the County’s ordinances, related to Local Option Sales and Services Tax. Auditor Jake Grandia explained this was “purely administrative” and was necessary to reflect the City of Pella’s vote to extend the tax for 20 years.

Appointed Fallon Burney to the Commission on Veterans Affairs to fill a seat vacated with the passing of Al Van Zee. The term ends 6/30/27.

Approved a quitclaim deed for a portion of road right-of-way abandoned in the 1940s near G-40. A survey noticed the discrepancy.

Approved Plans, and Specifications, and Estimated Total Cost for County Line Road Pavement Rehabilitation – Grading and Storm Sewer, as well as Road Pavement Rehabilitation. This will require two bid lettings, with costs shared with the City of Monroe. Both projects will have bid lettings on June 17, with an award expected at the June 24 supervisors’ meeting.

Approved the transfer of approximately \$19,000 from the Adkins fund to the Debt Service Fund. The County has fulfilled its portion of the expenses for the development in Pleasantville. The County keeps bond proceeds in a separate fund, with interest kept separate. Treasurer Michaela Bigaouette will transfer the money into the debt service fund and use it as part of debt service calculation for FY27.

Supervisors appropriate fiscal year expenses

By Steve Woodhouse

The new fiscal year for Marion County will begin July 1. The Board of Supervisors voted at its regular meeting Tuesday morning to allocate 100 percent of the money approved in the previously passed budget.

Chair Kisha Jahner was the first to say she was “fine” with appropriating 100 percent of the departments’ budget.

“Be mindful of your budget,” she said. “We all know things can change.”

“I’m fine with 100 percent also,” Supervisor Steve McCombs added.

“I’m in favor of doing 100 percent as well,” Supervisor Jim Mueller echoed.

Marion County’s budget for the upcoming fiscal year is \$35,930,377. The Road Department has the largest departmental budget at \$12,472,387.

In a separate action, the supervisors approved the budget amendment for the current fiscal year. The budget amendment included an expenditure increase of \$1,203,239. This includes:

Auditor, \$37,570

Sheriff, \$50,000

Court Services, \$135,000

Human Resources, \$15,000

Conservation, \$100,000

Development, \$13,553

Non-Departmental, \$852,116

The non-departmental expenses include \$735,116 for Adkins Development obligations, \$35,000 for EMA, \$16,000 in excess medical expenses for jail inmates, \$10,000 in attorney expenses/\$5,000 for engineering services tied to the sinkhole, \$5,000 for EMS planning, \$20,000 for repair/maintenance for 3014 East Main and a transfer of funds from the Adkins account in the amount of \$25,000.

Public hearings were held prior to approval of these budget actions. No comments were received.

PORCUPINE MEATBALLS

My mother-in-law was a great cook. She was a farm wife and teacher, so she rarely had a minute of free time. She and my father-in-law canned and froze great amounts of garden produce, using it whenever there was an opportunity. The recipe I’m sharing this week is one that has many variations, but I’m fond of this version because it uses just a few ingredients that most of us have on hand. Because of its simplicity, it has fewer calories and less sodium than some similar recipes. To make this even more nutritious, I often use brown rice, which is a whole grain product and adds more fiber and nutrients than regular white rice.

The amount of tomatoes you use depends on how much you like tomatoes! If you’re more fond of the meatballs and don’t want too much tomato flavor, a 15-ounce can or pint jar of diced tomatoes will be enough. However, if you like a good amount of tomatoes and appreciate lots of juice, use a quart of canned tomatoes or a 28-ounce can. It’s also possible to substitute tomato sauce for the tomatoes.

P O R C U P I N E MEATBALLS

1/2 cup Minute Rice

½ cup finely chopped onion

Water

½ teaspoon salt

1 pound ground beef

¼ teaspoon pepper

1 pint diced tomatoes

Place rice in a 1-cup liquid measuring cup and add enough water to reach the 1-cup line. Allow to stand for about 10 minutes. Mix the ground beef with the onion, salt and pepper. Drain rice and add to meat mixture. Cover with tomatoes. Bake at 350 for 45 minutes.

Pella’s Third Ward City Council Seat Draws Challenge

(article submitted)

Life-long Pella resident, Anita Fischer, is announcing that she will be running for City Council in the November election for Ward-3. Fischer has filed a statement of organization with the Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board and registered as VerMeer Fischer for City Council.

According to her campaign literature under a caption of Rooted in Pella – Committed to Serve, Fischer lists her priorities if elected to serve Ward-3. They include financial accountability, accessible leadership, transparency, commitment to Pella and collaborative community engagement.

Anita Fischer (née VerMeer) is a sixth-generation Pella citizen, graduate of Pella Christian High School, and a proud wife, mother and grandmother. Before marrying her husband Kory of 22 years, she attended Indian Hills Community College in Ottumwa, completing coursework in the administrative field, including accounting and legal study.

She has dedicated her life to public service and is actively involved in her church and in local, county and state political issues. Fischer describes herself as a servant for all the people. She is sincerely interested in how federal, state, and local issues affect the citizens and community regardless of political party affiliation.

Fischer decided to run for City Council because Pella’s history and foundation, families, and future generations matter. “I can continue serving my community and advocating for Pella families and children as a member of the City Council,” said Fischer. Pella’s Ward-3 race is expected to be interesting and competitive with the entry of Anita Fischer.

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