

COUNTY

BOS schedules first of state required public hearings

by JIM RUDISILL

The Louisa County Board of Supervisors scheduled the first of two state-required public hearings on its new fiscal year (FY) budget during its regular meeting on March 3.

That first hearing will be to receive public comment and questions on the county's proposed FY 2027 spending plan.

Supervisors Scot Hunt and Shawn Maine (supervisor Kevin Hardin was absent from the meeting) agreed to hold the county's hearing on the budget's Proposed Tax Levy on March 23 at 6 p.m. in the supervisors' room of the County Annex, 503 Franklin Street, Wapello.

According to a notice of the public hearing, the Taxable Valuation – General Services for Louisa County (with the current FY 2026 figures in parenthesis) is \$765,867,012 (\$760,016,971), with the Requested Tax Dollars – Countywide (Except for Debt Service) is \$5,974,750 (\$5,935,998).

Since there is no anticipated property tax dollars planned to be assessed for Debt Service, the Requested Tax Dollars – Countywide does not change from the figures above.

The projected FY 27 Tax Rate – Countywide is \$7.80129 per \$1,000 valuation, which will be slightly below this year's rate of \$7.81035 per \$1,000.

The notice also provided information on just rural taxes. It showed the Total Valuation – Rural Services in FY 27 is \$598,387,879 (FY 26 - \$597,397,300), with Requested Tax Dollars – Additional Rural Levies projected to be \$1,760,439 (\$1,635,680).

The Tax Rate – Rural Additional is projected to be \$2.94197 per \$1,000 (FY 26 - \$2.73801), while the anticipated Rural Total tax rate is \$10.74326 per \$1,000 (\$10.54836).

The public hearing notice also provided information on comparisons involving a \$100,000 residential property in FY 26 and a \$110,000 property in FY 27. Based on those comparisons, an urban owner who is paying \$370 in FY 26 can expect to pay \$382 in FY 27; while a rural owner will see an increase from \$500 in FY 26 to \$526 in FY 27.

"SUPERVISORS" continued on page 7





Columbus Community School District

FUEL UP & GIVE BACK!

Make habit of filling up at the Columbus Jct. FAST STOP!

3¢ PER GALLON will go to the **Columbus Wildcats**

Columbus Jct. AGRILAND FS FAST STOP
24303 Hwy 92

Fill up from **March 1 - June 30, 2026**

Funds will be donated directly to **Columbus Community School District**

Questions?
Give AGRILAND FS a call at **515-462-5353.**

Fuel Up & Give Back to support Columbus Community School District

From March 1 to June 30, AGRILAND FS will donate 3¢ for every gallon of fuel sold at their Columbus Junction FAST STOP location to the Columbus Community School District.

Columbus Community School District is slated to be the recipient of a Fuel Up & Give Back pilot program by AGRILAND FS that will run March 1 to June 30, 2026. During that time, AGRILAND FS will donate 3¢ for every gallon of gas and diesel fuel sold at their Columbus Junction FAST STOP® location at 24303 IA-92. At the end of the pilot program, the amount raised will be donated directly to the school district, who will determine how the funds will be allocated.

"This partnership provides a wonderful opportunity for our district. Funds raised through the program may support upgrades to playgrounds and learning environments, improvements to our technology program, and other student-centered initiatives," said Randy Phillips, Superintendent at Columbus Community School District. "By choosing to fuel up at FAST STOP, you are directly contributing to the success and growth of our students. Every fill-up makes a difference—thank you for helping invest in the future of our school community!"

AGRILAND FS currently has 18 FAST STOP gas stations located in 17 communities across southern Iowa and northwest Missouri. They are running the Fuel Up & Give Back promotion as the third phase of a pilot project to evaluate the potential impact and sustainability of this type of give back program in its communities.

"We are excited to partner with our local community school districts on this round of Fuel Up & Give Back. As we have seen from previous rounds of the program, 3¢ per gallon can quickly add up to thousands of dollars over the four-

month period," said Ross Knobloch, Director of Energy at AGRILAND FS. "With our FAST STOP locations being open to the public 24/7, everyone has the opportunity to fuel up and give back to their local school district, plus, we appreciate all of the help spreading the word about this program to further support each AGRILAND FS FAST STOP community. We want to thank everyone for joining us in supporting your local community, and we look forward to seeing you at our FAST STOP pumps!"

The AGRILAND FS Columbus Junction FAST STOP gas pumps are open to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Fuel can be purchased at the pumps using any major credit card, debit card, or the AGRILAND FS proprietary FAST STOP charge card that gives users a savings of 3¢ per gallon on their statement when the FAST STOP Card is used at any of the 18 AGRILAND FS-branded FAST STOP locations.

About AGRILAND FS

AGRILAND FS is a financially strong and dependable cooperative, rooted in more than 90 years of experience with our eye on tomorrow. Our 28 locations across Southern Iowa and Northwest Missouri and additional service areas across the Midwest and throughout the United States are dedicated to providing local and trusted agronomy, propane, fuel, lubricant, turf product, feed, and grain solutions. Our AGRILAND FS-branded FAST STOP fuel stations are open to the public, with fuel available 24/7, and accept all major credit cards. From the field, to your home, and all points in-between, you can trust AGRILAND FS to be there, when and where you need us. For more information, visit www.agrilandfs.com or www.agrilandfs.com/faststop.



COLUMBUS COMMUNITY ATHLETIC BOOSTERS
BINGO NIGHT

Friday, March 20th
Columbus Junction American Legion

Briefly . . .

Columbus Schools Menu - March 12-18, 2026

Thursday, March 12th: Breakfast-Yogurt and Graham Crackers. Lunch-Hot Ham and Cheese, Sun Chips, Carrots, Apple Slices.

Friday, March 13th: NO SCHOOL

Monday, March 16th: NO SCHOOL

Tuesday, March 17th: NO SCHOOL

Wednesday, March 18th: NO SCHOOL

Milestone Cafe Menu - March 12-18, 2026

Thursday, March 12th: 1C Chili Soup, ½ C Carrots, ½ C Mixed Fruit, Corn Bread.

Friday, March 13th: 3oz Liver & Onions, ½ C Mashed Potatoes, 2oz Gravy, ½ C Green Beans, ½ C Fruit, Wheat Roll.

Monday, March 16th: ½ C BBQ Pulled Chicken on Bun, ½ C Broccoli, ½ C Cinnamon Baked Pears.

Tuesday, March 17th: ¾ C Tuna Noodle Casserole, ½ C Buttered Carrots, ½ C Fruit, 2Sl. WW Bread.

Wednesday, March 18th: Cook's Choice with Dessert.

LC Libraries to hold 250th anniversary celebrations

Louisa County Conservation and your Louisa County Libraries invite you to participate in a year of 250th anniversary celebrations! Stop by your local libraries any time to get a passport to Louisa County, featuring checklists of amazing attractions in your own backyard, challenges, and information on upcoming programming! We're looking forward to celebrating our nation's 250th birthday with you, featuring all that Louisa County has to offer.

Let's Honor Our Louisa County Veterans

As we approach our great nation's 250th birthday, let's share some of the stories of service of Louisa County's veterans. Email the Columbus Gazette about the veteran whose service you'd like to honor. Share in 400 words or less who they were, when and how they served, who they are to you, and a little about their time in the service. Maybe include some of the skills and qualities they took from their service and put into their daily lives. Who did they become? Who did they come home to? Or sadly, who did they leave behind at home? How did they inspire others? What do you want to share about them? We'd like to know these stories and be able to share them with our readers. Email the Columbus Gazette at cjgaz@windstream.net.

Louisa County Cattlemen's Banquet

The annual Louisa County Cattlemen's Banquet will be held Friday, March 13th at the American Legion Building in Columbus Junction. Social Hour will begin at 5:30 pm followed by a Prime Rib Dinner starting at 6:00 pm. Auction, Scholarship presentations and "Friends of the Industry" awards to follow.

Tickets available at the door or from any Louisa County Cattlemen Member.

Nominate an outstanding Columbus Graduate

Columbus Community has long been noted for its outstanding graduates. We all know someone who has distinguished himself/herself after graduating from Columbus.

It's that time of year again! With graduation only a little over three months away, the Columbus Community Board of Education is seeking nominations for the title of Distinguished Graduate of 2026. The individual nominated should be a Columbus Community graduate who has displayed the success that comes with a Columbus diploma in a wide variety of areas.

Previous winners include Hal Prior, who worked with NASA; Tom Huston, former Iowa State Banking Superintendent; Dan Crawford, Professor of biology Kansas State University; Lisa Piper, Humanitarian working with causes all over the world; Brett Gardner College Professor and entrepreneur; Roger Salazar, first Hispanic to graduate from CCHS; Tammy Virzi, Editor of the Columbus Gazette; Mike Jay, Internationally known "Track Guy" and voice of the Drake Relays and many other track events; Wade Owens, Special Forces Colonel; Dr. Boyd Buser, College Dean; Nate Boulton, state legislator; Ritchie Orr, nuclear scientist; Dan Wilson former CJ Mayor; DJ Murry Professor of Pharmacy at the University of Nebraska; Lisa Friis professor and inventor; Andy Milder, coach; and most recently Bob Curtis, long-time teacher.

Nomination forms can be found on the school website: Columbuscsd.org and should be returned to the school via email or sent to the District Office in care of Neil Mills. If you have questions or request help filling out the form, please call Sandra Martin 319-212-0615.



AMERICAN LEGION Post 100
Fish & Chicken Fry

Catfish Fillets & Chicken, Beans and French Fries

Saturday, March 14th
American Legion • Columbus Junction
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
\$15.00 ALL YOU CAN EAT
We'll be spinning the wheel for loins!

