

AROUND THE AREA

SPENCER WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY — Mostly cloudy, with a high near 61. Breezy.

TONIGHT — Partly cloudy, with a low of 37. Breezy.

WEDNESDAY

67
40

THURSDAY

67
51

FRIDAY

64
47

SATURDAY

76
50

SUNDAY

80
56

Opioid fund council to begin awarding grants after July 1

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Clay County's Opioid Fund Advisory Council is moving closer to awarding opioid settlement funds after months spent organizing the new board and drafting procedures.

Several members of the council delivered an update on their organization's progress during the Board of Supervisors' Tuesday, May 12, meeting. The council has agreed to meet on the fourth Thursday of each month to review applications for opioid settlement funds and make funding recommendations to the board.

The council's recommendations will require formal approval from the supervisors, and they likely won't begin until after June 30.

"We've got a really good team that ... wants to make sure that these funds have an impact and are used the right way," council member Nicholas Hanges said.

The county's opioid fund is derived from legal settlements between state governments and opioid painkiller manufacturers. Clay County received its first settlement payment of around \$135,000 in 2025 and is expected to receive similar payments over the next decade. The fund must be used on efforts to combat opioid addiction.

Council members told coun-

ty supervisors that they are currently drafting bylaws with help from the county's legal counsel and are still "tweaking" details, including how expenditures will be treated and reported. Supervisor Allen Batschelet said he'd prefer the council's bylaws to be "more descriptive than prescriptive," and that a separate operating agreement be used to determine how funds are paid out so the council could be more flexible.

The council does not expect to be awarding any funding until the next fiscal year begins on July 1. The council's first full meeting is scheduled for June 22, when officers will be elected and procedures finalized, council members said.

No injuries reported in house fire



Garage and attic area of a home sustained significant damage in an evening fire on Wednesday, May 13, on East 19th Street. No injuries were reported, according to the Spencer Fire Department. (Photo by Carol Grace Riner)

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No one was hurt in a Wednesday, May 13, house fire that destroyed a garage and damaged two homes in Spencer.

The Spencer Fire Department responded to reports of a fire in the 300 block of East 19th Street at around 7 p.m. in Spencer. Firefighters arrived to find a garage

fully engulfed and fire moving into the home it was attached to. The garage's roof had collapsed. Fire damage was mostly confined to a single home with damage in the garage and attic, according to Spencer Deputy Fire Chief Mark Stover.

While searching the home, firefighters found and rescued one dog, according to Stover.

The fire was so hot that a neighboring home also saw some of its vinyl siding melt.

According to its Facebook page, the Clay County Long Term Recovery Group has established a way for the community to help support the family. For more details, contact LTRG on Facebook.

The family has requested privacy and is asking the community to refrain from driving by the residence. The family also said they were grateful for the support they've received from the community so far.

TREATMENT COURT MONTH PROCLAMATION



Spencer Mayor Donovan Wunschel signed a proclamation on May 12 declaring May as Treatment Court Month in the city to honor Mental Health and Substance Use Awareness Month. Wunschel was surrounded by Clay County Attorney Travis Johnson, District Judges Kristy Busse and Andrew Smith, Defense Attorney Jack Bjornstad, and other panel members Nicholas Hanges, Candace Daniels, Dean Mechler, Daniel Pullen and Richard Gordan. (Photo submitted)

SPLASH PAD

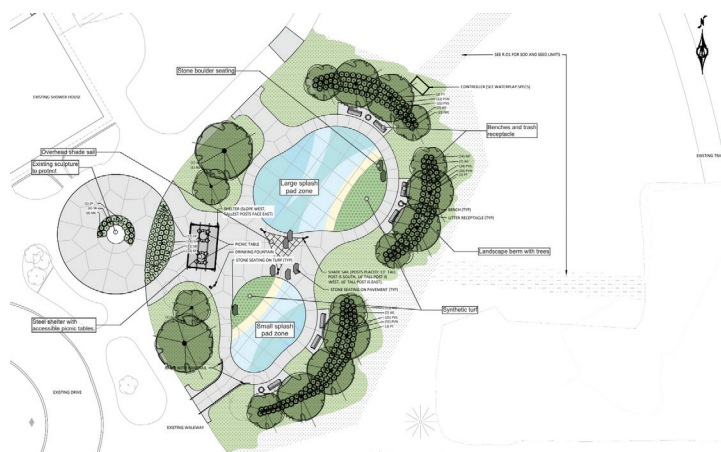
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Families attending the ceremony said they were excited about the new facility. Donors and parents Hannah and Cole Milbrath said they expect the splash pad to have a major impact on Spencer families.

"It adds another asset for the community. It's useful for everyone," Cole Milbrath said. "It provides a place for good family time."

Among attendees was Steve Pick, CEO and general manager of Spencer Municipal Utilities, who said the project "will be a really good investment for generations to come."

SMU secured naming rights for the splash pad with a \$300,000 donation, which helped push the private portion of the project funding to around \$600,000.



Spencer also secured a \$224,000 Community Attraction and Tourism grant from the Iowa Economic Development Authority. In April, Fullhart said that between the grant and private fundraising, more than \$817,000 of the roughly \$921,000 project will be privately funded. City sales tax revenue will be used to cover the

remainder of the project's costs.

Construction will affect some walking trails throughout the park this summer, but signs will alert visitors to closures, according to Kevin Larson, the northwest regional vice president of Woodruff Construction, the project's contractor.

The splash pad is expected to open in spring 2027.



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Friday, May 22nd
9am to 3pm

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MLS# 260187
234 6th Street SW - Spencer, IA
\$189,900

OPEN HOUSES SAT., MAY 23RD 10-11AM

WESTFIELD SUBDIVISION
216, 213, 207 34th Avenue W, Spencer, IA

MLS# 260420
1502 Memphis Avenue - Spirit Lake, IA
\$69,000

MLS# 260421
1502 Memphis Avenue - Spirit Lake, IA
\$69,000

MLS# 260441
1217 13th Avenue W - Spencer, IA
\$265,000

NEW LISTING

MLS# 260454
34759 Electric Park Street - Ruthven, IA
\$359,000

NEW LISTING

MLS# 260439
410 S 2nd Street - Mallard, IA
\$179,000

NEW LISTING

MLS# 260453
524 7th Street - Whittemore, IA
\$50,000

NEW PRICE

MLS# 251637
607 Call Street - Emmetsburg, IA
\$82,900

NEW PRICE

MLS# 260266
210 N 3rd Street - Mallard, IA
\$275,000

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