

# MIGHTY:

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reelected as chair for the organization, with Deb Peterson elected as secretary. Although no official endorsement in local, state or national elections were made by the party, they made an appeal to any Union County residents who wish to represent the party in local elections.

Weight said she was proud of this year's caucus turnout and support for the party throughout a difficult year.

Five candidates are running in the Democratic primary for U.S. Senator, four of which had presence in Union County's caucus. Zach Wahls, Josh Turek, and Bob Krause each sent letters to the caucus. Nathan Sage was also present with a smaller profile for his platform. Richard Sherzan has also declared for the position.

Other state candidates who sent letters to the caucus helped underline

concerns from rural Democrats. Wade Dooley, running for Secretary of Agriculture, said water quality remains one of the biggest challenges for Iowa.

"Fixing it means looking at the environment as a whole system — building solutions that are resilient and sustainable for generations," Dooley wrote. "I also want to use the department's resources to build stronger local food systems by supporting local food hubs, local food purchasing by schools, helping small and mid-size processors build and grow and making it easier for Iowa families to get wholesome food from Iowa farmers they trust."

Dooley is running to be the Democratic candidate to challenge incumbent Mike Naig. Chris Jones has also declared for the ballot.

Julie Stauch, running for Governor, also sent a letter to Union County Democrats. Stauch is running against frontrunner Rob Sand. In her letter, Stauch ran on a platform

of improving water quality, removing "insane" school vouchers and reducing health care costs in Iowa.

"We are in this place because of 10 years of Republican control of the Iowa House, Senate and the Governor's office," Stauch wrote. "2026 is the year that we can end this debacle, and build the Iowa that Iowans want and not favors to a handful of greedy corporate interests."

Taylor Wettach for Auditor, Nate Willems for Attorney General, Ryan Petterman for Secretary of State and John Norwood for Treasurer are running for the state Democratic primary unopposed.

Upcoming dates for Union County Democrats begin tomorrow with a committees meeting at 9 a.m. in the Creston United Methodist Church. The county convention will take place at 9 a.m. Saturday, March 21 at the Creston Depot.

# Companies can now claim 'no artificial colors' if they add plant-based color to food

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is relaxing rules that restrict when food companies can claim their products have no artificial colors.

The agency announced Thursday that food labels may claim to have "no artificial colors" when they are free of petroleum-based dyes, even when they contain dyes derived from natural sources such as plants.

In the past, the FDA has allowed companies to make those claims only when products "had no added color whatsoever," the agency said in a statement.

The move is another step toward the Trump administration's aim to phase out synthetic dyes from the nation's food supply.

In a joint statement, Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and FDA Commissioner Marty Makary said the move would encourage companies to switch to natural rather than synthetic colors if they can claim their products contain no artificial colors.

"We are taking away that hindrance and making it easier for companies to use these colors in the foods our families eat every day," Makary said in a statement.

Kennedy and Makary have urged U.S. companies to voluntarily remove synthetic dyes from their products — and many food makers, such as PepsiCo and Nestle, have complied. In addition, some states have taken steps to ban artificial dyes from school meals.

The move drew praise from Consumer Brands, a trade group for packaged foods, which said "all natural ingredients should continue to follow a rigorous science and risk-based evaluation process."

"This is a positive example of the FDA taking the lead on ingredient safety and transparency," Sarah Gallo, the group's senior vice president, said in a statement.

But the label change could mislead consumers, said Sarah Sorscher, director of regulatory affairs for the Center for Science in the Public Interest, an

advocacy group. It would allow a claim of "no artificial colors" for any color additive that is not a petroleum-based certified color, including potentially harmful additives such as titanium dioxide.

Also on Thursday, the FDA said it had approved a new natural dye, beetroot red, and expanded the use of spirulina extract, a color derived from algae that provides a blue hue in foods. The FDA currently allows roughly three dozen natural dyes in food products. The agency banned a controversial dye known as Red No. 3 last year and has proposed banning a rarely-used hue, Orange B.

The agency also recently said it would review the six remaining petroleum-based dyes frequently used in the U.S. food supply: Green No. 3, Red No. 40, Yellow No. 5, Yellow No. 6, Blue No. 1 and Blue No. 2.

Health advocates have long called for the removal of artificial dyes from foods, citing inconclusive

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

### South Central Iowa Regional 911 Service Board Meeting Minutes for December 17, 2025 (virtual/in-person meeting)

The virtual/in-person meeting was called to order at 7:11 pm by Tony Hardisty, Chairman. The members present were Paul Welch, Jo Duckworth, Polly Holmes, Nathan Baier, and Angela Henry along with Lyn Hansen (Hansen's M&S Services) and Trent Preston (Clarke County Dispatch). The members present virtually were Zach Girard, Brian Akers, Byron Jimmerson, Chuck Cleveland, Nate Bucher, and Dani Gray along with Diane Sefrit (SCI Administrator) and Duane Vos (Racom).

The December Meeting Agenda was reviewed. Motion by Welch to approve the December Meeting Agenda. Second by Baier. All ayes.

The November minutes were reviewed. Motion by Baier to approve the November minutes. Second by Baier.

The financial/activity reports were reviewed with some changes that Sefrit explained along with the current net profit/loss. Motion by Henry to approve the reports. Second by Henry. All ayes.

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Sefrit reviewed the billing summary. Windstream's bill is incorrect again, and Sefrit reached out to them again to get it corrected. Motion by Welch to pay the bills except the one in red. Second by Henry. All ayes.

Hansen provided her written report.

Hansen reviewed the incorrect address from Adams County that is in Google maps. She will contact Google to get it corrected.

Sefrit provided the SCI ALI database on December 11th which was joined with the site structure point layer then it was uploaded to the GeoComm databah on the 12th. The updates were done by Kelly Fox today with some corrections in Madison County that were not corrected. Another update can hopefully be done on Friday. Hansen will send out a notification as needed.

From November 19 to December 17th, there were 17 calls from outside the counties.

On December 4th, Brianna Furey emailed material to Sefrit & Hansen. They were following up on the transition of ArcMap to ArcPro. Hansen had another call with Furey regarding the projection who reached out to Fox and the projection looked ok in the ArcPro. The migration starts next year. Sefrit reviewed the training, Option A, which included the scope, pricing, etc. Motion by Baier to approve Sefrit signing the approved training document of Option A so GeoComm could have it before the end of the year. Second by Henry. All ayes.

GeoComm provided their new proposal for a renewal contract for support and maintenance. Sefrit reviewed the proposal which is significantly higher, and the differences from year to year. She also looked back at the previous contract renewal. Henry asked what the "Dispatch CAD support" is for. Sefrit will ask what this is for. Welch felt like there needed to be more information, so the board said to wait on any decision at this time. Hansen talks about the previous contract's adjustment, and Sefrit explained that it was due to the Addendum that was made to the original contract. Baier asked about the last pricing that SCI paid, and Sefrit said that it was \$32,340.43 in June 2025 for renewal in July 2025.

Sefrit provided the Comtech ALI Data on December 9th. The Comtech ALI database along with the necessary layers in the Arc map were uploaded to the state on the 9th. It was uploaded again on the 10th due to a change in the upload process from "1/2" needing corrected as it had in the past. There were no critical errors after it was reuploaded. There were two address errors that continue from there.

In October, there were 99 counties that met the benchmarks. Hansen re-reviewed her contract regrading for 2026. Additional digits reflect without the Service Board's per-

mission. No increase in the amount. Motion by Baier to approve Hansen's contract renewal for 2026. Second by Baier. All ayes.

\*\*\*\*\* Hardisty stepped out of the meeting for approximately 5 minutes\*\*\*\*\*

On December 11th, there was a 911 Council Meeting that Sefrit attended in person. Blake DeRouchey, 911 Program Manager, reviewed that there is a fix in place for the DTMF tones issues that have been going on. He also sent out ALI database guides to telcos and PSAPs which Sefrit did not receive. The Chapter 10 administrative rules continue to move through the rule making process. There are 47 outstanding Service Board Membership Forms and 62 outstanding Data Expenditure Forms. Sefrit has received 4 of the 7 Data Expenditure Reports. The administrative deadline is January 1st. PSAP update forms are also due. Zetron provided an update which stated that there are 84 PSAPs on the Iowa Shared Services. Marie Carlson, Zetron, is going to have a Shared Services User Group Conference on April 22nd.

There was a coalition meeting on the 11th also that Sefrit could not attend due to no phone number being provided to call in. Sefrit did receive an update that included a flyer showing the proposal for a surcharge increase and lowering the local/state allocation formula for two years then bringing it back up to where it is currently. SCI provided their information (logo) to put on the flyer.

Sefrit turned in the insurance inventory on time and is waiting for the invoice.

Sefrit provided a quote for her new office computer for \$2,319.00. Motion by Welch to approve the new computer. Second by Baier. All ayes.

Sefrit reviewed the budget worksheets. SCI will provide an amount for the reserved funds line item in their budget. A 26-27 Budget Hearing was set for January 28th at 7:15 pm. Motion by Baier to approve the 26-27 Budget Hearing for January 28th at 7:15 pm. Second by Henry. All ayes.

The ICAP grant is no longer needed by Taylor County so Adams County would like to use it for dispatcher equipment upgrade. Motion by Girard to approve the dispatch equipment upgrade. Second by Jimmerson. All ayes.

Vos stated that Bill Snyder did not have anything to report. Vos reviewed the Catastrophic Failure Plan. The Service Board would like the plan in writing to explain the monetary figures. Vos estimated that the Catastrophic Failure Plan would be approximately \$2,500,000. Vos will have this available for the next meeting.

Sefrit reviewed the new quote from RapidSOS. Hardisty stated that Adams County just paid for responding for two years per the terms and cannot be refunded. Jimmerson also brought it up that the set up has already been done so why are we being charged for it? Sefrit also pointed out that the video, provided by Bri Lee (RapidSOS), did not show what SCI was asking for when it came to the mapping integration. Hansen read the emailed response from Stacy Gross, GeoComm. Sefrit questioned the accuracy of the updated pricing due to the gap of understanding with the mapping integration between SCI and Lee. After further discussion, Jimmerson suggested working with RapidSOS and pin down more technical information, options, and ask questions and respond. Sefrit and Jimmerson. All ayes.

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