

Waterloo, Iowa October 19, 2023

The Oversight Board for the Black Hawk County Consolidated Communications Center (CCC), in the State of Iowa, met in regular adjourned meeting at the Courthouse in Waterloo, County Seat of said County, and electronically via Zoom, at two o'clock (2:00) p.m., pursuant to law, to the rules of said Board, and to adjournment. The meeting was called to order and on roll call there were present: Cedar Falls Mayor Rob Green, Dunkerton Mayor Michael Schares, Evansdale Mayor Deanne Kobliska, La Porte City Mayor Jasmine Gaston, and Black Hawk County Supervisors Chris Schwartz, Dan Trelka, and Linda Laylin.

Absent: Gilbertville Mayor Mark Thome, Hudson Mayor George Wessel, Waterloo Mayor Quentin Hart, Black Hawk County Supervisors Tavis Hall, Tom Little.

Mayor Hart was present at 2:15 pm.

Also present: CCC Director Judy Flores, Finance Director Michelle Weidner, County Auditor's Office Systems/Real Estate Manager Tim Jamison, County Auditor Grant Veeder, County Human Resources Director Amanda Fesenmeyer, Waterloo Police Chief Joe Leibold, Board of Supervisors Administrative Aide Lori Wermers. From Johnson County (all on Zoom): County Supervisor Rod Sullivan, Finance Director Dana Aschenbrenner, Joint Emergency Communications Center Director Tom Jones, EMA Director Dave Wilson.

Unless otherwise noted, all actions were approved unanimously, those absent noted above.

Moved by Trelka, seconded by Schwartz that the AGENDA be received and placed on file with the County Auditor as approved. Motion carried.

Moved by Trelka, seconded by Schwartz that the MINUTES of the Board Meeting held January 03, 2023 be and are hereby approved as submitted. Motion carried.

The Johnson County officials described the history of their joint emergency communications center (JECC), which is funded by an emergency management agency (EMA) levy in the county's general supplemental fund per Iowa Code sections 331.424(1)(a)(9) and 29C.17(2)(a). The center is an independent agency formed under Chapter 28E of the Code. Discussion for the center began in 2001 after the 9/11 terrorist attacks when it was learned that different public safety agencies in the county could not easily communicate. Agreement was reached in 2007 and the center building opened in 2010. Like the Black Hawk County CCC it handles dispatch for all fire, police and ambulance in the county and takes E911 emergency calls. The JECC has its own bank account, employees, insurance, and benefits. It contracts for payroll and financial services with the city of Iowa City. Its annual budget is presented to a policy board, which is comprised of elected officials, under the theory that they will be more sensitive to taxes than appointed officials. The policy board passes the budget to the Emergency Management Commission for approval and adoption. Large capital items are considered by Johnson County for possible financing through bonded indebtedness to prevent overburdening the general supplemental fund levy. Unlike the county general fund, the debt service fund has the advantage of drawing taxes from tax increment financing districts, which make up about 10% of Johnson County's taxable valuation. JECC works closely with both the Board of Supervisors and the E911 Board and has use of E911 surcharge revenues.

Trelka asked what they would have done differently in hindsight. Sullivan said that he hoped that the center workers would be county employees, but due to a lack of trust among the entities they became employees of the center, which proved to be more costly. Jones said they learned that private sector accountants weren't familiar with government accounting, and the center saved money by switching from private to public sector financial services. Wilson said it makes sense to capitalize on economies of scale. Trelka said the crux of the question for Black Hawk County is whether it can absorb the increased expense in its levy while recent legislation is limiting property tax growth. Sullivan said Johnson County made its change under a different environment and Trelka's concern is well founded. Wilson said that legislation introduced in the 2023 General Assembly would create a separate EMA levy, which would remove the burden from the county budget. Aschenbrenner said that the center is a permitted use of the general supplemental fund, which does not have a limit for permitted uses.

Kobliska said there is a concern that if the county takes over funding of the CCC that the cities will not reduce their budgets commensurately, but she personally doesn't want her constituents to pay more taxes. Jamison asked about the makeup of the policy board. Jones said it has two members from Johnson County, two from Iowa City, one from Coralville, one from North Liberty, and one representative from the Emergency Management Commission. Jamison asked who decides when bonding will be used for large expenditures. Aschenbrenner said he did. Sullivan said the Board of Supervisors typically follows his advice.

On motion and vote the meeting adjourned.

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Linda Laylin, Chair, Board of Supervisors

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Grant Veeder, County Auditor.