

From the Board – April 2020
Fayette County Supervisors

As the pandemic resulting from the spread of the Corona Virus rages on, the Fayette County Board of Supervisors continues to meet via Zoom as a Board, and with some of the many other agencies of which individual Supervisors are representatives.

One of those agencies is the Fayette County Community Foundation, which recently announced the awarding of more than \$120,000 to area civic groups. Unfortunately, there is no awards ceremony this year due to the Governor's proclamation disallowing public gatherings, but the Fayette County Board of Supervisors enthusiastically congratulates the recipients which were announced in last week's area newspapers!

Your local Community Foundation has also formed a **Covid-19 Disaster Response Fund** to benefit the most vulnerable struggling as a result of the pandemic. Supervisor Jeanine Tellin has been appointed to the advisory board of this 'arm' of the Foundation, and Supervisor Janell Bradley serves on the Community Foundation Board.

According to Vicki Rowland, who with Fayette County Economic Development Director Mallory Hanson is directing local efforts of the Disaster Response Fund: \$50,000 has been raised to benefit those facing economic challenges. Applications are currently being accepted from **Non-Profits** in need as a result of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Already, requests for funds have been approved for each of the three local food shelf agencies, and Fayette County Emergency Management Agency so it can order PPE for local health workers. There will be a great need for financial assistance as our community continues to battle the spread of the virus with limited social contact.

If you as a business, individual or organization are able to contribute, please consider a gift to this fund. Contributions can be made at: www.cfneia.org/fayettecovidfund and clicking on the 'Give Today' button. Gifts can also be directed by mail to the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, 3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls, IA 50613. Checks can be made payable to "Fayette County COVID-19 Disaster Response Fund."

One idea might be to make a contribution in honor of, or in memory of a loved one.

If you have further questions about the Foundation or the COVID-19 Disaster Response team, contact one of the following members: Vicki Rowland, Chair, Janell Bradley, Erica Bushaw, Bill Clark, Susan Franzen, Ken Hemesath, Rita Losh, Dr. Rich Patrick, Rick Scheffel, Barb Schoenjahn, Jamie Tafolla.

Thanks for considering.

On an unrelated topic, there appears to be confusion by some, regarding the chain of command in some county entities, so I'd like to dispel a few myths.

Myth #1 The BOS ordered the property reappraisal currently underway in the county.

FACT: Reappraisals aren't ordered by any Boards of Supervisors in Iowa. In simple terms, a county's assessor's office must be in compliance with valuation standards established by the Iowa Department of Revenue, and if found to be outside the established parameters, an equalization order is made. Reappraisals are made on a regular rotation in every county in Iowa. The Assessor is required to value all real estate every year, and re-value every two years in the odd numbered year. All classes are based on market value except ag class which is assessed on its productivity and net earning value.

Myth #2 The BOS closed the landfill and pulled the recycling bins from area communities.

FACT: The Fayette County Solid Waste Commission has the authority over the landfill/transfer station and recycling program. Members of the BOS serve on the commission along with representatives appointed by EVERY city in the county. However, the named decisions weren't made by the commission as a whole. Often times, decisions like this one and many others, are made by department heads. If you disagree with policy within a department it would always be best practice to consult the head of that department first to resolve your issue. Contact information for all departments is listed on Fayette County's website, at: fayettecountyiowa.org

Myth #3 The position of Fayette County Assessor can be filled by an on-the-job trainee.

FACT: The county cannot hire an individual to fill the role of County Assessor unless he/she possesses the necessary qualifications stated in Iowa Code.

Per Iowa Code, “the Examining Board must within 7 days of the vacancy request the Iowa Director of Revenue forward a register of the names of all individuals eligible for appointment.” Only the names of individuals on the register are eligible for consideration. To be appointed, an individual must pass an examination given by the Iowa Department of Revenue (covering appraisal theory and practice and Iowa assessment laws.) Regular certification is given if the individual has a minimum two years of appraisal related experience or a temporary certification is given, if not. Within 18 months, the temporary certification will be reviewed following training completion by the Iowa Dept. of Revenue.

Assessors are reappointed to their positions every six years. A temporary certification requires the assessor have a minimum 150 hours of continuing ed of which 90 hours has to be tested.

It is not the Board of Supervisors that holds the power of hiring an assessor. The Fayette County Conference Board - made up of the board of supervisors, the mayors of EVERY town in the county and one representative from each school district, comprise the Conference Board. Each faction gets one vote. The Conference Board then, approves the **budget** of the Assessor’s office and the salaries as recommended annually by the Assessor, who is a stand-alone department head with authority over day-to-day activities.

As a final note, the Board of Supervisors extends huge appreciation to all county employees who have given the utmost concern to continuing county operations in a safe manner while either working from home or practicing social distancing when in the Courthouse or working out in the public.

We are also grateful for the work of Fayette County Public Health, Emergency Management and Law Enforcement agencies and all essential workers in our area for the fabulous work they’ve been doing and

professionalism they've shown in the effort to keep the Corona virus from spreading here.

Please know, "You Are Appreciated."