

From the Board – May 7, 2020

(Submitted by Janell Bradley)

Vicky Halstead joins Assessor's office

Fayette County is pleased to share that beginning Tuesday, May 26, Vicky Halstead will join our Assessor's office to provide the leadership we have been seeking since last fall. Previous Assessor Ali Manson resigned late summer to take a position in Delaware County, where she resides.

Halstead has been Chief Deputy Assessor in Benton County for more than three years and has 18 years' experience working in an Assessor's office, where her responsibilities included real estate appraisal, assisting the assessor with abstracts, scheduling assessor review appointments and Board of Review appointments, processing splits and subdivisions. She was recently interviewed separately by both the Fayette County Examining Board, and the Conference Board and was a unanimous choice.



Vicky and her husband, Brian, have six grown children between them and intend to move to the area this summer. Vicky joins our current staff of Jill Hubbell, Cindy Schulte, and Nancy Hanson. Welcome Vicky!

Corona update

On the topic of the Corona Virus: As Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds continues to make announcements regarding gradual release of counties from Covid-19 restriction, departments within the courthouse have been readying for the return to in-person public service, but with the utmost safety in mind.

Custodial staff has placed arrows on the floor and steps to encourage social distancing. Upon entering many of the courthouse offices once the doors are unlocked, the public will see clear, acrylic barriers designed to protect both the public and our county employees. Please know that when we do re-open, it's likely we'll be limiting the number of people inside an office, or appointments may be required for some offices.

Watch the county website at fayettecountyiowa.org for more details. Fayette County Economic Development Director Mallory Hanson also posts COVID-19 resources almost daily at www.visitfayettecountyiowa.com.

Hanson recently shared that as of May 6, 2020, 23 businesses in Fayette County received \$346,348 in Small Business Relief grants through the Iowa Economic Development Authority. Two businesses also received Targeted Small Business Sole Operator fund grants, totalling \$11,000.

Matching dollars available for Covid response fund

FCED Director Mallory Hanson is leading an emergency disaster response team (supervisor Janell Bradley is a member) to disseminate funds to organizations in need. The committee meets electronically on a weekly basis to discuss applications and funding. There is presently an offer from a Foundation to match donated funds up to \$10,000. Gifts can be made with a credit card at: www.cfneia.org/fayettecovidfund and clicking on the 'Give Today' button. Or, by mail, to: Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, 3117 Greenhill Circle, Cedar Falls, IA 50613. Checks should be payable to Fayette County COVID-19 Disaster Response Fund. Any donation amount is welcome.

In April and thus far in May, more than \$24,000 has been granted to non-profits in Fayette County, including Fayette County Public Health, Northeast Iowa Community Action and several area food banks/pantries.

Doing the county's business

Lastly, while we're all doing our part to self-isolate and social distance, county employees continue to do the county's business. Deeds are still being recorded, absentee ballots are being mailed out, planning and zoning issues are heard and payments are being processed in the treasurer's office to name just some of the responsibilities with which county employees are tasked.

The transfer station reopened on May 1, and recycling bins are being returned to their prior posts in area communities.

We promise to provide an update in an upcoming 'From the Board' on the schedule for our major \$7.2 million re-surfacing project that will begin soon. Hot Mix Asphalt plants will be established at possibly three different sites to meet Mathy Construction's needs as they carry out their contract with Fayette County.

More good news

Other good news to share is that Fayette County Conservation was the recipient of a Community Foundation grant to finish bridge lighting and install

interpretative kiosks on the walkway over the Turkey River at Elgin. FCCB is also seeking other grants, including one from AARP to restore the Gilbertson Hiker's Highway (handicapped accessible trail) and one from the Arts Council for Turkey River Rec Corridor trail mile markers. A fishing dock will be added to Gilbertson Lake.

Stay safe everyone, and remember that social distancing when out in public, is here to stay for a while.