

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2023**

At 9:00 a.m. Chairperson Bob Yoder called to order in special session a meeting of the Washington County Board of Supervisors which took place in the Washington County Courthouse. Items on the agenda included approval of agenda; public comment related to agenda items; discussion and possible action regarding the current open position of Washington County Attorney; department head comment; adjourn. Supervisors Jack Seward, Jr., Marcus Fedler, and Richard Young were also present while Supervisor Stan Stoops participated by remote means.

Other individuals present at the meeting included Jennifer Wilkerson, KCII Radio; Kalen McCain, SE Iowa Union; Mary Zielinski, The News; Jacob Thorius, County Engineer; Jennifer Lerner, Assistant County Attorney; Anthony Janney, Interim County Attorney, Ann Caslavka and Molly Jennings, County Attorney's Office; and citizen James Jennings. Various other individuals listened and/or watched remotely by way of electronic means.

All motions were passed unanimously by those Supervisors in attendance including by remote means.

On motion by Fedler, seconded by Young, the Board voted to approve the agenda as published.

During the public comment portion of the meeting Auditor Dan Widmer, Assistant County Attorney Jennifer Lerner, and Ann Caslavka and Molly Jennings, County Attorney's Office, each voiced support for naming Shane McChurch as Washington County Attorney. The Board took no formal action.

The Supervisors next took up the matter of selecting a new County Attorney to replace former County Attorney John Gish who resigned the position on January 29, 2023, in order to accept another position. The names of the three candidates, in no particular order, included Nathan Repp, Zach Miller, and Shane McChurch. Seward voiced that in order to evaluate the candidates for County Attorney he used a rubric scoring system which included a "doubt scale" and an "experience scale". Seward also gave consideration to communication skills and all-around "people skills" along with his perceptions of the candidate's honesty and integrity. Seward summarized by saying his perceptions, along with the various assessments he performed, resulted in Miller ranking the highest of the three applicants. Seward noted that each of the three applicants had differing and unique strengths that would serve each of them very well in the position of Washington County Attorney. When asked which candidate he favored Seward deferred and stated he wished to hear the thoughts of his fellow Board members prior to expressing his opinion. Yoder opined all of the candidates interviewed well and added that a decision from the Board would be needed as to whether to promote from within the County Attorney's office or to hire someone from outside the County Attorney's office. Yoder outlined the various strengths of the three candidates and ultimately stated he favored McChurch. Fedler offered that integrity and principles are important attributes for a successful county attorney. He also stated all applicants did a good job answering the pre-selected interview questions with Miller doing the best job. Fedler described the selection of a new Washington County Attorney as quite difficult but ultimately ranked Repp as his #1 choice. Stoops, who was unable to attend the meeting in person, stated he had listened to the recordings of the interviews multiple times and had also studied the resumes received from each candidate and as a result he favored Repp. Young stated he agreed with many of the comments expressed by his fellow Board members and noted that one of the candidates had minimal trial experience. Young also noted McChurch was already familiar with the judges, attorneys, and law officers that he would be working with and in turn voiced his preference for McChurch. A general Board discussion ensued with regard to the perceived qualifications of each candidate and the perceived greater importance of some qualifications as compared to other qualifications. A motion made by Seward that Zachary Miller be appointed as the next Washington County Attorney failed due to the lack of a second. A motion made by Young and seconded by Yoder to offer the position of Washington County Attorney to Shane McChurch failed. The roll-call vote on the motion was as follows: Aye-Young, Yoder; Nay-Seward, Fedler, Stoops. On motion by Stoops, seconded by Fedler, the Board voted to appoint Nathan Repp to the position of Washington County Attorney. The roll call vote on the motion was as follows: Aye-Stoops, Yoder, Fedler; Nay-Seward, Young.

There was no department head comment.

At 9:45 a.m. on motion by Young, seconded by Fedler, the Board voted to adjourn.

ATTEST:
March 11, 2023

ROBERT C. YODER
Chairperson, Board of Supervisors

DANIEL L. WIDMER
County Auditor