

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023**

At 9:00 a.m. Chairperson Bob Yoder called to order in regular session a meeting of the Washington County Board of Supervisors that took place in the Washington County Courthouse. Items on the agenda included recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance; approval of agenda; public comment related to agenda items; Fireworks Permit application – Richmond Shooters/Dennis Murray; Resolution 23-49 regarding approval of an application for Transportation Safety Improvement Program (TSIP) funding for paved shoulders on County Road W-38 (Wellman Road); discussion and action regarding request from Coalition Against Bigger Trucks; department head comment; adjourn. Supervisors Jack Seward Jr., Richard Young, Marcus Fedler, and Stan Stoops were also present.

Other individuals present at the meeting included Jennifer Wilkinson with KCII Radio and Kalen McCain with the SE Iowa Union along with County Attorney Nathan Repp, Board of Supervisors Administrative Assistant Amber Williams; and County Engineer Jacob Thorius. Various other individuals listened and/or watched remotely by way of electronic means.

All motions were passed unanimously unless noted otherwise.

Young led those individuals assembled in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

On motion by Fedler, seconded by Young, the Board voted to approve, and authorize the Chairperson to sign on behalf of the Board, a request for a Fireworks Permit received from Richmond Shooters/Dennis Murray for an event scheduled to take place on August 19, 2023, from noon to 10:00 p.m. at 1259 Riverside Road, Riverside, Iowa. Sheriff Jared Schneider expressed no objection to the application.

On motion by Seward, seconded by Fedler, the Board voted by way of roll call vote to approve Resolution 23-49 as follows and to authorize the Chairperson to sign Resolution 23-49 on behalf of the Board.

RESOLUTION 23-49

**APPROVAL OF TRANSPORTATION SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
APPLICATION FOR PAVED SHOULDERS ON COUNTY ROAD W-38 (GINKGO AVENUE)**

WHEREAS, the Washington County Board of Supervisors recognizes the need to incorporate safety features in Secondary Roads projects; and

WHEREAS, Transportation Safety Improvement Program (TSIP) Funds are annually made available to qualifying local projects in amounts not to exceed \$500,000 to facilitate the incorporation of said safety features; and

WHEREAS, application for said funds must be submitted to the Iowa Department of Transportation for review and approval; and

WHEREAS, as a part of the application procedure, a commitment of funds and a commitment to maintain the facility for the useful life of the improvement must be made by the applicant; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of Washington County, Iowa, as a part of the application for TSIP funds, resolve to commit to the additional funds needed above and beyond those granted to Washington County by the Transportation Safety Improvement Program and to supply the Construction and Engineering cost for the County Road W38 Paved Shoulder Project (beginning at 170th Street and extending 3.6 miles to Wellman) from existing county funding and also resolve to maintain the facility for the useful life of the improvement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Washington County Board of Supervisors that the Washington County Engineer be authorized to execute and submit the application to the Iowa Department of Transportation for Traffic Safety Improvement Program funding; and

County Engineer Jacob Thorius updated the Board with regard to legislation being proposed by members of the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee that if passed would likely lead to the passage of a bill that would implement a pilot program for states, including Iowa, that desire to increase the weight limits on six-axle trucks that travel interstate highways from 80,000 pounds to 91,000 pounds. According to Thorius the approval of such increased load limits would result in increased damages to not only interstate highways but also state and local county roads and bridges. While being touted as merely a pilot project Thorius remarked that he knew of no six-axel trucks that travel exclusively on interstate roadways and never travel on gravel roads, city streets, paved county roads, or state highways in order to load or unload. A 2016 report to Congress from the U.S Department of Transportation found that increasing the weight limit on six-axle semi-trucks from 80,000 pounds to 91,000 pounds would lower the life span of roads nation-wide by 2.4% to 4.2%. Based on a four-year average of road maintenance, bridge, and culvert maintenance and road construction costs compiled by the Washington County Secondary Roads Department the proposed increase in new weight limits would result in additional annual costs of from \$112,429.00 to \$188,351.00. According to Thorius to date there has been no discussion with regard to an increase in government funding for road repairs. It is also projected that if approved the increased weight limits would result in the need for approximately 5,000 state and local bridges across the nation, including 29 in Iowa, to be posted with weight restrictions at an estimated total cost of approximately \$1.4 billion. A group called Coalition Against Bigger Trucks (CABT) has made available an on-line petition stating opposition to the proposed legislation and Thorius encouraged the Board, as well as the public, to sign the petition which is available at www.cabt.org. Proponents of the legislation maintain that increased weight limits will result in increased efficiencies and lower shipping costs with such savings passed on to consumers. Proponents of increasing weight limits also

have suggested that truck licensing fees be increased to offset the cost of road repairs. Seward urged each Supervisor to sign the on-line petition in opposition to the proposed legislation. The Board informally agreed with Seward's suggestion that a hard copy of a letter in opposition to increased weight limits be prepared and approved by the Board with such letter being sent to Iowa US Senators Charles Grassley and Joni Ernst as well as to Iowa's U.S. 1st District Congressional Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks. The Board took no formal action.

There was no public comment.

At 9:23 a.m. on motion by Seward, seconded by Young the Board voted to adjourn.

ATTEST
August 8, 2023

ROBERT C. YODER, CHAIRPERSON
Washington County Board of Supervisors

DANIEL L. WIDMER
Auditor