

City, county, school officials discuss issues at quarterly 'Super Board'

By JOE FOREMAN
EDITOR

Representatives from the City of Glenwood, Mills County Board of Supervisors and Glenwood Community School District met for the first "Super Board" meeting of the year Thursday evening at City Hall.

For the past several years, representatives from the three entities have tried to meet on a quarterly basis to share ideas and update one another on significant projects going on within the community.

GCSO Superintendent Dr. Devin Embray gave an update on the progress of the school district's long-term facilities plan, which could include the acquisition of the Meyer school building on the campus of the Glenwood Resource Center as a replacement facility for West Elementary School and a remodel of Northeast Elementary. Embray said the coming months will be spent developing a formal proposal and sharing information with the community regarding the district's facilities needs. A bond issue vote would likely take place in 2024.

Additionally, Embray discussed current and future vacancies on the board of education and extended an invitation he had made previously for the city and county to consider having their vehicles' oil changes and brake work be done at the school district's bus barn, which he said would be financially cost effective for all three tax-funded entities. Neither the city nor the county have been receptive to the idea up to this point.

City of Glenwood officials gave updates on talks regarding the future of the Glenwood Resource Center and repair work at the Glenwood Aquatic Center. The aquatic center didn't open in 2022 because of water-loss issues.

Mayor Ron Kohn said needed repairs have been identified and will be completed with costs covered by JEO Consulting, the engineering firm that designed the facility. City officials are confident the repairs will be made in a timely manner and the aquatic center will be open for the normal swimming season in 2023.

The multiple apartment and housing construction projects going on in the city were also discussed along with the possibility of having a community service day for children that might include clean-up activities at Glenwood Lake Park and other public and private venues in the community.

Carol Vinton, a member of the county board of supervisors, discussed local tourism initiatives, including special activities in Henderson and the Indian Creek Museum. The county budget process and comprehensive plan were also on the county's portion of the agenda.

Thursday's meeting lasted about an hour.

Cattlemen's Heritage Beef announces land acquisition in NW Mills County

Ground-breaking for beef processing facility expected in 2023

By JOE FOREMAN
EDITOR

Nearly 18 months since announcing plans to build a 2,000-head per day beef processing facility in Mills County, Cattlemen's Heritage Beef Company has finalized the purchase of a 132-acre site in northwest Mills County.

The purchase of land northwest of the Highway 370 - Interstate 29 interchange was finalized Dec. 30 for an undisclosed amount. The land is just south of the Mills - Pottawattamie County line.

Plans for the beef processing facility were announced in June 2021. The plant is projected to employ up to 800 employees and provide a tax boost to local taxing agencies.

Mills County elected and economic development officials called the proposed a "win-win" when Cattlemen's Heritage announced plans for the facility.

"The tax base and the jobs this will bring is a win-win for everyone," said Mills County Supervisor Lonnie Mayberry.

Cattlemen's Heritage officials conceded the land acquisition was a lengthy process.

"I'm very appreciative of the cooperation, flexibility, patience and professionalism that the owners, their representatives and officials in Mills County demonstrated throughout this process," said principal developer Chad Tentinger. "Land purchases for projects of this size often take quite a while to complete and they often have unforeseen challenges, but everyone worked together very well from Day One and through negotiations until final documents were signed."

Groundbreaking for the facility will take place in 2023, Tentinger said.



COURTESY CATTLEMEN'S HERITAGE BEEF CO.

Architectural rendering of the beef processing facility proposed for northwest Mills County.

"A facility of our size and scale requires a certain level of infrastructure and public utilities. In addition to those requirements, this site checks all the boxes for logistics when it comes to the level of truck traffic for cattle and raw goods coming into the plant and processed goods leaving the facility," he said. "Its proximity to I-80 is another logistical plus. With the eventual need for up to 800 employees, its location in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metropolitan statistical area is another valuable attribute."

Tentinger noted that the site is zoned for industrial development with emphasis on agribusiness-type operations. Bunge North America operates a soybean processing facility on the opposite side of Interstate 29, just east of the Cattlemen's Heritage site. An ethanol plant

is located nearby.

"Our facility and its state-of-the-art operations fit the neighborhood, but we'll also be putting our best foot forward in terms of an attractive public-facing design," Tentinger said.

The company last year selected Gross-Wen Technologies to provide contained treatment at the site. The technology will capture and offset several thousand tons of carbon dioxide per year from the atmosphere.

"That's the equivalent of avoiding the use of 242,000 gallons of gasoline every year," Tentinger said. "The nitrogen and phosphorus that it will recover will be converted into valuable, natural fertilizer for re-use by area farmers as part of our goal to create a carbon-neutral footprint."

MCPH administrator excited for challenges, opportunities

By JOE FOREMAN
EDITOR

The new administrator for the Mills County Public Health Office brings a unique background to the position.

Kiernan Scott comes from a family with ties to the southwest Iowa medical community and she brings years of hands-on experience working in the community with children and families.

Before taking on the MCPH administrator position in December, Scott worked for Healthy Housing Omaha, a non-profit agency that works to ensure every child has a safe and healthy living environment, "regardless of their zip code."

"I was working in housing for children and families, reducing triggers for asthma, lead poisoning prevention," she said. "I was working primarily with children and families from low-income areas."

A graduate of Marian High School in Omaha, Scott earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Nebraska-Omaha. While in college, she worked in early childhood education, working in a variety of areas ranging from teaching to nutrition. She eventually worked her way up to the position of vice president of operations for an early childhood company.

She began her professional career commuting to Chicago on a weekly basis where she was in charge of franchising for her employer.

"I really loved housing and working with the hospital systems," Scott said. "And community partners around the social determinants of health



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Mills County Public Health Office Administrator Kiernan Scott.

and making sure that just because a child is born in a certain zip or area, or their family isn't of a certain economic status, that it doesn't affect their health outcomes, which really in turn affects their future success."

Scott said she's looking forward to the challenges and opportunities her new job with MCPH presents. She commended the work of the agency's staff, including nursing coordinator Lorri Greiner, for their work during a time of change and transition.

"Lorri Greiner has done a great job as interim (administrator) and the board of health has

done a great job of getting everything in this leadership transition very stable and up-and-running," she said. "It's been great to be able to come in and not have to put out any fires. Just kind of learn and see everything that's going on. I think there's a lot of room for growth in a very positive way."

"Getting to know Lorri and getting to know the board of health, I realized how unique this department is. All of the various things they do and the support they have from the board of health, the supervisors and a county that is really looking to grow."

Scott noted that one of the first big tasks at hand will be facilitating a public health needs assessment in Mills County along with the Iowa Department of Public Health.

"That will really be my focus - just making sure we get a really quality survey out and we get a really good turnout so that we can get that community feedback on areas of need or growth," she said. "Things they would like to see from public health because we really are here to serve the residents."

The assessment process will begin later this year and carry over into 2024.

Scott's mother and grandmother are nurses in Montgomery County so she's familiar with the area and the unique health-related challenges in rural communities.

"My mom is a nurse practitioner at Montgomery County Memorial Hospital," she said. "We've always had conversations about the differences between urban health and rural health. I think there are new challenges and things to learn."

Scott and her husband Lucas have two children, Eli (7) and Ryker (2).

Tim Becker's departure leaves vacancy on school board

By JOEL STEVENS
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Glenwood Community School District is seeking to fill an immediate vacancy on the Board of Education.

Tim Becker announced in December he would be stepping down immediately. Becker resigned after accepting a new job out of state.

Glenwood Superintendent Dr. Devin Embray said the board would like to move quickly to appoint a replacement for Becker's seat.

"The board has already been

out soliciting names among the community that know that Tim resigned," Embray said. "We've reached out to some and there are four or five people we plan to confirm are interested."

A school board work session is scheduled for Jan. 23 where Embray said the remaining four board members - Curt Becker, Elizabeth Richardson, Matt Portrey and John J. Zak - are expected to appoint a candidate to finish Becker's term.

Once appointed, a replacement would be required to formally apply to appear on the ballot and petition signatures to run for re-election in

November to continue to serve on the board.

Tim Becker's seat will not be the lone vacancy up for election in November. Current board member Curt Becker, no relation to Tim, announced earlier this month he would not be seeking re-election to the seat he has held since 2015.

Curt Becker will remain on the board through the October school boarding meeting.

Tim Becker (right) resigned from the Glenwood Board of Education after accepting a new job out of state.



DEATH NOTICES

Travis Batten, 49
Edlred R. Reinert, 88
June Elizabeth Strattbucker, 90

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