

# The Paper

Our Town, Our Paper!



Laurens, Iowa



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May 4, 2023

## Local News

### Pocahontas County Trail Plan Ambition

*This story originally appeared in the 2023 Pocahontas County Alumni Magazine, as part of an alumni registry project that was funded by the Rural Return Grant. The grant is part of the governor's Empower Rural Iowa Initiative in partnership with the Iowa Economic Development Authority. The Pocahontas County Board of Supervisors were a recipient of the grant in January 2022 and will provide a \$10,000 half match.*

Completing recreational trails in Pocahontas County has been a long term visioning goal for active county residents for several years, but funding and completing trails is no easy task. It's one that takes dedication and time. Luckily, some communities have persevered and have begun to see the trails be a reality!

Laurens recently completed trail connections to the refurbished pond area at Sportsman's Park. The different

sections are now connected and act as one trail, the "Prairie Park Trail."

"The community has seen an increase in usage with those connections," Margo Underwood, the Pocahontas County Hometown Pride Community Coach noted. "That's also the goal in Rolfe - to connect the Three Rivers Trail to the asphalt loop at Sunset Ridge Park."

Underwood has been part of several trail conversations over the last decade as the County Hometown Pride Coach. She has been able to share her knowledge and expertise with the communities throughout the county on relevant funding opportunities that they can apply for. Several projects have

happened under her leadership, with Sunset Park at Gilmore City as another example.

Gilmore City is working to get their community trail plan on paper. Things are really moving forward because Gilmore City was selected as one of three communities in the MIDAS six county region for a pilot project on trail planning. Fonda was one of the other communities also selected for that program, meaning that two of the three communities selected for this pilot project across a six county region were chosen from Pocahontas County.

*...continued to page 2...*



*...continued from page 1...*

Participation in this program is being done at no costs to the communities.

And it does take a community to raise a trail. That's why there is excitement from the federal funding side of things, as now engineers are discussing trails and bike lane options when redoing highway infrastructure.

"When we started the Rolfe project, we reached out to the DOT to plant the seed about the bike lanes," Underwood recalled. "That connection has become a strong partner and advocate for our trail plans. They're paving the way for what we want to accomplish."

The overall goal in Pocahontas County is to eventually connect all of the communities together by trails. If each community gets a trail started, it becomes easier to secure funding and government support when roadwork and resurfacing projects are happening. For competitive grants and funding, the more segments of trails you have and plan to connect, the easier it is to secure those funding options. It makes applications very strong and turns those sections into community and regional connections, much like the Prairie Park Trail that was completed in Laurens.

"Once you get one project underway and it's successful, it gets easier," Underwood confirmed.

If you are interested in donating to any of the trail plans and projects in Pocahontas County, you may do so online at [www.pocofoundation.org](http://www.pocofoundation.org) through the Pocahontas County Trails Fund. To keep in touch with stories and opportunities like this from Pocahontas County, you can register with the Pocahontas County Alumni Registry by going to [www.tinyurl.com/pocoalumni](http://www.tinyurl.com/pocoalumni).



## *Pool Update!*

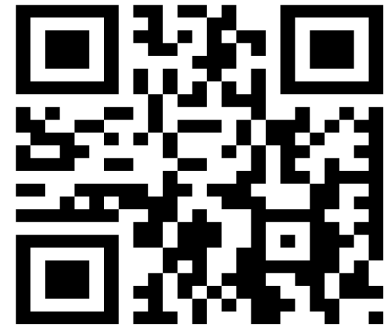
There is much progress to report on the Laurens Pool Project!

Our Design Committee members have been working with Water's Edge Aquatic Design on the layout and pool placement. The full committee will be meeting soon, with the experts available in a Zoom meeting, to give the plan final approval. Next, it will go to the City Council for approval, and then we can start putting it out for construction bids! We are on track to break ground this year!

We received a check from our Anonymous donor, officially matching the \$35,000 in donations raised in the first quarter of the year, bringing our total 2023 donations to \$70,000! This means we have raised \$2,421,368.68 for the pool! Let's work hard this next quarter to make that number a nice, round \$2.5 million, OK?!

This also means there is still \$215,000 available as matching funds. So, please make your donations now, when it counts the most. Let's not leave any of this offer on the table!

Scan the QR Code or visit [tinyurl.com/pocoalumni](https://tinyurl.com/pocoalumni) to get registered with the Pocahontas County Alumni Registry!



### Why register?

- Discover business opportunities
- Learn about community projects
- Find out about new businesses
- Keep up on community events
- Hear about philanthropic possibilities

For all alumni of past and present consolidated school districts of Pocahontas County, Iowa, as well as affiliates with an affinity to the county.



**POCAHONTAS COUNTY  
ALUMNI REGISTRY**



## *Villisca Axe Murders Program at the Library*

Ed Epperly entertained the patrons of the Laurens Public Library recently with his tales of Villisca.

He told how he became fascinated by the case of the Villisca Axe Murders as a college student majoring in history. He went to the town in 1956 and interviewed anyone still alive who was involved in the 1912 investigation. He visited the town, and the case several times over the years, and when he retired, he decided to compile his research into a book, *"Fiend Incarnate: The Villisca Axe Murders of 1912."* He read a passage from his book, and had the audience enthralled with his tales.

Copies of his book were available for purchase, and will also be available to check out at the Laurens Public Library.



## The Paper

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## ***2023 Pocahontas County Fair Book***

The 2023 Pocahontas County Fair Book is available at <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/pocahontas/files/documents/2023%20Fairbook.pdf>.

If you would like a paper copy, you may stop at the ISU Extension and Outreach Pocahontas County office during regular business hours and pick one up, books will not be mailed.

Please read the rules for whatever project areas you will bring to the 2023 fair, if you have questions, please contact [lzeman@iastate.edu](mailto:lzeman@iastate.edu) or 712-335-3103. The tentative schedule is posted in the front of the fairbook with the final schedule posted July 1.



**LAURENS CLEAN UP** *days*

**FRIDAY, MAY 5TH - SATURDAY, MAY 13TH**  
8:00 am - 5:00 pm

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 10TH**  
8:00 am - 7:00 pm

**Residential ONLY!**

Dumpsters located at Laurens Police Station

If items can be bagged, they **MUST** be bagged!

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Absolutely NO:	•	Carpet <b>MUST</b> be rolled and taped!
Cardboard, Trees, Grass, Dirt,	•	
Leaves, Furnaces, Water Heaters,	•	
Paints, Oil, Tires, Batteries,	•	
Chemicals, Construction Debris,	•	Appliances, TVS, & Electronics will
Bricks, Concrete, Glass, or	•	be picked up at a <b>LATER DATE</b> .
Hazardous Waste	•	Stickers <b>MUST</b> be purchased in
	•	<b>ADVANCE</b> at City Hall.

## ***Celebration of Life for Karoll Jean Kyle***

Karoll was a member of Laurens class of 1964. Daughter of Mark and Jean Kyle, survived by sister Paula Grothe, brother David Kyle, daughter Cami (Beneke) Jones and Erik Kyle.

On May 6, 2023 we will be gathering from 4-6 p.m. at the Arvada Community Room, 7601 Grandview Ave, Arvada, CO.

Please join us to laugh and remember a wonderful person who will be greatly missed.

Send any photos you would like to include in our video to: Cami Jones by email to [c91jones@yahoo.com](mailto:c91jones@yahoo.com) or text to 479-279-2706.

## ***4-H and FFA Livestock Identifications Due***

All 4-H and FFA members that would like to exhibit livestock at the 2023 Pocahontas County Fair must have their livestock identified no later than May 15. 4-H members will need to purchase tags at the ISU Extension and Outreach Pocahontas County office and enter in your [v2.4honline.com](http://v2.4honline.com) account.

FFA members will need to see their advisor for tags and identification papers. If you have any questions, please call the Extension office at 712-335-3103 or email [lzeman@iastate.edu](mailto:lzeman@iastate.edu).

***At the Library***  
***with Glenda Mulder***  
***May 4, 2023***

We are on the search for a part time Children's Librarian. This is a really fun position for just the right person. We need someone who is organized, outgoing, and who loves to be around all ages of kids (naturally!) If this sounds like you, come talk to us!

New fiction this week includes *Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese, *Bear with Me Now* by Katie Shepard, *One True Loves* by Taylor Jenkins Reid, *Did You Hear about Kitty Karr* by Crystal Paul, *The Rescue* by T Jefferson Parker, *Loner* by Diana Palmer, *Half Moon* by Mary Beth Keane, *With My Little Eye* by Joshilyn Jackson, *Happy Place* by Emily Henry, *You are Here* by Karin Lin-Greenberg, *23rd Midnight* by James Patterson, *Things I Wish I'd Told My Mother* by Susan Patterson, *The Bride Wore White* by Amanda Quick, *The Wedding Planner* by Danielle Steel, *All the Days of Summer* by Nancy Thayer, *House on Prytania* by Karen White and *Last Word* by Taylor Adams.

In nonfiction we received Jennifer (Dukes) Lee's latest *Stuff I'd Only Tell God; A Guided Journal*. This may not really be a good library book, because it encourages interaction, but I knew we would all have to see it! And then maybe order our own copy.

We also received *I Swear: Politics is messier than my minivan* (is that a great title, or what?!) by Katie Porter,

and *It goes. so. fast.: The year of no do-overs* by Mary Lou Kelly.

OK, I promised I'd report back on the April Book Club *How High We Go in the Dark* by Sequoia Nagamatsu. It was dark, sad, and sometimes uplifting. I thought it was really well written about an unusual topic. I really enjoyed reading something totally different!

May's Book Club choice is historical fiction; *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. Our catalog describes it like this, "Deemed unrepentant by a Bolshevik tribunal in 1922, Count Alexander Rostov is sentenced to house arrest in a hotel across the street from the Kremlin, where he lives in an attic room while some of the most tumultuous decades in Russian history unfold." I have heard good things about this title and this author. I am looking forward to reading this.

It's hard to believe we are on our last month of L-M class visits! This school year has flown by and we are gearing up for our Summer reading. This year's theme is Find Your Voice and we will be meeting Wednesdays at 1 o'clock beginning June 9. No sign up is necessary, come to as many sessions as you can!

**Dates to Remember**

May 17 5:30 p.m. - Tot Time

May 23 @ 6:30 p.m. - Cardmaking

May 22 @ 7 p.m. - Book Club *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles

June 5 @ 7 p.m. - *Lincoln Highway in Iowa* by Darcy Maulsby

June 6 - Take it Tuesday Pine Cone Flowers

June 14- August 9 - Wednesdays at 1 Find Your Voice Kids' Summer Reading

July 8 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. - Local Authors Fair at Laurens Summer Celebration

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## *Pocahontas County 4-H to Blank Park Zoo*

4th-6th grade 4-H members had the opportunity to join Buena Vista, Humboldt, Webster, and Hamilton County for a day trip to Des Moines. The youth enjoyed the Blank Park Zoo and a picnic lunch.

The Des Moines Art Museum was an opportunity to see all different kinds of artwork. The tour was very informative and interesting; most of us have not had the opportunity to visit the museum. The last stop was to be an Iowa Cubs baseball game, but Iowa weather had different plans for us! The game was cancelled due to rain so we came back without seeing the game, but each child that was on the trip will receive a ticket to an I Cubs game of their choice in the 2023 season.



Pictured L to R: Dakota Mumford, Caroline Peterson, and Vanessa Klocke at the zoo.



Sawyer Storms and Sophia Kopriva enjoy the petting zoo

## *Midwest Compost School to Be Held June 20-22*

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach will host the 2023 Midwest Compost School on June 20-22 at the Iowa State Dairy Farm and Composting Facility near Ames.

This is a specialized, three-day course for compost facility operators and composting professionals. Topics covered include feedstock selection, recipe development, operations, analysis, monitoring, odor and runoff management, and marketing strategies. An emphasis is on food residuals composting. Each day includes a combination of hands-on training, lecture, discussion and problem solving.

“Participants will receive hands-on experiences and hear from composting facility managers and other experts about techniques that will give them a competitive edge,” said Kapil Arora, agricultural engineer with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and the course coordinator.

The program is approved by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for compost facility operator certification as specified under the Iowa Administrative Code.

The school features instructors from Iowa State University, University of Minnesota, University of Wisconsin and Illinois State University and is presented in collaboration with the Iowa Composting Council and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Early registration is \$450 and must be made prior to midnight, June 9. Late registration is \$475 and the registration deadline is midnight, June 14. Pre-registration is required and space is limited for this program. Registration includes course materials and meals listed on the program. For additional information and to register online, visit [www.aep.iastate.edu/compost](http://www.aep.iastate.edu/compost).

***This Week at  
Bethany Lutheran***

**Pastor David E. Klappenbach**

**Thursday: May 4, 2023**

11:30 AM - National Day of Prayer  
at City Hall

**Saturday: May 6, 2023**

8:00 AM - Men's Group  
9:00 AM - Women of Bethany  
General Mtg.

**Sunday: May 7, 2023**

**Fifth Sunday of Easter**

9:15 AM - Adult SS  
9:30 AM - Youth SS & Coffee  
Fellowship  
10:30 AM - Worship w/Communion  
& SS Spring Program  
3:00 PM - 4-H Club Mtg.

**Tuesday: May 9, 2023**

8:30 AM - Prayer Group  
9:30 AM - Tuesday coffee at Bethany

**Wednesday: May 10, 2023**

7:00 PM - Council Mtg.

***Worship, Love,  
Accept~ Together in  
Christ's Name***



***This Week at  
Laurens United  
Methodist Church***

**Pastor Deb Parkison**

**Thurs., May 4:**

Laurens Methodist Women's General  
Meeting @ 2 p.m.  
Laurens Methodist Women's Executive  
Meeting @ 1 p.m.

**Sat., May 6:**

United Methodist Men's Meeting @  
8 a.m.

**Sun., May 7:**

Sunday School @ 9:10 a.m.  
Fellowship Coffee/Reception in honor  
of graduates @ 9:30 a.m.  
Worship @ 10:30 a.m. w/ Holy  
Communion, Graduate Recognition &  
Potluck following worship service



***This Week at First  
Christian***

**Pastor Rev. Rita Cordell**

**Wednesday, May 3 -**

11:30 a.m. - Ladies Lunch followed by  
C.W.F. at the church  
7:00 p.m. - Mission Council

**Sunday, May 7**

9:30 a.m. - Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. - Worship



***Resurrection of  
Our Lord Catholic  
Church***

**Pocahontas, IA -- Pastor: Very  
Rev. Craig Collison, VF**

**MASS TIMES:**

Daily Mass as scheduled in the  
weekly bulletin  
Saturday at 5:00 PM and Sunday at  
10:30 AM

**Confessions:** Saturday 4:15 pm at  
Resurrection



# *Farm Safety Expert Reminds Iowans to Share the Roadways*

## *Roadway safety advice for farmers and non-farm motorists*

Steve Freeman is a professor and safety research expert at Iowa State University, where he teaches classes related to occupational safety, including farm and rural safety. He grew up on a diversified farm/ranch in eastern Colorado. He holds a Ph.D. in agricultural engineering from Purdue University and has written numerous research articles about occupational safety.

**Q: *You've been an expert in farm and rural safety for more than 30 years. What motivates you to work in this area?***

A: Growing up, I knew a lot of neighbors who had been injured while working on a farm. It was considered part of the price of farming and every time the old farmers gathered, the conversation often included stories of their injuries or of injuries to others. But when children were injured or killed, it was often ignored – just too painful to talk about and revisit. I knew there had to be a better way. Every farm injury is preventable. We have made progress, but still have work to do.

**Q: *Farm equipment and motor vehicles have improved significantly in terms of better lighting, signage and visibility, yet we still continue to have incidents and injuries. How important is this technology and what must we do to get the most from it?***

A: First, we need to make sure that we maintain the technology and ensure that the technology is working correctly.

*Biggest Little Paper In Town!*

Second, we need to make sure that we don't over rely on the technology. We still need to ensure that our youth and workers are properly trained to complete all farm tasks safely. Technology has made farming easier and safer, but safety is still a matter of our behavior and actions.

**Q: *What is the single biggest thing that farmers and non-farm motorists should do to safely share the roadways?***

A: Everyone needs to be patient and accept that we share our rural roadways. Farmers need to ensure that their equipment is visible and they need to be cautious when moving equipment on roads. Motorists need be aware of the possibility of farm equipment and to slow down. The difference in speed between cars and farm equipment often catches drivers by surprise. Drivers should not try to pass farm equipment unless they are sure the road is clear and the farmer is not planning on turning off the road to the left. Finally, farmers should not try to pull off the side of the road to let vehicles pass unless they know the side of the road is stable and safe.

**Q: *We remind people about roadway safety with farm machinery every year. Why is this necessary?***

A: While farm equipment is a common sight on rural roads during specific times of the year (for example, planting season and harvest season), it is still relatively rare throughout the year. We all become complacent and forget about hazards that we don't deal with every day. These yearly reminders create awareness and remind everyone that we need to share the roads and work together, to keep our rural roads safe.

Freeman offers the following advice for both farmers and rural motorists.

**Tips for the rural driver.** Be prepared for farm vehicles. Farm vehicles travel significantly slower than automobiles. You may only have a few seconds to react and slow down before overtaking a farm vehicle. Be prepared to slow down and follow; you may not have room to pass. Slow down and keep your distance. Don't assume that the farmer can pull over and

let you pass. Shoulder conditions may make it unsafe for the farmer to pull heavy equipment to the side of the road.

Be sure of the farmer's intentions before passing. Don't assume that a farm vehicle is turning right or pulling over to let you pass if it pulls to the right side of the road. A farmer may have to swing right in order to make a left turn. Wait until you know what the farmer is planning to do.

Be patient and enjoy the scenery if you find yourself following a farm vehicle. Even if you have to follow a farm vehicle for a couple of miles, it will only take a few minutes of your time.

Be especially alert in the evenings; farmers are returning from the fields and dusk makes farm vehicles more difficult to see.

**Tips for the farmer.** Only allow licensed, or appropriately trained, operators to take farm machinery onto the road. Youth who are able to operate machinery in the field may not be able to deal safely with traffic and other road hazards.

Make sure farm machinery is equipped with the lighting and marking safety devices recommended by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers and required by state and local laws. Be sure to remind all operators to use the appropriate hazard lights and turn signals when traveling on roads.

Minimize total vehicle width and secure equipment in the transport position before entering roadways.

Watch for approaching traffic and vehicles trying to pass. If possible, pull over and let traffic pass safely, but be alert for roadside hazards.

Obey all traffic laws and signs.

Signal intentions to motorists and avoid sudden or unexpected maneuvers.

Exercise additional care when entering roadways, approaching unsigned or "blind" intersections, crossing narrow bridges, going around sharp corners or going over hills.

# City Council Minutes

April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The Laurens City Council met in regular session at the Municipal Building at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Mayor Pro Tem John Jamison called the meeting to order. Present were Council members Hannah Zylstra, Loren Booth, Aaron Christenson, Jean Swanson, City Manager Hilary Reed, Deputy City Clerk Joan Hoben, and Public Works Director Julian Johnsen.

Zylstra moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the April 3<sup>rd</sup>, meeting, and the list of claims. Christenson seconded. All ayes: motion carried.

## CLAIMS 04-17-23

ALLIANT	MONTHLY GAS BILL	387.22
BOLTON & MENK	BOOKS & DVDS	248.90
BADGER METER	TECH SUPPORT	48.72
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS	910.39
BOLTON & MENK	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	6,526.50
CENGAGE	LARGE PRINT BOOKS	269.90
COMMUNITY FIRST AUTO PARTS	STARTER FOR PICKUP	311.31
CONNECTIONS, INC.	MONTHLY GROUP INSURANCE	40.68
VSUAL EDGE IT, INC.	MONTHLY COPIES	93.81
FOUNDATION ANALYTICAL LAB	WATER TESTING	370.75
HEMPHILL LAW OFFICE	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	30.00
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE	FED/FICA TAX	7,396.93
IAMU	MEMBERSHIP DUES	592.00
IOWA PRISON INDUSTRIES	PERMIT TAGS	94.50
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	FILTER FOR PAYLOADER	150.68
JULIAN JOHNSEN	POOL CLASS	515.58
KEVIN SHANNON	POOL CLASSES	249.56
LAURENS FOOD PRIDE	CLEANING SUPPLIES	8.18
LAURENS HOUSE OF PRINT	UTILITY BILLING SHEETS	395.52
LMPC	PHONE & INTERNET	143.48
LMU	MONTHLY UTILITIES	650.64
LAURENS PLUMBING SERVICE	SUPPLIES	516.97
LAURENS SUN	LEGALS/ADS	429.00
THE MACHINE SHOP	STEEL PLATE/SUPPLIES	338.38
THE PAPER, INC.	SUMMER AD	100.00
NORTH CENTRAL INT'L INC.	GARBAGE TRUCK REPAIR	2,559.52
PETTY CASH	SUPPLIES	57.50
POC FARM & HOME	SWEEPER	6.99
PRINCIPAL LIFE GROUP	GROUP LIFE INSURANCE	868.27
PRO COOPERATIVE	MONTHLY CITY FUEL	2,631.80
R & D INDUSTRIES, INC.	TECH SUPPORT	1,011.88
RICHARDSON SERVICE	POLICE REPAIRS	510.84
SHAMROCK RECYCLE	MARCH CURBSIDE RECYCLING	1,840.00
TRINITY REGIONAL MED CTR	WORKERS COMPENSATION	171.00
UNITYPOINT CLINIC OCCUPATION	RANDOM TESTING	42.00
VERIZON WIRELESS	MONTHLY CELL PHONE	504.01
WELLMARK	MONTHLY HEALTH INSURANCE	9,653.20
WESTERN IOWA TEC	M HAYEK TRAINING	85.00
WEX BANKS	MONTHLY POLICE FUEL	1,027.59
	TOTAL	<u>41,789.20</u>

PAYROLL  
001

GENERAL

4/3/2023

14,742.95

# City Council Minutes

210	ROAD USE TAX	1,570.25
600	WATER	2,824.19
610	SEWER	2,514.55
670	GARBAGE	2,548.08
	TOTAL	24,200.02
	PAYROLL TOTAL	<u>24,200.02</u>
	PAID TOTAL	<u><u>65,989.22</u></u>
001	GENERAL	26,002.01
110	ROAD USE TAX	3,653.71
112	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	5,834.31
600	WATER	7,233.23
610	SEWER	12,539.13
670	GARBAGE	10,726.83
	TOTAL BY FUND	<u><u>65,989.22</u></u>

Mayor Pro Tem Jamison opened the public budget hearing for the FY24 budget. There were no written or oral objections to the FY24 budget. The public hearing was closed for the FY24 budget at 5:02 p.m.

Reed presented the FY24 budget.

Swanson moved to approve Resolution 10-23 – FY24 Budget. Booth seconded. Roll call vote: Ayes: Zylstra, Booth, Christenson, Swanson, Jamison. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem Jamison proclaimed April as Keep Laurens Beautiful Month.

Booth moved to accept Ryno’s Law Mowing Nuisance abatement bid. Zylstra seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

Discussion was held on lot inventory. Reed and Johnsen will come up with the most viable lot options and report back to the council.

Booth moved to approve moving forward with Option 1 from the Parks Master Plan presentation from ISG and asking Hometown Pride for some contribution. Swanson seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

Booth moved to approve allowing Don Hemphill the ability to respond to Moss & Barnett and to counter their offer up to the attorney’s recommendation. Zylstra seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

Zylstra moved to adjourn 6:07 p.m. Booth seconded. All ayes. Motion carried.

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John Jamison, Mayor Pro Tem

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Hilary Reed, City Clerk