

# The Paper

Our Town, Our Paper!



Laurens, Iowa



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January 28,  
2026

## Local News

### Pocahontas County Receives 2026 Iowa Tourism Grant for County Kaleidoscopes

Pocahontas County Economic Development Commission is one of the recipients for this year's 2026 Iowa Tourism Grant. The entity received an \$8,700 grant award through the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) office to market the county-wide life-size kaleidoscope initiative that was completed in 2025.

"This grant is an important investment in Pocahontas County," said MaryJo Litwiller, Executive Director of Pocahontas County Economic Development. "Tourism plays a vital role in our local economy, and this funding allows us to showcase what makes our community unique while supporting local businesses and community pride."

The grant funds will be used to market the kaleidoscopes on a national and international level, with a goal of bringing out of state tourists to Pocahontas County. Podcast ads will be ran from March through June on The MinnMax Show, and social media influencer Oh My! Omaha will be doing a promotion of the kaleidoscopes during that same timeframe as well.

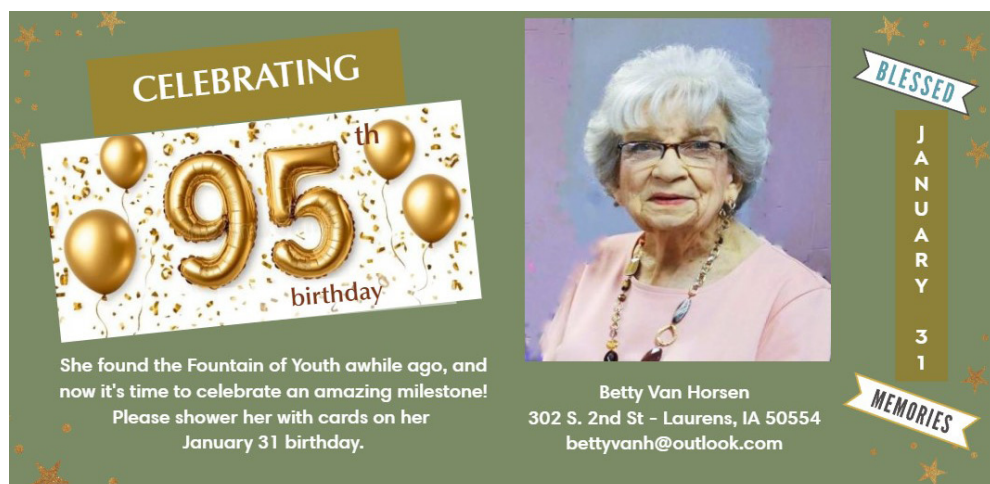
The Pocahontas County Foundation and Pocahontas Chamber of Commerce are financial partners on the grant, with the Foundation providing the required 1/4th match needed to secure the grant and the Chamber providing funds to cover help cover travel costs of the partnering influencer.

"The Pocahontas County Foundation enthusiastically supported the PCEDC's application with matching funds to support the Iowa Tourism Marketing Grant," explained Margo Underwood, Development Advisor for the Pocahontas County Foundation. "The County Foundation worked collaboratively with the Pocahontas County Visioning Committee to help fund 5 of the 11 kaleidoscopes located throughout Pocahontas County. Promoting increased tourism in Pocahontas County directly impacts revenue, workforce attraction and community pride which are the building blocks for stronger and more sustainable communities,"

"The Chamber is proud to be a small part of this project," stated Pocahontas Chamber Executive Director Parker Aden, who assisted in writing the grant application alongside MaryJo Litwiller. "We recognize the kaleidoscopes have caught statewide attention already, and serve as a great identity for our community to draw more people in. We hope visitors from across the nation, and perhaps even internationally, can have a wonderful time in our county and discover the charm of a rural lifestyle."

Approximately \$300,000 in awards were given to 32 entities from across the state. This is the first time Pocahontas County has ever received this grant. To learn more about the kaleidoscopes in Pocahontas County, visit [www.discoverpoco.com](http://www.discoverpoco.com)





Ninety-five years of laughter and sometimes a tear. A journey filled with memories she holds dear. Here's the ninety-five years of shining bright. She's had a well lived life and been a guiding light. Her heart is kind and she is always sharing a smile. Here's to more memories from across the miles.

*Thank you for honoring Mom with your thoughts and cards!*

*-Michael, Tammy & Bill*



**Thursday**

**January 29, 2026—7:00 p.m.**

**Happy Hour - 6:00 p.m.**



## ***Scholarships Available for Pocahontas County Senior 4-H Members***

The Pocahontas County ISU Extension Council once again is excited to offer up to ten \$1,000 scholarships to graduating 4-H senior members in 2026.

Eligible members planning to attend an accredited college, university, vocational program, or apprenticeship are encouraged to apply. Applications are available at <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/pocahontas/> or may be picked up at the ISU Extension and Outreach Pocahontas County Office.

All applications must be submitted by 4:30 p.m. on February 2, 2026. For more information regarding scholarship applications please contact Ashlie at the Pocahontas County ISU Extension Office, [ashliej@iastate.edu](mailto:ashliej@iastate.edu) or 712-335-3103.

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*At the Library*  
*with Glenda Mulder*  
*January 28, 2026*

I've read recently that 2026 is the year to embrace "Grandma Hobbies." What this means is activities that draw us away from our electronic devices and instead have us crafting, reading and solving puzzles. Well, you know we have the books covered. Did you know we have a continual puzzle exchange? Choose your favorite size and scene, and just take it home. Return it when you are done with it, (no due date) or pass it on to someone else. We've got our monthly craft night as well as crafting supplies available to be checked out.

And now, let's throw in a Beginning Crochet Class! That is definitely a "Grandma Hobby" in my eyes. Kelly Van Sickle has agreed to return as our instructor. If you are a true beginner, or just want to brush up your skills, here's your chance. We are jumping right in and starting immediately! We have skeins of yarn and crochet hooks, so really, all you have to do is show up. This will continue Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. weekly as long as we have interest. We would also welcome anyone who would like to bring their latest crochet project and crochet along with us!

New fiction recently includes: *Private Rome* by James Patterson, *The Devil's Daughter* by Danielle Steel, *Murder Your Darlings* by Jenna Blum, *The Briars* by Sarah Crouch, *Meet the Newmans* by Jennifer Niven, *Watch Us Fall* by Christina Novac, *We Who Will Die* by Stacia Stark and *Beth is Dead* by Katie Bernet. In nonfiction, we received *Homeschooled* by Stefan Merrill Block.

February Book Club Choice is *On Her Game: Caitlin Clark and the revolution in women's sports* by Christine Brennan. More on that later!

**Mark Your Calendar**

Every Tuesday @ 6:30 p.m. - Crochet Class

February 2 & 16 @ 5:30 p.m. - Evening Tot Time

February 3 @ 3:30-5:00 p.m. - Kids Make & Take Penguins!

February 3 @ 6:30 p.m. - Take it Tuesday Heart Painting

February 23 @ 7 p.m. - Book Club *On Her Game: Caitlin Clark and the revolution in women's sports*

**The Paper**

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**Join us for our 2026 Leadership Series which is designed for both professional and personal growth. These sessions will focus on communication skills, team building, customer service and building stronger relationships at work and home. This three-part program will be held at Prairie Lakes AEA in Pocahontas, IA from 9am to 11am and cost \$25 per person per session. Registration deadline is February 20th.**

### 1 March 13th | Communication

If you had to rate your communication skills on a scale of 1 to 10, what number would you give yourself? In this engaging, interactive session, we will explore simple strategies for increasing your effectiveness as a communicator, particularly at work. We'll cover key areas including consideration of your listeners' perspective; active listening skills; deductive vs. inductive communication; nonverbal communication; and when to use different modes of communication (email vs. phone). These strategies can be implemented to make you more skillful and effective when you communicate.

### 2 April 10th | Emotional Intelligence

How effective are you at relating to others? Do you have a good grasp on which personality types set you off? Can you remain calm in the face of annoyances? Decades of research on these types of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) skills have repeatedly demonstrated that people who have higher levels of Emotional Intelligence enjoy greater success and satisfaction at work, at home, and in their relationships. During this, interactive session, you will learn several user-friendly strategies for increasing your EQ. We'll start by introducing 25 key competencies of people with high levels of EQ, then work into strategies for improvement in Self Awareness; Self-Management; Social Awareness; and Relationship Management.

### 3 May 8th | Crucial Conversations

We've all been there—dreading an unavoidable difficult conversation. In a workplace, it might mean talking to a colleague who missed a critical deadline, confronting a team member about inappropriate behavior, or discussing issues that feel too "hot-button" to address. In this session, we will walk step-by-step through a framework for having those difficult conversations in ways that keep the conversation calm and productive. We'll start by helping participants understand their own natural styles of responding to difficult conversations, then work into learning specific strategies for conversing with others whose style may be very different from their own. These strategies can be easily applied to difficult conversations at both work and home.

## REGISTER HERE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer/Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Attending: March 13<sup>th</sup> ☐ April 10<sup>th</sup> ☐ May 8<sup>th</sup> ☐

Cost per session per person = \$25

Total amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration deadline: February 20th**

Return this form along with your payment to MaryJo at PCEDC Office (111 N Main Street, P.O. Box 212, Pocahontas, IA 50574)

Make checks payable to: Pocahontas County Leadership Fund



### Brenda Clark Hamilton

Brenda Clark Hamilton is a dynamic keynote speaker and workplace trainer who offers fresh perspectives in leadership, communication, and offering one's personal best to life, relationships, and career.

Brenda launched her speaking business in the fall of 2005, by offering training to businesses in her northern Iowa community. She spoke at her first statewide conference in 2008. Since that time, she has become a nationally recognized conference speaker and audience favorite, speaking at approximately 100 events each year, in every industry imaginable.

Audiences are quick to note Brenda's sense of humor, in-depth knowledge, high energy, and skill at keeping them engaged. Brenda's career experience includes coordinating professional development for 1200 Iowa teachers. She holds a Master's degree in education.



[pocahontascounty.iowa.gov/economic-development/](http://pocahontascounty.iowa.gov/economic-development/) Questions? E-mail: [litwiller@iowacentral.edu](mailto:litwiller@iowacentral.edu) Phone: 712-730-2259

## *This Week at Bethany Lutheran*

**Pastor David E. Klappenbach**

**Wednesday: January 28, 2026**

7:00 PM ~ Confirmation

**Sunday: February 1, 2026**

**Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

9:15 AM Adult SS & Youth SS

9:30 AM ~ Coffee Fellowship

10:30 AM ~ Worship w/Communion,  
Install Council

Bethany Prayer Group after worship

**Monday: February 2, 2026**

4:00 PM ~ W/M Mtg.

**Tuesday: February 3, 2026**

8:30 AM ~ Prayer Group

9:30 AM ~ Tuesday coffee at Bethany

**Wednesday: February 4, 2026**

7:00 PM ~ Confirmation

**Saturday: February 7, 2026**

8:00 AM ~ Men's Group

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



**Bethany**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
*North American Lutheran Church*

## *This Week at Laurens United Methodist Church*

**Pastor Deb Parkison**

January 4 through February 15:

Pastor Paul will be in the Pulpit

**Sunday, February 1:**

Sunday School @ 9:15

Adult Sunday School @ 9:30 AM

Fellowship Coffee @ 10:00 AM

Worship Service @ 10:30 AM

Holy Communion Sunday followed  
by potluck dinner



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## *This Week at First Christian*

**Pastor Rev. Rita Cordell**

**Thursday, Jan. 29**

2-5 p.m. - Clothes Closet open

**Saturday, Jan. 31**

10 a.m. - 12 p.m. - Clothes Closet  
open

**Sunday, Feb. 1**

9:30 a.m. - Sunday School

10:30 a.m. - Worship



## *Resurrection of Our Lord Catholic Church*

**Pocahontas, IA -- Priest:  
Father Paul Nguyen**

**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

## *Beginning Beekeeping Series*

Have you wondered about the health benefits of honey and wanted to start producing your own? Raising bees now, and wondering how to keep your bees healthy and protect them from disease? ISU Extension and Outreach, serving Hamilton, Webster, Humboldt, and Pocahontas Counties, is hosting a Beginning Beekeeping class to answer those questions and more. Roy Kraft will be leading the training. Join us starting February 2, 2026, for beginners and novices. Sessions will cover how to start a hive and provide current information to help maintain a healthy one. The cost is \$40 for the five training sessions.

Honeybee hives can be a rewarding way to start a small business or simply learn to produce your own healthy honey. Provide a backyard source of a healthier alternative to using sugar. Roy Kraft will cover building a hive, how to feed bees, honey harvesting, wintering bees in Iowa, beehive terminology, basic equipment needed, and more topics.

This class is designed for all ages interested in learning more about bees or gaining tips on maintaining a healthy hive. Each class will be virtually starting February 2, 9, 16, 23, and March 2 from 7-8:30 pm. Participants will receive a book on raising honeybees and other class materials as part of the registration fee. Participants will have access to the recorded sessions for viewing for several months to ensure their success with their hives. Online registration is available at: <https://registration.extension.iastate.edu/emc00/PublicSignIn.aspx?&aat=666b652b52644f5173576d43617747474e6c6e38746f566f45452f6a6770467972317441785a33724d33593d> or call ISU Extension and Outreach Pocahontas County at 712-335-3103 or email Erica Svuba at: [esvuba@iastate.edu](mailto:esvuba@iastate.edu).

## *ISU Extension and Outreach Launches Online Guide to Iowa Zoning to Support Housing Understanding*

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach has launched the Online Guide to Iowa Zoning, a new publicly accessible mapping and data tool designed to help policymakers, planners and community leaders better understand how local zoning regulations shape housing development across the state.

Developed with funding from the Iowa Finance Authority, the guide brings together zoning maps and housing-related zoning regulations for hundreds of Iowa cities in a single, interactive online platform. The resource allows users to explore zoning districts city by city and compare key housing-related standards across similar communities.

“Iowa communities are facing real challenges when it comes to housing availability, affordability and development speed,” said Gary Taylor, professor of urban planning and development at Iowa State University. “Zoning plays an important role in all three, but the information is often difficult to access or compare. This guide is meant to make zoning more transparent and easier to understand.”

The Online Guide to Iowa Zoning focuses on housing-related provisions within local zoning codes. These include what types of residential uses are allowed, along with standards such as minimum lot sizes, density limits, setbacks and parking requirements. The guide reflects zoning maps and ordinances adopted by cities as of Dec. 31, 2024, and is intended to serve as a snapshot in time rather than a real-time regulatory database.

The project includes zoning information from 243 Iowa cities, ranging from the state’s largest metropolitan areas to smaller rural communities. Cities were selected to ensure representation across population sizes and counties, including the largest cities statewide, cities in Iowa’s most populous counties, and at least one city from each county not otherwise represented.

“Local zoning decisions are often made in isolation,” Taylor said. “By putting this information side by side, communities can better see how their regulations compare to similar cities and consider how zoning may be influencing housing outcomes.”

In addition to interactive maps, the guide provides tools to help users compare zoning characteristics across similar communities. Comparison tables allow users to examine key housing-related standards among cities with similar population size and growth patterns, while a companion dashboard uses census and housing data to provide broader context on housing demand and development trends.

A final report summarizing project findings on the use of zoning standards such as exclusive single-family zoning, minimum lot sizes and setbacks, parking requirements, planned unit developments, by-right approval of residential projects and others is posted on the project homepage.

Because zoning terminology can be complex, the guide also includes explanatory materials to help users understand how zoning terms are defined and how they are used within the project.

“Zoning can feel technical and inaccessible,” Taylor said. “Our goal was to create a tool that helps people understand what the rules mean in practice and how they shape housing choices in their community.”

For more information, contact Gary Taylor at [gtaylor@iastate.edu](mailto:gtaylor@iastate.edu) or visit the Online Guide to Iowa Zoning.

January 22, 2026

The Utility Board of Trustees of Laurens, Iowa met in regular session at the Municipal Building, 272 N. Third Street, Laurens, Iowa, at 3:00 p.m. on the above date. Present were Trustees Kelly Horsman, Jerry Runneberg, and Ben Storms. Also present was General Manager Chad Cleveland. Guest Julian Johnsen joined the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Motion by Trustee Runneberg and seconded by Trustee Horsman to approve the agenda for the January 22, 2026 regular meeting. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Runneberg and seconded by Trustee Horsman to appoint Trustee Ben Storms as Chairman, Trustee Jerry Runneberg as Chairman Pro Tem, Chad Cleveland as Board Secretary, and Trustees Horsman, Runneberg, Storms and Secretary Cleveland to the Investment Committee. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Horsman and seconded by Trustee Runneberg to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2025 regular meeting. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Horsman and seconded by Trustee Runneberg to approve the summary of receipts for December 2025 in the amount of \$391,803.38 and the list of expenses for December 2025 in the amount of \$289,775.51. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

## **Summary of Receipts**

A/R- Electric	\$ 261,370.80
A/R- Communications	\$ 47,660.68
Merchandise/Services- Electric	\$ 538.00
Carrier Access Fees- Communications	\$ 707.39
Write Off Recovery- Electric	\$ 160.00
Renewable Energy Credits- Electric	\$ 14,372.55
Land Purchase Filing Refund- Electric	\$ 22.00
E-Rate Reimbursement- Communications	\$ 61.20
Deposits- Electric	\$ 1,660.00
Deposits- Communications	\$ 302.00
LIHEAP Energy Assistance- Electric	\$ 12,360.00
Accrued Vacation- Electric	\$ 363.15
Accrued Vacation- Communications	\$ 181.68
Marathon Energy Sales- Electric	\$ 15,496.86
Tower Lease- Communications	\$ 3,446.19
Attachment H Revenues- Electric	\$ 32,671.57
Lifeline Broadband Support- Communications	\$ 9.00
Lifeline Voice Support- Communications	\$ 11.00
Renewable Energy Credits Reconciliation- Electric	\$ (114.73)
Wages/Benefit Taxes- Electric	\$ 35.57
Wages/Benefit Taxes- Communications	\$ 147.24
IPERS Benefit- Electric	\$ 179.55
IPERS Benefit- Communications	\$ 31.68
Office Phones- Electric	\$ 60.00
EBS Self-funding Overpayment- Electric	\$ 100.00
<b>Total Cash Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 391,803.38</b>

## **List of Expenses**

AFLAC	Employee Contributions	\$ 142.86
Ahlers & Cooney PC	Legal Fees	\$ 753.00
Aureon	CALEA/SS7/Transport	\$ 149.48
Avesis- Fidelity Security Life	Group Vision Insurance	\$ 96.13
B & K Embroidery	Company Clothing- Embroidery	\$ 10.70
Bailey, Dave	Safety Footwear	\$ 128.35



Calix, Inc.	Cloud Services	\$ 1,761.22
City of Laurens	Utility Billing/Write-off Reconciliation	\$ 81,202.23
CMBA Architects	City Hall Renovation Project	\$ 1,500.00
Consortia Consulting	Monthly Consulting Fee	\$ 1,200.00
Department of Energy	WAPA Power Bill	\$ 38,913.75
DGR Engineering	Fuel System Modifications Project	\$ 2,951.50
DGR Engineering	Relay Upgrades & SCADA Project	\$ 746.50
Employee Benefit Systems	Self-Funding- Administration	\$ 120.00
Employee Benefit Systems	Self-Funding- Claims	\$ 496.45
GFC Leasing – WI	Copier Leases	\$ 85.32
Grainger	Tool & Fuses	\$ 156.89
Horsetech	Shipping Fees	\$ 15.17
Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Taxes	\$ 9,808.97
Internal Revenue Service	Federal Excise Tax Penalty	\$ 135.38
Interstate TRS Fund	TRS Fund Assessment	\$ 250.27
Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities	Apprenticeship Program	\$ 1,300.00
Iowa Department of Natural Resources	Underground Tank Mgmt. Fee	\$ 66.50
Iowa Department of Revenue	Sales Tax	\$ 3,932.82
Iowa Department of Revenue	State Withholding	\$ 1,068.25
Iowa One Call	Locates	\$ 29.70
Iowa Public Employees Retirement System	IPERS Contributions	\$ 5,706.61
Laurens House of Print	Envelopes & Paper	\$ 276.65
Laurens Municipal Power & Communications	Communications Bill	\$ 119.56
Laurens Municipal Utilities	Utility Bill	\$ 105.64
Laurens Plumbing	Supplies	\$ 23.52
Laurens Sun	Publications/Advertising	\$ 76.06
Long Lines	Communication Services	\$ 7,981.38
Lumen Lexcis	Directory Listings	\$ 144.00
LumenServe	Tower Lighting Monitoring	\$ 316.24
Mid-America Communications II	Fiber Network Assistance	\$ 453.75
Mid America Computer Corporation	Utility Billing	\$ 895.64
MidAmerican Energy	Neal 4 Operations	\$ 50,000.00
NIMECA	Power Bill	\$ 18,349.77
NIMECA	Cornbelt Meter Maintenance	\$ 401.56
Paymentus Group Inc	CC Processing Fees- Communications	\$ 191.68
Paymentus Group Inc	CC Processing Fees- Utility Billing	\$ 152.32
Payroll	Salaried, Hourly & Overtime	\$ 25,721.10
Phelps Uniform Specialists	Dust Mops & Mats	\$ 95.49
PLIC-SBD Grand Island	Life/Disability Insurance	\$ 666.55
Pocahontas County	Land Purchase & Recording	\$ 10,882.00
Pocahontas County E911	Quarterly E911 Fees	\$ 720.03
Pro Cooperative	Vehicle Fuel	\$ 215.96
Qwest dba CenturyLink-IA	Access Charges	\$ 95.15
Richardson's Service	Battery- Skid Loader	\$ 195.76
RSM US LLP	Network Support	\$ 3,100.07
RSM US LLP	Relay Upgrades & SCADA Project	\$ 2,130.00
Scott's Lawn Service	Vegetation Control	\$ 75.00
Secure Shred	Paper Shredding	\$ 27.00
US Card Systems	Consulting Fee	\$ 149.95
Verizon	Wireless Phone Service	\$ 116.04
Visa	FR Clothing/Office Supplies/Fees	\$ 368.22
Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield	Group Health Insurance	\$ 12,136.78
Ziegler Inc	Skid Loader Parts	\$ 864.59
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 289,775.51</b>



Trustees reviewed the Utility Funds Report, Investment Schedule, Income Statement, and Balance Sheet for December 2025. No specific action was taken.

Trustees reviewed the current Investment Policy. No specific action was taken.

Trustee Runneberg introduced the following Resolution entitled “RESOLUTION NAMING DEPOSITORIES” and moved for adoption. Trustee Horsman seconded the motion to adopt. The roll was called, and the vote was: Ayes: Horsman, Runneberg, and Storms. Nays: None.

Chairman Storms declared the following Resolution duly adopted:

## RESOLUTION NAMING DEPOSITORIES

BE IT RESOLVED that the Utility Board of Trustees of the City of Laurens, Iowa to approve the following list of financial institutions to be depositories of the Laurens Municipal Light and Power Plant and the Laurens Municipal Broadband Communications Utility.

<u>DEPOSITORY NAME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>MAXIMUM BALANCE</u>
Community State Bank	Laurens, Iowa	\$10,000,000
West Iowa Bank	Laurens, Iowa	\$ 5,000,000
Iowa Public Agency Investment Trust	West Des Moines, Iowa	\$ 5,000,000
LPL Financial Holdings	Boston, Massachusetts	\$ 5,000,000

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Chairman, Board Chairman Pro Tem, Board Secretary, Accounting/Billing Clerk, and Customer Service/Billing Clerk are hereby authorized to deposit Utility funds in amounts not to exceed the maximum approved for each financial institution.

Adopted this 22nd day of January 2026.

Ben Storms  
Chairman, Board of Trustees

ATTEST: Chad Cleveland  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

Motion by Trustee Horsman and seconded by Trustee Runneberg to approve the “New Home Cash Incentive Program” for calendar year 2026 available to the first owner of a newly constructed all electric residence. Qualified applicants will receive a cash incentive of up to \$10,000 from Laurens Municipal Power & Communications, which is calculated at a rate of \$5.00 per square foot of living area. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Runneberg and seconded by Trustee Horsman to pay the standard mileage rate for business use as set by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for calendar year 2026. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Trustee Horsman introduced the following Resolution entitled “RESOLUTION APPROVING THE LABOR AND EQUIPMENT HOURLY RATES FOR CUSTOMER RELATED SERVICE CALLS, MUTUAL AID SERVICE CALLS, AND CITY OF MARATHON SERVICE CALLS” and moved for adoption. Trustee Runneberg seconded the motion to adopt. The roll was called, and the vote was: Ayes: Horsman, Runneberg, and Storms. Nays: None.

Chairman Storms declared the following Resolution duly adopted:

## RESOLUTION APPROVING THE LABOR AND EQUIPMENT HOURLY RATES FOR CUSTOMER RELATED SERVICE CALLS, MUTUAL AID SERVICE CALLS, AND CITY OF MARATHON SERVICE CALLS

WHEREAS, pursuant to elections held in the years 1949 and 1997, the management and control of the Laurens Municipal Electric and Communications Utilities are the responsibility of a Board of Trustees; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees may, by resolution, establish, impose, adjust, and provide for the collection of rates to be charged for the use of the services provided by the Laurens Municipal Electric and Communications Utilities.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Laurens Municipal Electric and Communications Utilities of the City of Laurens that the labor and equipment hourly rates for customer-related service calls, mutual aid service calls, and City of Marathon service calls during regular working hours are as follows:

Labor	\$ 80.00 per hour
Service Truck/Van	\$ 46.00 per hour
Basket Truck	\$ 86.00 per hour
Digger Derrick Truck	\$ 86.00 per hour
Mini X Excavator	\$ 86.00 per hour
Skid Loader	\$ 86.00 per hour

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the labor and equipment hourly rates for customer-related service calls, mutual aid service calls, and City of Marathon service calls after regular working hours and weekends are as follows:

Labor	\$120.00 per hour
Service Truck/Van	\$ 69.00 per hour
Basket Truck	\$129.00 per hour
Digger Derrick Truck	\$129.00 per hour
Mini X Excavator	\$129.00 per hour
Skid Loader	\$129.00 per hour

Only properly trained Laurens Municipal Power & Communication (LMPC) employees are authorized to operate LMPC equipment. LMPC has the right to refuse any work that is the responsibility of the customer or person requesting the work.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 22nd day of January 2026.

Ben Storms  
Chairman, Board of Trustees

ATTEST: Chad Cleveland  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

Motion by Trustee Runneberg and seconded by Trustee Horsman to approve the Employment and Retention Agreement for General Manager Chad Cleveland contingent on Ahlers & Cooney Law Firm reviewing the agreement and clarification from MissionSquare Retirement that their Retirement Health Savings Account plan is not tied to the group health insurance plan. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

General Manager Update:

- Holiday Lighting Credit – we had 41 customers take advantage of the \$25 Holiday Lighting Credit.
- Trustees reviewed reports showing 2025 total billing for electricity and communications.
- Fuel System Modifications Project – engineer has been working with Acterra Group on submittals, but no construction has started yet.
- Relay Upgrades and SCADA Project – contractor is on site and working on the East Substation switchgear.
- City Hall Renovation Project – Pre-Bid Conference Meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup> and Bid Opening on February 10<sup>th</sup>.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Ben Storms  
Chairman, Board of Trustees

ATTEST: Chad Cleveland  
Secretary, Board of Trustees

# City Council Minutes

January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026

The Laurens City Council met in regular session at the Municipal Building at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Mayor Pro Tem Hannah Zylstra called the meeting to order. Present were Council members Homer Martz, Aaron Christenson, Rick Woodley, City Manager Hilary Reed, Deputy Clerk Joan Hoben, Public Works Director Julian Johnsen, and Police Chief Alex Leu. Councilmember Loren Booth was absent.

Woodley moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026,, meeting, the list of claims, and a Class C Retail Alcohol License pending fire inspection for Silver Dollar Cantina. Martz seconded. All ayes: motion carried.

## CLAIMS 01-19-26

AFLAC	GROUP INSURANCE	408.76
ALLIANT ENERGY	MONTHLY GAS SHOP	635.00
AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES	LIGHTS FOR RECYCLE BUILDING	413.01
FIDELITY SECURITY LIFE	MONTHLY EYECARE INSURANCE	190.28
BADGER METER	TECH SUPPORT	64.50
BOMGAARS	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	315.23
CENGAGE LEARNING, INC.	LARGE PRINT BOOKS	166.44
CITY OF MOVILLE	NUISANCE ABATEMENT	1,213.65
CMBA ARCHITECTS	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	500.00
COMMUNITY FIRST AUTO PARTS	BATTERY FOR FORKLIFT	225.13
CONNECTIONS, INC.	MONTHLY GROUP INSURANCE	31.14
DAKOTA SUPPLY GROUP	SHOP SUPPLIES	2,265.80
DELTA DENTAL	DENTAL MONTHLY INSURANCE	717.34
EMC	WORKERS COMPENSATION	167.63
FOLLETT SOFTWARE COMPANY	LIBRARY OPERATING SYSTEM	1,356.00
GFC LEASING - WI	PRINTER MAINT.	15.00
I & S GROUP, INC.	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	2,297.50
IRS	FED/FICA TAX	4,888.12
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	SHOP SUPPLIES	24.49
JOHNSON, MULHOLLAN, & COCHRANE	LEGAL FEES	2,885.78
JULIAN JOHNSEN	MEALS	31.91
CHAMGER OF COMMERCE	CHAMBER DUES	50.00
LMPC	MONTHLY PHONE & INTERNET	144.56
LMU	MONTHLY UTILITIES	728.40
LAURNES PLUMBING SERVICE	SUPPLIES	377.96
LAURENS SUN	LEGALS	150.99
MACC	TECH SUPPORT	1,503.82
THE MACHINE SHOP	SHOP SUPPLIES	223.21
MARLIN EGERTSON	6 US FLAGS	150.00
MENARDS	SUPPLIES - RECYCLE BUILDING	1,501.26
METERING & TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS	METERS	3,571.84
NW IOWA LEAUGE OF CITIES	ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP	25.00
PAYMENTUS CORPORATION	BILLING PROCESSING	187.91
PHELPS UNIFORM SPECIALISTS	MOPS, RAGS, RUGS	95.23
POCAHONTAS CO TREASURER	TAXES DUE	18.54
POCAHONTAS CO SOLID WASTE	LANDFILL FEES	6,921.90
PRINCIPAL LIFE GROUP	MONTHLY LIFE INSURANCE	1,127.90
PRO COOPERATIVE	MONTHLY FUEL FEES	3,828.93



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RB LUMBER COMPANY	POLICE DEPT. REPAIRS	3,493.20
RICHARDSON SERVICE	F150 TIRES	1,153.12
RSM US LLP	TECH SUPPORT	1,266.30
SHAMROCK RECYCLING, INC.	CURBSIDE RECYCLING	2,010.60
SIEPKER AUTO REPAIR	FORD 2016 MAINT.	45.05
VERIZON WIRELESS	MONTHLY CELL PHONES	242.98
	TOTAL	<u>47,631.41</u>

PAYROLL	1/5/2026	
001 GENERAL		3,423.21
210 ROAD USE TAX		1,830.45
600 WATER		3,136.57
610 SEWER		3,474.02
670 GARBAGE		<u>2,701.53</u>

TOTAL 14,565.78

PAYROLL	1/12/2026	
600 WATER		<u>1,376.92</u>

PAYROLL TOTAL 15,942.70

PAID TOTAL 63,574.11

001 GENERAL	14,933.38
110 ROAD USE TAX	6,933.34
112 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	838.94
600 WATER	15,663.15
610 SEWER	7,873.10
670 GARBAGE	<u>17,332.20</u>

TOTAL BY FUND 63,574.11

Discussion was held on the Final Design Supplemental Agreement with Snyder & Associates for the Prairie Restoration Trail. Christenson motioned to approve. Woodley seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

Discussion was held on Ordinance 06-26 – Water Services Update. Woodley motioned to approve the first reading of Ordinance 02-26 – Water Services Update. Christenson seconded. Roll call vote: Ayes: Martz, Christenson, Woodley, Zylstra. Nays: None. Absent: Booth. Motion carried.

Martz motioned to adjourn at 5:45 p.m. Christenson seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

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Hannah Zylstra, Mayor Pro Tem

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Hilary Reed, City Clerk