

THE JOHNSON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION MINUTES
AUGUST 5, 2026

Chairperson Green called the Johnson County Board of Supervisors to order in the Johnson County Health and Human Services Building Boardroom at 9:00 a.m. Members present: V Fixmer-Oraiz, Jon Green, Lisa Green-Douglass, Mandi Remington, and Rod Sullivan.

Green sought and received unanimous consent for approval of the agenda as presented.

Public Comment - County Board Office Community Engagement & Policy Coordinator Paola Jaramillo Guayara introduced Amy Coffman of Lighting Up Language, LLC, regarding language access. Coffman said County staff have been enthusiastic about the initiative. Jenny Wonderlick, County resident, said increasing demands on law enforcement, including online child exploitation, demonstrate the need for a new facility and emphasized safety, dignity, and a functional environment for those housed and working there. Wonderlick urged the Board to vote in favor of placing the bond referendum on the ballot. Sue Dvorsky of Coralville and candidate for County Board of Supervisors District 3, said the need for a new law enforcement facility is not a partisan issue. Dvorsky said conversations with residents throughout the County showed broad agreement that the current facility is inadequate and questioned why the County continues discussing the issue after 15 to 20 years. Anthony Haughton of Iowa City discussed the need for a new County jail, citing the cost of housing individuals in other counties and the resulting difficulties with court appearances, access to legal counsel, and family visitation. Haughton said state policies could increase jail populations beyond the County's control and said the County should provide clean, safe, and adequately equipped facilities for individuals in its care. Fred Johnson of Iowa City supported the proposed jail project and discussed the challenges faced by incarcerated individuals without support systems. Johnson discussed connecting residents with resources such as language access services to support individuals and reduce demands on law enforcement. Dr. Emerson Cram opposed the proposed jail bond referendum and compared the proposed facility to historical institutions of confinement. Cram urged the Board to consider how future generations may view the decision and to pursue approaches that better reflect human dignity, autonomy, and public safety. Storma Brink of North Liberty opposed the proposed jail project, citing experience in crisis services and concerns about human rights abuses in correctional facilities. Brink said a new facility would not address the underlying causes of those problems and said social service professionals could provide additional perspectives. Abbie Banks of Iowa City opposed the proposed jail bond referendum on moral, fiscal, and practical grounds. Banks said incarceration does not address underlying causes of crime and advocated for investments in housing, education, food security, and healthcare. Laura Bergus, Iowa City, opposed placing the proposed jail bond referendum on the ballot, citing concerns about the project's cost, projected interest, lack of a bond rating, limited data regarding efforts to reduce jail populations, and racial disparities in the criminal justice system. Bergus advocated for community-based investments and addressing existing facility needs. Leslie Carpenter, County resident and mental health advocate, discussed the complex

causes of mental health and homelessness and the roles of federal, state, and local governments in addressing those issues. Carpenter noted the number of individuals with severe mental illness who enter county jails and said the diverse jail population requires varied services and solutions.

Agreement with Shelter House for Eviction Diversion Services

County Social Services Director Lynette Jacoby recalled the County established the Eviction Diversion Program following the COVID-19 eviction moratorium to assist households facing eviction due to nonpayment of rent. She said the County invested American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for rental arrears assistance, helping 120 households remain stably housed. Jacoby said the ARPA-funded contract ended on June 30, 2026, with all available funds fully expended. She said the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) budget includes funding to continue the program and recommended approving the agreement with Shelter House Community Shelter & Transition Services (Shelter House) in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. Jacoby said Shelter House received state funding for the program and the County funding allows them to expand capacity. Formal consideration of the agreement will be scheduled for a future Board meeting.

Job Description for the New Accounts Payable Specialist Position

County Auditor Julie Persons reviewed and recommended approval of the job description for the new position in the County Auditor's Office. She said the FY27 budget includes funding for the position, which supports her office's ongoing career path initiative. Persons noted Human Resources reviewed the job description. Formal consideration of the job description will be scheduled for a future Board meeting.

FY27 End User License Agreement with Granicus for Meeting and Agenda Software

County Board Office Executive Director Erin Shane said responsibility for Board Office software contracts transferred from Information Technology (IT) to the Board Office budget as part of the Workday transition. She reviewed and recommended approval of the FY27 End User License Agreement with Granicus through Carahsoft for \$54,292. Shane said the software supports Board agenda preparation; meeting management; online posting of agendas, minutes, and videos; and livestreaming of Board meetings. She said the FY27 budget includes funding for the agreement. The Board will consider the agreement at tomorrow's formal meeting.

Proposed Resolution Setting a Date for a Special Bond Election

Green said as the Board continues to discuss the proposed County Sheriff's Office and Jail facility, the next step is for the Board to consider conducting a special election for voter consideration of the proposed bond issuance. Green recalled the Board's previous discussion regarding the repayment schedule and said he and Sullivan settled on a 12-year repayment period, resulting in an estimated annual property tax impact of \$88 per \$100,000 of residential taxable value. Green noted Fixmer-Oraiz and Remington opposed the proposed repayment period. Green-Douglass referenced an email received by the Board regarding the annual property tax impact and asked whether the Board had considered a longer repayment period. Green said a longer term could reduce the annual payment but would limit future Boards' ability to accelerate repayment. Green

said the 12-year schedule provides the greatest flexibility for future Boards to adjust the repayment schedule based on financial circumstances. Green-Douglass and Sullivan said they could support the 12-year repayment schedule. Fixmer-Oraiz urged the Board not to place the bond referendum on the ballot and opposed the proposed facility and repayment structure. Fixmer-Oraiz advocated for reconsidering the County's approach to incarceration and questioned the level of public input involved in developing the proposal. The resolution is scheduled for Board action at tomorrow's Board Meeting.

Strategic Plan Update

Shane said there is no update to report.

State & Federal Legislative Issues, Including Updates on the Urban County Coalition (UCC), pending Legislation Affecting the County, and Representation of County & Supervisor Positions
Green said there is no update to report and noted the annual meeting has still not been scheduled.

Operational Issues of the Board of Supervisors Office

Shane reviewed the Board Meeting schedule, which can be viewed online at <https://johnsoncountyiowa.gov/meetings>.

North Liberty Library Board of Trustees Appointment Recommendation

County Board Office Communications Manager Krista Burich reported the North Liberty Library Board of Trustees has one vacancy for a resident of unincorporated Johnson County for a three-year term beginning upon appointment and expiring June 30, 2029. Formal consideration of the Board's appointment recommendation will be scheduled for a future Board meeting.

Adjourned at 9:46 a.m.

Attest: Julie Persons, Johnson County Auditor

Recorded by Auditors Office: Marly Melsh, Executive Clerk to the Board