

# Dickinson County Newsletter # 41

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Articles written & pictures taken by Mardi Allen, information provided by participating departments... thanks Alissa, Mark Steven, Spirit Lake City Administrator



**Courthouse Construction Update:** The Construction project is coming to an end! Do we all want to jump up and down and give out a hurrah????? I am sure some of us are ready! Beth Will has received the second to last pay application from McHan. This pay application is requesting \$9,449 for work done in November and all but \$15,000 of the retainage held for phase 2. This is a total request of \$273,286. The Supervisors have requested a meeting to discuss outstanding issues with the boilers and some quality issues with walls, sidewalks and the parking lot before approving this pay application. If you are not aware, there are 21 courthouse windows with damage and will be replaced. Beth will be scheduling the replacement process with those Department Heads affected. After the window replacement, the only construction left that will be handled by McHan is the installation of louvers in the tower. However, the Board of Supervisors has a list of things that need to be done. Among those, additional work on the tower, adding sidewalk to the south side of the property (will be done in conjunction with the 19<sup>th</sup> Street construction), adding the boardroom to the generator, artwork in the hallways, and additional security cameras will need to be completed before closing out the bond. GOOD NEWS!-----and almost a miracle considering the length of time it took to complete this project, the Board of Supervisors still expect to come in within the courthouse budget.

**19<sup>th</sup> Street Reconstruction:** The City of Spirit Lake is moving ahead with plans to reconstruct 19<sup>th</sup> St. between Hill Ave. and Jackson Ave. in the summer of 2009. This long-planned project was delayed last year to allow completion of the Courthouse and The State Bank projects. The project will include new paving, storm sewer, lighting, and other site improvements. This will involve removing the existing pavement and will result in street closure this coming summer. The City is planning at least one meeting with all County departments and separate meetings with the Sheriff's Department and the Judges to work out building access during the 19<sup>th</sup> street construction. The Courthouse public parking lot will have to be redirected so that the outlet is not on 19<sup>th</sup> Street during construction. Beck Engineering has been and will be a part of the communication loop with the City and the County in order to minimize issues with parking at the time of the Courthouse employee parking lot construction. Mark Stevens, City Administrator, assured the Pam Jordan and me that the City will work with the County to minimize any inconvenience and to keep everyone informed.

**Employee parking lot:** This morning, Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>, Paul Johnson, Steve Anderson, John Will, and I met with Brad Beck of Beck Engineering to go over the preliminary plans for the employee parking lot. The design will include approximately 80 new parking spaces, some permeable pavers, 2 nice sized bio-retention cells, an area for a picnic table and green space, side walk from the west end of the parking to the existing courthouse sidewalk, security lighting and security cameras. The schedule for construction is tentatively having bid letting in April or May, 2009, with construction to start in May or June and completion in October of 2009. The project will be constructed in two phases allowing employees to park in one half of the parking while construction takes place in the other half. Even with phasing, parking will be at a premium with the 19<sup>th</sup> Street construction taking place approximately the same timeframe as the Courthouse parking lot project.



**Dickinson County Recycling:** Dickinson County has contracted with H&H Recycling to provide curbside recycling twice a month for the most populated areas of the County. The County also provides 24/7 recycling drop off bins through agreements with Lake Park, Superior, Terril, Spirit Lake, and Milford. This writer rode both of the Dickinson County recycling curbside routes on two separate occasions. On August 25<sup>th</sup>, I rode the route that took us to Montgomery and then back around areas of West Lake Okoboji and Center Lake. This route took 3 hours to drive and approximately 76 households had recycling out to be picked up. After talking with a few of the resident on the route, it was obvious that some just do not know that this service is available.

I rode the second route on November 17<sup>th</sup>. This route took us to the north and west side of Spirit Lake and then around East Lake Okoboji. Approximately 73 households recycled on that trip. Mike Hawn of H&H, said that many more recycle in the summer. The route took 3 hours and the trailer was about 1/4 full. According to H&H in the summer it is almost completely full. Mike Hawn also said the first route of the month usually has more and they typically come in with the cage full.

This picture was taken at the end of the West Lake/Montgomery route on August 25<sup>th</sup>. The truck also had 2 big boxes filled with glass and tin.



For those of you that do not recycle and live in the County and not in any of the cities, please consider starting. If you live on West, East, Spirit or Center Lake, curbside is probably available to you. You can pick up free recycling tubs by calling the Planning and Zoning office and making arrangements. Also, please notify H&H that you are going to start recycling. Any other rural Dickinson resident can recycle 24/7 in the cities of Spirit Lake, Milford, Superior, Lake Park and Terril. Please call the city hall if you do not know where their recycling bins are located. The County will be analyzing the cost/benefit of this service during the budget process for FY2010.

**Information Technology:** Alissa reported that the spam filter has been an ongoing issue. The vendor found there was a bug that was causing the safe list emails to be incorrectly marked as spam. The vendor is actively working on fixing that issue so during this time some spam will get into users mailboxes during the testing times. She said she has researched and chosen another vendor if the problem is not resolved soon.

Work is still in progress on the new website. It is coming along and departments have given Alissa new information to add to their pages so she is actively working on getting that ready.

United Technologies has finished installing all the weather alert speakers for the courthouse. The speaker volume can be turned up and down on an individual office basis in case there are any issues with the alerts being too loud or too soft. The radio has just arrived so Alissa will schedule United Technologies back to have the radio installed and tested.

Alissa attended the ISAC fall school in November. Warren County reported on VMware and how they are currently doing with their VMware project and the issues they have run into. Currently, all but one of their servers is running on a virtual machine. If you remember, Alissa reported on VMware in last month's newsletter. Alissa has been weighing the pros and cons and soon Dickinson County will be considering moving to VMware.

There is a need for additional security cameras both inside and outside of courthouse. Alissa has been working with Mike Ehret and Alpha Wireless to get pricing for these additional security cameras. The county has also received a quote from Accurate Controls, who originally had the bid to put the cameras in the courthouse. The Supervisors will be considering the quotes and benefits of both vendors and will make a decision in the next few weeks.