

Dickinson County Newsletter # 47

July 2009

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Employee Parking Lot update - information supplied by

Beth Will & Chris Beck: Weather permitting, the employee parking lot will be completed the end of September. You can see that the north half is completed and is being used. The permeable pavers have also been installed, the sign moved and painted and the parking spaces have been painted. Beck reported Thursday, August 20th, that if the weather permits he has about another month's worth of work to complete the project.

Treasurer's Office Report by Kris Rowley:

The treasurer's website at www.IowaTaxAndTags.gov is being updated to make it more user-friendly. The update is expected to be released this August. It will feature shopping cart payment options. There's also a major change coming from the State of Iowa later this fall in the way driver's licenses are issued. Iowa residents will be issued a temporary paper license at all the local stations and the laminated license will be mailed to them within 30 days. This is being done to fight fraud and identity theft. The treasurer's office currently accepts credit and debit cards though a service delivery charge is added to the bill.

Below are Driver's license and passport numbers and online payment information for FY2009:

Number of people served at our Driver's License Station – 8412

Number of Driver's Licenses Issued – 7057

Number of passport photos taken – 563

Number of Canadian passport photos taken – 2

Total dollar amount of taxes and motor vehicle tag renewals paid online -- \$6,768,803.49

Number of tax and motor vehicle transactions paid online – 5571

Information Technology and GIS Report provided by Alissa Julius and Amy Schmeling:

Space is becoming an issue on the County servers. As Dickinson County is relying more on electronic documents and scanning, we are quickly finding we are running out of space. The current SAN was purchased about 6 years ago and nearing its end of life. HP has stopped supporting the product making it necessary to upgrade the storage system. Reliability of the system makes an upgrade necessary along with the need to allow for growth. Research has been done and there is a cutting edge product that would work with our current configuration effectively. There are going to be some good sessions at a conference in September that will help determine what product will be proposed for our new storage device.

Sidwell is planning on upgrading some of their software components which require the use of SQL. Currently, Dickinson County has SQL 2000 which is used for a variety of county programs. The most current version available is 2008. The needed upgrade will be purchased and installed in the next couple of weeks so that the SQL server will be ready for Sidwell to install their upgraded product. The only cost will be the SQL software since Dickinson County has VM software and that allows a new virtual server to be setup to host the SQL server software.

Alissa will be attending the VMWorld conference to get ideas on how other locations are using virtual servers to help with their day to day processes. There are also some hands on labs to help learn how to better use the product. Another county in Iowa has attended this conference for the past three years and has highly recommended the conference as very good learning experience.

GIS: A meeting was held at the Dickinson County Taxpayer's association on July 23rd where the topic was "sharing of services" among county entities. Amy presented a brief explanation on what GIS is and how it can be used in daily business operations. She also gave an overview of some of the layers the County currently has and provided a demonstration on the simplicity of finding answers to questions like: "How many subdivisions lay within 100ft of Lower Gar Lake?"

CD's with GIS Data to have been sent to Alan Jensen, ISU GIS Extension Program Director. This GIS data will help with the study of "sharing of Services" within the county and help them get a better idea what needs are out there for Dickinson County.

Glen Petersen from the Sanitary District has provided the county with his GIS information. He has shared everything he had on file in regards to the sanitary lines throughout the county as well as the manholes and lift stations. This information is very useful to numerous offices throughout the courthouse and will streamline tasks on many levels.

The Planning and Zoning Office is a good example of how the sanitary district layer can be useful in the county. Jim Leinbaugh from the sanitary district comes to the zoning office weekly to look at permits that have been applied for. He knows a lot of the sewer line locations and information, however occasionally there are properties he is unsure of. Prior to the county having access to the sanitary GIS data, Jim would have to go back to Milford to check the data and either come back to the courthouse with the information or call it in. With the sewer lines the Planning and Zoning office can look up the information in question saving both the Planning and Zoning office as well as the sanitary district the time of running back and forth.

Veterans Administration Report provided by Ernie Cupp:

The IACCVA summer school was held July 27-29 in Marshalltown. Ernie taught a two hour class on the VIMS computer program used to complete federal forms and track information. Over 40 people attended. Ernie felt this summer school was a very good school this year. He thought one of the best sessions was the suicide prevention block. The group was given the tools and instruction on how to help prevent suicide. This program might be one that the safety or wellness committee should look at. He also attended a session on workplace violence that was very informative.