Pen City Current

Tuesday, January 10, 2017 | 4 pages | Volume 1 • Issue 18

Ludwick prepares to turn over reins

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Current warden Nick Ludwick chats with an Iowa Public Radio reporter during the opening of the new ISP facility in 2015. Patti Wachtendorf, a former ISP staffer, will be taking over in early February. Ludwick is retiring on medical advice after a twelve-year battle with cancer.

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON - Most young children have dreams of what they want to be when they grow up. Typically those dreams change as we mature and move into adulthood. But sometimes they don’t.

When Patti Wachtendorf takes over the helm of the Iowa State Penitentiary in early February it will be a culmination of a dream she had as a young teenager in Carthage.

“You didn’t want to be a warden when you were growing up?!” Wachtendorf said in a Monday morning interview at the ISP facility.

“I watched a movie, and I wish I could think of the name of it, it was back in the late 60s- early 70s and the inmates were abused. And I thought it was terrible so I was gonna go in and change the world.”

She said most kids when she was in school thought they had to be a cop to change the world. When she was in high school she wrote letters to wardens to see if she could go see their facilities and three said yes.

“So I went from Carthage to Rockwell City which was a long way and then to two prisons in Illinois,” she said.

Wachtendorf began her career with the Department of Corrections in 1983 at ISP. She was a Correctional Officer, Investigator, Senior Correctional Officer, Correctional Counselor and Treatment Services Director. She left Fort Madison in December 1997 when she was appointed as Treatment Services Director at the Mount Pleasant Correctional Facility. In January 2001, she became the Security Director at Iowa Correctional Institute for Women in Mitchellville and then Deputy Warden in July of 2006.

“I’m excited to come back home. I have children and grandchildren here,” she said. “I’ve always wanted to work in corrections and my ultimate goal has always been maximum security warden and Fort Madison is home.”

Wachtendorf will be replacing current Warden Nick Ludwick, who is retiring after close to 42 years in Iowa and Michigan prison systems on advice of his medical care team. Ludwick has been battling melanoma cancer for close to 12 years, the last five in Stage 4.

“My medical team told me it was time to go play,” he said.

Wachtendorf credits Ludwick with positioning the new facility for success.

“Nick’s done all the hard stuff. He

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Wachtendorf: Nick did the hard stuff

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Outgoing warden

Nick Ludwick will be retiring as warden at ISP after seven years at the facility and forty-two years total in the Michigan and Iowa prison systems.

He said he's raised staff about their strong family ties at the prison and a real sense of community and away from the workplace. And that focus helps offset the bad news on the outside.

Lee County Supervisor Ron Fedler, who spent more than two decades as a guard at the prison, said he wished Wachtendorf all the best. "As a supervisor I look forward to working with her and the Lee County Board looks for a long and prosperous relationship with her and the Iowa State Penitentiary."

Ludwick said he's leaving completely confident in Wachtendorf's leadership. "I leave begrudgingly, by I'm leaving before I wanted to leave for medical reasons." Ludwick said. "But I leave very confident in Patti. Our styles are very similar in walking and talking, we have high expectations for staff, we're both extremely accessible. We believe that humor, when used appropriately in the workplace, really helps in this type of environment. Every day can go bad in this type of institution. There are two types of silence in a prison and only one of which is acceptable. The potential is always there for unrest, but when we do what we do and train others do the same you can prevent things from going wrong."

He also said that he believes, in a spiritual sense, that he's been afforded special favors in his battle with cancer for the work that he's done. "I'll return home to my family and I may write. My only regret is not coming to Iowa sooner," Ludwick said. "It's been that positive of an experience. To see the staff interactions and interactions with offenders. It's just been great to have been a part of that culture change."

Wachtendorf has been working with the county attorney and the state's attorney offices. "Things aren't the same as they used to be. And in most cases we're working with less people in those departments and when the FBI's involved you're at their mercy."

"I want a second detective on my department...let me rephrase that...I need a second detective on my department."

Lee Fedler said. "I think it's long overdue that the county have this." Weber said he was leaning heavily on the Shepherd. "The reason I want a Shepherd is because they're bigger. I've seen other dogs, but they can grab the bad guys and they can kind of swing them around a bit, but you bring a full male Shepherd in here his back's gonna reach this table and he's gonna get your attention. Weber said any dog in the county, he would want to have working hand in hand with ISP because they have the best training and award winning handlers. He said grants and individual donations and even possible industry commitments could help offset the costs of the Shepherd.

Two small business owners have already contacted me and one said he would give me $500 and the other said $1,000. And the industry, one of the largest in Lee County, came to us. That was unsolicited."

Weber said the second detective is necessary because they are not only doing work for the sheriff's department but also the county attorney and the state's attorney offices.

"The reason I want a Shepherd is because they're bigger. I've seen other dogs, but they can grab the bad guys and they can kind of swing them around a bit, but you bring a full male Shepherd in here his back's gonna reach this table and he's gonna get your attention."

Weber said he would back fill the department with two more deputies and promote a current deputy into the second detective position. The board also heard from the Veteren's Assistance and IT departments, the Board of Health, the Treasurer's Department and Secondary Road department. The workshop continues tomorrow at 10 a.m. with a 10:30 board meeting to follow and then more work-shops at 12:30.

There are two types of silence in a prison and only one of which is acceptable. The potential is always there for unrest, but when we do what we do and train others to do the same you can prevent things from going wrong."

-Nick Ludwick

Outgoing ISP Warden

The Pen City Current and www.pencitycurrent.com website are products of Market Street Publishing, LLC. The Pen City Current is published Sunday through Friday mornings.

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SCC would likely administer regional facility

LAND - Continued from Page 1

FMHS principal Greg Smith gives a report on the progress of Fort Madison Community High School at a meeting Monday where district principals all gave reports.

similar facilities in Iowa City and in Jones County in northern Iowa. Smith said the LCEDG helped him put together a 12 Plus class at the high school to give students a look at entering the workplace, and they put the idea in his head.

"Lee County Economic Development helped me create that 12 Plus class and we wanted to build on those partnerships and get students involved in stuff after high school other than traditional college. Sixty percent of my kids fall into that boat so I was obviously interested. Then they asked if we had considered a regional education facility but we're talking millions of dollars there." 

"So we went to our industry partners and said if we did some real research and homework and got what we thought we wanted, and we asked if they would help fund it. And they said no problem. They were all very supportive of putting money in and would probably provide some of the instruction I would guess. "The land needed would be approximately 7 to 8 acres and Smith said it would probably need to be located somewhere in central Lee County so all the area districts could take advantage of the facility. Hopefully we can find someplace out by Central Lee, but we need to find someone who will donate seven to eight acres of land, and the industries have said they have no problem putting up money for the facility," he said.

If constructed the facility would provide both vocational and academic classes for students that either weren't really ready for college, but wanted to study a vocation such as traditional welding or health care programs like a CNA. But the facility could also provide for academic classes that area high schools could utilize for dual credit. Smith said he spoke to students at some of the facilities they toured and found that some students were spending half their day there. "You would be amazed how many kids, if you make it a non-college atmosphere will come," Smith said. "We had heard that and we saw so many kids because it wasn't a college campus and they liked that." Because the credit would be issued out of SCC, Smith said the college would likely oversee the facility, but high school credit could obviously be given as well if the local districts agree to do that.

The committee consists of Smith, Jenny Steffensmeier of Steffensmeier Welding & Manufacturing, Jason Huffman of Huffman Welding & Machine, Don Weiss, Executive Director of SCC’s CBIZ program, Dr. Michael Ash, President of SCC and LCEDG representatives.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report

01/06/17 - 8:39 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a property damage accident in the 700 block of Avenue E.
01/06/17 - 9:44 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of burglary in the 1400 block of Avenue E.
01/06/17 - 9:57 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1700 block of Avenue H.
01/06/17 - 12:12 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 3400 block of Avenue D.
01/06/17 - 12:15 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 800 block of Avenue G.
01/06/17 - 4:10 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a property damage accident in the 1100 block of 24th Street.
01/06/17 - 9:45 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of vandalism in the 800 block of Avenue G.
01/06/17 - 9:45 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 3400 block of Avenue N.
01/07/17 - 3:12 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of robbery in the 2200 block of Avenue L.
01/07/17 - 2:58 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1900 block of Avenue I.
01/07/17 - 4:38 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 800 block of Avenue E.
01/07/17 - 8:49 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 1000 block of Old Denmark Hill.
01/08/17 - 7:46 a.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a property damage accident in the 100 block of 2nd Street.
01/08/17 - 12:29 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a personal injury accident in the 3100 block of Bell Road.
01/08/17 - 1:30 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Amber Marie Sawyer, 27, of Fort Madison in the 800 block of Avenue E on charges of failure to maintain control, no valid insurance/accident related, and OWI first offense. She was released on a promise to appear.
01/08/17 - 2:25 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of larceny/theft in the 2000 block of Avenue H.
01/08/17 - 3:36 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a report of a stolen vehicle in the 1100 block of 23rd Street.
01/08/17 - 8:43 p.m. - Fort Madison police arrested Dominic Jordan Houten, 22, of Fort Madison, in the 5800 block of Avenue O on a warrant service for possession of burglary tools and two counts of 3rd degree burglary, and on a separate warrant service for 2nd and 3rd degree theft. He was taken to Lee County Correctional Center and held.
01/08/17 - 10:30 p.m. - Fort Madison police responded to a property damage accident in the 2500 block of 26th Street.
01/08/17 - 8:11 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Alex Joseph Derr, 29, of Keokuk at the sheriff's office on a charge of 5th degree criminal mischief. He was taken to the Lee County Correctional Center and jailed. He was later released for time served.
01/08/17 - 11:05 p.m. - Lee County Sheriff's deputies arrested LeeAnn Marie Polk, 28, of Dallas City at Half's Ice Cream on charges of OWI first offense, no insurance, and leaving the scene of an accident. She was taken to the Lee County Correctional Center and jailed.
### LEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**MEETING**

**DATE:** January 17, 2017

**CONVENING TIME:** 9:00 A.M.

#### **AGENDA**

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approve Agenda
3. Approve Tuesday, January 3, 2016 Board Minutes
4. Consider Approval of Claims
5. Public Input
6. Receive Compensation Board Recommendation
7. Consider Appointment to Conservation Board
8. Consider Approval of Second Reading of Amended General Assistance Ordinance and Consider Waiving Third Reading
9. Consider Approval of Imaging System from Solutions
10. Consider Approval of Resolution Removing Buildings on Leased Land from County Tax System
11. Consider Approval of Tax Abatement Resolutions (5)
12. Consider Approval of Personnel Actions
   a. Step Increase-Auditor’s Office
   b. Step Increase-Health Department
   c. Position Change-Board of Supervisors
13. Reports
   a. Treasurer’s Report of Fees Collected
   b. Treasurer’s Semi Annual Report
14. Commission or Committee Reports
15. Adjourn

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**PUBLIC MEETING – CITIZENS WELCOME:** Workshop to follow. Vision and hearing aids/tinnitus available upon request. Contact Title VI Administrator: 319-372-5705. County Website: www.lee-county-iowa.gov

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### EXPENDITURES

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### REVENUES

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**PROCEEDINGS**

**FORT MADISON CITY COUNCIL**

January 3, 2017

The Fort Madison City Council met in regular session at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, January 3, 2017, at City Hall, 811 Avenue E. Mayor Randolph presided. Council Members Greenwald, Wright, Rink, Andrews, Lair, Seidel and Cangas were present.

Agenda Item No. 10 was removed from the agenda. On motion, Council approved the agenda. On motion, Council approved the Consent Agenda: Minutes of 12/20/2016, as written; Resolution No. 2017-01, URTED for Janice Feary; 2307 Avenue B; Resolution No. 2017-02, URTED for Kenneth G/Judy L. Beebe; 2619 Avenue H; Resolution No. 2017-03, URTED for Neil A LeMaster/Stephanie A Kemper; 2608 Avenue L; Resolution No. 2017-04, URTED Dorothy M/for L. Reuther; 4207 Avenue L; Payment of Claims and Reports of the City Clerk.

Concerning $19,927,000 Sewer Revenue Capital Loan Notes, on motion, Council placed on file and approved the form of Tax Exemption Certificate and Loan and Disbursement Agreement. On motion, Council adopted Resolution No. 2017-05, approving and authorizing a form of Loan and Disbursement Agreement by and between the City of Fort Madison, Iowa, and the Iowa Finance Authority, and authorizing and providing for the issuance and securing the payment of $19,927,000 Sewer Revenue Capital Loan Notes, Series 2017, of the City of Fort Madison, Iowa, under the provisions of the City Code of Iowa, and providing for a method of payment of said Notes. On motion, Council adopted Resolution No. 2017-06, accepting PIP 2016-02, Sligan Sewer Expansion.

On motion, Council approved instituting further proceedings to change the meeting time of the City Council from 7:00 P.M. on the first and third Tuesdays of each month to 5:30 P.M. on the first and third Tuesdays of each month. On motion, Council approved the 2017 meeting dates of the City Council. On motion, Council approved hiring a Firefighter to fill a vacancy that will be created following a retirement.

At 7:17 P.M., on motion, Council adjourned until Tuesday, January 17, 2017 at 7:00 P.M.

/s/ Bradley A. Randolph, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/ Melinda L. Blind, City Clerk