Reactions mixed on property tax bill

IPERS tweets bill won’t affect public employees pensions

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

FORT MADISON – After debates that went full into early Thursday morning, a bill that requires Iowa’s cities and counties to secure a supermajority before increasing property tax revenues is in front of the governor.

A protracted debate on Senate File 634 ended with the bill moving to Gov. Kim Reynolds’ desk after it was approved by the full House at about 3 a.m. Thursday morning.

The bill would require cities and counties to take extra steps before approving budgets that include more than a 2% increase in property tax revenues from the current year.

If Reynolds signs the bill, it would become effective on July 1, 2020.

The bill is a watered down version of bills that were still being debated as late as Wednesday night. Several stipulations, including a 3% hard cap on property tax revenues and a provision for a voter referendum to reverse the approved increase and a 25% cap on end fund balances, were all pulled from the final approved version through amendments.

But local officials and Democratic legislators are still concerned.

Currently, municipalities and counties just vote on proposed budgets submitted from budget directors, city managers or administrators after public hearings are held on the budgets.

Under the new bill, the elected boards and councils of each city and county would be required to vote on any proposed increases in property tax revenues over 102% of the current budget year.

That vote would require a two-thirds majority. For

Reactions mixed on property tax bill

SPORTS:
Lady Hounds slide past Keokuk in girls soccer action.

See page 4

Reactions mixed on property tax bill

SPORTS:
Lady Hounds slide past Keokuk in girls soccer action.

See page 4

Reactions mixed on property tax bill

SPORTS:
Lady Hounds slide past Keokuk in girls soccer action.

See page 4
MONA L. HAAS

Mona L. Haas, 80, longtime resident of Keokuk and loving mother died Tuesday, April 23, 2019 at River Hills Village in Keokuk.

According to her wishes she was cremated and there will be no services. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to the family and mailed to the Vigen Memorial Home at 1328 Concert St., Keokuk, Iowa 52632.

The Vigen Memorial Home is assisting the family with arrangements. Online Condolences may be made to the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

SANDRA JEAN "SANDIE" VEST CAMPBELL

Sandra Jean "Sandie" Vest Campbell, 81 of Bowen, IL died Wednesday, April 24, 2019 Memorial Hospital in Carthage, IL.

She was born August 15, 1937 in Carthage, IL, the daughter of Francis and Virginia Thompson Vest. On May 19, 1956 she was united in marriage to Robert Campbell in Carthage. He survives.

She is also survived by her children, Steve (Julie) Campbell of Augusta, IL, Robin (Roy) Scott of Keokuk, Darla (Fred) Birkhofer of Camdenton, MO, Marla (Rick) Berry of Hamilton, IL, Robert (Okay) Campbell of Girard, IL and Donna Campbell Amanda of Ft. Madison, IA, grandchildren, Tawnya (Kent) Boyd, Megan Ritter, Michael Homan, Nathan Campbell, Nic (Gamara) Campbell, Preston Scott, Isaac Sey, Trent Justice (Charla Holmes), Shannon Homan (Dustin Racen), Jacquelyn Scott, Gwen Scott, Whitney Vigen, Raven Campbell, Dylan (Corbyn) Schrader, Mike (Erika) Berry, Jackson Amandus, great grandchildren, Alvia Nelson, Saydee Boyd, Maddie Boyd, Isaiah Sey, Emerson Glasgow, Illona Sey, Kylee Vigen, Ilyness Sey, Robin Lauren Glasgow, Kloe Homan, Mary Claire Ritter, Callan Vigen, Birdie Schrader, Greyson Justice, Evie Berry and Miller Marie Racen, brother and sisters, Ronald (Marilyn) Vest of Bowen, IL, Terri (Pat) Sullivan of Colchester, IL and Ginger Reroof of Colchester, IL.

She was preceded in death by her parents, sons, Chris and Randy Campbell in infancy, granddaugh- ter, Deborah Ann Fuller, grandparents, Joshua Scott and Christopher Berry and her sister, Ann Whitaker.

Sandie graduated from Bowen High School.

She was a member of the Bowen Christian Church.

Sandie enjoyed being a homemaker and spent her life making a wonderful home for her husband and children.

Sandie was well known for her stunning handmade Santa Clause dolls known as "Sandie's Santas". She was a skilled seamstress and made quilts for every newborn member of her family. Sandie also had a love for writing and was gifted in poetry. Her grandchildren and great-grandchildren were the sunshine of her life and she loved spending time with them. Above all, her greatest pride and joy was her very large family. She loved hosting family gatherings and bringing everyone together as often as possible, but her favorite of all was the annual Campbell family Christmas Eve.

A memorial service will be held at 1 p.m., Saturday, at Bowen Christian Church in Bowen, IL.

Memorials may be made to Memorial Hospital or the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Online condolences may be left for the family at www.vigenmemorialhome.com.

Pen City Current obituary policy

The Current runs obituaries one time at no charge to funeral homes and they run the day they are submitted in most cases. They are also run as submitted by the funeral homes.

Follow Us @pencitycurrent

Pen City Current will not publish an e–Edition Sunday, April 28 through Wednesday, May 1 so we can attend the wedding of a family member on the east coast.

The e–Edition will resume on Thursday, May 2.

Thanx for reading!

Pen City Current

Founded in 2016

Member LION Publishers

www.lionpublishers.com

Pen City Current and www.pencitycurrent.com are products of Market Street Publishing, LLC. Pen City Current is published Sunday through Friday mornings.
38 Special to headline Burlington event

BURLINGTON – A series of outdoor concerts is planned for the Burlington Riverfront June 21 and 22. Headliners for the two-day event were recently announced. Country music artist Granger Smith will headline Friday with Southern rock act 38 Special taking the premiere slot Saturday.

“Our goal is to showcase ten bands over two days,” said Mike O’Neil, Executive Director of Burlington Riverfront Entertainment.

Burlington Riverfront Entertainment is organizing the concerts in collaboration with Peoria-based Inked Entertainment.

June 22nd’s event will have a rock focus. Several regional rock bands are still being finalized to perform in addition to 38 Special. With several Gold and Platinum albums to their credit, concert goers will recognize many songs from the featured band including “Hold On Loosely,” “Rockin’ Into the Night,” “Caught Up in You,” “Fantasy Girl,” “If I’d Been the One,” “Back Where You Belong,” “Chain Lightnin’,” “Second Chance.”

Friday’s concerts will all feature country music with Mitchell Tenpenny and Hardy joining headliner Smith in the lineup. Smith is best known for his number one smash hit “Backroad Song” which he followed with top five single “If the Boot Fits.” His current full length album When the Good Guys Win has spawned the top fifteen hit “Happens Like That” and current fast-rising single “You’re In It.” Tenpenny will perform crowd-pleasing party songs like “Drunk Me” and “Alcohol You Later”. Hardy, a relative newcomer to the nationally touring country music scene, is making waves with his debut single “Rednecker.” Local artists David Kroll & Heartland and Stumptown will also play on June 21.

Tickets for either night are $30. A weekend pass is available for $50. VIP tickets are also offered at $10 more per ticket. Tickets can be purchased at Ticketmaster.com or at the Auditorium Box Office. Box Office hours are Tuesday-Friday 10:30 am – 4:30 pm. For more information visit BurlingtonRiverfront.com.

For the Record

Fort Madison Police Report
04/24/19 – 11 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested Josh Corcoran, 37, of Fort Madison, in the 500 block of 2nd St., on a charge of 3rd degree burglary. He was held in custody.

04/24/19 – 10:22 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in progress in the 300 block of Avenue C. 04/24/19 – 11 a.m. – Fort Madison Police arrested David Patrick Mortimer, 54, of Fort Madison at the Lee County Jail on a charge of 3rd degree burglary. He was held in custody.

04/24/19 – 10:22 a.m. – Fort Madison Police responded to a report of a burglary in progress in the 300 block of Avenue C.

04/25/19 – 1:34 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Tab Andrew Boltger, 46, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff’s office on a warrant for violation of probation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

Lee County Sheriff’s Report
04/24/19 – 1:25 p.m. – Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Tab Andrew Boltger, 46, of Fort Madison, at the sheriff’s office on a warrant for violation of probation. He was taken to the Lee County Jail and held.

04/25/19 – 1:34 a.m. – Lee County Sheriff’s deputies arrested Ashley Michelle Youngs, 23, of Savannah, Ga., in the 2600 block of Hwy. 2, on charges of disorderly conduct and public intoxication. Those listed above are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.
Lady Hounds slide by Keokuk, 2-1

BY ETHAN LILLARD
PCC SPORTS

KEOKUK – Football players are known to get into a warrior-esque mindset when they step on the field.

Playing on a football field Thursday, Fort Madison's girls soccer team adopted that warrior-like mentality and played through wind and rain for a 2-1 victory over Southeast conference foe Keokuk on the Chiefs' home field.

"We've played Keokuk 11 times since we started our program," Fort Madison Head Coach Sebastian Seifert said. "We've only won one game. This is just our second win against them and on their home turf is even better. I'm happy with that." Support local journalism.

"That's one reason why we have her out there," Seifert said. "She is tall and physical and can muscle her way through the defensive line. She rewarded that with two goals today." Walker put that same speed on display 10 minutes later when the Bloodhounds advanced the ball to the offense half of the field with a little help from the wind. Walker was the first to the loose ball and kept her momentum rolling all the way to the Chiefs' front door for another goal, giving Fort Madison a 2-0 advantage.

Walker was the only player to score in the first half, as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions as both teams took a brief break from the conditions..." Seifert said. "That didn't stop Fort Madison keeper Josie Pumphrey. Vandenbergs goal was the only good fortune the Chiefs found on the day, as Fort Madison continued to dominate time of possession the rest of the second half, holding the Chiefs scoreless for 36 minutes for the 2-1 win. "Getting the W is a good answer, but the way we played, I'm not satisfied," Seifert said. "This field is a little more narrow than ours. I think they struggled with spacing, but we got the win and that's what matters."

Fort Madison moves to 5-3 on the season and sit at No. 2 in the Southeast conference. The Hounds are back at the friendly confines of Baxter Sport Complex Tuesday as they take on Fairfield.

FMHS's Brandy Walker gets free in the middle of the field on the way to one of her two goals on the night in the Hounds' 2-1 win over Keokuk in girls soccer action Thursday night in Keokuk.

FMHS senior Braxtyn McGhghy sets to throw in to Fort Madison Aliysha Fincher in Thursday's soccer action at Keokuk. The Hound moved to 5-3 on the year with a 2-1 win.

FMHS boys sweep singles at Keokuk

BY CHUCK VANDENBERG
PCC EDITOR

KEOKUK – The clouds opened up after Fort Madison swept all six singles matches at Keokuk Thursday night, cancelling any doubles action.

But the Bloodhounds took all six singles matches from Keokuk highlighted by a tiebreaker at No. 5 singles.

Fort Madison’s Bryce Workman took the first set at No. 5 with a 7-6 win after taking the 6-6 tiebreaker with a 7-3 win in the tiebreaker first-to-seven by two, over Keokuk’s Will James.

James would turn the tables with an easier 6-3 win in the second set forcing another tiebreaker with each player winning a set. Workman won the first-to-10 tiebreaker 10-5 to take the match.

At No. 1, Sam Avery downed the Chiefs Abbott Haner 6-2, 6-3 and then Jason Thurman shutout Kaiden Stoneking with identical 6-love sets at No. 2.

Vasin Thurman downed Callum Tackes 6-2, 6-1 at No. 3 singles and No. 4 Reed Fehseke gave up just one game in a 6-0, 6-1 win over Jared Evans. Levi Sissell cleaned things up at No. 6 with a 6-3, 6-1 win over Tucker Hannon to give the Hounds the win.

The boys host Mt. Pleasant on Friday at Fort Madison High School's courts.

FMHS senior Braxtyn McGhghy sets to throw in to Fort Madison Aliysha Fincher in Thursday's soccer action at Keokuk. The Hound moved to 5-3 on the year with a 2-1 win.

Fincher in Thursday's soccer action at Keokuk. The Hound moved to
LEE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT HOSPICE

YOUR #1 CHOICE IN HOSPICE

First Medicare Certified Hospice in Southeast Iowa - Since 1989

Our Hospice Services Include:
- 24/7 on-call nursing staff
- Skilled Nursing Services
- Social Worker visits
- Music/Massage Therapy
- Homecare Aide Assistance
- Spiritual & Grief Support
- Volunteer Services

We are proud to provide our Hospice Services in Lee, Des Moines, Van Buren & Henry counties in Iowa and Hancock & Henderson counties in Illinois

#3 John Bennett Drive • PO Box 1426
Fort Madison, IA 52627
(319)372-5225 or (800)458-6672

LEEE
Lee County Health Department

CHD

www.leecountyhd.org

Like us on Facebook!
IPERS tweets bill won’t affect retirement pensions

BILL - Continued from Page 1

are saying they didn’t raise the levy.”

What will be in that tax bill? There’s nothing in the legislation that requires a letter explaining the tax bill to the tax payer. The bill says a public hearing is required and a super majority vote if revenues are proposed at a 2% increase or higher.

There’s nothing in here to provide transparency, that isn’t already being done. People now, without the bill yet being signed by the Governor, have the right to question their property tax bill. They even have the right to contest their assessment.

City and county books are open records and any resident can walk in and ask any questions they want. I do it all the time. Of all the budget votes I’ve seen in the

democratic legislature telling local governments how to operate. They’ve already mandated minimum wages and mental health fund spend downs.

Democrats fought hard into the night to keep a 3% pay fund those payments. Democrats contend now

to some of IPERS’ contributions as established annually

end fund balance, which would have limited local government’s ability to save for future needs.

The real winners in this fight appear to be the Demo-

crats, unless of course something is buried deep in the

The concerns on my end is where is the increased transparency. Nothing happened here that provides additional access to information.

Ignorance isn’t bliss and the math isn’t that complicated. If your city or county reports its tax levy, which sets their part of the total property tax bill, is the same as last year, but your bill went up, either some other entity’s rate went up, or your valuation went up. But it’s all explainable with a phone call to the governmental agency. That was in place yesterday…and today…and will be tomorrow.

This bill won’t solve the problem of people not under- standing their tax bill.

So it begs the question. What’s this all about anyway? But maybe that’s Beside the Point.
The Lee County Board of Supervisors is accepting sealed bids for two properties located in the unincorporated town of Argyle, Iowa.

The first property is located at 1808 294th Street. Lee County Controller Teresa Murray has assessed this property at $2,310.00 for the land and $3,210.00 for the structure that is located on the land. Notice is hereby provided that the west wall of the structure abuts adjoining property to which there is no access or easement and the adjoining landowner will not allow access from his property.

The second property is located at 1806 294th Street. Lee County Controller Teresa Murray has assessed this property at $392.00.

There will be a Public Showing of these properties on Friday, April 26, 2019 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Questions can be addressed by contacting the County Auditor at the above phone number or email or by contacting Lee County Engineer Ben Hull at 319-372-2541.

The West Point Municipal Utility System Board of Trustees met in regular session at West Point City Hall, West Point, Iowa 52666 on April 9th, 2019. Board Chairman Randy Welding presided and called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Board members present were: Brian Schmitz along with Board Member Ted Vonderhaar who were both present. Tentative agenda was approved by consensus. Status of delinquent accounts was discussed and corrected by Board Members in detail.

Field operations report, as prepared by Utility Superintendent, was presented by Board Members in detail. Board Chairman was report ed on the following: The next regular System Board Meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, May 14th, 2019 at West Point City Hall 5:30 p.m. and is open to the public. On motion, minutes of prior regular meeting of March 12th, 2019 was approved. On motion, approved warrants payable for April 9th, 2019 as presented. Motion was seconded and meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m., May 14th, 2019.

EXPENDITURES FOR MAY 2018

3rd Generation ELECTR- TRENCING ........................................ 150.00 ABDOL, RON - REBATE ..................................................... 100.00 AMAZON - COMPUTER HARDWARE....................... 75.44 COMMUNITY ACTION - REFUND .................................. 271.62 DAILY DEMOCRAT - LEGAL PUBLICATION .................. 90.79 DELTA DENTAL - INSURANCE ...................................... 135.96 EMBELLISHMENTS & DESIGN - LOGO / DE- CALS .................................................. 360.00 EFTPS - FED/State TAX ............................................... 6,575.33 FLETCHER-REINHARDT - CROSSARMS,BRACK- ETSES, JACKETS .................. 5,929.39 FLOYDS EZWAY - TRASH PICK UP .................. 120.00 FULLKENKAP INSURANCE - ANNUAL INS. PREMIUM .................. 17,381.58 G WORKS - D. SMITH USER GROUP MEETING .................. 112.50

HELP WANTED

COMMUNITY GARDEN CO-ORDINATOR NEEDED

RSVP/United Way of the Great River Region is seeking a full-time Community Garden Co-ordinator.

Do you like to garden and work outdoors? Do you like to plant, plan and harvest food?

We are seeking an individual to help those who are interested in gardening. We will guide you in planting, cultivate, harvest and lead other volunteers in our community. The Garden is located at 2060 Avenue L, Fort Madison, Iowa behind Hy-Vee.

Must enjoy outside work, gardening and harvesting. Will direct garden activities with other volunteers and may require some bending, stooping and lifting of 10 lbs. or less. Times: 1 hour, 2 times per week.

If interested and for more information, please call – Tammy at 319-372-8043.

United Way of the Great River Region supports non-profit organizations and agencies that provide programs addressing needs in health, education and financial stability to residents in Clark, Hancock, and Lee Counties.

United Way of the Great River Region is a United Way Regional serving all of Lee County, Iowa.

Housing for Sale

NEW LOWER PRICE

Chateau Apartments Extra Clean & Quiet Apartments for Rent

the Lee County Board of Supervisors, that would mean three of the five supervisors would need to vote in favor of the increase. Lee County Supervisor Gary Folliuo said getting three of five supervisors to agree on a budget isn't abnormal, but he said election years could make things difficult.

For the Fort Madison City Council, which has seven councilman, five of the seven councilman would need to vote in favor of the increase.

“I don’t think it would be a problem,” he said. “But you’ve got election years in there and some people are different in election years.”

He said the county is already facing shortfalls every year and this is just another potential potfall for revenues to cover services to county residents.

“We’re faced every year with cuts in the area of $400,000 to $1 million that we have to scale back for. If there are other shortfalls or mandates that are un-funded, that’s problematic for the county and municipalities,” he said.

Then if you add in unfunded rollbacks, you’re talking about a whole different story. We’re just being asked to do more with less every single legislative year.

The rollback is the 2013 state property tax rollback that was implemented under the commitment that the state would “backfill” revenues to local governments for revenues lost as part of the rollback. State Rep. Jeff Kurtz (D-Fort Madison) said the bill hurts Iowa communities and is an indirect attack on public retirement funds.

“I don’t want anyone to think we’re hiding something. I think we do a decent job of being transparent and I would err on the side of being overly transparent,” Kurtz said.

“Then if you add in unfunded rollbacks, you’re talking about it being a bill for property taxes. Other than us meddling in local business, I don’t know what they thought was supposed to happen” Varley said the remedy for citizens who don’t like what a city is doing is solved at the ballot box.

“The bill hurts communities because of these soft caps. They talked about it being a bill for property taxes. Other than us meddling in local business, I don’t know what they thought was supposed to happen” Varley said the remedy for citizens who don’t like what a city is doing is solved at the ballot box.

“If the citizens don’t like what a city is doing financially, then they could vote them out of office. You can’t run a city well if you have such little control over your own destiny. Iowa has a state government that seems to enjoy restricting cities instead of taking care of state business, he said.”

Fort Madison Mayor Brad Randolph said from his understanding of the changes, the bill doesn’t have that much of an impact. He said he didn’t think Fort Madison revenues had increased more than 2% since a Quality of Life bond was passed several years ago, but said during reassessments, like the county just experienced, you could find yourself in that situation. He said the bill is being touted to increase transparency, but he said Fort Madison holds public hearings on budgets every year and residents have access to any information they need to educate themselves on their property tax bill.

“I think we do a decent job of being transparent and I would err on the side of being overly transparent,” Randolph said.

“If I don’t want anyone to think we’re hiding something. I think we do a pretty decent job of justifying what we’re spending and why. People don’t like being taxed in general, including myself. But to make government function and provide services there has to be some taxes assessed.”