

Business Record

AUGUST 24, 2018

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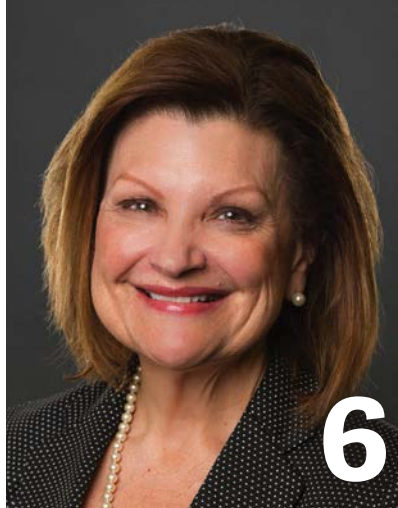
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THE INSIDER notebook

Bits and bites of the finer side of Iowa business



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Great housing search of 2018 ends

BY KATE HAYDEN

Praise be! The Great Shelter Search of 2018 has ended, and instead of a studio apartment, I found a (rental) house and a roommate.

To those who missed my two previous updates, I've been on the hunt since May for a studio or one-bedroom that could move me closer to work, but with enough parking that my out-of-town friends don't live in fear of the tow truck over a weekend. It took me a week and a half to deduce that downtown Des Moines was not going to work — and, by luck, I came across the house.

Amenities-wise at the house, there isn't a gym or pool, but if I'm being honest, those are just two convenient ways to be guilted over my favorite pizza order. Instead, there is an original brick fireplace, a two-car garage and a sunroom where I can repeat sun salutations to my heart's wildest desires. The laundry machines are also included, which, how can you pass on that?

It's an exciting end to a, frankly, mostly disappointing search. Rental housing in Des Moines seems to be at an all-time high with apartment complexes everywhere downtown, but the reality is that much of that is inaccessible to younger employees without roommates — and midlevel apartments in the rest of Des Moines are tight with demand and poor in communication.

It became more sobering when I realized I still had things fairly easy. A recent report compiled by the Polk County Housing Trust Fund found that no affordable housing, defined as a two-bedroom apartment, exists in Des Moines for minimum wage earners making an annual pay of \$15,080.

I toured much more than three units, but in the name of "House Hunters" and personal comparisons, I thought I'd review the three most likely apartments I almost rented, compared with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2018 fair market rate forecast for the Des Moines-West Des Moines region, which included Dallas, Guthrie, Madison, Polk and Warren counties. All apartments I searched for were within Des Moines city boundaries except for Building No. 3, located in West Des Moines.

HUD's forecast for Des Moines metro apartments lists \$597 for an efficiency and \$708 for a one-bedroom.

If I go to the website of Complex No. 1 — where I tried to wait-list for both an efficiency and a one-bedroom (sans balcony) — an available studio floor plan could run me either \$605 or \$660 a month. If I look at one-bedroom floor plans without a balcony, they put me between \$630 and \$750.

Building No. 2 on my search, a historic renovation, ran between \$765 and \$795 with an assigned-parking fee of \$50, which conveniently was not mentioned during my tour. (Perhaps it's a new policy? I'm not living there, so I'm not worried.) Garage parking fees, which were disclosed to me, are \$75.

Building No. 3, another historic renovation under construction at the time, was very limited in units and was, understandably, going to be more expensive. The studio I intended to lease ran at \$650, according to an email from the developer at the time, and there were no parking fees. The other two studios available ran at \$750 and \$800 a month, and I didn't bother considering the one-bedroom.

Maybe this is a problem with HUD's fair market calculation methodology, which used data from 2011 to 2015 to forecast FY 2018. Maybe this is a side effect of an optimistic market, although if you want to know how it's really doing, you should read Kent Darr's coverage.

I'm clearly no expert, but I'm also not living off of minimum wage, or raising a family, or even owning a dog. Like most everyone, though, I had a budget that would ideally let me build savings and move out of my family's home at the same time. When it comes to lifestyle, the units marketed toward young professionals like me felt pretty out-of-touch.



In case you missed it...

A brief look back at news from the past week on BusinessRecord.com

Q&A with YPC's new president

The Young Professional Connection had a leadership change in recent months.

<https://bit.ly/20Jkjzy>

Parking tech

A new system at the airport will tell drivers, in real time, how many parking spots are available on each level of the parking ramp.

<https://bit.ly/2w9jit1>

SBA backs \$3M

The U.S. Small Business Administration backed seven Central Iowa loans for a combined \$2.96 million in July.

<https://bit.ly/2MSE8nC>

\$27,500 in mini-grants

The Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, Mid-Iowa Health Foundation and United Way of Central Iowa recently awarded grants to seven nonprofits.

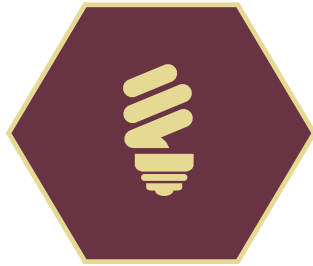
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LED bulb costs are somewhat shocking

BY JOE GARDYASZ

It had been a while since my wife and I needed to replenish our supply of lightbulbs — and we knew that the influx of next-generation LED bulbs was going to mean a higher out-of-pocket cost than the traditional incandescent bulbs we grew up with. The argument that these bulbs should last for years and years was weakened by the fact that we had just broken two of the fragile bulbs while dusting them. After finding what we thought was the best price on a set of four small bulbs for our bathroom fixtures — just over \$15 — we grudgingly took it to the self-checkout. Lo and behold, it rang up at more than \$21. We put the bulbs back for now, and we're going to shop around for a more reasonable price on LEDs — if not a small stock-up on incandescents while we can still get them. I realize that the high upfront price tag should more than pay for itself through energy savings, but I wonder what moderate- to low-income families will do when low-cost incandescents are no longer an option. Maybe we'll include our remaining old-fashioned bulbs for our kids in our will.



Investment strategists show confidence in economy

BY STEVE DINNEN

If you harbor doubts about the strength of the economy, talk to Chris Cook from Gilbert & Cook Inc. Or Eric Lohmeier, president of NCP Inc. Or how about Todd Kellenberger, portfolio specialist at Principal Real Estate Investors? They believe that the stock market's in good shape, valuations for private business are the strongest in years, and real estate remains a solid investment choice.

This assessment comes to us by way of the midyear report on the economy presented by Urbandale-based wealth managers Gilbert & Cook Inc. Chris Cook is chief investment strategist there, and he pointed out that while some think the stock market is overheated, statistics don't necessarily back that up. Look at price-to-earnings ratios, a widely used tool use to see whether a stock is over or under valued. Applied to the market as a whole, the 25-year average on PE ratios is 16.1. That's just where it stands today.

A recession (remember 2008?) typically endures for 15 months, while a recovery lasts for 47 months. We currently are in the 110th month of recovery. While the growth rate is hardly setting a blistering pace, Cook says that capital is getting deployed "very prudently."

"This growth rate, although not very exciting, can continue for a long time," he says.

If you're on the prowl for a business to own, or especially to sell, now's the time to get moving, said Lohmeier. Interest rates are low, inflation is in check and the federal corporate tax rate just got slashed. All of this has played into the hands of business owners, who are finding that when they sell a business they might command a price of eight times free cash flow. That compares with past averages of five to seven times free cash flow.

"This is the best environment for mergers and acquisitions in my lifetime," says Lohmeier.

Strong times also are playing out for real estate, which Kellenberger reviewed using REITs — real estate investment trusts — as a yardstick. REITs, both U.S. and global, have been top performers in the stock market since 2017. For investors they have provided diversification, and a stable cash flow that produces a decent yield. Nearly \$200 billion is sitting on the sidelines awaiting investment in everything from apartments to office buildings to industrial properties, says Kellenberger.

So it's clear sailing ahead. Unless something roils the waters. Like a trade war? Recent tariffs imposed by the U.S., or countered by foreign nations, already have had a negative impact on steel users and farmers. "With tariffs and trade wars, everybody loses," Lohmeier says.



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Wallace Elementary Renovation
Johnston Early Learning Academy

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Terra Lake Park
Beaver Creek Water Trail
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Windsor Office Park
NW Beaver Office Park
Birchwood Crossing

SHOP



Merle Hay Road Gateway 
Johnston Town Center 
Shops at Roughwood 
Adam Ridge Retail Center 

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To learn more about the status of these projects visit growjohnston.com/opportunities

To learn more about development in Johnston, register to join us for our Annual Bus Tour on October 11th! 2018bustour.eventbrite.com

A CLOSER LOOK: A local leader you should know

LINDA GOODWIN

Chief operating officer/chief nursing officer
Mercy Medical Center-Des Moines

BY JOE GARDYASZ

Linda Goodwin is eager to implement fresh ideas at Mercy Medical Center-Des Moines in her dual role as chief operating officer/chief nursing officer. Before joining Mercy on June 1, she was regional group chief nursing officer for Centura Health System's Mountain North Denver Region in Colorado. Goodwin spent the first 18 years of her nursing career at Salina Regional Health Center in Kansas, progressing up the management chain. She began her first chief nursing officer position in 1999 in Hutchinson, Kan., and moved up through successive chief nursing roles at hospitals in Kansas and Colorado. As Mercy's chief nursing executive, she leads nursing on all of Mercy-Des Moines' campuses, including Mercy Medical Center-Des Moines, West Lakes, Centerville and Skiff in Newton. Goodwin has already introduced Mercy's senior leaders to daily scrum sessions as part of a strategy to quickly move the organization forward on a number of fronts. Among her goals for Mercy is to apply for Magnet certification with the American Nursing Association's accrediting body, a status currently held by just a handful of hospitals in the state.

How did you get started in health care administration?

I was actually an accountant, and I became an accountant fairly early out of high school and a couple of years of college. I was working for an organization in Kansas, and my mother got diagnosed with lung cancer. She was a nurse, and she always wanted me to be a nurse. So my husband and I committed to moving back because I was the only daughter, and she really needed me. Towards her death, I really fell in love with the idea of a career giving back to people. Although accounting is very good and an expertise I carry with me in this role, it did not give me the mission I was seeking in my life.

How did you connect with Mercy-Des Moines?

During that time [at Centura in Denver] I met Mike Wegner [previously CFO there and now CFO of Mercy-Des Moines], and he had always spoken very highly of Iowa. ... When this position came open, he said, "What do you think?" I met the team and I fell in love with the opportunity here. ... The people here are excellent and they're passionate about the mission and the community. And it's the right-size city to be able to move a little bit more quickly than you can in Denver.

What's the value of integrating the COO and CNE roles?

From being on the chief nursing executive side for most of my career, I really saw that that becomes siloed from the rest of the organization. The beauty of being able to lead both is to be able to break down those barriers and really move operations in totality towards the goals of the organization. The challenge is that sometimes I think I get stereotyped into the nursing side. When people meet me and hear some of the vision we have here, I think that surprises them

that a nurse from a financial or strategy side would really have the skill sets to drive more than just nursing forward.

What sort of leadership lessons do you bring to this position?

God has been good to me, because he's offered me a lot of exposure to different leadership styles — good ones and not such good ones. From where I'm at in my career, I think I can pull from those experiences. One of the things I see that we have to work on here is developing trust in the leadership team. We're all new — no one knows us — and how do we get people excited about new ideas, and then trusting that we'll deliver? Part of the reason I think people struggle with trust in a new team is that everyone takes 90 days to assess [the] current state. Well, health care doesn't have 90 days to assess current state, so we have to put together a plan to rapidly assess and then address the challenges that are urgent.

How do you put that into practice?

We scrum every day for 15 minutes. At first they looked at me like, "Scrum? What are you talking about?" So I brought them an article and said, "Just read it." We each started off with three things that could be moved forward in 30 days. ... I give Karl [Keeler, Mercy's president] a scorecard every two weeks. ... So we're moving the organization forward quickly, and the senior leaders are kind of getting into it. And we're taking this to a shared decision model with physicians to encourage them to help us lead.

What's the most urgent need to address?

Our No. 1 opportunity — and we're facing it today as we visit the certificate of need [for Mercy's new psychiatric hospital that was approved on July 26] — is behavioral health patients and how we're going to manage them in our community. Because they're filling our beds and maybe not getting the care we would desire because they're not in the right spot at the right time. So I said [to the physicians], "OK, if I help you with that by Nov. 1 and we improve that patient flow, will that develop trust in me and my team?"

What are other challenges on your plate?

Branching out to communities that are growing. ... We believe that Mercy is a solution to serve them in maybe different ways than we have in the past. My boss, Karl Keeler, is bringing new thought to that, and we're excited as an executive team on how that might look in the future. ... No matter what service line it is, we believe that Mercy can bring value to it.

Does that mean building more outpatient clinics?

Our clinics are good, and they're in good places. It's tying it together into a more integrated methodology so that patients feel seamless care, and then expanding that into a wider net, really expanding our service lines be-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

HOMETOWN: Randall, Kan.

FAMILY: She and her husband, Larry, have a grown son in Wichita and two grandchildren.

EDUCATION: B.S., nursing, Marymount College, Salina, Kan.; M.S., nursing, Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kan.; MBA, Kansas Wesleyan, Salina, Kan.

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Closer Look suggestion?

Do you know a leader who's new or of growing interest in Des Moines' business community? Send an email to the editor with the name, position and reason you think your nominee should be interviewed by our reporters. Send suggestions to suzannebehnke@bpcdm.com

yond what we've been able to provide in the past. As technology advances, more complicated and extensive care can be offered here in this very large institution.

What are your biggest opportunities as CNE?

I believe that our nursing division is really excellent here; our patient care is excellent. We are very close to being able to consider application towards Magnet [certification] with the American Nursing Association's accrediting body. I think we'll be able to get that done within a few short years by our focus on those Magnet standards.

What would that certification mean for Mercy?

It attracts the highest-quality nurse; it gives them a voice and decision-making power on how nursing is delivered to patients. It gives them pride in their profession and feeling good about what they do when they go home at night. And it gives them the ability to design new care models, using new approaches that maybe haven't been thought of before.

What might new care models look like at Mercy?

For us here, I'm hoping that we will have an innovative mindset to try new and exciting

care delivery models that no one has tried elsewhere, at least [not] in Iowa — whether that's using technology, or utilizing different people with different training. At the end of the day, nurses need assistance to provide total patient care. One nurse for five patients is very complicated, and that is not sustainable going forward.

What types of civic pursuits are you interested in?

Our foundation director, Shannon Co-field, and I have talked a lot about that because I was on various boards in Denver where we addressed such challenges as the homeless, behavioral health patients. I was part of a joint venture between a [long-term acute care] facility where patients definitely were able to get out of the hospital and to the right resources more immediately. ... And certainly [I am open to] working alongside some of our Catholic organizations like Catholic Charities and House of Mercy.

Hobbies?

I really like playing golf; I'm not very good at it, but I love it. And I love to bike. We also like to hike. Our church is very important to us. ■

“I'm hoping that we will have an innovative mindset to try **new and exciting** care delivery models that no one has tried elsewhere, at least [not] in Iowa.”

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Business Best Practices in the MeToo Era

The past year has been filled with the fallout and consequences from news of sexual harassment in the workplace. Although the issue of sexual harassment isn't new, the #MeToo movement has increased the attention and sensitivity to harassment in the workplace and provided an opportunity for more transparency and discussion. With that opportunity, comes an increased potential for workplace situations that perhaps in the past were underreported or rationalized away. Indeed, in Iowa we've seen the headlines too. Our expert panelists will help us understand the effects #MeToo is having in the workplace and provide best practices that business and civic leaders need to know to both protect their businesses and foster a culture that empowers both women and men to thrive and learn from one another.

WE'LL DISCUSS QUESTIONS SUCH AS:

- How do you make changes if your business has a negative culture that is perhaps at the line or over it?
- What is sexual harassment, and what's not?
- How have workplace cultures shifted in the wake of #MeToo?
- What programs and policies related to sexual harassment should be in place to support women and men?
- How should your business conduct itself both legally and ethically if allegations are alleged against a top executive?
- What are the potential unintended consequences of #MeToo that could create new barriers for women striving for top leadership positions?

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TIFFANY O'DONNELL
CEO, Iowa Women Lead Change



KIRSTEN ANDERSON
Advocate & Founder, Equitas Solutions



JON COUTURE
Chief Human Resources Officer, Principal Financial Group Inc.



KARIN JOHNSON
Partner, Labor and Employment, Faegre Baker Daniels LLP



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Publisher, Business Record

MODERATOR

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MEET DES MOINES' NEWEST ANNUITY COMPANY

VENERABLE
STAKES OUT
MARKET NICHE
IN VARIABLE
ANNUITIES

BY JOE GARDYASZ

PATRICK LUSK
president and CEO, Venerable Insurance and Annuity Co.

PHOTO BY DJANE TINKEY

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COVER STORY

<< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Venerable Holdings Inc. isn't your typical insurance startup.

The newly formed annuity company, which formally launched on June 1, has leapt out of the gate with about \$30 billion in annuity assets under management, over 600,000 policyholders and approximately 240 employees, half of whom are already working in downtown Des Moines.

A consortium of private equity investors — led by affiliates of Apollo Global Management — created Venerable as a stand-alone company to specialize in acquiring and managing blocks of variable annuity policies. Venerable's initial acquisition was a \$30 billion closed block of variable annuities that it bought from Voya Financial Inc.

Rather than selling its own variable annuities, Venerable will seek growth by reinsuring or acquiring additional portfolios of variable annuity policies that insurers want to divest. The company is equally dividing its headquarters between Des Moines and West Chester, Pa., a western suburb of Philadelphia where Voya had based a portion of its variable annuity business.

The potential market for acquiring and managing blocks of variable annuities is substantial, said Patrick Lusk, president and CEO of Venerable Insurance and Annuity Co., the operating arm of Venerable Holdings.

"We view it as a very large opportunity," Lusk said. "There are hundreds of billions of dollars of assets under management out

DEAL A 'WIN-WIN-WIN' FOR APOLLO, ATHENE AND VOYA

In a recent letter to investors, Leon Black, chairman and CEO of Apollo Global Management, described the deal in which Venerable bought Voya's variable annuity business and sold the remaining fixed annuity business to Athene "a win-win-win solution for Apollo, Athene and Voya."

"This transaction added \$18 billion of fixed annuities to Athene's balance sheet and together with several strategic investors, we established a new permanent capital vehicle called Venerable that acquired the variable annuity piece of the transaction. Athene is our largest permanent capital vehicle. And following the Voya transaction, their balance sheet is approximately \$100 billion, a phenomenal success story for a business that did not exist 10 years ago.

"Through the strength of our strategic relationship with Athene, where we serve as the investment manager for their assets, we've helped them to consistently deliver leading returns within the life insurance industry. The total amount of AUM [assets under management] in all the permanent capital vehicles we manage is nearly \$125 billion or approximately 45 percent of Apollo's total AUM."

there. Some of that would be in the form of closed blocks, while other companies may still be writing variable annuities that may have closed blocks [no longer selling new policies] from the past that they find to be underperforming. Just given the size of these blocks, it wouldn't take too many transactions necessarily to grow our block of business substantially."

According to a special report published in June by insurance rating company A.M. Best Co., most private equity transactions have involved the firms acquiring variable annuity or fixed annuity businesses from life and annuity companies.

"These blocks generally line up well for private equity investors interested in managing the assets of what are essentially run-off blocks of business," the report said. "These run-off blocks also can become platforms for private equity firms to buy additional blocks to add to the run-off model and manage additional assets." A.M. Best said it expects to see continued interest from private equity funds in the life and annuity segment.

Venerable's launch also provided a business win for Athene Holding Ltd., whose annuity and insurance operations are based in West Des Moines. As part of the Voya transaction that closed on June 1, Athene will reinsure approximately \$19 billion of Voya's fixed and fixed indexed annuities from Venerable and Voya, all of which will be administered by Venerable. That arrangement allows Venerable to focus on its variable annuity niche, Lusk said.

Both Voya and Athene, which are minority investors in Venerable, will also benefit by providing the asset management services for those annuities. Athene Asset Management will provide its services for the fixed annuities that Athene will reinsure, while Voya Investment Management will serve as the preferred asset management partner for Venerable's variable annuities.

Along with its initial acquisition of annuity policies from Voya, the company acquired Voya's expertise in that area by picking up nearly all of its initial staff from Voya. Those employees didn't even have to move from the building — Voya subleases two floors and a shared-space floor in Hub Tower to Venerable.

The Des Moines operation is led by Ken Brown, executive vice president and chief operations officer, who most recently was senior vice president of sales development with Voya, where he worked for 14 years.

"My charge is to make sure that the policyholders and customers are well cared for," Brown said. "One of the nice things is that we brought a lot of seasoned annuity professionals over to Venerable as part of this transaction. So we've got years and years of knowledge about how to appropriately service customers."

Variable annuities financially squeezed many an insurer in the late 1990s and early 2000s, after companies such as Voya — formerly ING — realized they hadn't adequately reserved to earn profitable spreads after paying policyholders. It resulted in numerous insurers closing these products to new investors and searching for ways to manage their existing blocks of business profitably.

"Once those reserves are established and the proper hedging policies are in place, the variable annuity blocks can be managed correctly," said Lusk, who was previously Voya's chief actuary and head of its closed-block variable annuity business. "But because there are market-based guarantees in the products, the results can be more volatile. Again, with the right reserving and hedging, you can ride out those market conditions."

Venerable's majority owners — who with Apollo Global include New York City-based private equity firms Crestview Partners and Reverence Capital Partners — will have the patience to manage the business for the long haul, Lusk said.

"In private hands, we don't have to report to public shareholders," he said. "We do have to file the same statutory insurance reports every quarter as any other insurance company does, but we don't have to have shareholder calls. We don't have to watch the stock price in the business press every day."

Going forward, Venerable intends to grow by reinsuring blocks of variable annuities from other insurers, Lusk said. "The sale from Voya was an outright sale of an insurance entity. We ultimately would be open to sales of companies, or insurance transactions or other ways to take on risk from companies that don't want to retain those risks."

Venerable's staffing plan calls for expanding to about 300 employees between its two locations by the end of the year; it currently has 22 open positions posted on its website.

"As a completely stand-alone company, we also have to build out various corporate functions; for example, procurement and purchasing, a tax department, facilities management and other functions," Lusk said. Among key hires yet to be made in Des Moines are the heads of its facilities and purchasing areas.

"In terms of our staffing model, we want it to be scalable," Brown said. "We want to be in a position where we can capture additional opportunities in the marketplace. A lot of it depends on the operational needs and what execution requirements that company might require. One of the things we're trying to establish is an effective, very fluid and adaptable organization. So one of the key elements we look for in our employees is an entrepreneurial spirit. We embrace people who are willing to modify their activities to meet the needs of the client."

“

IN PRIVATE
HANDS, WE
DON'T HAVE
TO REPORT
TO PUBLIC
SHAREHOLDERS

”

Patrick Lusk, *president and CEO,*
Venerable Insurance and Annuity Co.

COVER STORY

A somewhat complicated ownership structure

Who are Venerable's owners? The short answer is that Apollo Global Management, Crestview Partners and Reverence Capital Partners each own 23 percent of the company, while Athene holds 21 percent and Voya has 10 percent. But who ultimately controls the business is more complicated, as described in this excerpt from Venerable's approved acquisition application with the Iowa Insurance Division:

"The complex structure of the proposed acquisition has resulted in multiple ultimate controlling persons in this application. The acquiring party, Venerable, is a wholly owned subsidiary of VA

Capital. VA Capital is in turn controlled, through intermediaries, by Athene Holding, Apollo Global Management, Crestview Partners, and Reverence's management vehicle, RCP GenPar HoldCo. Athene Holding and Apollo Global Management are each controlled by Leon Black, Joshua Harris, and Marc Rowan. Crestview Partners is controlled by Barry S. Volpert and Thomas S. Murphy, Jr. Finally, RCP GenPar HoldCo is controlled by Peter C. Aberg, Milton R. Berlinski, and Alexander A. Chulack. Facts in the record indicate that these ultimate controlling persons are experienced and competent based upon their experience in the insurance and financial industries."

<< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Venerable has a vested interest in establishing its reputation with both the insurance industry as a great place to work as well as a trustworthy place for other insurers to transfer their variable annuity assets, Brown said.

The company's collaborative work environment in Hub Tower includes several "idea bars" where employees can gather to discuss projects. Among its perks is 40 hours of paid volunteer time off to get involved in community organizations.

"In the spirit of entrepreneurship, we try to look for ways to offer our employees not only a great place to work, but also a cultural difference that makes you feel great about coming in to work and doing great work for whatever customer you may be serving," Brown said. ■

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Mercy building 'a more modern healing environment'

PREPARATORY WORK UNDERWAY FOR PLANNED PATIENT TOWER

BY JOE GARDYASZ

Green-screened construction fences will remain a consistent sight across Mercy Medical Center-Des Moines' main campus over the next several years. But the seemingly never-ending construction mess will eventually pay off — with a new multimillion-dollar patient tower anchoring the southeast corner of the campus.

Mercy's goal in its Campus Master Plan is to replace about 300 of its most-outdated patient rooms that are located in the H-towers of the hospital with construction of a 12-story patient tower, which will be located just to the south of the East Tower, where the east parking ramp is now situated.

The project will also add about 900 more parking spots to the campus and provide a streamlined design that should make it easier

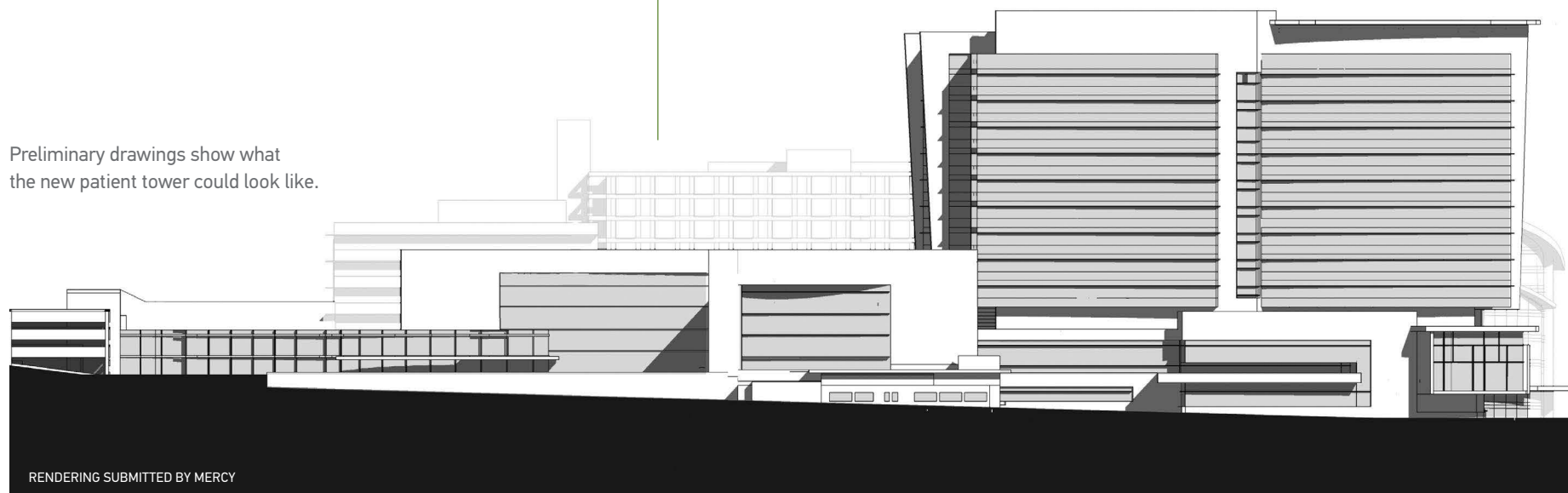
for patients and families to navigate, said Sandy Swanson, vice president of planning and business development.

When the modernization is completed — Swanson hopes by 2024 — Mercy-Des Moines will have a much different look and feel, as the primary adult inpatient entrance shifts to the east side of the campus.

"One delightful aspect of moving the majority of our adult surgical services to the new tower is that our existing main entrance that serves all of our patients now will be renovated into a child-oriented entrance for the children's hospital," she said. Once the tower is completed, space in the existing H-towers will be backfilled with administrative and clerical offices, she said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 >>

Preliminary drawings show what the new patient tower could look like.



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“One delightful aspect of moving the majority of our adult surgical services to the new tower is that our existing main entrance that serves all of our patients now will be renovated into a child-oriented entrance for the children’s hospital.”



– Sandy Swanson
vice president of planning and business development

A LOT OF MOVING PIECES

The “enabling” infrastructure projects for the new patient tower began two years ago, after the city approved a planned unit development for the project. Among the first pieces of the project was demolition of the Mercy Office Plaza. A southwest parking deck at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Laurel Street was completed last year, along with additional surface parking on the west side of Sixth Avenue last year.

Construction crews are currently working within two fenced-off areas of the campus — one a big excavation for a \$12 million west parking ramp expansion adjacent to Sixth Avenue, which Swanson said should be completed by this time next year.

Across the medical campus to the northeast, another fence at the corner of Third Street and University Avenue encircles the last remaining Mercy Park Apartment building, which is now undergoing asbestos abatement before being demolished later this year.

Also this fall, construction will begin on a \$20 million expansion of Mercy’s central utilities plant that powers the medical center. The plant is being beefed up to handle the added load of the planned patient tower. That project should be completed by early 2020.

One of the last preparatory projects for the tower will be tearing down the east parking ramp to clear a site for the new patient tower.



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One of the primary objectives of the modernization project is to create larger medical/surgical patient rooms to replace rooms that were built more than 45 years ago in the hospital's H-towers, Swanson said.

"The [existing] rooms are very small, and the floor-to-ceiling heights in that building don't accommodate the kind of technology that's really needed in a medical/surgical unit now," she said. "The way that that building was constructed, it has long hallways that don't lend themselves to the modern healing environment that has lots of light and flexible spaces for staff."

With the added parking ramps, the project also addresses the tight parking situation on the campus. Improved navigation will be an additional benefit.

"As this campus has evolved and you have buildings that are added on, we have many entrances onto this campus, both from your car and once you get parked," she said. "One of our goals is to reduce the amount of time that people have to walk."

And by designing the new buildings with increased natural light, visitors should also find it easier to use visual cues from the outside to orient themselves while they navigate the medical center, Swanson said.

TOTAL PRICE TAG STILL IN FLUX

The tower, which preliminary plans describe as a 12-story structure, should blend well with the existing six-story East Tower, which opened in 2006.

"I think our objective is to visually coordinate the new tower with our East Tower," Swanson said. "It will be right next door and connected to the new patient tower. So we'll try architecturally to tie those buildings together, with a focus on making it very clear to people as they arrive where they need to go."

The project's total cost, which the Des Moines Register two years ago reported could top \$500 million, is still in flux, Swanson said.

"I'm not prepared to give a final project cost; we are making some adjustments based on current needs and the market changing," she said. "We may be making some changes in how things are distributed."

The project will be funded with cash from operations, along with capital financing from Mercy's parent organization — Catholic Health Initiatives.

"The process is just like all large businesses," Swanson said. "You present business cases and it goes through review and approval." Timing for the beginning of construction of the tower will be contingent upon CHI's

WEST DES MOINES HOSPITALS WERE OPENED BELOW CAPACITY

In 2007, when Mercy was planning to build its West Des Moines hospital as a replacement facility for the now-closed Mercy Capitol hospital in Des Moines, it struck a 10-year deal with Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield. The insurer, concerned that two new hospitals being built simultaneously in West Des Moines would inflate medical costs, had threatened to compel a state review of the need for the project by the Health Facilities Council.

In that agreement, Mercy agreed to open the West Des Moines hospital with 82 of the authorized 146 rooms open, with the top two floors shelled out for adding more patient rooms.

UnityPoint Health-Des Moines, then known as Iowa Health-Des Moines, also reached an agreement with Wellmark in which it opened with 95 beds — below its capacity — with two floors vacant on its top floors as well.

Both hospitals agreed to significantly lower reimbursement rates from Wellmark at each of its West Des Moines hospitals over the 10-year contracts, both of which expired last year.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 >>



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“As this campus has evolved and you have buildings that are added on, we have many entrances onto this campus, both from your car and once you get parked. One of our goals is to reduce the amount of time that people have to walk.”

– Sandy Swanson
vice president of planning and business development

approval of the funds. “What we’re hoping is that we could be done by 2024,” she said.

Swanson said Mercy is currently evaluating how many beds it may incorporate into the new downtown patient tower, as well as how many beds may be added in West Des Moines at Mercy West Lakes hospital. The West Des Moines hospital — which is authorized for up to 146 rooms but is still operating at its initial 82 beds — was built with its two top floors vacant and ready for expansion.

“We haven’t absolutely determined with finality; however, it’s likely that some rooms will probably be replaced in shell space at West Lakes, with the remainder at this tower,” she said. “We’re still deciding what’s best based on the needs of the various service lines.” ■



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Business Record Health & Wellness beat reporter
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Heart of America Group

The Heart of America Group, based out of Moline, Ill., has a wide portfolio of event spaces in the Des Moines area. It owns 12 hotel and restaurant spots in the Greater Des Moines area, with more on the way.

With that many options, all equipped with Heart of America Group's dedication to unique and well-run events, it isn't hard to find the right fit in any of their locations.

A wide range of options

Hotel Renovo in Urbandale serves as a shining example of the Heart of America Group's vision of breaking the mold. It opened in 2015 and has a distinct look created just for this location, which is right off Interstates 80 and 35 at exit 125 on Hickman Road. The high-end, farm-inspired architecture is one of a kind, yet welcoming to guests all over the world. It is sure to impress at any event.

"It's unlike anything you'll find in our area and in other markets as well," said Krysia Hannam, market director of sales for Heart of America Group. "It was a labor of love, and it was made with events in mind."

The hotel can mold its two event rooms for any type of event. For business meetings, the high-scale rooms give off a high-class feel. The 32-foot vaulted ceilings surrounded by

glass walls on both sides give off a modern vibe. The hotel also has an outdoor patio that allows for casual conversations with a scenic view during breaks.

"Our clients say they've never been in a meeting space like that," Hannam said. "They love the options for all the different food. The service aspect is crucial. Whatever our groups need, Hotel Renovo is always there and someone is always willing to jump in and help."

Beyond the meeting spaces, Hotel Renovo has 102 guest rooms and complimentary Wi-Fi throughout the hotel. It also has a 24-hour business kiosk with a printer. Other amenities for your business attendees include same-day dry cleaning, coin-operated laundry and daily deliveries of USA Today.

The Wildwood Lodge, which just completed a renovation, in Clive, Iowa, is in a prime spot for traveling because of its location right off the intersection of Interstates 80 and 35. For business meetings, it provides a convenient location next to West Des Moines' premiere business parks, such as the Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Hy-Vee and Farm Bureau headquarter buildings.

The hotel offers two meeting rooms, the Thunder Bay and Hudson Bay rooms. Thunder Bay is the biggest, with 1,020 square feet of space. It can fit up to 100 people, depending on the room setup. The Hudson Bay room has 702 square feet and can fit up to 60 people.

The DoubleTree by Hilton in south Des

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Moines has four meeting rooms for up to 75 people. It's just one mile south of the Des Moines airport, serving as an ideal meeting place for international events.

The executive boardroom offers ergonomic chairs, contemporary office supplies and large windows with natural light. The Sammy Room serves well for banquets, like rehearsal dinners. And the Beacon meeting room can seat up to 36 people for events like trainings and seminars.

Johnny's Italian Steakhouse has three locations throughout the Des Moines area: West Des Moines, Altoona and on Fleur Drive.

The Johnny's location in West Des Moines is combined with Holiday Inn's West Des Moines location, offering four meeting rooms, including two large ones: Johnny's Boardroom and the Grand Ballroom. The Grand Ballroom can seat up to 280 people

but can be broken up into separate rooms, if needed. The boardroom seats up to 40 people.

Each of the rooms comes with the essential amenities like teleconferencing equipment, cable modems, projectors and more. All of the food for the events is catered by Johnny's. For planning the event, the location offers one point of contact for event planning and follow-through on the day of the event.

The Altoona Johnny's location, one of the largest stand-alone restaurants in the Des Moines area, has a top-notch pier with a gorgeous view of the seven-acre lake, a heated, covered space for cooler months, an outdoor bar and a fire feature. The pier is the perfect place to host events like fancy corporate retreats or an extravagant meeting.

"[The pier] is one of kind in Des Moines," said Kevin Berger, chief operating executive at the Altoona location. "It's a unique setting overlooking the lake. It has an amazing vibe. It's a great place to just kick up your feet in the bright sunshine and enjoy the event."

The restaurant also has a semiprivate room called The Sammy, which serves large groups for social or corporate events.

The Johnny's location on Fleur is located inside the DoubleTree

by Hilton. It uses many of the spaces that the hotel uses, but offers catering and other semiprivate spaces inside the restaurant. The restaurant has a private event menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner, perfect for any business or social event. But the restaurant has the capabilities to handle special requests, if needed.

"We start with our private events menu options, but we can do just about anything that our guests want," said Amy Bjerke, managing director. "We offer event menus with various types of food options. The boardroom menu has simplified options for events with plated dinners. This menu is one of our most popular choices for private events."

Top-notch versatility in Des Moines

One of the more unique locations in Central Iowa for any type of business meeting or corporate retreat is the AC Hotel.

The hotel is located is on Grand Avenue in the Historic East Village district, just a few blocks away from rustic brick buildings, downtown Des Moines' most impressive restaurants and flavors of local culture. On the top of the AC Hotel is the Republic on Grand rooftop bar, one of the area's premier dining and event spots.

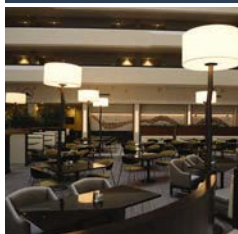
The Republic on Grand has two outdoor lounges, on the south and west sides of the building.

“Whatever our groups need, Hotel Renovo is always there and someone is always willing to jump in and help.”

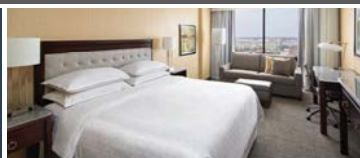
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The south-side lounge can accommodate up to 100 guests in cocktail-style seating, and the west-side lounge can hold up to 30 people and boasts a fire feature with an unmatched view of the Des Moines skyline. And just this year, the Republic on Grand has opened up the entire Republic for private rental. Event planners can book the space by the hour or for an entire evening.

The Republic is perfect for any type of business event: a cocktail party before a trade show, a holiday party and much more.

"The Republic allows you to remove the four walls," sales executive Tyler Beard said. "You're breaking out of that box. The trends nowadays are moving away from hotels. You walk into a typical hotel and there's four walls and a table. Here, there's a unique backdrop and the ability to host great events."

What really separates the AC Hotel from many other venues is its unique combination of meeting spaces. In addition the upscale vibe of the Republic, the AC Hotel has a variety of rooms and spaces on the main floor.

The Grand Room, which can accommodate up to 56 people, features floor-to-ceiling windows that look out onto Fourth and Grand. Right outside the room is a 300-square-foot terrace. During a break in meetings, your attendees can sit outside and enjoy cocktails and the electric vibe of the district.

Next to the Grand Room, there are two meetings spaces for small groups, fitted with

interconnected technology. For a bigger event, companies can rent out most of the main floor, including the AC Lounge, which is equipped with a bar.

Combine all of these spaces and a high-quality hotel, and the AC Hotel can serve as a one-stop shop for multiday functions or a one-off casual company outing.

"When groups can utilize all the different spaces we have, that's what creates the best experience," said Katie Kellogg, the chief operating executive at the AC Hotel. "They can use our Grand Room for a plated dinner and then end up at the Republic for late-night cocktails. It can be an experience throughout the entire hotel, which is really fun."

The Republic, which serves events inside the hotel as well, is renovating its banquet and catering menu with high-class and top-notch offerings. But that doesn't mean your meeting is bound by it. The team at the Republic works with your group to determine what food options will work best.

"We have an amazing executive chef," Kellogg said. "We are elevating our menu with some unique and high-end options. But if there's something you don't see, we can work with you to create something perfect for your event."

When reaching out to the AC Hotel regarding an event, event coordinator Tom Weber will be there to help. Weber gives the one-on-one dedication to each client and

ensures each event runs smoothly and to your liking. He gives tours of the spaces before booking to truly show the hotel and Republic's unique styles.

For amenities, the AC Hotel offers some of the best. It provides many services for any help you might need in setting up your event — everything from carpenters to security guards. There is Wi-Fi in all areas and fax and copy services on-site. For parking, the hotel offers 56 underground spots.

The AC Hotel is one of the best spots in Des Moines for all kinds of events, but all of the Heart of America Group's locations have a unique charm that will help your company's special event go right.

"We're stretching the idea of what's possible," Hannam said. "We're changing the face of meetings, and we're lucky that we have great venues to work with at Heart of America Group."

Des Moines Embassy Club

History means a lot at the Des Moines Embassy Club, and it's no surprise. The club has been around for more than 106 years.

The location has changed, starting with the Des Luxe hotel building, and so have the services — the club started as a lifestyle piece with barbershops, libraries, hotel rooms, billiards, etc. Now the Des Moines Embassy Club is a fine dining and events establish-

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ment with locations downtown and in West Des Moines.

The Des Moines Embassy Club hosts a wide range of events, and you don't have to be a member to book. But if you are a member, you get great discounts.

"We host lots of events between the downtown and west locations, but our favorite corporate events to host are the VIP cocktail receptions and dinners," said Emily Biedenfeld, director of membership and event sales. "It's such a great way

to showcase our town of Des Moines with views of the city from the 34th floor or a lakeside cocktail reception at the West Club."

The downtown Des Moines Embassy Club location has seven different rooms for events. The Ballroom is the biggest and seats up to 250 guests for a fully seated meal. The other locations are the Crystal Dining Room, the Crystal Extension, the Bar and Lounge, and three smaller rooms on the 33rd floor, which offers an unparalleled view of Des Moines.

In the West location, there are five meeting spaces, the biggest being the Ponderosa ballroom, which holds more than 500 guests in theater-style seating. Bring your party outside at the Lakeside patio with formal and lounge seating.

The Des Moines Embassy Club's in-house banquet staff is experienced. Most of the servers and banquet staff have been with the club for more than 10 years. "That's a great accomplishment in the world of hospitality,"

Biedenfeld said.

Between the two locations there are three talented and creative chefs. They've created everything from Gatsby-themed menus to St. Patrick's Day luncheons. At the Embassy Club West location, a garden provides fresh vegetables, herbs and even apple trees. Biedenfeld said the club incorporates "farm-to-table"-style dining, giving dishes a fresher taste. Chef Brown offers a new menu feature daily.

And since the Des Moines Embassy Club provides planning services throughout the entire process, you don't have to stress when it comes to the big event.

"All of our sales staff is with you through the planning process," Biedenfeld said. "From the most seasoned event planners to the woman planning her wedding, we are here to help with timeline, food selections, setup instructions and flow of the night ideas."

The District Venue

When planning events at the District Venue, located in Ankeny, clients can look at it as a simplified, one-stop shop.

The District offers an all-inclusive and full-service format in-house. From start to finish, every element of an event can be accomplished through the District Venue. And if event planners need something beyond what the District Venue can provide,



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it maintains relationships with superior businesses in order to refer the most trustworthy and affordable vendors.

“Instead of offering numerous packages that force you to compromise on what you want and what your budget allows, we provide you and your guests with the same amenities — regardless,” said Erika Pirtle, general manager.

The space is versatile as well. It can host a variety of corporate events, like networking gatherings, banquets and more with up to 350 attendees. Through an event planner who is one email or call away throughout the process, the District Venue tries to make the planning process worry- and stress-free by offering setup and assistance on the day of the event. The location is well-suited for travelers, with many hotels within a few minutes.

Inside the space, the District Venue provides all the dining amenities, like tables, chairs, napkins and silverware as well as excellent in-house wait and food service. The District Venue offers buffet, family-style or plated-style dinners.

There are two projector displays, cordless microphones and speakers throughout the venue connected to free Wi-Fi.

The audiovisual setup can help facilitate meetings and large corpo-

rate events. In addition, the District Venue offers a tailored menu for all sorts of business meetings and events, whether that be breakfast, lunch or dinner. The menu can meet the needs of an all-day business event or a weekend holiday break.

When the event is over, the District Venue provides complimentary tear-down. It’s all part of the quality client service the District Venue offers from start to end.

“Our favorite part of an event is the very end, when everything has come together and played out well,” Pirtle said. “It creates the best feeling in both the planners and attendees. Knowing that our client’s needs have been met and exceeded brings a smile to our face. It builds the bridge towards a continued relationship and future events.”

“Our favorite part of an event is the very end, when everything has come together and played out well.”

Science Center of Iowa

For businesses looking for event spaces with unique and out-of-the-box offerings, the Science Center of Iowa is the perfect place.

After all, in what other event space can you pet a snake and watch an explosion in the same day?

“The Science Center of Iowa has all the basics, such as classrooms and lecture halls, but experiencing the museum’s exhibits and live programs is what keeps professionals buzzing about your event after the fact,” said Curt Simmons, president and CEO.

The Science Center of Iowa is well-known for its educational and fun offerings, but not many people know a lot of the exhibits can be used for private events. The center also has the John Deere Adventure Theater, which has a capacity of 175.

The center can be booked for different corporate events. The Science Center of Iowa works with three exclusive caterers and the in-house Food Chain Cafe to meet food and dining needs for events.

For parking, the Science Center of Iowa owns a parking ramp just a few steps away from its doors.

The event staff at the Science

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THE BOX**

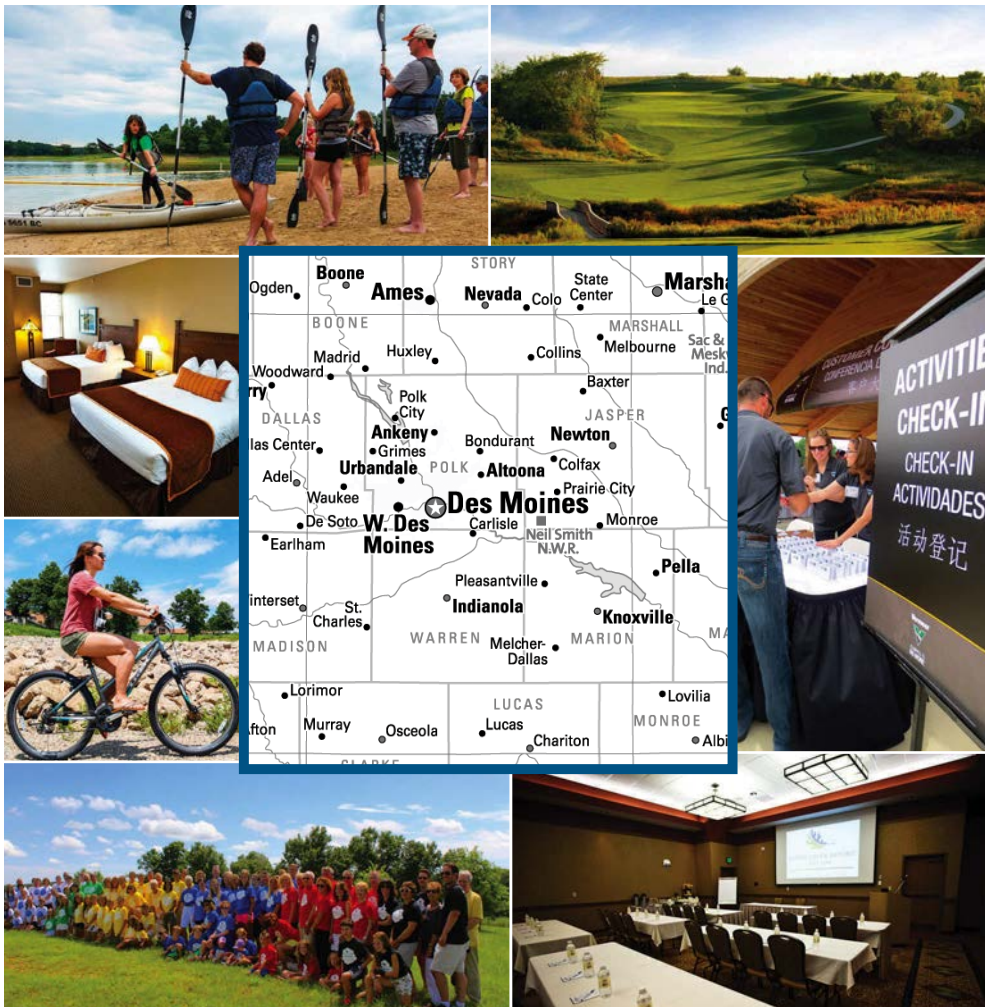
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Center of Iowa helps the event planning throughout the process. All events have set-up and tear-down services as well as bar and security staffing, if necessary. Every event will also have an on-site coordinator.

"It occasionally seems challenging to coordinate an event in such a different kind of space, but our rental team always walks through the schedule with the planner and provides expertise on what setup works best in the space," Simmons said.

There are a wide range of events the Science Center of Iowa can host. Bring your company team to take the SCI Challenge Scavenger Hunt for a bonding and team-building experience, or host a casual networking event with socializing and

cocktails in the planetarium.

For more professional events, the Science Center of Iowa has several spaces for business events. The Iowa Learning Center classrooms offer a smaller space for meetings, but the center also offers a bigger space in Principal Hall for keynote speakers, trainings and networking events. For senior team meetings, the boardroom is available for rent and boasts one of the best views of downtown. The center offers packages for quarterly meetings.

After the meetings, you can pair the business with fun to help your team unwind with the scavenger hunt or a live science demonstration.



Embassy Suites by Hilton

The Des Moines Embassy Suites hotel has the space and flexibility to create an event that's right for whatever you need.

Located in the Historic East Village, the Embassy Suites hotel offers nearly 20,000 square feet of meeting and banquet space to accommodate groups of 10 to 1,200 people. There are convenient all-first-floor meeting spaces, and the Complete Meeting Package (CMP), which bills one price for food, audiovisual services and room rental, makes pricing easy. For smaller business meetings, the hotel provides several different size meeting rooms.

The outdoor patio overlooking the river and city skyline can be rented for private groups searching for the perfect spot for a cocktail hour.

Before the event, the hotel's event services and sales manager staff will help with planning. During your event, the professional and hospitable banquet team, trained to anticipate needs of meeting planners and attendees, will ensure a stress-free environment.

If you're hosting a multiday event, the Embassy Suites hotel is the only full-service, all-suite property in Des Moines. There are 234 two-room suites with amenities such as two 37-inch LCD HDTVs and

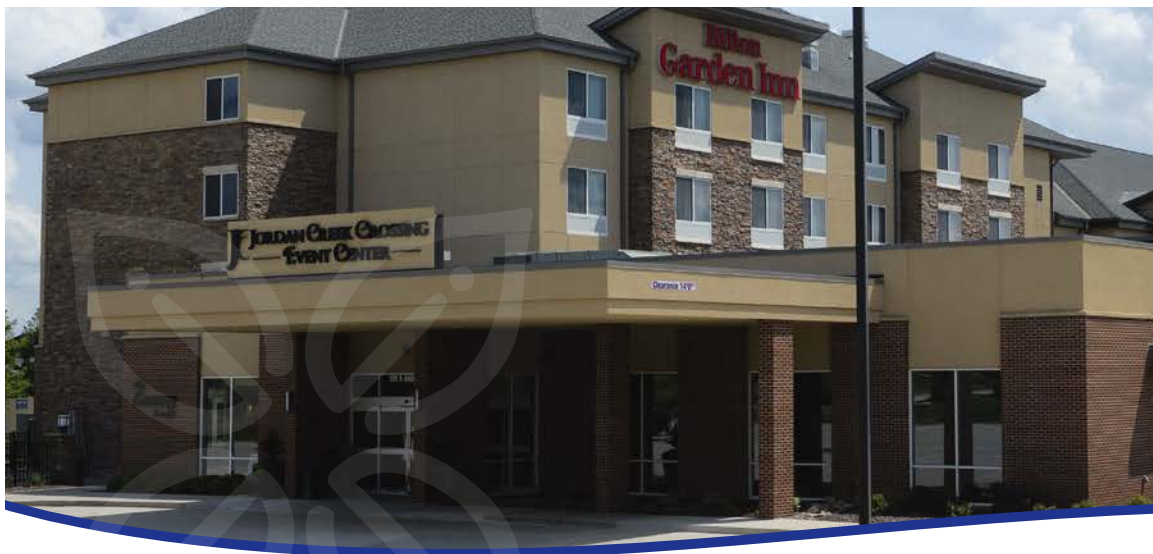
Wi-Fi, with local photography and artwork adorning the suite walls.

The beautiful open atrium lobby displays true Des Moines hospitality. And great on-site services such as an indoor pool and a modern fitness center enhance each of your attendees' stays. Each guest can enjoy a free made-to-order breakfast, or they can get lunch and dinner at the on-site Liberty's restaurant, which offers American food in a relaxed atmosphere.

Going off-site for the day? Come back for the Embassy Suites' Evening Reception, a daily event from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. with beverages, snacks and warm conversation.

Perhaps the best part of the hotel is its prime location. All the fun of Des Moines is within walking distance, so your attendees won't have to go far to find places to unwind.

The Embassy Suites, offers a beautiful riverside and cityscape view, along with a great view of the state Capitol. The location is close to trendy East Village restaurants and shops and the established Court Avenue. Just a block away is the Simon Estes Amphitheater.



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Board Room	365 sq ft	12ppl	Conference Style

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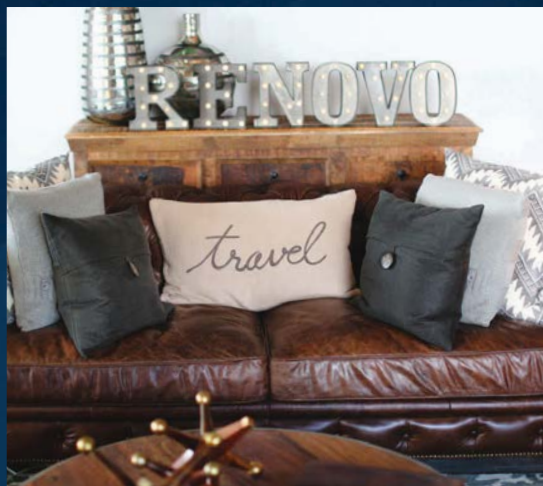
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Greater Des Moines
Botanical Garden

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Salisbury House & Gardens

The Salisbury House's architecture — consisting of Tudor stonework, Gothic arches and Carolean brickwork inspired by the King's House in Salisbury, England — makes this location unique among banquet halls.

Built in the 1920s, the Salisbury House is an out-of-the-box option that will make your business event or retreat a memorable one. The location has hosted a variety of corporate events — client appreciation gatherings, strategic planning sessions, formal dinners and corporate fundraisers, just to name a few.



The Common Room can give you a unique setting to have your next board meeting, with a 19-foot English oak trestle table surrounded by ornate needlepoint tapestries. The large, beautiful outdoor space can accommodate larger crowds.

To help your event go smoothly, the Salisbury House team assists with planning from beginning to end, helping you select the perfect space for your group or suggest a caterer to fit your wants and needs.

"Think outside the box when booking your next event," said Bonnie Bronson, director of sales and private events. "We're a unique venue and proud of our history and the specialized options we can offer. We'd love to have the opportunity to help you host your next corporate event at Salisbury House."

Prairie Meadows

Prairie Meadows has seen it all when it comes to events, from trade shows to conferences to weddings to concerts and galas.

It's that experience that has made Prairie Meadows, located in Altoona, just 12 miles from downtown Des Moines, one of the best event venues in the state. In 2017, it was named runner-up in the event spaces category in

the Des Moines Business Record's Best of Des Moines contest.

"Anything that can be done, we've done it," said Mark Dylo, sales and special events supervisor. "But we're always open for more and new challenges. Our staff has the experience, and new challenges excite them."

The Meadows Events and Conference Center, Prairie Meadow's event venue, is one of the largest such venues in Central Iowa. With 34,000 square feet of versatile meeting and banquet space, the center has the ability to serve up to 2,000 guests.

The event center is also undergoing a makeover. A multimillion-dollar renovation is set to be completed in early September, featuring a modern, sleek look. The decorations and walls are black and white with LED lighting creating the perfect ambiance.

"We're very proud of what people are going to walk through when the renovation is complete," Dylo said.

Prairie Meadows provides a comprehensive banquet menu, but that's just a foundation of the possibilities for food options.

During a trade show or multiday event, planners don't have to worry about providing entertainment. After all, Prairie Meadows is one of the biggest hubs of entertainment in Central Iowa. It has more than 85,000 square feet of 24/7 casino action. The horse-racing track provides more fun as well.

"We provide the entertainment, which



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saves on costs, and what groups like about us is all the options we have,” Dylo said. “When you come to the Meadows Events and Conference Center, there are many entertainment choices throughout the property.”

The hotel features 168 rooms, including double, queen, king and suite options, with an indoor saltwater pool, hot tub, fitness center, airport shuttle and restaurants.

Whatever your business event might be, the team at Prairie Meadows will work with you to make it unique and memorable.

“We explore,” Dylo said. “We have a lot of creative minds here and a lot of passion to make everyone’s events a success. There are a lot of moving parts with these events, and it takes a special team to pull them off. We have that here at Prairie Meadows.”

Panera Bread

Finding a healthy and fresh catering menu and high-quality service can be hard, but it doesn’t have to be with Panera Bread, which has locations scattered throughout the Des Moines metro.

Panera offers breakfast and lunch meal options and can serve in buffet style or in individual boxed meals. Each location can deliver and set up on site, and all of Panera’s packaging is recyclable.

Panera’s food is well known for its fresh and high-quality offerings. It was the first

to have entirely antibiotic-free chicken and was at the forefront of the push to remove all trans fat from all baked goods.

“Clients come to us for the high-quality, health-conscious menu offerings we can provide,” said Emily Deahr, marketing administrator. “Panera has been a leader in the industry in the clean food movement. These foods have made Panera the leading choice for clients looking for healthy, great-tasting choices for their functions.”

Panera’s cafe at 6740 University Ave. in West Des Moines is located in one of the most business-dense areas of the city off Interstates 80 and 35. The bakery-cafe provides catering services for business breakfasts and lunches for the many offices and medical facilities nearby, as well as for clients needing to pick up meals to take out of town.

The Johnston Panera location is in the rapidly expanding business corridor off Interstate 80 and has many business catering services as well.

Curate

Taste! To Go Catering and Events has been serving the Des Moines community for 15 years through its award-winning catering, bar and event planning services. Curate, its new event space that opened in December 2017, strives to serve that same purpose.

Located in the growing Historic East

Village district, Curate boasts more than 6,000 square feet of event space with a 500-square-foot mezzanine level overlooking the main floor. The space offers custom lighting options, access to a robust Wi-Fi network for meetings, and high-quality video projectors for gatherings large and small. Because of its clean art gallery look, the space allows for ultimate decorating flexibility.

Outside of the main event space, there is a beautifully landscaped patio for enjoying conversation and cocktails — a great way to end a day of business meetings or for some casual conversation.

Use a partner you can trust in Taste! To Go, which provides catering, bar and event-planning services for Curate.

“Curate was designed with both business and social events in mind,” said Andrea Williams, co-owner of Curate. “We understand that hosting your event represents you, your business and your reputation. That’s why we consider every detail critical to the success of your event with our detailed planning process.”

Through the end of the year, Curate is offering 20 percent off its standard rental fee for business functions.

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Des Moines Marriott Downtown

If you're looking for a place that can tailor to your meetings and events seamlessly, the Des Moines Marriott Downtown may be your perfect spot.

The hotel uses an app called Meetings Imagined, which addresses the unique meetings and event needs of each client. It focuses on why each meeting is being held and files each meeting or event into seven different purposes. Each of the purposes has creative ways to use room sets, foods, beverages, technology and even music to help improve the experience.

"Attendees are looking for more than the normal meeting," General Manager Patrick Miller said. "They are looking for an experience, and meeting planners are looking for new and innovative ways to make meetings more productive and fun. Meetings Imagined helps planners to be inspired with new approaches to learning."

It helps that the Marriot has so much versatility. The location has more than 30,000 square feet of functional and flexible space, with 16 meeting rooms in total, equipped with interconnectivity and technology.

And since the Marriot staff is

well-rounded in each area of an event — sales, event planning, event operations, etc. — businesses can rest assured they are getting experts in every field.

"Service is our foundation," Miller said. "Our staff is 'Iowa Nice' and has 1,892 combined years of total hospitality experience. A handful of the team members have been with the hotel since its opening year in 1981. Our staff welcomes our guests to our hotel as if they were welcoming them into their home."

For multiday meetings or events, the Des Moines Marriott Downtown also offers top-notch guest rooms, 413 in total, which have Keurig coffee makers, large flat-screen televisions with Pandora, Netflix, Hulu, high-speed internet access and more. Book your VIPs in the hotel's Presidential Suite or in one of the nine King Suites. This month, the hotel finished an \$18 million renovation project, which modernized all of the hotel's guest rooms, expanded the Concierge Lounge,

created a re-concepted lobby and upgraded the front entrance.

When it comes to booking your meetings, Miller recommends thinking outside the box. Meetings don't have to be boring and traditional. Using the latest technology and looking for interactive ways to engage your attendees can make your meetings and events better.

It's also important to start planning these events as soon as possible.

"Venues fill up quickly and a lot of businesses plan a year or more in advance, so it is never too early to start planning," Miller said.

Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden

The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden is not only the geodesic tropical conservatory everyone recognizes, but it also is seven acres of stunning gardens and fresh, modern meeting spaces for whatever company event you want to hold.

There are a wide variety of flexible setups for all kinds of business meetings and corporate retreats, whether it's a one-hour breakfast or a multiday meeting. The Botanical Garden can accommodate groups up to 220 people, and every rental includes complimentary admission to the Garden

"Attendees are looking for more than the normal meeting, they are looking for an experience."

Think Outside the Box When Booking Your Next Event.



The possibilities are endless at Salisbury House, a 42-room estate nestled among nine acres of beautiful gardens and woodlands. Let the unique architecture transport your guests to a time and place when hospitality was an art and elegance was a way of life.

Envision experiencing your corporate event in the rich setting of elegance the historic mansion provides. Imagine your next board meeting seated at a 19-foot-long English oak trestle table. Greet attendees with coffee or cocktails in the Great Hall

under sixteenth century wood beam rafters sourced from an English inn where Shakespeare once stood. Treat guests to a private tour of the house, and the priceless collections within, led by a Salisbury House tour guide.

Step out of the norm and book your next client appreciation event, strategic planning session, corporate dinner, fundraiser, holiday party or board meeting at Salisbury House.

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for event guests during public hours, white linens on all the tables, setup and tear-down of tables and chairs, a photography pass, free parking, free Wi-Fi, an audiovisual system and dedicated event staff on-site during the event.

For those who haven't been to the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden in a few years, they may be in for a surprise. It first opened in 1979 under the name of the Botanical Center. In 2013, it became a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and underwent an extensive renovation and expansion.

The Garden has many unique areas to explore. There sculptures littered throughout the many gardens and a variety of indoor conservatories, distinct flowers and many terraces to walk through. The corpse

flower, which was planted on July 25, 2017, is the first of its kind in Iowa and is well known throughout the state. The Trellis Cafe overlooks the Botanical Garden and serves lunch Tuesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., serving locally sourced, plant-based products that change monthly. Outdoor seating is available, weather permitting.

It's because of this beautiful landscape and services that the Garden was named the most beautiful wedding venue in the state of Iowa by PureWow. The Garden also has a whole host of regular events and educational programs — it's all part of the organization's mission to be an asset in the community.

"We have many people who return for the first time in several years and can't believe the improvements since their last visit," said Jen Sieck, events and venue manager. "And for those who visit us regularly, the Garden is constantly evolving with the seasons. It's truly a new experience every time."

Environment matters at the Garden. The natural light, stunning scenery and the ability to explore the property helps turn routine meetings into special events. It's located along the Principal Riverwalk, just north of downtown Des Moines, on Robert D. Ray Drive.

Because the space is conducive to moving around, the Garden offers Botanical Breaks, interactive and informative activities for meeting and retreat attendees that can be

completed in as few as 15 minutes or over a lunch break.

These can be live demonstrations or take-home activities like air plant sculptures, terrariums and succulent dish gardens that highlight the Garden's mission-driven venue while re-energizing a group.

"People are inspired and energized by the surroundings, and that can make a big difference when you're collaborating to solve a problem or trying to learn something new," Sieck said.

When planning an event, it's important to have regular, clear communication in advance, Sieck said. The Garden works directly with clients to ensure that all details are handled and that the event meets their expectations and needs.

"We help reassure and put clients at ease by letting them know we are prepared and ready to welcome the client and their guests," Sieck said.

The Garden has a dedicated team of event coordinators and liaisons. Every event has at least one dedicated team member who serves as the primary point of contact from start to finish.

It's the Garden's attention to detail that leads to the location's great reviews. For your business retreat or meeting, think a little outside the box. The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden is that unique spot that you've been looking for. If you can dream, the Garden can do it.



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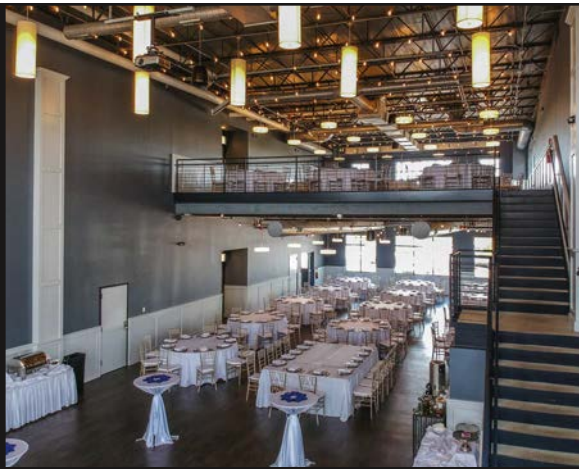
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“We hear, especially from our returning clients, that we offer an exceptional guest experience,” Sieck said. “From the time someone books an event through its completion, they’re receiving personalized, high-touch guest service tailored to their individual needs. We greet guests as soon as they enter the building and personally guide them back to their meeting space, and are ready to assist with anything throughout the event.

“It’s the little things like that that make people feel welcome and help reflect the special place they’re in.”

To find out more and get booking information, visit dsmbotanicalgarden.com/events.

Country Lane Lodge

Located on 40 acres of secluded and wooded land, the Country Lane Lodge is a scenic event venue just minutes away from the Des Moines metro. It was built in 2017 by Amish workers, known for their meticulous craftsmanship, and was made with events in mind.

Everywhere you look, the Country Lane Lodge gives off a rustic yet elegant charm. The high ceilings perfectly complement the three stunning chandeliers and floor-to-ceiling fireplace. The bar features a live-edge wood top.

“Getting off-site for occasional meetings can motivate and recharge your associates.”

The Country Lane Lodge’s versatile space can accommodate 400 guests for corporate receptions, holiday parties, wedding ceremonies and receptions, nonprofit fundraisers, and rehearsal dinners.

Rentals include the use of the Country Lane Lodge’s entire venue space including the outdoor patio and fire pit, a staffed bar, initial setup and tear-down and use of the PA and audiovisual systems.

“Getting off-site for occasional meetings can motivate and recharge your associates,” said owner Kendra Kasischke. “Our outdoor spaces allow you to enjoy nature, participate in team-building exercises outside or just enjoy spending time together around the fire pit.”

Remove stress when planning your event. Tell Country Lane Lodge what you want, and they will make it happen — the venue, the setup and the bar service. Let them host an event you and your guests will never forget.

Iowa State Center

The staff at the Scheman Building, part of the Iowa State Center on the campus of Iowa State University, is no stranger to hosting events.

Since 1974, the Scheman Building has been the ideal location for business meetings, corporate events, trade shows, weddings and conferences of all sizes. The facility offers 25 rooms, including the 450-seat Benton Auditorium, executive board space, an expansive exhibition space and more.

“The Scheman Building primarily works with business meetings and corporate events,” said Holly Boman, director of marketing at the Iowa State Center. “We offer almost everything in-house that would be needed to make an event run smoothly.”

Those amenities include catering, audiovisual service, room furnishing and full help with coordination of events. All aspects of an event are run through an on-site event planner, simplifying the process. The Scheman Building’s catering is done in-house, allowing for the accommodation of almost any request and the ability to plan around allergies and dietary restrictions.

The Scheman Building is perfect for those looking for a simple, smooth event

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planning process.

“When planning an event, I recommend looking for venues, like the Iowa State Center, that can do everything in-house,” Boman said. “Having to outsource things like catering can be a hassle. Booking with a venue that has everything in place will make the planning process much more successful.”

Hilton Garden Inn – Des Moines/Urbandale

Creating any kind of event is easy at the Hilton Garden Inn – Des Moines/Urbandale.

With nearly 11,000 square feet of adaptable space, from the ballroom to various meeting spaces, the Hilton Garden Inn – Des Moines/Urbandale has everything you’ll need to make your business event a success. Host a large company gathering in the Ballroom, which can accommodate up to 300 people. For more intimate gatherings, like a board meeting, take advantage of the Board Room, which can hold up to 12 people and features high-back chairs for comfortable seating.

There are also casual settings, like the Banquet Patio, an outdoor space that can fit up to 60 people.

The Hilton Garden Inn – Des Moines/Urbandale offers a special welcome briefcase for all meeting and events. The briefcase holds items for meeting planners to

use in case an unexpected need arises during your meeting or event.

While the in-house catering menu offers a mouthwatering menu of all kinds of creative options, the executive chef can step outside the box to create something right for you. There is also a portable wet bar option available.

Located just off Interstate 35/80, Hilton Garden Inn – Des Moines/Urbandale opened in 2004 and was one of the first developments in the area. It was built to serve the event, banquet and lodging needs of residents and businesses of the north side of Des Moines and the wider Des Moines community.

The hotel has easy access to all Des Moines has to offer. Downtown Des Moines is just 20 minutes away and the hotel is located near many corporate headquarters. Your attendees can enjoy free, on-site parking, and during a multi-day stay, they can stay in one of the 148 high-class, comfortable rooms at the hotel. The hotel offers amenities such as an indoor pool, a business center and a fitness room, among others.

The full-time, dedicated staff at the Hilton Garden Inn – Des Moines/Urbandale has more than 150 years of experience. They put the focus on helping you achieve your event goals and more.

“We have one focus: exceeding guest

expectations every time,” Director of Sales Rose Mary Schira said. “We turn ordinary meetings into extraordinary. One of the things that sets us apart is our unmatched level of service. At our Hilton Garden Inn – Des Moines/Urbandale, you will enjoy personalized attention through the planning process and support from our team of professionals from beginning to end.”

The Ron Pearson Center

Name an event, and it’s likely the Ron Pearson Center has the amenities and the facilities to host it.

The Ron Pearson Center, a 68,000-square foot, multiuse building, is one of the largest event centers in the Des Moines area, perfect for trade shows, corporate banquets or board meetings.

Formerly the Hy-Vee Conference Center, the Ron Pearson Center opened in 2016 after being renovated for more than a year while Hy-Vee’s new facility with a 21,500-square foot ballroom could be built in the same location, attached to Hy-Vee’s corporate office.

That large space lends itself to versatility. The space can host a variety of events, with 10 different rooms of various shapes and sizes. And, unlike some of the downtown event spaces, the Ron Pearson Center

offers free on-site parking for guests.

“The Ron Pearson Center hosts business meetings, corporate functions, fundraising galas, holiday parties, wedding ceremonies and receptions, retirement parties, and much more,” said Sales Manager Ashley Bergman. “Our on-site executive chef and kitchen staff provide guests with only the finest cuisine. Our staff serves in a courteous manner and ensures no detail is forgotten.”

Because of the center’s air walls, the rooms can be customized for each event. The space can accommodate up to 2,270 guests with theater seating and 1,400 guests in roundtable seating. For business meetings, the Ron Pearson Center can set up smaller rooms with different styles of seating, like classroom style, U-shape or in a square.

The Ron Pearson Center takes an active approach to planning events. It provides event planners with an event coordinator who works with clients on all event details and oversees the coordination of the event from beginning to end.

The staff takes care of all setup and tear-down of the various rooms in the facility, including the large banquet rooms – setting tables, chairs, china, silver and glassware. The Ron Pearson Center offers complimentary linens and napkin colors in a variety of options. They have a pro-

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fessional banquet staff, including wait staff, bartenders and banquet captain.

To make the event extra special, the Ron Pearson Center also has state-of-the-art audiovisual setup. It has four 12-by-21-foot screens fitted with 20,000-lumen projectors. The space is also fitted with ceiling clouds, which can change colors to enhance the mood. With an expert audiovisual staff, the Ron Pearson Center takes the work off your hands so you can enjoy the event worry-free.

With the capability to host events of all sizes, unlimited food possibilities and numerous audiovisual options, the Ron Pearson Center can personalize and execute the perfect event for your business.

Honey Creek Resort

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this summer, Honey Creek Resort strives to offer a unique experience for corporate retreats and business meetings.

Located on 850 acres of land in Honey Creek State Park in south-central Iowa on Rathbun Lake, Honey Creek was designed to leave a minimal environment footprint. It boasts one of the few Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-certified hotels in Iowa and an Audubon-certified golf course.

"We are not a box on the highway," said Anne Drannen, director of sales and marketing.

"We specialize in productive meetings where creativity really flows. Groups love being able to play and blow off steam in the same place they can get work accomplished. We're only 1 1/2 hours from Greater Des Moines, but it feels like another world!"

To make your experience easier, Honey Creek takes care of all of the meeting or retreat planning. It offers full-service food and beverage services, with state-of-the-art audio-visual setups. What really sets Honey Creek apart is its team-building activities, including the Amazing Lake Race, night hikes, the inflatable AquaPark and geo-caching, just to name a few.

In 2016, Delaware North, a global leader in hospitality and food service, took over management of the resort for the Department of Natural Resources, but Honey Creek is still owned by the state of Iowa. The resort's team brings more than 45 years of experience to events. The banquet staff is skilled and hands-on and has handled groups as small as two and as large as 2,500 people.

Honey Creek has 8,881 square feet of indoor meeting spaces and even more room outside. For multi-day events, there are well-appointed, on-site guest

accommodations, including 105 lodge rooms, 28 cottages and RV parking.

There are ample opportunities for recreation as well. Take a break on the 18-hole Preserve Golf Course, rent a boat out on the lake or cool off in the resort's indoor water park.

For your next corporate retreat or business meeting, think in terms of productivity and fun. Honey Creek is the perfect place for both.

"Your staff expects more," Drannen said. "More fun, more team building, more active learning. Nothing is more valuable than having your team bond together as they learn and grow. You can do that at Honey Creek."

"Your staff expects more. More fun, more team building, more active learning. Nothing is more valuable than having your team bond together as they learn and grow."



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Hilton Garden Inn West Des Moines

For a space a bit outside of downtown Des Moines, the Hilton Garden Inn in West Des Moines has the space and the quality to make your next business meeting or corporate retreat a quality one.

Opened in 2006, the Hilton Garden Inn is within walking distance of the Jordan Creek mall, which is home to several fantastic restaurants and stores. It offers easy access to Interstates 35 and 80 and is just a 20-minute drive from downtown Des Moines.

Hilton Garden Inn's new event center features a grand ballroom that boasts 5,600 square feet. There are also two 1,500-square-foot areas of dividable meeting rooms. All of the space makes the location a perfect place for business functions or any other type of event, like weddings, associations or banquets of up to 400 guests.

There are also two outdoor patio areas for a more casual environment. These spaces can hold up to 300 people. For more intimate meetings, use the Boardroom, which can accommodate up to 12 people.

The Hilton Garden Inn provides in-house catering and menu options to help you create a delicious and memorable event in your personal style.

Guests of your business functions can enjoy the hotel's 24-hour business center, complimentary shuttle within a five-mile radius, full lounge, fitness center, same-day valet service and indoor pool. The hotel has 176 guest rooms, which include a microwave, refrigerator and coffee maker. The Great American Grill, the on-site restaurant, serves breakfast and dinner daily, including nightly room service. The Pavilion Pantry is a 24/7 shop that offers healthy snacks, sweet treats, cold beverages and meals to cook up in the in-room microwave.

Every morning, guests can enjoy a fresh, cooked-to-order breakfast, including farm-fresh eggs and the hotel's signature waffles. At night, network at the Garden Grill or the Pavilion Lounge with some cocktails.

For small business meetings of five to 25 people, go to HGI.com/e-events to book your space. The Meetings Simplified online tool on the Hilton Garden Inn website also creates a simplified and streamlined meeting planning experience.

Sheraton West Des Moines

The Sheraton West Des Moines Hotel's recent \$10 million renovation may have changed the look and feel of the guestrooms, banquet space, lobby and dining outlets, but not the hotel's level of hospitality. The Sheraton still prides itself on the successful execution of each event, allowing the planner to concentrate on the one thing that matters most – the guests.

On Sept. 23, 2016, Marriott International made history through the acquisition of Starwood Hotels and Resorts, creating the world's largest hospitality company. Sheraton, a brand within the Starwood Portfolio, will retain its name and unique qualities after the integration this fall. That established level of hospitality will now be complemented by the systems, resources, benefits and reputation Marriott International brings to the world of hospitality.

With 23,000 square feet of flexible meeting space, the Sheraton West Des Moines Hotel welcomes everything from large-scale events of up to 1,000 guests to intimate networking events. The Sheraton has 20 versatile meeting rooms, including an elegant 12,000 square foot convention center, making it the largest conference hotel space in West Des Moines. With a cascading waterfall,

the Atrium Party Deck provides a unique setting for any luncheon or social gathering.

Every guest is essential at the Sheraton West Des Moines Hotel. Whether you're planning a wedding reception, annual conference or fundraising gala, the Sheraton West Des Moines Hotel has the facilities and resources to create a memorable experience.



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Kent Darr, senior staff writer
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Data to build on

Pleasant Hill can deliver the data to support more diverse housing

BY KENT DARR



Ben Champ
Pleasant Hill city manager

With a decade under his belt in Pleasant Hill city management, Ben Champ has heard a few things about the city, and now a study has confirmed the stories: The city can accommodate a more diverse housing market than what has developed over the years.

Anecdotally, city officials believe they have been missing out on market-rate multifamily projects and single-family housing that will fill a big middle that runs between the upper end of entry-level homes and more expensive estate residences.

Leland Consulting Group Inc. provided the data to confirm the suspicions.

The findings are important for a suburb that boasts the quickest drive to downtown Des Moines and sees the state's capital city as supplying the jobs, recreation and entertainment that are crucial to Pleasant Hill's population. At some point over the next 30 years, there will be a direct link from downtown to Pleasant Hill via the Southeast Connector, a project the city is preparing for in big ways.

"While there are employment centers in all of our metro cities, how downtown goes, goes the rest of the metro," Champ said. "Downtown is is our biggest feature right now ... our access to those jobs, access to the recreation, to the restaurants, while still being able to live this close in the neighborhood of your choice."

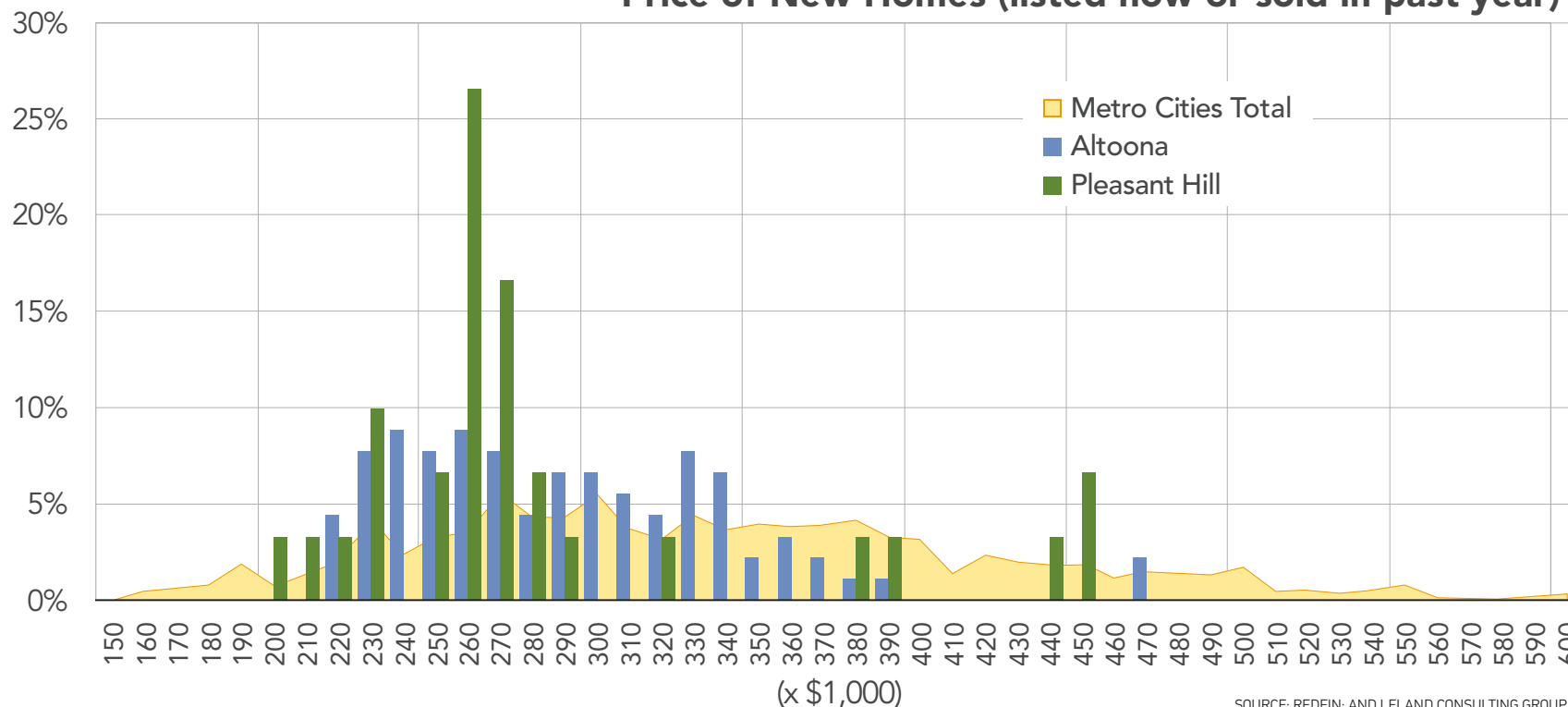
What the study found is that Pleasant Hill's multifamily vacancy rate stands at 3 percent, below the Greater Des Moines average, and it soars above regional average in the number of single-family homes in the \$260,000 to \$270,000 price range, and it is above average in the supply of homes in the \$440,000 to \$450,000 range.

In the multifamily market, the city has not issued a new building permit since 2016.

There is room to fill those gaps. The Leland Group found that city also is above area norms in the number of young families, before leaping again to baby boomers. And the median annual income is about \$80,000, compared with \$68,000 for Greater Des Moines.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36 >>

Price of New Homes (listed now or sold in past year)



SOURCE: REDFIN; AND LELAND CONSULTING GROUP

“The message that we want to share is that **it’s OK to take a little bit of risk** ... because we’re showing that there is a demand and that there would be buyers in those different price ranges.”

Madeline Sturms,
community development director,
Pleasant Hill

<< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

If you are a developer and get the notion that the city’s population is prepared to support more diverse housing, city officials want to have a chat.

The study also found that about 14,000 new housing units of all types should be added to a market that is within a six-mile radius of Pleasant Hill and that the city should expect to capture up to 2,000 of those units.

“That’s really helping us focus our conversation with city staff and the council on what can we be doing to get towards the higher absorption rate. So what economic development activities can we do? How can we be supportive of the development market to make sure that we’re pushing the limits towards that high absorption rate?” said Pleasant Hill Community Development Director Madeline Sturms.

Sturms also pointed out the importance of attracting renters to Pleasant Hill.

“We’re below that healthy vacancy rate [of 5 percent], which means that if there is a renter that’s looking to enter into our market, the chance of them finding an available unit is really small. ... There are not units available for them to be able to rent,” she said. “And that’s a big deal to us. Because if we can’t get new people entering into our market, you know, there’s data that proves that people will buy their first home within a close radius of where they rented their first apartment.”

Developers, naturally, will build what they believe the market will support. Hence, the large number of homes in the \$250,000 range.

“The message that we want to share is that it’s OK to take a little bit of risk, it’s OK to do something outside of that [range], because we’re showing that there is a demand and that there would be buyers in those different price ranges,” Sturms said.

The city is considering zoning changes, such as allowing for higher densities in some developments, that could encourage more developers to build in Pleasant Hill.

Pleasant Hill officials will deliver the data to any developer who wants to see it.

“We have a council that understands the importance of having housing for everybody to have a complete economic development picture to get the things that everybody wants in their community,” Champ said. ■

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Consider exit, succession and retention at the same time

I'm often asked what I enjoy most about the work that I do. It's all about helping business owners find clarity. I've been blessed over the years to work with clients who are great visionaries with tremendous resilience. From humble beginnings they have created enterprises that inspire the employees who work for them and clients who use their services. As a business owner, one of your great gifts is seeing things that have not been created yet and building a road map to ensure your vision becomes a reality.

Helping an owner build a road map for a successful exit can be a very fulfilling endeavor. Most owners I work with have the answers inside them, but have not taken the time to examine them fully. Helping them see those answers and potential paths for a successful exit is one of the most rewarding parts of my work. So why should you consider exit, succession and retention at the same time? If you look below the surface, they are all interconnected. If you are considering an exit from your business, then you need to examine and evaluate all possible ownership succession paths. Do you sell inside to a group of trusted key employees? Is there a supplier or friendly competitor who has expressed interest? If you have children in the

business, should you consider gifting shares outright or gifting shares with a retained interest? Should you consider creating a new entity such as an ESOP or family limited partnership to help facilitate your transition?

Your decision to exit, to determine what you really want, to define a timeline, and to build a sound team will all depend on an ownership succession path that makes the best sense for you. Exit and succession planning go hand in hand. So does retention planning, which means your ability to take a good, hard look at your current incentive and retention plan to ensure your key people stay through the ownership transition. As you know well, your key people are the core of what makes your business successful. Taking time to understand, evaluate and implement the best possible plan is a must in today's environment. Any potential buyer will see a strong long-term incentive and retention plan as a positive from a valuation standpoint. All too often owners will neglect this important facet of their business before bringing their business to market. Remember the saying "A seller sees value where a buyer sees risk." Take the time to address this important issue and think of it from a selfish standpoint. If I take time to

JOE LAMBERSON

Joe Lamberson is the founder of Via Consulting Group. He can be reached at vcgclarity@gmail.com or at 515-661-1141.



invest in my key people and build a sound plan for them, how will it strengthen my valuation and make it easier for me to exit on my terms?

Taking the first step toward creating a solid exit and ownership transition plan can seem overwhelming at times. The sooner you start the planning process, the better it will be for you, your employees and your family. Reach out to a trusted business owner friend who can be a sounding board. Find an expert who you know will have your best interest at heart. Be transparent with your employees, and inspire them to see this transition as a positive. Change can be a very positive thing in our lives when we come to terms with it and embrace it. Create the redundancy systems that need to be put in place for your company to survive beyond you. Embrace your journey, every step of the way. ■

Have an opinion?

We're always on the lookout for community leaders who want to voice their opinion on the issues affecting Central Iowa business. If there's an issue or challenge in your industry that you think our readers should hear about, consider submitting a column for publication. For more information, contact the editor at suzannebehnke@bpcdm.com.

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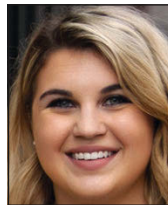
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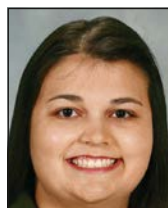
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ON THE MOVE: Promotions, changes, appointments



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Nicole Webb
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TUESDAY

Terrace Hill Garden Party

Host: Terrace Hill

About: Join Iowa's first gentleman, Kevin Reynolds, in the beautiful and historic Terrace Hill gardens for a summer evening of food, drinks, tours and fun. Proceeds from this event will benefit the Terrace Hill Partnership, a nonprofit organization that supports conservation and restoration projects for the Terrace Hill building and grounds.

When: 5-7 p.m.

Where: Terrace Hill

29- 9/1

WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY

11th annual Hunger Fight

Host: Meals From the Heartland

About: The 11th annual Meals from the Heartland Hunger Fight is fast approaching. It's a sight to behold when thousands of Central Iowans come together over a four-day period to package millions of meals to feed hungry people here in Iowa, throughout the U.S. and around the world.

When: Various times

Where: Iowa Events Center

30

THURSDAY

West Metro Golf Classic

Host: West Des Moines, Clive and Urbandale Chambers of Commerce

About: West Metro Golf Classic formerly known as the Wild West Golf Shootout joins the memberships of West Des Moines, Clive and Urbandale chambers in an action-packed day on the course of Beaver Creek Golf Club. Both morning and afternoon shotgun starts provide plenty of opportunity for over 350 golfers to enjoy the links and the camaraderie of fellow chamber members.

When: 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. starts

Where: Beaver Creek Golf Club

30

THURSDAY

The Journey With Connie Wimer

Host: Downtown Des Moines Chamber of Commerce

About: Chamber members and nonmembers alike are invited to be inspired by successful individuals in Greater Des Moines as they share their story and life's journey. On Aug. 30, Connie Wimer, founder and chairman of Business Publications Corp., will share her journey.

When: 5-6:30 p.m.

Where: Wakonda Club, 3915 Fleur Drive, Des Moines

More calendar info

For more details on these events and to learn about even more events, please go to businessrecord.com/calendar. You can also find a form to submit your events at this site.



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The wonders of how books are made, how they end up in the library and how they end up on a best-sellers list have long been a mystery for most. The industry has drastically changed in the past 10 years. There are more books, more media and more options for authors (and potential authors) than ever before. We've dug through conversations we've had over the last few years and come up with a list of our most frequently asked questions, hoping to provide some answers on the book publishing industry.

WHAT IS TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING?

Traditional book publishing is when a publisher offers an author a contract and, in turn, prints, publishes and sells the book through booksellers and retailers. The publisher essentially buys the right to publish the manuscript, including many components of licensing, and pays the author royalties from the sales.

HOW DOES AN AUTHOR GET PUBLISHED?

Most authors need to find an agent before they find a publisher. Agents typically specialize in a specific genre, and to find the right agent, one must do a little research. Once the genre and agent have been identified, one must submit the appropriate proposal and query letter. The agent then pitches book ideas to publishers.

WHAT IS SELF-PUBLISHING?

Self-publishing is the publication of any book, album or other media by an author without the involvement of an established publisher. Unlike traditional publishing, the author controls the entire process and assumes the risk, costs and work. But that means he or she enjoys all of the earnings. Self-publishing can be done quickly and the author remains in control of his or her work and the profits. There are many online self-publishing services available with a wide variety of costs and levels of service.

HYBRID PUBLISHING?

Hybrid publishing is a combination of both processes. A hybrid publisher is an experienced, professional entity providing personal guidance, advocacy and expertise in services like editing, design and layout. Hybrid publishing takes the quality service and production of traditional publishers and combines those with the ease and ownership of self-publishing. Hybrid publishers typically only charge for the services provided, allowing the author to retain the copyrights, licensing and royalties from the sale of the book.

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DAVE ELBERT

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- Phone: (515) 988-3787

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Insurance is key to NRA future

An interesting and potentially game-changing legal case is playing out in federal court in New York where Gov. Andrew Cuomo's insurance and banking regulators are arrayed against the National Rifle Association.

Earlier this year, New York's Department of Financial Services effectively stymied NRA activities in that state by extracting civil penalties totaling \$8.3 million from two insurance companies and threatening regulatory actions against other insurers or banks that might consider doing business with the NRA.

In response, the NRA filed a lawsuit last month claiming that unless a federal judge stops the New York regulators, the gun owners' group could be driven out of business in the state where it was first organized in 1871.

To understand the seriousness of the legal threat, it helps to know the role that insurance plays in the modern-day success of the NRA and how Iowa insurance legend Gary Kirke helped invent the group's signature insurance product 40 years ago.

Kirke, who sold his insurance brokerage in 1998, was one of the earliest brokers to sell insurance through trade associations, and the NRA was one of his early clients. In 1977, he drew up a plan to help the NRA boost membership by providing low-cost insurance.

The policy Kirke helped create covered the loss or theft of members' guns, provided a death benefit for members shot or killed while hunting or traveling on NRA business, and a million dollars of liability insurance for gun-related activity — all for just one dollar a year per member.

“The insurance policy Gary Kirke helped create was responsible for more than doubling the NRA's membership.”

With that policy the NRA was able to boost membership from fewer than 1 million to more than 2 million in just a few years.

The NRA called the insurance “Carry Guard,” and although the premium has risen, the low-cost insurance is still a key aspect of membership for the group's more than 5 million members.

Until the New York regulators stepped in earlier this year, the broker for Carry Guard was Lockton Cos., with Chubb Ltd. providing the coverage.

The NRA lawsuit contends that New York's governor has a long-standing animus toward it and that Cuomo ordered regulators to take aim at its Carry Guard policies last fall in the wake of the Las Vegas shooting that left 58 people dead and 851 others injured.

Cuomo and Maria Vullo, New York's superintendent of financial services, have said they acted when it became clear that repeated mass shootings at locations throughout the country were undermining modern standards for corporate social responsibility.

Because of the NRA's continued opposition to what many believe are reasonable standards for gun control, Cuomo and Vullo said, New York insurers and banks that continued to do business with the NRA were putting their reputations and their managements at legal risk.

Actions by New York regulators prompted Lockton to announce in February that it would quit doing business with the NRA; days later, a second insurance brokerage also severed ties with the NRA, according to the lawsuit.

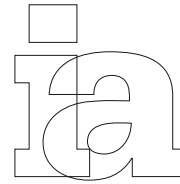
The NRA's legal action claims that Cuomo and Vullo want to “blacklist” the NRA and violate the group's free-speech rights.

Without liability coverage or banking services to handle income received from members and others, the lawsuit says, the NRA won't be able to maintain its offices, operate educational programs or hold rallies and other political events.

The lawsuit also says that Lockton agreed in May to pay a civil penalty of \$7 million to the state of New York and that Chubb accepted a \$1.3 million fine for its role in providing insurance to the NRA.

Unless a federal judge intervenes, the lawsuit says, the NRA's ability to raise money and do business will be affected and the group will be forced to severely curtail its activities. ■

Do you know an individual who has made a **CREATIVE IMPACT** in an Iowa community?



Magazine is now accepting nominations for its new

WELLS FARGO
 INSPIRING
IOWAN
 AWARD

Nominations due by **Sept. 14, 2018**
 Award presented at unveiling on **Oct. 2, 2018**

PRESENTED BY



Full criteria and nomination form at iapublication.com/wellsfargo-inspiringiowanaward

MARKETING

A few insights on content and how it's being shared

Most businesses have accepted or even embraced the idea that without creating content, your website can't hope to compete for search engine rankings, high visitor counts, or much engagement. There are just too many sites out there fighting for the same eyeballs that you want.

If you don't put something appealing and fresh in front of them, you're going to be out of luck.

BuzzSumo did a study of over 100 million posts in 2017 and came up with some very revealing data. I thought we'd take a look at a couple of the more interesting insights and diagnose what they might mean for how we should shape our content strategy.

Data point No. 1: Social sharing of content has been cut in half since 2015.

I believe many brands stopped sharing their content because they weren't getting much engagement. While everyone is hungry for likes, comments and shares, keep in mind that only a fraction of material is going to be unique enough to earn that level of activity.

We need to remember that over 85 percent of all social shares are done on the "dark web." That's not as sinister as it sounds. It just means that most of us share content person to person, in private messages or text messages, as opposed to on our public news feeds, etc. When

you're calculating the engagement level of your efforts, don't forget to create a metric or multiplier to factor in that reality.

If you aren't consistently sharing your content, you need to ask yourself why. I'm going to guess that one of three things might be happening:

- The content isn't worthy of the time it would take to share regularly.
- You haven't structured your department, workload or day to include time to do the work of sharing.
- You haven't leveraged the technology and tools available to make your sharing easier and more consistent.

You would be better off producing less content if that meant it was a higher quality and you were more motivated to share it. Content without distribution is a little like putting on a fancy dress to watch TV at home alone. No one is going to know, so why bother?

Data Point No. 2: There has been a growth in content sharing on LinkedIn, and many publishers are seeing steady increases in content engagement on the platform, albeit from a relatively small base.

Two facts of note in that sentence. People are sharing more content on LinkedIn, and they are getting more engagement — the very

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thing everyone is looking for when it comes to defining value for their efforts.

I think LinkedIn is probably one of the most underused social channels out there. Yes, odds are your "fan base" is smaller there. But odds are also good, if you live in the B-to-B space, that almost everyone you're connected to is a potential prospect, referral source or partner.

I see more engagement on LinkedIn posts than on any other channel. If your content is strong and unique to you, LinkedIn may be the perfect place for you to step up your game.

The other upside of using LinkedIn with more frequency is that you have far less competition there. While the study shows that there's a growth in sharing, it still pales in comparison with the other big channels.

Another important attribute of LinkedIn is that people tend to read longer posts and articles. It's less about the pictures, memes and other social media shortcuts. If you're producing excellent content, it may get more of your audience's attention and respect on LinkedIn.

We've only covered two of the insights from this research. Print off the full report and walk through it with your team, challenging your status quo as you do. ■



This week's QR code will take you to the complete BuzzSumo research report, 36 pages of insight and ideas.

Join the celebration on September 13, 2018

DMACC.edu/dbr/sba

6th Annual DMACC SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS

The annual DMACC Small Business Awards Ceremony recognizes the achievements of small business and its effect on the Central Iowa economy.

Enjoy an elegant dinner, cocktails, live music, networking and an evening you won't forget! A portion of the proceeds will support scholarships for the DMACC Entrepreneurship program.

Thursday, September 13, 2018
FFA Enrichment Center
DMACC Ankeny Campus

5:00pm-Cocktail Reception & Entertainment
6:00pm-Awards Program

Reserve your seat today!

2018 Winners

Below Farm & Auto Restoration Hubbard
CJM Financial, Inc. Ankeny
LaunchIT Urbandale
Pingora Outdoors Ankeny
PowerPollen Ankeny

EARLY DEADLINES DUE TO HOLIDAY

SEPTEMBER 7, 2018
ISSUE DEADLINE:
AUGUST 28, 3 PM

ORDINANCE NO. 15,690

An Ordinance entitled, "AN ORDINANCE to amend the Municipal Code of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, 2000, adopted by Ordinance No. 13,827, passed June 5, 2000, as heretofore amended, by amending Sections 42-28, 42-86, 42-91, 42-121, 42-183, 42-184, 42-188, 42-189, 42-191, 42-479, 42-480, 42-481, 42-483, 42-484 and 42-485, relating to drainage pipe installation in drainageways, and grading requirements, and public nuisance abatement and assessment administrative process", Be It Ordained by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa:

Section 1. That the Municipal Code of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, 2000, adopted by Ordinance No. 13,827, passed June 5, 2000, as heretofore amended, is hereby amended by amending Sections 42-28, 42-86, 42-91, 42-121, 42-183, 42-184, 42-188, 42-189, 42-191, 42-479, 42-480, 42-481, 42-483, 42-484 and 42-485, relating to drainage pipe installation in drainageways, and grading requirements and public nuisance abatement assessment administrative process, as follows:

Sec. 42-28. Definitions.

The definitions found in sections 42-451 and 42-477 shall apply to the provisions of this article, provided, however that the following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Public nuisance means whatever is injurious to health, or unreasonably offensive to the senses or is a menace to or hazard to the public health, welfare or safety, including without limitation, the runoff of pollutants from a construction site, or as provided in sections 42-347 and 42-348 of this chapter.

Sec. 42-86. Permits required.

(a) No person other than authorized city personnel or city contractors shall grade, strip, excavate, fill, stockpile or cause any non-agricultural earth change on any site, or install drainage pipe in public or private drainageways, without a grading permit issued by the city engineer for any of the following:

- (1) Platting of land pursuant to chapter 106, pertaining to subdivisions, of this Code.
- (2) Development of land for which a site plan is required, pursuant to article V of chapter 82 of this Code.
- (3) Installation of utility improvements in trenches that are greater than one foot in width or underground appurtenances with an excavated surface area greater than 400 square feet by a public or private utility company.
- (4) Excavation or the creation of any disturbed surface of 500 square feet or more of cumulative area within 100 feet of a lake, pond, river, stream, recognized drainageway or within the defined flood fringe of a river or stream.
- (5) Excavation, fill, or grading that modifies or alters the flow of stormwater and which effects adjacent or abutting property.
- (6) Any excavation or cause of earth change more than an average of two feet in depth across 2,500 square feet or more of area, or creation of a disturbed area more than 20,000 square feet in area, excluding basement excavations and backfill, utility service connections for one- or two-family residential dwellings, and utility trenches no greater than one foot in width. This exception does not apply to construction activity which is part of a larger common plan of development that requires a NPDES General Permit No. 2.
- (7) Any fill of dirt, stone, brick, concrete, soil or similar material covering a cumulative area larger than 2,500 square feet.
- (8) Stockpiling of any granular construction material in excess of 5,000 cubic yards on any site.
- (b) A grading permit will not be necessary for any of the activities identified in subsection (a) where, prior to formal application, the applicant receives from the city engineer a written statement that the planned work or final structures

or topographical changes, as presented by the applicant to the city engineer prior to formal application, will not result in or contribute to accelerated soil erosion or sedimentation, will not significantly interfere with any existing drainage course, and will comply with the requirements of the tree removal and mitigation ordinance codified in Article X of Chapter 42 of this Code. A grading permit will also not be required for work performed by city crews or for city construction projects under direct control of the city engineer.

(c) Persons exempt from permitting requirements are nonetheless subject to illicit discharge regulations found in article IX of this chapter. Sec. 42-91. Failure to complete work.

For failure to complete the grading work or failure to comply with all requirements, conditions, and terms of the grading permit and if such failure or uncompleted work constitutes a nuisance pursuant to sections 42-347 or 42-348 of this chapter, the city may give notice to the owner to abate such nuisance or cause such nuisance to be abated and, upon failure of the owner to do so, may perform the action necessary to abate such nuisance and assess the cost of abatement against the property, all in accordance with article VI of this chapter and I.C. § 364.12(3)(h). In addition, to the extent such permit has been issued pursuant to an application for site plan or subdivision approval, no further action shall be taken by the city pursuant to such site plan or subdivision application until such time as (i) the city has been reimbursed the costs incurred by it pursuant to the abatement, and (ii) the requirements, conditions and terms of the permit have been completed to the satisfaction of the city engineer and a certification of completion has been issued therefor. The enforcement provisions of this section are in addition to those set out in section 42-183 of this article.

Sec. 42-121. Grading operations.

The applicant or the owner of the property or any part thereof shall be responsible for the following:

- (1) The prevention of damage to any public utilities or services within the limits of grading and along any routes of travel of the equipment.
- (2) The prevention of damage of adjacent property.
- (3) Carrying out the proposed work so as not to grade on land so close to the property line as to endanger any adjoining public street, sidewalk, alley, or any other public or private property without supporting and protecting such property from settling, cracking, or other damage which might result.
- (4) Carrying out the proposed work in compliance with the approved plans, the requirements of this article, the NPDES General Permit No. 2 covering the property, the SWPPP covering the property, and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, and in compliance with section 106-136 of the municipal code.
- (5) The prompt removal of excessive soil, miscellaneous debris, or other materials applied, dumped, or otherwise deposited on public streets, highways, sidewalks, or other public thoroughfares during transit to and from the construction site so as to prevent a violation of sections 42-347 and 42-348 of this chapter.
- (6) Completing the grading operation and the erosion control measures within the approved time schedule.
- (7) Conducting any earth changes in such a manner as to effectively reduce accelerated soil erosion and resulting sedimentation.
- (8) Designing, implementing and maintaining acceptable soil erosion and sedimentation control measures, in conformance with the Soil Conservation Districts Law, I.C. § 161A.1 et seq., and the adopted rules of the Polk Soil Conservation District as they pertain to erosion control and which effectively reduce accelerated soil erosion.
- (9) Designing, constructing and completing all earth changes in such manner that the exposed area of any disturbed land shall remain exposed for the shortest possible period of time so as to prevent a violation of sections 42-347 and 42-348.
- (10) Updating, amending, implementing and maintaining the SWPPP, making required inspections and keeping inspection reports, and retaining all plans and reports, in accordance with the applicant's NPDES General Permit No. 2 requirements.
- (11) Carrying out the proposed work in compliance with any applicable tree removal and mitigation plan approved pursuant to the tree removal and mitigation ordinance codified in

Article X of Chapter 42 of this Code.

Sec. 42-183. Determination of pollutants as public nuisance and notice and abatement.

(a) Pollutants deposited or discharged into the MS4 or onto public or private property in violation of Sec. 42-121 are deemed to constitute a public nuisance.

(b) If the city engineer or the director determines that a nuisance exists, the city engineer or director shall give notice of the existence of the nuisance pursuant to article VI of this chapter and order abatement of such nuisance. The city may cause such pollutant to be removed, after providing the owner of the real property from which the pollutant originated with notice of the need to remove such pollutant and that if not removed the city will cause such removal and will assess the costs for such abatement. The notice shall provide at least a twenty-four (24) hour period for removal of the pollutant by the property owner prior to the city's removal and notice of the right to a hearing on the finding of a public nuisance pursuant to article VI of this chapter.

(c) Provided, however, that the city may cause such removal without prior notice in the event that such deposit or discharge presents an imminent risk of harm to person or property, and the director declares an emergency on account thereof, pursuant to article VI of this chapter.

Sec. 42-184. Right to assess costs of removal by city.

When the city removes pollutants pursuant to section 42-183, the city may assess the actual costs of removing such pollutants to the owner of the real estate found to be in violation of section 42-121 pursuant to article VI of this chapter, in addition to taking any other action provided for in this article.

Sec. 42-188. Notice of right to administrative hearing on public nuisance.

When the city makes a finding of a public nuisance and/or removes pollutants pursuant to section 42-183, a notice shall be given to the owner of the property subject to assessment of the right to an administrative hearing regarding the existence of and responsibility for the public nuisance, and regarding costs of the removal pursuant to sections 42-358 and 42-358.01.

Sec. 42-189. Administrative hearing for public nuisance and assessment of costs for removal.

Any person in receipt of a notice pursuant to Sec. 42-188 may have, upon written request pursuant to section 42-358.02 of this chapter, an administrative hearing held pursuant to section 42-358.02 of this chapter to determine if the public nuisance occurred, or to determine if the amount to be assessed is reasonable and if the assessment shall be placed against the subject property.

Sec. 42-191. Inspection and order to terminate construction activities.

(a) The city engineer may enter at all reasonable times in or upon any private or public property to inspect and investigate work being done under a permit issued pursuant to this article and to inspect and investigate conditions and practices which may be a violation of this article or rules of the soil conservation district. The city engineer shall have the authority to issue an order in writing to the owner of the property and/or any person engaged in grading or construction activities on the property, ordering such person or persons to cease and desist from construction activities due to failure to implement or maintain the SWPPP or any pollution control BMPs therein identified. The order shall be delivered by personal service unless the owner or person engaged in grading or construction activities cannot be found within the city, in which event notice shall be by ordinary mail addressed to the owners and/or applicant's last known address and by posting a copy of the notice in a conspicuous place at the construction site.

(b) Construction activities shall cease on the date stated in the city engineer's order and shall not recommence without the prior written approval of the city engineer.

(c) The person to whom the notice is directed may make a written request to the city engineer for a reconsideration and hearing on the cease and desist order and/or abatement order within ten (10) days from the issuance of the order, provided, however, that work on such property shall cease pending the outcome of the hearing.

(d) The request for hearing shall (1) contain the address of the person requesting the hearing and to which all further notices shall be mailed or served, and (2) shall state the basis for the appeal.

(e) The hearing shall be scheduled to be held as

soon as practicable and no later than fourteen (14) days after the request for hearing was filed with the city engineer. The person requesting the hearing shall be notified in writing or by telephone of the date and place of such hearing at least three (3) days in advance thereof. At such hearing the city engineer and the person requesting the hearing may be represented by counsel, examine witnesses, and present evidence as necessary.

(f) If the city engineer determines that the violation has created a public nuisance, the city engineer may order abatement of the nuisance by whatever means the city engineer may determine appropriate.

(g) The determination of the city engineer shall be a final administrative decision.

(h) In the event that the abatement as ordered by the city engineer is not performed, the city engineer may cause the abatement of the nuisance and assess the costs of abatement to the property for which the grading permit was issued in compliance with article VI of this chapter.

Sec. 42-479. City approval required for construction of private drainage pipes or related facilities or for connection to city drainage facilities.

Persons other than authorized city personnel or city contractors are prohibited from working on or making alterations or additions to city drainage facilities, including the making of connections or attachments to any city storm sewer, or to any city maintained constructed channel, without prior approval and issuance of permit by the city engineer. All proposed new installations of or improvements to driveway pipes or aprons, private drainage pipes or private drainageways or related facilities, running immediately to, from, or in city maintained street rights-of-way, city easement area or city stormwater drainage area, must be reviewed by the city engineer and, if approved, shall be installed in accordance with city standards and specifications. All permitted improvements shall be subject to inspection by the city engineer prior to final approval.

Sec. 42-480. Piping of private drainageways.

The owner of any property, across or through which a private drainageway passes, shall be prohibited from installing a drainage pipe to enclose such drainageway in whole or in part without prior approval and issuance of permit by the city engineer. All proposed new drainage pipes to be installed on private property shall be installed in accordance with city standards and specifications. All permitted improvements shall be subject to inspection by the city engineer prior to final approval.

Sec. 42-481. Removal of substandard drainage pipes and related facilities.

When a private drainage pipe or related facilities have been placed upon private property or in a city maintained street right-of-way, in a city maintained easement area, or in a city stormwater drainage area, and when it is determined by the city engineer that such drainage pipes or related facilities do not meet city standards and specifications, thereby endangering public safety or public or private property, or causing frequent maintenance problems, the city engineer may issue an order to the owner of such private property or to the person who installed such substandard drainage pipe or related facilities, directing that such substandard facilities be removed and that the drainage pipes and/or related facilities be brought up to minimum city standards and specifications. Whether the existing substandard drainage pipes and/or related facilities were constructed prior to or after the adoption of this subdivision, the city may require the person who constructed or who owns, operates or maintains such substandard drainage pipe or related facility to remove and replace the facility to minimum city standards and specifications at the sole expense and responsibility of such person.

Sec. 42-483. Enforcement.

The director and the city engineer shall be authorized to enforce this subdivision as hereinafter provided.

Sec. 42-484. Enumeration of stormwater drainage nuisances.

The following are nuisances that may be prosecuted as provided in article VI of this chapter: (1) The installation or maintenance of a substandard drainage pipe in a private drainageway, in a city street right-of-way, in a city maintained easement area, or in a city stormwater drainage area, resulting in the flooding of properties adjacent to said drainageway either upstream or downstream from said pipe or in said watershed, or resulting in the obstruction or surcharge-

PUBLIC NOTICES

WOOD ROOFING COMAPNY INC

WATER PLANT ROOF REPAIR \$1,004.73
Expenses per fund: General \$60,914.93; Capital Projects Water \$13,965.00; Road Use \$13,621.34; Sewer \$32,953.34; Water \$64,171.29
July 2018 receipts per fund: General \$304,903.37; Road Use \$32,596.72; TIF \$304.91; Capital Water Proj \$2,961,568.80; Water \$113,251.45; Sewer \$114,354.35; Total \$3,526,979.60
Published in the Business Record on August 24, 2018

MEETING MINUTES The City of Polk City City Council Meeting

6:00 p.m., Monday, August 13, 2018
City Hall

Polk City, City Council held a meeting at 6:00 p.m., on August 13, 2018. The Agenda was posted at the City Hall office as required by law. These tentative minutes reflect all action taken at the meeting.

Mayor and City Council Members Present:

Jason Morse | Mayor
Robert Sarchet | Pro Tem
Mandy Vogel | City Council Member
Ron Anderson | City Council Member
Jeff Walters | City Council Member

Mayor and City Council Members Absent:

Dave Dvorak | City Council Member
Staff Members Present:

Lindsey Williams | Assistant City Administrator/
Finance Director
Jenny Gibbons | City Clerk
Amy Beattie | City Attorney
Kathleen Connor | Engineering Representative
Trace Kendig | Police Chief
Dan Gubbins | Fire Chief
Mike Schulte | Public Works Director
Jamie Noack | Library Director

1. Call to Order | Mayor Morse called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call | Vogel, Sarchet, Anderson, Walters | In attendance
Dvorak | Absent

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: A motion was made by Anderson and seconded by Sarchet to approve the meeting agenda.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Public Comments | Dr. Bonne Doron, 1260 W. Broadway Street, addressed Council regarding the ban of fireworks

5. Consent Agenda Items

MOTION: A motion was made by Sarchet and seconded by Anderson to approve the consent agenda items

1. Consider motion to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes for July 23, 2018

2. Consider motion to receive and file the Parks Commission Meeting Minutes for August 6, 2018

3. Consider motion to approve the August 13, 2018 Claims

4. Consider motion to approve Resolution 2018-88 approving the MAC agreement for funding and implementation of Homeland Security Services from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2023

5. Consider motion to accept PT Paramedic/Firefighter Garrett Fagen effective August 1, 2018

6. Consider motion to move Ross Frank from Lieutenant to PT EMT/Firefighter effective August 1, 2018

7. Consider motion to approve the Temporary Site Plan request for a block party in Wolf Creek Townhomes on Saturday, September 8, 2018 from 4pm to 10pm with a street closure on 900 block of West Trace

8. Consider motion to approve North Polk United Soccer to use Sports Complex for practices and games during dates of August 19, 2018 to November 4, 2018

9. Consider motion to approve North Polk 12 U Softball to use Sports Complex for practices during dates of August 16, 2018 to November 1, 2018

10. Consider motion approve Temporary Site Plan approving Polk City Chamber & Economic Development to use the Town Square for the 26th Annual Big Creek Bike Ride from 7am to 2pm on Saturday, September 15, 2018

11. Consider motion to receive and file the July 2018 Water Report

12. Consider motion to receive and file the June 4, 2018 Library Board Meeting Minutes

13. Consider motion to receive and file the June and July 2018 Library Stat Reports

14. Consider motion to receive and file the Equipment and Library furnishings policy

15. Consider motion to receive and file the

Library weather-emergency policy

16. Consider motion to receive and file the August 2018 Library Director Report

17. Consider motion to approve the Temporary Site Plan request for a block party Lost Lake Dr. neighborhood on September 28, 2018 from 1p-10pm with a street closure on Lost Lake Drive between Falcon Dr. and Meadowlark Dr.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. New Business

1. MOTION: A motion was made by Sarchet and seconded by Vogel to approve hiring James Mitchell II as full-time Fire Chief at \$80,000 annually effective August 27, 2018

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. MOTION: A motion was made by Walters and seconded by Anderson to approve Resolution 2018-91 authorizing Pay App No. 4 – sub final in the amount of zero dollars and accepting the 2016 Street Repair Project Improvements

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. MOTION: A motion was made by Anderson and seconded by Sarchet to approve Resolution 2018-89 authorizing Pay App No. 4 in the amount of \$78,613.88 for Davis Street Reconstruction Project

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. MOTION: A motion was made by Walters and seconded by Vogel to approve Resolution 2018-90 approving E Vista Lake Pay App No. 4 in the amount of \$161.20

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. Reports & Particulars | Mayor, Council, City Administrator, Staff, Boards, and/or Commissions

▪ Mayor Morse thanked the Iowa Pork Producers for inviting him to be a celebrity chef at the fair for a few hours. Mayor briefly discussed Dr. Bonne Doron comments to Council and indicated that he felt the changes Council made to the Fireworks Ordinance this year had been a dramatic improvement from the year prior.

▪ Council Member Vogel asked for an updated on the spotlight installation. Kathleen Connor, Engineering Representative said things are moving forward, should be on the next Council agenda for starting the bid process. Mayor interjected that the construction should be early 2019. Vogel also inquired about how things are going with the Financial Consultants that were hired, Lindsey responded that she's met with

them three times so far and has another training scheduled this week. Vogel thanked the Police Department, staff and community businesses and volunteers for making the National Night Out a great event.

▪ Council Member Sarchet welcomed new Fire Chief Mitchell to Polk City and recognized Chief Dan Gubbins for all of his time and dedication to the department. Sarchet said he was very proud of how the transition has been enacted and that the character Chief Gubbins has displayed through everything is emblematic of how he has led the department during his tenure.

▪ Council Member Anderson said Polk City has been fortunate to have good people like Jason Morse and Dan Gubbins to lead the Fire Department thus far and with the demanding nature of the position full-time leadership is needed.

▪ Council Member Walters congratulated both Chief Gubbins and Chief Mitchell

▪ Police Chief Kendig thanked Lieutenant Siepker for organizing and leading the National Night Out Event. He said he did a phenomenal job and estimated approximately 300 people were in attendance. Kendig thanked the community for pitching in and volunteering, the NNO is all about community engagement. Kendig congratulated Senior Police Officer, Ron Lamfers for being selected as Traffic Safety Officer of the Year.

▪ Public Works Director Schulte discussed the need to police the landscaping area to eliminate dumping by non-residents.

▪ Assistant City Administrator/Finance Director Williams welcomed Jim and said she had the opportunity to spend a morning with him. She told him she is looking forward to working with him and hearing more of his ideas.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: A motion was made by Anderson and seconded by Sarchet to adjourn at 6:22 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Next Meeting Date – Monday, August 27, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

Jason Morse, Mayor

Attest

Jenny Gibbons, City Clerk

Published in the Business Record on August 24, 2018

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