# PAGE

# Classified/Legals

# Cedar County Ord. No. 67

CEDAR COUNTY ORDINANCE NO. 67 AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT A MORATORIUM ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION OF CARBON DIOXIDE (CO2) PIPELINES IN CEDAR COUNTY, IOWA

WHEREAS, a county may exercise any power and perform any function it deems appropriate to protect and preserve the rights, privileges, and property of the county and its residents, and to preserve and improve the peace, safety, health, welfare, comfort and convenience of its residents: and such powers are vested in the Cedar County Board of Supervisors under Iowa Code Sections 331.301 (1,2); and WHEREAS, there are presently no proj-

ects for the development or construction of CO2 pipelines proposed or existing within the bounds of Cedar County's borders; and WHEREAS, the Pipeline and Hazardous

Safety Administration within the Unites States Department of Transportation proposed new comprehensive regulations governing the requirements for carbon dioxide (CO2) and hazardous liquid pipelines on January 15, 2025 in a Notice of Rulemaking, RIN 2137-AF60, and such proposed rules and regulations are not yet final for application to CO2 pipeline development and construction which in the future might involve lands of Cedar County and its residents; and

WHEREAS, at least two states, California and Illinois1, have passed leg-islation preventing the transportation of liquid CO2 through pipelines unless and until the proposed rules and regulations of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration are concluded and adopted as its final rules emanating from RIP 2137-AF60, applicable thereafter throughout the United States to proposed construction and development of such

pipelines; and WHEREAS, the Iowa Legislature has passed no legislation to protect the health, safety, and welfare of lowa citizens by temporarily preventing the development and construction of carbon dioxide (CO2) pipelines pending completion of the rulemaking proceedings presently ongoing before the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration in RIN 2137-AF60:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY ENACTED BY THE CEDAR COUNTY IOWA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: SECTION 1:

No person, as defined in Iowa Code Section 4.1(20), shall commence development and construction, in Cedar County, Iowa, of any carbon dioxide (CO2) pipeline until the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Administration has adopted as final its pipeline safety rules and regulations consistent with its

California Public Resource Code Section 71465 (effective January 1, 2023); Illinois Safety and Aid for the Environment in Carbon Capture and Sequestration Act. Senate Bill 1289. Section 50 (amending §20 (g), (effective

July 18, 2024). proposed rulemaking designated Regulatory Information Number 2137-AF60 of January 10, 2025; SECTION 2:

This ordinance shall not be construed to conflict or interfere with the statutes and rules governing the Iowa Utilities Commission under Iowa Code Chapter 479B or otherwise, nor to be preempted by any other statute unless such other statute expressly cites this Ordinance by name and number. SECTION 3:

Savings Clause: If any section, provision, or part of this ordinance shall be adjudged invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of the ordinance as a whole or any section provision, or part thereof not adjudged invalid or unconstitutional. SECTION 4.

Effective Date: This ordinance shall be effective after its final passage, approval, and publication thereof, as provided by law

Aves: All Moved by Barnhart seconded by Kaufmann to approve a work request for Treasurer Delanev to replace license plates on wall in hallway that were removed due to new ceiling.

Ayes: All Moved by Kaufmann seconded by Barnhart to approve handwritten warrant #441883 to Outdoorsiness in amount of \$6,240.00 for electrical boxes due to a lost check and reissue via ACH. Ayes: All

Board reported on Outreach/Committee Meetings they attended. Moved by Barnhart seconded by Gaul to

approve 2025 Resolution for Destruction of Noxious Weeds. Aves: All

At 9:00 a.m. Board held their monthly department head meeting. Discussion held.

At 9:30 a.m. a Public Hearing on Ordinance #67. This second hearing of three. Those in attendance were EMS Director Dinsch, Treasurer Delaney, Recorder Bahnsen, Auditor Welch, Pam Fluharty, Home Health Manager Snook, Velma Hubner, Lisa Dircks and Jerry Dircks asked who enforc Goldsmith. es Ordinances for County. Consensus of Board said our County Attorney. Goldsmith expressed a need for an Ordinance in tandem with moratorium Moved by Bixler seconded by Barnhart to end public hearing at 10:00 a.m. until April 8, 2025. Ayes: All

Moved by Gaul seconded by Barnhart to adjourn at 10:02 a.m., to April 8, 2025. Ayes: All

Jon Bell, Chairperson Nicki Welch, Auditor **WBT 16** 

### Cedar county claims 3/27/2025

General Basic Fund 34.00-Advanced Business Systems-

copies 3175.04-Aladtec, Inc-time clock subs 216.90-Amazon Capital Services-labels 166.00-Melissa Bahnsen-mil

53 88-Baker Paper-cleaner 161.70-Caitlin Boyle-mil

40.00-Cedar County Clerk of Court-grand

45.00-Cedar County Extension-Training 700.00-Cedar County Historical-well plug 45.98-Cedar County Repair-oil 3759.00-Cedar County Treasurer-taxes 164.00-Central Iowa Distributing-cleaning 595.00-Control Installations of Iowa-

Install 420.00-Control Solutions, Inc-Cloud stor-

age 200.50-Crist Electrical Serv-repair

710.00-Mike Dauber-mthly svc 16.50-Grell Custom Metal Works Zane-

angle iron

22.48-H & H Auto-oil chq

481.13-Hermsen Automotive LLC-valve 48.70-Robin Housley-mil

48.70-Shelly Howsare-mil 100.00-lowa Dept of Inspection and-

inspection

105.00-Iowa Law Enforcement Academy-Training

2649.50-lowa Prison Industries-Signs 550.00-lowa State University-PH Confrence

50.90-Bruce Jeffries-mil 35.46-Thiesen's-blade

671.42-Johnson Co. Medical Examiner-

880.00-Klay Johnson-repair 3522.66-Kaseya US LLC-Endpoint 60.00-Mike Lodge-mtgs 106.00-McCloud Services-spray 125.36-ODP Business Solutions, LLCpaper 6.31-Office Express-paper clips 60.00-Jeff Owen-mtgs 60.00-Richard Paulsen-mtgs 1000.00-Lucas Pearce-Home Base Iowa 80.00-Kent Pedersen-mtg 399.05-Reserve Account-postage 400.00-Joshua Pruitt, MD-case fee

25.20-Quest 8 Blue Lagoon Car Washwash 165.25-Spahn & Rose Lumber Co-bolt

195.00-Spengler Auto Repair Inc-battery 54.20-Michael Stigers-mil 199.10-Julie Tischuk-mil 7966.30-Total Maintenai Inc-Boiler 94.80-Truck Country of Iowa Inc-Parts 1969.52-Wendling Quarries Inc-Rock Transfer Station Fund

1190.29-Altorfer Inc-oil leak 521.30-Cintas Corporation-towels 2379.28-Clinton County Waste Agency-

2nd qtr 21.70-MHC Kenworth Quad Cities-key 169.82-Genuine Parts Company Inc NAPA-hose/socket

30.00-Safety-Kleen Systems, Inc.-waste 162.40-Windstream Auto-Pay-phone

Cedar Co Health Fund 16505.07-CEDAR COUI TREASURER ACH-self funded med COUNTY 9050.92-Delta Dental Plan of Iowa-ins 144246.80-Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue-ins

PH/NS Memorial Trust Fund 7.59-Amazon Capital Services-pedicure Early Childhood Ia-Cedar/Jones 3915.98-Jones County Auditor-salary

Jnt Disaster Serv.Fund 166.27-AT&T Mobility-phone 39.82-US Cellular-wifi

F911

200.00-Aureon Alliance Connect, LLCdata

227.25-Jones County 911 Service-maint 35.04-CenturyLink Lumen-data

Assessor 12.60-Quest 8 Blue Lagoon Car Washwash

4357.00-Schneider Geospatial, LLC-Hosting

410.75-VISA/Bankers Bank-Hotel/Meal 272004.78--Grand Total End of Report WBT 16

# West Branch city council

(The following is a synopsis of the min-utes of the West Branch City Council meeting. A video recording is available for inspection at westbranchiowa.org. The minutes are not approved until the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.)

West Branch, Iowa: City Council: April , 2025

Council Chambers; Special Meeting;

6:30 p.m. Mayor Roger Laughlin called the West Branch City Council special meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Roll call: Council members present; Tom Dean, Colton Miller, Mike Horihan, Tom Dean, Jerry Sexton. Jodee Stoolman arrived at 6:32 p.m. City Staff present: City Administrator Adam Kofoed, City Clerk Leslie Brick and Finance Officer Heidi Van Auken. APPROVE THE AGENdA

Motion by Miller, second by Dean to approve the agenda. Motion carried on

a voice vote. PRESENTATIONS / communications /

open forum - None PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Public Hearing - Setting the Maximum Property Tax Levy for Fiscal Year 2026 Laughlin opened the public hearing at 6:31 p.m. Jim Hoffman, 110 Bickford Drive was present and asked the Council to explain the proposed levy and asked how the city what their plans were for spending the FY26 tax dollars. Kofoed explained that the proposed levy will go down this year from \$13.19 to \$12.69 and shared where tax dollars go. Kofoed said that approximately sixty-two percent of taxes go to the general fund which includes; public safety, parks & recreation, library and administration. The remaining goes to employee benefits, FICA and IPERS, liability insurance, emergency management, debts and capital projects. There were no other questions. Laughlin closed the public hearing at 6:42 p.m. COMments from mayor and council members - No comments adiournment

Motion to adjourn by Miller, second by Sexton. Motion carried on a voice vote City Council special meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

> Roger Laughlin, Mayor ATTEST:

> > CORN

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AMAZON.COM-BLDG, PROG SUPPLIES-LIBRARY-282.38 BRICK, LESLIE -MIL REIMB COURT HOUSE-23.80 -MILEAGE CEDAR COUNTY COOP-FUEL-PW-908.26 GOERDT INSPECTION -BLDG INSPECTIONS-1,512.00 HARLESS, VERONICA-KIDS CAMP, SR. FITNESS-875.00 HAWKINS-CHEMICALS-3,333.66 HI-LINE-SHOP SUPPLIES-PW-199.65 IOWA ONE CALL-UTILITY LOCATION SERVICE-24.30 LAUGHLIN, ERIN-IPRA MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT-71.12 MUNICIPAL SUPPLY-WATER METERS FOR REPLACEMENT-9,828.00 OASIS ELECTRIC-LIGHT FIXTURE REPAIR-LIB-164.22 STERNBERG LIGHTING-STREET LIGHT POLE-2,295.00 WEST BRANCH TIMES SUBSCRIPTION EXP 5-30-26 -37.00 TOTAL--19,554.39 PAYROLL-WAGES, TAXES, EMPLOYEE BENEFITS - 3/28/2025 64.584.90 PAID BETWEEN MEETINGS SISCO-HEALTH & FLEX CLAIMS 3/31/2025-198.49 ALATORE-WINDOW CLEANING CITY-29.33 IOWA CITY BRAKE-OSH KOSH REPAIR-17,165.27 JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL-WATER PLANT SUPPLIES-6.51 LL PELLING-POTHOLE MATERIAL-2,240.00 STATE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS-CHEMICALS-257.89 VERIZON WIRELESS-VERIZON WIRELESS-454.71 METLIFE-INSURANCE PREMIUM-2,029.33 SISCO-INSURANCE PREMIUM -15,316.49 SISCO-HEALTH CLAIMS 3/24/2025-4,429.40 ACTION SEWER & SEPTIC-EMERGENCY LINE CLEANING-380.00 AMAZON.COM-BOOKS-LIBRARY-206 62 ARNOLD MOTOR SUPPLY-EQUIP SUPPLIES-PW-81.88 BAKER & TAYLOR-BOOKS-146.63 DOG WASTE DEPOT-DOG WASTE BAGS-59.99 HI-LINE-EQUIP SUPPLIES-PW-230.48 MACQUEEN EQUIPMENT-AIR PACKS-FIRE-90,637.76 MAINSTAY SYSTEMS OF IOWA-OFFICE SOFTWARE-P&R-249.00 MEDIACOM-CABLE SERVICE-41.90 MIDWEST UNDERGROUND CONTRACTOR-EASTSIDE WATER MAINS PH2-79,311.39

STATE HYGIENIC LAB-LAB ANALYSIS-574.00 STERICYCLE-SHREDDING SERVICES-91.39 UNIVERSITY OF IOWA HEALTH-DRUG TESTS-PW-148.00 US BANK CORPORATE CARD-CREDIT CARD PURCHASES-894.43 SISCO-HEALTH CLAIMS 3/17/2025-563.28

TOTAL-215.744.17 GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES 299,883.46 FUND TOTALS GENERAL FUND-122,368.22 001 031 LIBRARY-5.556.74 ROAD USE TAX-12,206.26 TRUST AND AGENCY-31,753.66 112 330 EASTSIDE WATER MAIN PH2-79,311.39 600 WATER FUND-26 976 18 SEWER FUND-20,974.86 STORM WATER UTILITY-736.15 740 GRAND FUND TOTAL--299,883.46 REVENUE-FISCAL YEAR 2025 FEBBUARY FUND 001 GENERAL FUND-49,493.74 022 CIVIC CENTER-335.00 031 LIBRARY-99.25 036 TORT LIABILITY-205.40 110 ROAD USE TAX-25.315.05 112 TRUST & AGENGY-4,207.11 119 EMERGENCY TAX FUND-34.36 121 LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX-20,405.29 125 TIF-1,641.04 226 DEBT SERVICE-1,204.48 300 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RESERVE-273.89 500 CEMETERY PERPETUAL FUND-430.46 600 WATER FUND-61,382.53 610 SEWER FUND-76,573.61 740 STORM WATER UTILITY-6,465.00 TOTAL--248,066.21 Sexton questioned the invoice to Iowa City Brake for repairs to the Oshkosh. Sexton said he thinks the City paid more in repairs than the vehicle is worth. Goodale responded and said the Oshkosh is the only city vehicle that has "wing" for plowing which is needed in parts of the town. He also stated that the vehicle is not scheduled to replaced anytime soon.

Motion by Sexton, second by Horihan to approve the Consent agenda. AYES: Sexton, Horihan, Stoolman, Dean, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried. PRESENTATIONS / communications /

open forum - None PUBLIC HEARING / NON-CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution 2025-35 – Approving the Final Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2026 and Ordering a Notice of Public Hearing for April 21, 2025. / Move to action.

The Council had no comments Motion by Sexton, second by Horihan to approve Resolution 2025-35. AYES Sexton, Horihan, Miller, Dean, Stoolman NAYS: None. Motion carried. Resolution 2025-36 - Approve a Site Plan from Manatt's for a temporary concrete plant at 1001 S. Downey Street. West Branch. / Move to action. Tyler Duster, Manatt's Inc. explained their request to use the former concrete plant site on South Downey Street as other contractors have in the past for the

Duster if Manatt's could control the dust from the plant so as to not affect neigh-boring businesses. Duster said maintaining the dust will not be a problem. Motion by Sexton, second by Horihan to approve Resolution 2025-36. AYES: Sexton, Horihan, Dean, Stoolman, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried. Resolution 2025-37 - Approving Pay Estimate Number 8 (Final) in the amount of \$38,589.22 to Midwest Underground Contractors Inc. for the Phase 2 -Eastside Water Main Replacement Project / Move to action Schechinger reminded the Council that this project has a two-year maintenance bond and that any issues will be addressed by the contractor as needed. Motion by Miller second by Dean to approve Resolution 2025-37. AYES Miller, Dean, Sexton, Stoolman, Horihan NAYS: None. Motion carried. Resolution 2025-38 – Setting the date for a public hearing on proposal to enter into a General Obligation Corporate Purpose Loan Agreement and to borrow money thereunder in a principal amount not to exceed \$4,150,000. / Move to action

Thursday.

April 17, 2025

West Branch Times

Kofoed reminded the Council that the \$4.1 million-dollar bond consists of money for the Cedar-Johnson Road Reconstruction project and West Main Street milling. He also said that the bids for Cedar-Johnson Road came in lower than expected so there would be some extra funds to use on other projects. Motion by Dean, second by Sexton to approve Resolution 2025-38. AYES: Dean, Sexton, Horihan, Stoolman, Miller. NAYS: None. Motion carried. Resolution 2025-39 - Approving Pay Estimate Number 1 in the amount of \$7.695.00 to Neuzil & Son's Inc. for Tree Felling in conjunction with the Cedar Johnson Road Reconstruction Project. / Move to action.

Motion by Sexton, second by Dean to approve Resolution 2025-39. AYES: Sexton, Dean, Horihan, Stoolman, Miller NAYS: None. Motion carried. Resolution 2025-40 - Accepting the 2025 Cedar-Johnson Road Reconstruction Tree Felling Project as complete. / Move to action.

Motion by Sexton, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-40. AYES: Sexton, Miller, Dean, Horihan, Stoolman. NAYS: None. Motion carried. Resolution 2025-41 – Ordering provid-ing a conditional declination to review a boundary line adjustment located in the City's Extraterritorial Review Boundaries. / Move to action.

Kofoed said that P&Z reviewed and approved Darrall and Nicki Brick's request for a boundary lot line adjust-ment at their property located at 608 Leonard Lane. The Brick's would like to enlarge their existing building which will require the adjustment. City Engineer Schechinger reviewed their request and felt it was acceptable for the Brick's to move forward with their plan as long as they would allow for a (future) through



Passed this 8th day of April, 2025. First reading: March 25, 2025 Second reading: April 1, 2025 Third reading: April 8, 2025 Adopted: April 8, 2025 Published: April 16, 2025

**WBT 16** 

leak

# Cedar county board

BOARD PROCEEDINGS (FOLLOWING IS A SYNOPSIS OF (FOLLOWING LIS A STINOPSIS OF AY'S MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION AT AUDITOR'S OFFICE OR ON OUR WEBSITE-WWW. CEDARCOUNTY.IOWA.GOV) TIPTON, IOWA

April 1, 2025 Cedar County Board of Supervisors met in regular session at 8:30 a.m. April 1, 2025 with following members present: Bixler, Barnhart, Gaul, Kaufmann, and Chairperson Bell. Minutes reported by Deputy Auditor Hamdorf. Members of public were also present. Board viewed correspondence from vari-

ous agencies. Manure Management Annual Updates submitted.

It noted following Handwritten Disbursement issued on 3/28/2025 to Cedar County Treasurer for Benefits, Inc. for an electronic deposit: #441881 for \$7,922.15-self funded medical claims Moved by Bixler seconded by Kaufmann to approve agenda. Aves: All

Chairperson Bell addressed public for comments. There were none. Moved by Gaul seconded by Barnhart to approve Board Minutes of March 25, 2025

Ayes: All

Moved by Gaul seconded by Barnhart to approve Claim Disbursements #441794 -#441880 paid on 3/27/2025.

156.82-Vestis-mats/mops 1945.23-VISA/Bankers Bank-repair American Rescue Plan Act Fund 19913.00-Harger's Acoustics, Inc-Ceiling 4827.00-Total Maintenance, Inc-Hood General Supplemental Fund 412.00-Thomson **Reuters-West** Payment-info chro Rural Services Basic Fund 85.50-Amazon Capital Services-sit to stand 74.92-H & H Auto-oil chg 10.00-lowa Law Enforcement Academy-Training 56.59-Karl Emergency Vehicles-equip 216.90-Quest 8 Blue Lagoon Car Washwash EMS-Essential Srv(Ambulance) 578.00-American Ambulance Association-dues Secondary Road Fund 2665.25-Advantage FS, Inc.-gasoline 419.32-Alliant Energy-Utilities 11673.90-Altorfer Inc-Blades 75.00-Asphalt Paving Assoc-meetings 68.98-Cedar County Repair-Brush cutting 47.67-Copy Systems-Copies 851 48-Eastern Iowa Tire Inc-Tires 1800.00-Emmons & Oliver Resourses, Inc-Consultant fee 254.45-Grainger Parts Inc. W.W. Grang-Sundry/tools 38.00-H & H Auto-Tire repair 50.00-la Dept of Transportation-Equipment 83.25-J.J. Nichting Company-Parts

239.89-Thiesen's-Paint 57.22-Lawson Products Inc-parts 740.22-Genuine Parts Company Inc NAPA-Parts 9855.00-Ossian Inc-Materials 102.64-Phelps the Uniform Specialists-Sundry

1682.36-R & D Dircks Land Co-Land LFM-202502--7X-259.65-Sadler Power Train. Inc-Parts 151.60-Spahn & Rose Lumber Co-Sundry

CEDAR MANOR

Leslie Brick, City Clerk **WBT 16** 

# West Branch city council

(The following is a synopsis of the min-utes of the West Branch City Council meeting. A video recording is available for inspection at westbranchiowa.org. The minutes are not approved until the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting.) West Branch, Iowa; City Council; April

7 2025 Council Chambers; Regular Meeting; 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Roger Laughlin called the West Branch City Council regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call: Council members present;

Tom Dean, Colton Miller, Mike Horihan, Tom Dean, Jerry Sexton and Jodee Stoolman.

City Staff present: City Administrator Adam Kofoed, City Clerk Leslie Brick, Finance Officer Heidi Van Auken, Police Chief Greg Hall, Public Works Director Matt Goodale and Park & Recreation Director Erin Laughlin. Attending via Zoom: Library Director Jessie Schafer. APPROVE THE AGENDA Motion by Miller, second by Sexton to approve the agenda. Motion carried on a voice vote. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA Approve the Monthly Financial Report for

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Approve minutes from the March 17, 2025 City Council meeting. Approve the minutes from the April 1, 2025 Special City Council meeting. Approve a Special Event Permit for the White Pumpkin Studio Warehouse Sale at Heritage Square on May 24, 2025. February 2025. Claims for April 7, 2025.



# FEATURED PROPERTIES



416 E 4TH ST, TIPTON, \$69,500

BUILDING LOTS BORDERING CITY

OF TIPTON IS OFFERING 100% TAX

ABATEMENT ON NEW

CONSTRUCTION FOR 7 YEARS !!

1007 PARKVIEW LN.,

TIPTON

\$53,000

FOR RENT

Corner - Commercial for office for rent!! Great Cedar St

Location with windowfrontage!!

Welcoming reception area.

Large private office area. Shared kitchenette. High speed

internet available for \$25/mo.

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# SUBDIVISIONS, LOTS, ACREAGES & COMMERCIAL



Let us help you find your

dream home!

LOT 1 - \$57,000 • LOT 2- \$57,000 • LOT 3 - \$58,000 LOT 4 - \$52,000 LOT 5 - \$58,000 • LOT 6 - \$59,000 • LOT 7 - \$59,900 LOT 8 - \$59,900 • LOT 9 - \$58,000



2 Lots E. 5th St., **Tipton \$43.000** 



5.2 Acres 1692 Baker Ave. West Branch \$198,000

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culture shift with engaged management. Location: dar Manor, Tipton, Iowa Shifts Available:

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Thursday, April 17, 2025

West Branch Times

PAGE News 7

# **Social cues** Unmasking autism in public leadership

By Adam Kofoed City Administrator City of West Branch

How do you wake up one day and realize you're autistic?

The truth is you don't become autistic, you always were. But for some of us, survival meant learning to mask our autism traits so well that we are unable to recognize who we truly are.

That realization hit me just four months ago. In our field, we navigate immense pressures budget crises, community conflicts, unexpected tragedies. I've weathered my share, including the sudden death of a mayor in my first town.

I've served three years of active duty in the U.S. Army, earned an undergraduate and master's degree while raising two children, and built a career as a city administrator. By all accounts, I was thriving.

So how could someone like me have autism?

For years, I coped by pushing through, running on a 24/7 adrenaline high.

But a particularly stressful event, along with two of my children needing therapy for their basic development, disrupted my usual coping mechanisms, and something shifted.

I began to wonder: Could I be autistic like my younger brother? I hesitated before voicing the thought aloud.

When I finally asked my wife, she laughed and said, "Um, yes, I've always known you had a bit of the 'tism.'

Her casual acknowledgment floored me as I had begun following an online group of autistic adults whose diagnosis resulted

# Autism

From Page I

nosis. "I'm less distracted

Public Management Magazine posed several questions to West Branch City Administrator Adam Kofoed about his recent diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder:

# Q. Were there particular situations where masking felt most necessary?

A. I often mask in one-on-one conversations small talk doesn't come naturally to me. We all know the weather, so why talk about it? I also struggle with the give-and-take of relationships.

With staff and council, my guard is high. I have a strong team, but I've instinctively assumed that when someone asks a question, they are against the idea - or against me. That mindset helped me overprepare and succeed, but rewiring that thought process will take time.

# Q. How did it feel to receive your diagnosis?

A. At first, I felt a strange sense of clarity my life suddenly made sense. But then came embarrassment and fear that people would use it against me. I also mis-

in divorces.

self-acceptance But wasn't immediate. I started therapy, hoping the feeling would pass. Instead, each day my autism became more undeniable.

Suddenly, familiar sensations overwhelmed me the sound of water hitting the sink felt like a piercing alarm, the shower spray forced me to squint, and the whir of an exhaust fan made me instantly angry.

behaviors, speech tive and nonverbal communication," according to AustimSpeaks.org. Kofoed goes into more

detail in an interview with Public Management Magazine, the text of which appears on Page 7 of this issue of the West Branch Times. The article is entitled, "Unmasking Autism in Public Leadership.' Kofoed said he hopes that while he learns more about himself, "I want children in West Branch to know that they don't have to fit the mold to be successful.' "I have one of the worst ACT English scores ever, and I still made it through college and got a gradaute degree," he said. "I often didn't always fit in or I felt out of place. Despite those feelings, you can still do great things. He said that, as both a little brother and a parent, "it takes awhile to get autism testing formalized." "There's a sense of like doubt and hopelessness you would have because

# Q&A with Adam Kofoed on autism

understood autism as an all-or-nothing condition, not a spectrum.

Over time, I've come to understand myself better, though I still have moments of anger. Looking back, I realize how much I masked as a child.

One of many examples, I vividly remember being told I had "ants in my pants" because I couldn't sit still. That was just the common response to neurodiversity but it was incredibly hurtful to me as a child.

Oftentimes Q. when first telling others about one's autism diagnosis, there is some education involved. as many people don't fully understand what autism is and the fact that it presents differently from person to person. How did you explain your autism diagnosis to your staff and city council?

A. I haven't explicitly disclosed it. Instead, I introduced

a training called Reset 2025 to improve workplace culture. I shared that I would be attending

When I told my family, their reactions were mixed, mirroring my own confusion. They had never seen the signs because I had learned to suppress them.

Growing up in a smalltown, small-business family in the 1990s, masking wasn't just a habit, it was survival. I learned early that showing excitement could lead to ridicule; that teachers and classmates dismissed my restlessness

you have no idea if your child is going to make it on their own," Kofoed "You're insecure said. about that and you worry."

He encouraged parents by saying children with autism can still find success.

regular health appointments and explained my challenges – like dis-tinguishing between a directive and a heads-up conversation, or between an employee venting versus a complaint. Staff read between the lines and clapped.

I haven't verbally spoken about it to my council vet. Writing is easier than speaking about it.

My advice? Start with those you trust and show vour commitment to personal growth. People are more supportive when they see effort. Let them absorb it before diving into details.

Autistic people often walk a fine line - too guarded or too open. I overshare, so I'm giving it time before revisiting the conversation with council.

Q. How can we best support colleagues with autism?

A. First, recognize that autism is a spectrum everyone's experience is different.

Verbal and written support matter as many autistics are embarrassed

as having "ants in my pants."

and feel alone.

So, I adapted each time a moment like this occurred. I learned to survive and be normal.

By high school, I was scripting my speech in my head before speaking, ensuring I met expectations. Eye contact, once impossible, became a rehearsed performance.

And trust? That was something I extended to

West Branch City Council to other colleagues in this area, "they were extremely supportive and backed me 100 percent."

"That's not the West

More broadly, integrating mental health into workplace conversations would help everyone. The more we normalize discussing neurodiversity, the better our teams will communicate and collaborate to strengthen our communities.

# Q. How has unmasking impacted your mental health and selfesteem?

A. Self-esteem is still a work in progress. Masking feels natural, and I sometimes worry I'm not unmasking enough.

The biggest shift has been in my energy levels. I no longer burn all my energy trying to "fit in," which has pulled me out of a constant fight-orflight mode.

That's made me more present at home. My wife's mood has improved; my 3-year-old, whom we suspect also has autism, has started to talk and read for the first time; I'm building a stronger bond with my 9-year-old; and my 13-year-old has gained confidence.

Being in the moment has changed everything.

But when I could no longer maintain the mask, I retreated to hiding in closets at home, at my parent's house, even at work. The overstimulation was too much. The embarrassment, unbearable.

Eventually, I realized I had to be upfront with my staff and city council before they grew too concerned. It felt all too obvious and I felt I did not

He said the article in PMM "explores his journey of self-discovery after years of unknowingly masking his autistic traits."

have the choice in hiding it anymore.

What happened next surprised me. Eventually, several councilmembers personally texted me with their support, and when I told my staff, they clapped. The moment was over-

whelming.

For the first time, I saw that I was in a safe space. And I knew that so many adults like me never find that kind of acceptance.

I can't tell my autistic colleagues whether they should come out in their own workplaces. That decision is deeply personal.

But I can encourage them to find their own West Branch – a community where they feel seen, accepted, and supported.

Their ability to see the world in a different lens is valuable to any municipal government looking to have an edge over others.

West Branch, Iowa, has long been a place where humanity prevails. As a Quaker community, it played a pivotal role in the Underground Railroad. with residents risking and, in some cases, losing their lives for the sake of justice.

West Branch shaped a young orphan named Herbert Hoover who defied all odds to become president of the United States.

And today, that same spirit of acceptance is making history again, as West Branch becomes home to the first known openly autistic city administrator.

To my fellow public servants on the spectrum: You are not alone. I see you. I support you. And I hope you, too, find your West Branch, a place where you can unmask, be vourself, and be embraced for who you truly are.

too concerned. What happened next surprised me. My staff clapped. I saw, maybe for the first time, that I was in a safe space." He said he better

no one.

(with the earplugs). When I'm not wearing these, you will see a lot of natural squinting, or me looking away," Kofoed said. "This helps keeps me grounded and in the moment."

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, autism spectrum disorder "is a neurological and developmental disorder that affects how people interact with others, communicate, learn, and behave."

Normally, symptoms appear by age 2, but Kofoed's diagnosis came at age 37.

autism Although can be diagnosed at any age, it is described as a "developmental disorder" because symptoms generally appear in the first two years of life, according to the NIMH.

Common symptoms "challenges include with social skills, repeti-

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"There's a lot better therapy now than existed even when I was growing up," he said. "The main takeaway for parents is that it's OK and it's going to be OK. Sometimes it may come sooner or later, but their kid can still be a leader in their own way."

April is Autism Awareness Month. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, autism affects about 1 in 36 children and 1 in 45 adults in the United States.

Kofoed states that he is "no different" than anyone else who grew up in West Branch.

"I have my past childfrustrations with hood growing up in a small town," the city administrator said.

From coworkers to the

Branch I remember growing up here," Kofoed said. want people to know this community is changing very fast. But I also think, despite our growing pains, we are becoming a much more inclusive and welcoming community."

The husband and father said he does not want people to treat him differently.

"No, not at all," he said. "I think it's more or less of an understanding or awareness. It's really not so much of what I'm getting - I can't really answer that. It's not about what I'm getting from it. It's about giving hope to people who are currently in that situation and aren't in an environment where they are able to discuss it. I don't expect anything from anybody."

Kofoed said "there's a lot going on in my head" since the diagnosis.



Before his diagnosis, he would rehearse conversations, avoid eye contact, an overprepare to "mask" his autism.

'When I could no longer maintain the mask, I found myself retreating - hiding in closets at work, at home, and at my parents' house, overwhelmed by overstimulation," Kofoed wrote in a statement. "I finally realized I had to be upfront with my staff and city council before they grew

appreciates West Branch's "long history of inclusivity," like how the town played a role in the Underground Railroad and shaped Herbert Hoover, the orphan turned-president.

"West Branch is a place where humanity prevails. And today, that same spirit of acceptance is making history again, as West Branch becomes home to the first known openly autistic city administrator," he writes.



# LEGALS FROM P6

# street to the west should the city annex the Rummells farm in the future. The

Council had no concerns with the Motion by Dean, second by Miller to approve Resolution 2025-41. AYES: Dean, Miller, Stoolman, Horihan, Sexton NAYS: None. Motion carried. Discussion - Cedar-Johnson Road Reconstruction Project Bond proceeds. Kofoed said engineers estimates for the 2025 GO Bond of \$4.1 million was

broken down as follows; \$3.4 million for

Street milling. With the Cedar-Johnson

project and \$750,000 for West Main

the Cedar-Johnson Road Reconstruction

asked the Council to provide some ideas on what other projects could be done. The Cedar-Johnson Road project will commence just north of Meadows Place and extend all the way to Ember Lane and complete the last section of Serenity Circle. Laughlin and Sexton were in favor of asphalting from Ember Lane to the Cedar's Edge maintenance shop (or city limits), but Miller was quick to squash that idea and said that there are still chip and seal streets in town that should be replaced before paving a road to a private maintenance building Dean asked if there were any other infrastructure issues that were costing the city money that should be considered.

Road bids coming in much lower than

expected, the City has extra money that they can use for other projects. Kofoed

Goodale said there are a few areas with water mains that cause the city extra maintenance costs. Goodale also supported the idea of replacing the chip and seal streets as those also have annual maintenance costs associated with them. Sexton and Stoolman mentioned Greenview Subdivision and the issues it has. The consensus from Council was to put the extra money toward other city projects and asked Goodale to provide them with a top ten list of projects that may fit into the remaining bond money. CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT Kofoed reported that he would have a few agenda items for the next Council meeting for consideration and discussion including Heritage Hill, Phase 4, Greenview street lights and admin revised job descriptions.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT - No report CITY ENGINEER REPORT Schechinger said a pre-cons meeting is being scheduled with Boomerang so the project can start. Meadows Part 6 utilities are in but that Barnhart is on hold until Boomerang can start their project. Schechinger said he is also keeping on FEMA with their review of the Wapsi Creek Widening

### project STAFF REPORTS

Goodale said the new yard waste site will be opening later this week to the public. The new site is north of the previous lo-cation and new signage will be placed to direct residents to the new site. Goodale also said that the yard waste site rules will be added to the City Code of Ordinances which the City Clerk has prepared and will be coming to a future Council meeting. Brick gave an update regarding the sewer meter at the West Branch Village that was supposed to be installed two years Brick said a new meter had to be installed in January, but that it is still not recording accurate sewer flows which is used for billing purposes. Brick said she has contacted City Engineer Schechinger for his assistance as they work toward a solution in the matter. Hall gave kudos to Sergeant Steen on

her investigative skills which have led to arrests regarding recent criminal activities in the city. Hall also encouraged the Council to consider license plate recognition (LPR) cameras. License plate recognition, are specialized cameras and software designed to capture, read, and process vehicle license plate information

often used for security, traffic manage ment. and law enforcement purposes Hall admitted that they are expensive but worth the money for public safety and helping solve crimes

COMments from mayor and council mem bers

### No comments

adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Miller, second by Sexton. Motion carried on a voice vote. City Council meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Roger Laughlin, Mayor ATTEST:

Leslie Brick, City Clerk **WBT 16**