

CONFERENCE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

3/11/2025

The Cedar County Conference Board met on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. in the Assessor's Office. Chairman Jon Bell called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Roll call was taken. Those members present:

Supervisors: Jon Bell, Jeff Kaufmann, Mike Bixler, Brad Gaul

Mayors: Roger Laughlin (West Branch), Todd Sawyer (Stanwood), Tammi Goerdt, (Tipton)

Bd Education: Matt Lafrenz (Tipton), Jeric Armstrong (North Cedar)

Others: Cari Dauber (Assessor), Stephanie Wiese (Assistant Assessor)

Moved by Kaufmann to approve the Board Minutes of February 6, 2025, second by Sawyer, all in favor, motion carried.

A public hearing of the FY2025-2026 Assessor budget was held. Chairman Bell read the notice. Bell asked for any comments or objections regarding the proposed budget. Gaul objected to a 5% wage increase for the Assessor and motioned to decrease to 3%. Bixler seconded and agreed with Gaul stating it would not be fair to the other officials who only received a 3% increase. Bixler brought up that Assessor Dauber is in the top third in pay in the State. Dauber asked Bixler for the information he was referring to. Bixler said it was public record, and he was looking at the ISAC survey. Bixler stated directly to Assessor Dauber that he was tired of the eye rolls and stare-downs, but it didn't bother him because he had angry mothers stare at him when he was a high school coach. Assessor Dauber stated she is getting tired of it too. Chairman Bell opened it up for discussion.

Assessor Dauber reiterated to the board that just three years ago the Assessor resigned, and they did not receive any applications for the position. She also informed them that there will be a larger shortage of assessors in 2027 due to retirements. The County had to hire a retired assessor to temporary fill the position in 2022. Assessor Dauber has had to do a lot of clean up of the assessment records with less staff and Bixler stated she was doing a good job. Assessor Dauber rebutted that she didn't want to hear it. Gaul praised Dauber for her work performance and finding a replacement. Goerdt did not realize that this topic was going to be discussed therefore she has not done her own research to make an informed decision. Lafrenz asked for the history of pay increases and what was done last year. Assessor Dauber stated that she did not receive an increase last year when other employees were given a 1% increase. Assessor Dauber stated that another department head received a large increase than 3% for the FY25-26 budget year to keep that employee from potentially leaving the County and the shortage of that position. Gaul asked who she was referring to and Bixler assumed she was talking about the County Attorney. Bell stated no she is not referring to the County Attorney, but in fact she was referring to the IT Director position. Gaul stated that he believed it was an 8% increase. The salary went from \$75,000 to \$80,000. She questioned how that was being fair to all officials. Lafrenz didn't think that it would be wise to argue over a 2% difference. Armstrong asked when the County went away from the compensation scale due to he stated this is going to cause problems in the future in determining wages. Bixler stated they have been having issues already.

Laughlin joined the meeting at 8:13 a.m.

Chairman Bell explained to Laughlin what vote was taking place concerning the Assessor's wage increase. Laughlin stated that his city implemented a 3% to 5% increase.

Chairman Bell called for a roll call vote to decrease the Assessor's wage to 3%.

Supervisors: Jon Bell (no), Jeff Kaufmann (yes), Mike Bixler (yes), Brad Gaul (yes)

Mayors: Roger Laughlin (yes), Todd Sawyer (no), Tammi Goerdt, (no)

Board of Education: Matt Lafrenz (no), Jeric Armstrong (no)

Motion was defeated. Chairman Bell asked the board members if they wanted to present another motion. There was no response.

Bell then moved on to the next agenda topic regarding approval of the Designated Reserve Fund projects. Kaufmann asked Dauber if this is still the same as what was previously proposed at the last meeting. Dauber replied yes it is.

Moved by Kaufmann to approve designated projects for the allocation in the Designated Reserve Fund, seconded by Goerdt. Motion carried.

Bell asked for a motion to set the levy and approve the budget. Kaufmann asked Dauber what is the amount of decrease in the levy. Dauber stated it is a 14 cent decrease.

Moved by Kaufmann to approve the 2025-2026 Assessor budget and set the levy at .34586, seconded by Bixler. Motion carried.

Bell asked if there was any other business. There was none.

Bell asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Laughlin moved to adjourn the meeting, second by Sawyer. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:22 a.m.

Jon Bell, Chairman

Cari Dauber, Assessor