

**City of West
Branch
Office of the
City
Administrator**

To: Mayor and Council
From: Matt Muckler, City Administrator
Date: March 25, 2011 Weekly Council Update

- **March 31st Council Work Session:** A Council Work Session will be held on Thursday evening March 31st at 6:30 p.m. Issues to be discussed include the time of regular Council Meetings, water and sewer permit fees, and the preliminary plat of the Meadows Subdivision.
- **Iowa League of Cities Update:** The Iowa Legislature is considering changes to laws concerning open meetings and public records. Subcommittees were held on two bills this week. SF289, a bill the League is monitoring in its current form, passed out of a subcommittee without any changes after stakeholder groups expressed that they had worked together to come up with compromises to get everyone registered neutral on the legislation.

Last week, the Senate passed SF430, a bill the League opposes, after a surprise bipartisan amendment supported and lobbied by Governor Branstad was introduced. The amendment struck the language of the bill and inserted stronger language that creates a Public Information Board with rulemaking and enforcement authority over Iowa Code Chapters 21 (Open Meetings Law) and 22 (Public Records Law). Despite efforts by the League to raise concerns with the amendment, the bill passed the Senate 49-0. This week SF430 did not pass out of the House Subcommittee. More controversy surrounds this bill, due to both the process in the Senate which excluded many stakeholders and its creation of a new state agency with enforcement and rulemaking powers. The League expects discussion to continue on the bill.

- **More Library Grants:** The West Branch Public Library received notice this week that both grant applications submitted by the library to the Community Foundation of Cedar County were approved in full. The first grant was a request for startup funding for the new automation system which is now fully funded and will be implemented this summer. The library had always planned for the startup funding to be funded by grants or from the Friends of the Library to decrease the amount required from regular revenue sources. The other grant was submitted on behalf of the Cedar County Library Association and will provide a total of \$7,500 to the county's libraries for children's programming and materials (\$937.50 to each library).
- **Water Tower Maintenance:** A representative from Maguire Iron, Inc. visited West Branch on Thursday March 24th to provide maintenance advice and cost estimates on the water tower located near the elementary school. Initial recommendations will include repainting the inside and outside of the tower. Maguire will be advising the City that sandblasting the outside of the tower is not currently necessary. This could allow the City to avoid containment and could significantly reduce costs. The only portion that would require sandblasting would be the inside wet portion of the tower. Cost estimates will be provided to the Council when they are received.

The information provided is one-way communication and should not be discussed among you as this would be a violation of the open meeting law.