



AGENDA OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, IA
TO BE HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
215 E. WASHINGTON STREET
AT 6:00 P.M., TUESDAY, February 13, 2024

To attend the meeting via Zoom go to:

<https://washingtioniowa.gov/city-government/city-council-mayor/agendas-council-packets-minutes/#:~:text=https%3A//us02web.zoom.us/j/5077385758%3Fpwd%3DaG9oTys4TDMydWlUeVFkTU1OekNUZz09>

Meeting ID: 507 738 5758

Passcode: 539036

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call

Agenda for the Special Session to be held at 6:00 P.M., Tuesday, February 13, 2024 to be approved as proposed or amended.

NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion and Consideration for a Resolution Endorsing Applications for Municipal Grant Funds.

WORKSHOP

- FY25 Budget

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Police Department

City Attorney

City Administrator

MAYOR & COUNCILPERSONS

Jaron Rosien, Mayor

Millie Youngquist, Mayor Pro Tem

Patrick Morgan

Illa Earnest

Elaine Moore

Fran Stigers

Ivan Rangel

ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-_____

**A RESOLUTION ENDORSING
APPLICATIONS FOR MUNICIPAL GRANT FUNDS**

WHEREAS, the City of Washington has been very fortunate to receive sizeable amounts of municipal grant funds through the Washington County Riverboat Foundation over the years; and,

WHEREAS, the Riverboat Foundation has established procedures requiring applications to be completed for each project cities wish to complete using municipal grant funds; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined the projects and initiatives for which it would like to allocate these funds for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, IOWA:

Section 1. The City Council hereby requests that the Washington County Riverboat Foundation allocate anticipated municipal funds for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 in the following manner:

- A. Downtown Streetscape Expansion: \$450,000
- B. Downtown Investment Grant: \$100,000
- C. Central Park Restroom Remodel Project \$100,000

Section 2. The City Council states its commitment to identifying additional funding needed to successfully complete the above projects and initiatives.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 13th day of February 2024.

Millie Youngquist, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:

Amanda Waugh, City Clerk

*Millie Youngquist, Mayor Pro Tem
Kelsey Brown, Finance Director
Amanda Waugh, City Clerk
Kevin Olson, City Attorney
Deanna McCusker, City Administrator*



*City of Washington
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Washington, Iowa 52353
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(319) 653-5273 Fax*

February 9, 2024

To: Mayor & City Council
Cc: Kelsey Brown, Finance Director
Amanda Waugh, City Clerk

From: Deanna McCusker
City Administrator

Re: Updated Resolution Requesting Municipal Riverboat Grant Funds

I submitted the Riverboat municipal grant application requesting our normal \$425,000 for FY25. I received notification that we can ask for more, up to \$650,000 since that is what we have been receiving the past 2 fiscal years. We did not know that we could increase our request for funds until yesterday.

Based on the notification that we can increase our request up to \$650,000 I would recommend to Council that we request the following for FY25:

- \$450,000 Downtown Streetscape Expansion
- \$100,000 Downtown Investment Grant
- \$100,000 Central Park Restroom Remodel Project

In our budget discussions updating the restrooms at Central Park was a top priority. We did have minimal funding set aside to update a few things, but with this \$100,000 request we can completely remodel the restrooms fully. This will be a nice project to have completed with all the visitors that attend Central Park.

Washington Chamber of Commerce



205 W Main Street
Washington, IA 52353
319-653-3272
chamber.washingtoniowa.gov
chamber@washingtoniowa.org

2024 Board of Directors

Michelle Redlinger

Executive Director
Washington Chamber of Commerce

Erik Buchholz, President

St. James School

Patty Elliott, Vice President

Elliott Realty Group

Matt Brown, Treasurer

CBI Bank

Mikayla Slechta, Secretary

Washington Chamber of Commerce

Lee Iben, Past President

ActionCOACH Business Coaching

Diane Gallagher

Gallagher Farms

Phil Minino

Bazooka Farmstar

Amy Kleese

United Presbyterian Home

Jaron Rosien

JP's 207

Greta Clemons

Washington County Hospital

Mary Audia

WEDG

Ex-Officio

Samantha Meyer

Main Street

Ex-Officio

January 12, 2024

Dear Washington City Council:

The Washington Chamber of Commerce has a responsibility "To create a progressive business climate and to promote a high quality of life in the Washington community." On behalf of our board of directors, we are privileged to uphold this mission and to work in collaboration with the city.

The Chamber is proud to operate the Welcome Center for the City of Washington, an important communication hub for residents and visitors alike. This center serves as a vital point of contact for individuals interested in learning about the city's offerings, including tourism, relocation, and business opportunities. We are honored to play a pivotal role in promoting the success of Washington's community through our Welcome Center.

The Washington Welcome Center is dedicated to promoting the economic benefits of community events and tourism for our businesses and government. In Iowa, tourism is a proven economic driver, supporting a total of 68,607 jobs and contributing \$10.4 billion to Iowa's economy. Visitors to Iowa spend a total of \$19 million in the state each day. In fact, visitor spending grew 13% over the prior year.

The Washington Welcome Center recognizes the importance of showcasing the diverse offerings of our community to attract more visitors and ultimately grow our economy. We provide helpful information on local attractions and offer recommendations for dining and lodging. We host events that showcase the unique culture and heritage of our town. Our friendly and knowledgeable staff and volunteers aim to make every visitor feel welcomed and valued. We believe that by working together with our partners in the tourism industry, our community will continue to grow and thrive.

In 2023, the Welcome Center joined the statewide organization Iowa Travel Industry Partners (iTIP) and sent representatives to Travel Iowa's annual conference. Our representative will be joining state legislators in January for the iTIP Legislative Night at the State Capital to lobby for increased tourism funding across the state, as Iowa is the 4th smallest investor in tourism across the nation, setting a precedent that we have little to offer visitors. As members of iTIP, we give Washington's vision a voice.

Locally, we shared community attractions at Washington County's largest tourism event, the Washington County Fair. Over 500 visitors were exposed to our community events, resulting in nearly 200 new email sign-ups for our weekly e-newsletters. Our Welcome Center partnered with the Hotel Motel Committee to secure grant funding for their wayfinding and community kiosk projects. We advocated with local business owners to keep county services in our downtown, developed a partnership to bring a community piano to downtown and continue to improve one of our most utilized resources, the community calendar, as people plan their schedules around local events.

The success of Washington relies on you, its businesses and patrons! With a town of over 7,000 residents, we are home to the world's oldest continually operating theater as certified by the Guinness World Records, a LEED certified library, and a town square that was referred to as a page right out of a Hallmark movie. With one motel, one hotel, and one soon to be built, five Airbnb's and over a dozen restaurants, Washington is a great place to visit and stay a while. Several small and large businesses, from a County Hospital with nearly every type of care, to growing public and private school systems, to five banks, three retirement facilities, two large grocery stores, clothing stores, a shoe store, jewelry store, florist, art shops, coffee shops, a local minibus service, and over a dozen churches, Washington has something for everyone.

For those looking for a place to hold their family reunions, the Washington Aquatic Center on the west side of Sunset Park is a great place. Right near the park, a fourteen-mile walking trail is perfect for that person who wants a scenic walk on a paved trail through the trees, past a pond and overlook of a few country farms. Or, get in a car and travel to see all the barn quilts Washington County has to offer.

In 2024, we look forward to partnering with the leading location intelligence platform in the travel industry, Arrivalist. This partnership will give our Welcome Center access to visitation data, traveler movement, and trip insight data that is specific to Washington, Iowa. Not only will we be able to use this data to track visitors to local events, including the variety of events held by the Welcome Center (Ridiculous Day, Spring & Fall Craft Fairs, Candlelight Tour of Homes), but we will be sharing access of this data to our tourism partners so that entities like the YMCA can track data at tournaments held at the Wellness Park and the Washington County Fair Board can track visitor information at the fair.

We are grateful for the partnership we have with many entities in the region that work to bring visitors to our great community. We are especially thankful for the tremendous partnership with the City of Washington, not only financially, but in the many ways we work with different departments to make this great town a destination. Your collaboration in supporting local tourism is greatly appreciated and we are respectfully requesting that the City of Washington maintain your current support, equaling an annual contribution of \$24,000.

We look forward with enthusiasm to serving all of you this 2024 year!

Michelle Redlinger
Chamber Executive Director

Mikayla Slechta
Outreach Coordinator

Erik Buchholz
Chamber Board President

WEDG accomplishments/ successes 2023

From Brett DeWolf, May 2023... "I feel our group is very unique in its approach to membership, how we **collaboratively** work within our county and our regional involvement with all economic agencies in the 380 corridor. We do not see economic benefit only from an entrepreneur/employer perspective but we seek out ways to benefit the employee, homeowner and community members in our entire area. I feel WEDG is an integral part of our strong communities that helps to ensure we have strong businesses, through those efforts our strong businesses thrive in strong communities."

(Categories Below are Strategic Pillars for WEDG, highlighting the work we do, thanks to you!)

Business Retention and Expansion

- WEDG provided an audience with **Debi Durham, Director of IEDA/IFA**, to showcase the YMCA Pool Project Capital Campaign, resulting in a **\$500,000 CAT grant award**. We were also honored to speak to a Destination Iowa committee as they were debating their final award recipients. It worked!
- WEDG works with the City of Washington to market industrial lots. We've facilitated the sale of **4 lots at the SW Business Park** in Washington to the following businesses: W-3 Construction, Sunset Diesel and Paws and More, and Swaffer Welding. (Approximately **\$100,000 revenue in direct lot sales**. County Tax Rev fr Businesses in SW Business Park is approximately **\$66,000/year**).
- WEDG submitted ITQ for OCIO Broadband Initiative on March 31, 2023. We were delighted to be awarded an Opportunity Zone for broadband in an area west of Washington to open funding opportunities for rural broadband. The Broadband Intervention Zone designation is for the greater WestChester region!
- Wrote Letters of Support for our Broadband suppliers as they applied for the Rural Broadband expansion grant. Awards: **Sharon Tele = \$1,842,400, KCTC = \$3,120,782 and Wellman Coop = \$2,698,551.**
- WEDG is assisting **Brava Roof Tile with a 25k sq ft expansion** by facilitating a meeting with **IFA Director Debi Durham, Alliant Energy and the City of Washington**. This will increase Tax Revenue and their operational capacity.
- Assisted Sharon Telephone with a **Broadband Expansion Project** and then subsequent recognition with Miller-Meeks, Ernst and Grassley staffers in August. Invited to the completion of Sharon Telephone Company's fiber-optic cable network in and surrounding the city of about a thousand people, roughly a third of it funded by state and federal grants. Most notable among those was the USDA's Community Connect program.
- WEDG maintains **LOIS Listings (commercial version of realtor.com)** for area commercial sites and buildings on the market.
- WEDG landed the Whitesell deal with the City of Washington leading to NLW housing and Brava. Currently **\$51,576/year** to WEDG and to the City of Washington with a final balloon payment in 2028.
- We were fortunate to work with a local developer and The City of Washington to explore the benefits of a TIF allocation toward a **Cobblestone Hotel** in Washington, Iowa.

- Currently looking at prospects for YMCA building and Middle School in Washington.
- WEDG is providing assistance with marketing for **Dutch Market** on Highway 1. Opening spring of 2024!!

Workforce

- WEDG is the liaison between Washington County and Kirkwood to administer the **260 E Program** in our county. Some recent examples include Brava Roof Tile, who submitted for 25 jobs, 18 of them will qualify for the 3% tax credit. Total amount \$415,000. Open Gates also submitted for 6 jobs, 2 will qualify for 3% tax credit for a total of \$45,000. Total active 260E Agreements = **\$1,620,000 in tax savings to our local industries thus far.**
- WEDG facilitates **Workforce Initiative meetings** for Washington County professionals once/quarter. All are welcome to attend!

Housing

- **Washington Rehabilitation Pilot Program** - 10 homes received award of \$25,000 each for rehabilitation via collaboration with the Housing Trust Fund. (Audia on this board.)
- We led the effort to secure and were awarded **\$50,000** in down payment assistance for Kalona student-built home #2 from our area ECHTF.
- WEDG facilitates **Housing Initiative meetings quarterly** for Washington County professionals. Join us!

Child Care

- WEDG co-sponsored (with ECI and ISU Extension) a recurring **Child Care Appreciation Event**, which started on April 11, 2023 to celebrate and appreciate our current Child Care Professionals. Industry leaders were on hand to add their thanks. We continued this every 6 weeks at the ISU Extension Center, WA.
- We connected the Washington YMCA to Halcyon to collaborate on resources, like food service, workforce, etc.
- We held meetings with **Kids Corral**, ECI, Bazooka and WEDG and assisted them with solutions to their emergency staffing situation. The director has been hired thanks to the diligence of Janelle Johnson, Elaine Turner and their board!
- We facilitate **Pleasantview Child Care Strategy Team** meetings to explore intergenerational CC at Pleasantview campus. Those involved are WEDG, City of Kalona, ECI, IWF, the YMCA, Mid-Prairie Schools and Pleasantview management.

Community Support

- We transplanted all of the **fire survivors from Greiner Plaza** to Sittler Studios and Federation Bank (the day after the fire) to allow all our businesses to continue quickly and efficiently in continuity of business.
- WEDG helped organize and facilitate the **Community Partnership dinner** awards ceremony February 27, 2023 at the Riverside Casino and Golf Resort.
- WEDG was a dissemination point of **Governor's Disaster Proclamation** March 31, 2023 following the tornado to help direct survivors to available funds and was able to assist Marissa Reisen, Emergency Management and individual farm families.
- We assisted in the facilitation of community education of **Dr. Gene Takle, ISU Agronomy Professor**, presenting on Climate Challenges for Iowa Agriculture at ISU extension office on April 6, 2023.
- Mary Audia, Exec Director of WEDG, was a panelist on the **Women In Leadership** event

on Thursday, March 30, 2023 sponsored by WOW. Joined by Tera Pickens, Millie Youngquist, Isabella Santoro, Samantha Meyer, Vani Tschantz, and Jacque Arreola.

- WEDG nominated [the Riverside Casino & Golf Resort](#) who then received the **Partnership Award - Large Business Award** for 2023 from CBJ, The Giving Guide.
- **WEDG Business Lab** launched in August 2023. Free coaching services for one year to Washington County!! Normally \$1440/mth or **\$17,280/year**.
- Multiple legislative visits by **Senator Joni Ernst in Kalona, Congresswoman Miller Meeks in Riverside, Senator Grassley, IA Sen Dawn Driscoll and IA Rep Heather Hora**.
- WEDG hosted **economist Dr. Ernie Goss** on August 16th for general public and Advisory Level investors. 50 community members in attendance! Great economic education for our local community.
- We participated in the **Wellman Walk Around with IEDA** in Washington leading to future grant opportunities.
- Active participant in **Healthy Hometown Initiative** with Washington County Public Health and Wellmark.
- Partnered with the YMCA to organize **Lt Gov Adam Gregg** visit to Washington in Oct 2023 bringing awareness to our region.
- Support for the **pork industry**. In depth interviews with Brennenman Pork, WEDG and SE IA Union Oct 2023.
- **Community Foundation of WA County Annual Dinner** - we raised over **\$12,000** with partial proceeds going to Hospice of WA County!
- Wrote LOS for **Riverside, IA CDBG for their Downtown Revitalization** and partner in **Comprehensive Plan with Kalona**.
- Wrote Letter of Support to **EDA for EECI CEDS plan** to help support our regional effort of a common vision. Was also an Advisory member of the creation of the CEDS plan.
- Act as a navigator for community support projects through companies like **Goldfinch Solar** and others.
- **WEDG (Audia) serves on the following boards/committees:**
 - Main Street Washington Board and Economic Development Committee Chamber, Washington
 - Kalona Economic Development Group
 - Community Foundation of Washington County
 - Great Places Committee
 - Pleasantview Child Care Strategy Committee
 - ECICOG (East Central Iowa Council of Governments)
 - ECIHTF (ECI Housing Trust Fund)
 - Envision Iowa Strategy Committee (for regional CEDS)
 - Washington Noon Rotary
 - Wage Enhancement Program for Childcare Strategy Team

Save the Date:

Washington Business Partnership Annual Dinner - March 25th, Riverside Casino, 5:00 pm. Register here! <https://givebutter.com/AD24>

WEDG Quarterly Speaker Series continues with TIF Presentation by Pat Callahan - **March 22nd** at noon. Washington Public Library.