



Thursday, February 19, 2026

Council Discusses Infrastructure Investments at Monday Meeting

Financing ongoing improvements to the city's water system was a topic of discussion during Monday evening's Boone City Council meeting.

The council approved a resolution to authorize a loan and disbursement agreement and the issuance of not more than \$2.146 million in general obligation capital loan notes that will be repaid in three years. The city will save a significant amount of interest by repaying the bonds in three years rather than extending payments for 20 years, which is a frequent practice for many municipalities.

Responding to written questions about the city's investment in water and wastewater infrastructure improvements submitted by a citizen, city administrator Ondrea Elmquist said, "We are not proposing an increase to your tax levy. However, by law, we have to state what that bond would cost in a tax levy. So, this will be paid for by debt service but using the tax levy we currently have."

Fourth Ward Councilman Terry Moorman and At-large Councilman Kyle Angstrom, who chairs the council's utility committee, emphasized that much of the work was needed before Daisy Brands announced its plans to build a large dairy-processing facility on the city's east side.

"Just to be clear, the majority of this work is already in the (city's capital improvement plan) and these are projects that we were going to have to do, anyway," Moorman said. "If we are ever going to grow or expand, these projects need to happen."

Speaking about improvements to the city's water treatment facility on the north side, Angstrom said, "This is something that needs to move forward. The facility was built 30 years ago. ... We've put a lot of Band-aids on things and it's time to rip the Band-aids off and fix everything."

They also noted that improvements to water mains on the north side are necessary for fire protection and to provide service redundancy, and city administrator Ondrea Elmquist said replacing the wastewater lift station on Snedden Drive already has been in the capital improvement plan for 10 years – "way before Daisy."

"Yes, the lift station is upsized to help accommodate Daisy, however, even when the elementary school went in, this was a conversation and whether the lift station would be about to accommodate that," she said. "We will not be able to expand or grow on the east side of Boone without that lift station."

Council members also authorized the execution of a Wastewater and Drinking Water Treatment Financial Assistance Program (WTFAP) grant contract with Iowa Finance Authority in the amount of \$500,000 to help offset the cost of the wastewater headworks project and unanimously approved a request to authorize the staff to apply for an Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant for the new water tower project. "We're hoping for a \$1 million grant," Elmquist said.

Angstrom said much of the utility committee's work for months has been dedicated to water and wastewater improvements, including their impact on usage fees and tax levies. He said the committee meets at 5:00 p.m. on the second Monday of the month in the council chambers. "Everyone is invited to attend," he said.

Council members discussed the value of city leaders participating in the Ames Regional Economic Alliance's annual trip to Washington, D.C. to lobby federal officials about funding needs and policy priorities, which will take place April 21-23. The per-person cost for the trip is \$3,800.

First Ward Councilman Jordan Hammer, who was elected to his first term in November, said he believes efforts to advocate Boone's needs to Iowa's congressional delegation can be just as effectively done without spending money on the trip. Hammer cast the lone vote against sending Angstrom, Moorman and Elmquist on the trip.

Ames Regional Alliance Senior Vice President Brenda Dryer shared the latest quarterly report about economic activity in Boone, noting that nearly 300 real estate sales closed in the city last year. Dryer noted the average property was only on the market an average of 27 days – "one of the lowest, actually, in our region" – and that buyers received an average of 97% of asking prices. She shared that Boone will host a regional housing summit later this month with Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Director Debi Durham scheduled to be among the expected 100 people in attendance.

Main Street Boone Director Holly Stecker shared a market snapshot designed to support community revitalization and strategic development efforts by providing a clear picture of the local marketplace. The report, which was prepared by the IEDA's Downtown Resource Center as part of Main Street Iowa services, highlights key demographic trends, retail patterns, and tourism insights that influence economic development strategies.

In other business, the council:

- Set a public hearing for 6:00 p.m., March 2 for the consideration of granting an access easement across the portion of the platted public right-of-way within outlot K of the Golf Estates Subdivision.
- Set 6:00 p.m., March 2 for a public meeting on the authorization of a loan and disbursement agreement and the issuance of not more than \$1.3 million in water revenue capital loan notes.
- Held a public hearing about the sale of property at 932 Eighth Street and approved a resolution authorizing the sale and issuing a quit claim deed.

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