

# NIACOG NEWS

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NORTH IOWA AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

May - June 2017

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## SALUTE TO CITY CLERKS!

# Thank You!

NIACOG staff work closely with many of the clerks throughout our region. Clerks are frequently relied upon for assistance, expertise and knowledge as we prepare grant applications or administer grant funds for city projects or prepare draw-downs to the State. City clerks are often our main contact whenever we need to appear at a city council meeting or are seeking information or action by their Mayors or councils. NIACOG salutes all clerks in the region and recognizes the vital role they play for their City.

State law requires each city council to appoint a city clerk. The duties of city clerks vary drastically from city to city. Some duties are defined in state law and many include taking and publishing the minutes of council meetings, maintaining and publishing ordinances, keeping city records, and administering oaths. There are many other duties, but these differ from city to city depending on staff structure, city size, and city programs.

The city clerk's job has evolved over the years and the skills needed to carry out the job have multiplied. In some cities, the clerk also holds the position of financial

officer, city administrator, or city treasurer. In most cities in Iowa, the clerk is responsible for filling out financial and other reports. In small cities, the clerk may also function as the animal control officer, code enforcement officer, utility billing clerk, payroll clerk, license/permit issuer, and complaint officer, among many other duties. Some smaller cities share a clerk with a nearby community.

Being a city clerk requires knowledge and related skills. While many city clerks have considerable educational credentials, much of the required knowledge is not taught in college courses. Consequently, city clerks seek professional training and development through state and national organizations. Clerks from a number of area cities have completed courses at the Iowa Municipal Professionals Institute. For certification at the state level, or through the International Institute of Municipal Clerks. If there is a constant in local government, it is change. Regulations, record, keeping, and reporting requirements change each year. Budgeting forms change and new financial challenges arise. Continuing education and attendance at the North Iowa City Clerk Association meetings may be imperative to keep the clerk up-to-date so that the city can comply with various requirements, mandates, new laws, programs, and technology affecting Iowa.



## LOCAL RESOURCES FOR SMALL PROJECTS

Cities and non-profits are often trying to accomplish fairly small community improvement projects that make a big difference to their citizens. These projects might include playground equipment, a book kiosk for the library, beautification for tree plantings, etc. Unfortunately, with tight budgets supplemental funds are often needed to help with expenses. These projects are often too small to qualify for State or Federal funding, so non-government funds may be the answer.

The purpose of this article is to provide a partial list of non-government funding sources including local foundations and advice about making donation requests.



### Local Foundations

- **Iowa County Community Foundations -**  
*www.iowacommunityfoundations.org/find-your-local-community-foundation.aspx*
- **Alliant Energy Foundation –**  
*www.alliantenergy.com/CommunityInvolvement/CharitableFoundation/Programs/029784*
- **Zoe Brown, Barkema Trust,**  
*barkematrust@hotmail.com*
- **Worth County Development Authority –**  
*worthcountydevelopmentauthority.com*

- **Hansen Foundation -**  
*www.hansonfoundation.org*
- **Farrer Foundation -**  
*Gerald M. Stambaugh, 641-423-5154, gstambaugh@heinyllaw.com*
- **Muse Norris Foundation -**  
*http://globegazette.com/elizabeth-muse-norris-charitable-fund/article\_bc7b96d0-cddc-11e6-bf31-871c9adf5d79.html*
- **Principal Foundation –**  
*principal.com/grants*

Always contact the foundation prior to preparing the application, to verify the deadline for submittal, discuss your project in general terms, and ask for insight about the application process, what amount of funding is reasonable to request, and the priorities for selection of grantees.

### Donation Requests to Citizens, Local Industry, & Banks

- Fundraising through local donations is always more successful when personal visits are made to potential funders.
- Consider offering recognition especially for major contributors in the form of listing donors in communications, naming the event after donors, or placing a plaque in their honor. However, be very sensitive to requests for anonymity.
- Beyond requesting funds from local industries and/or banks, the local institutions may also have a parent company with a charitable foundation.

Best wishes on your projects!

## Calendar of Events

### May

4th	Iowa's SMART Economic Development Conference in Des Moines	
8th	7:00 pm	NIACOG Board Meeting @ Bennigan's in Clear Lake
10th	2:00 pm	Draft Flood Hazard Product Review Meeting @ Cerro Gordo County Law Enforcement Center
18th	2017 Passenger Transportation Summit @ Ankeny DMACC Campus	
19th	9:30 am	North Iowa City Clerks Association @ NIACOG Office
27th	North Iowa Band Festival	
29th	Memorial Day—NIACOG Office Closed	

### June

12th	12 pm	NIACOG Ex. Committee Meeting @ NIACOG Office
14th	Flag Day	
21th	Summer Begins	



## RLF FUNDS AVAILABLE



NIACOG has funds available in its Revolving Loan Fund. If you know of a company in your area that is looking to expand and create new jobs, they may be eligible for funding through the NIACOG RLF program. This a great gap financing tool for companies trying to finance an expansion plan. Funding is limited to a maximum loan amount of \$115,000 at 3% interest. Applicants must be from the NIACOG eight-county region and endorsed by the local economic development corporation. For more information, please contact the NIACOG office.

## HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRESS IN THE NIACOG REGION

Later this spring, the Cities of Britt and Leland will be ready to close out their respective housing rehabilitation programs. Both cities have one project remaining, and both of these will be completed soon. The City of Britt's Program was funded in 2014 through the Iowa Economic Development Authority's (IEDA) CDBG Housing Fund, also known as the CDBG Residential Housing Sustainability Program. Eleven homes will be rehabilitated altogether in the Britt program. The City of Leland's program was funded in 2015, also through the CDBG Housing Fund. Seven homes will be rehabilitated in the Leland program. Both programs were given administrative assistance by NIACOG staff. NIACOG congratulates both communities in their efforts to make a portion of their housing stock more safe, sound, and affordable.

Good progress is also being made by another NIACOG community which is presently undergoing a housing rehabilitation program. The City of Bancroft has completed the rehabilitation of 5 homes, and 2 more are underway. Bids will be opened later this month on the final 2 projects (#8 and #9). The City of Bancroft was awarded a Housing Fund grant through IEDA in 2015.

Two cities in the NIACOG region were awarded Housing Fund grants by the IEDA last year (Program Year 2016). These are the communities of Fenton and LuVerne. Three rehabilitation projects are now under way in Fenton and two are now underway in LuVerne. Both communities will be bidding on the second phase of their respective programs later this summer. Both have a performance target of 6 rehabilitated homes so good progress is being made in achieving their targets.

Three cities in the NIACOG region submitted CDBG Iowa Housing Fund grant applications in January of this year, for Program Year 2018. These were the Cities of Charles City, Grafton, and Manly. Each of these cities are applying for funds that would assist in the rehabilitation of 6 homes which, initially, is the maximum performance target allowed by the IEDA for Program Year 2018. The IEDA anticipates that grant awards for 2018 will be announced in late June, with the recipient workshop scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week in July.

If your community is interested in pursuing grant funds to rehabilitate homes and help preserve the housing stock in your community, please call Steve Wendt in the NIACOG office for more information.



NIACOG staff celebrated Administrative Professionals Day on April 26th by taking Jodi Wyborny out to lunch at the Mason City Country Club.

