

AUGUST 2024

MONTHLY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



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FINANCE

Parking Ticket Collections: After months of working with the Story County Treasurer and Department of Transportation (DOT), the City began collecting outstanding parking tickets through vehicle registration stops on July 2. This arrangement prompts the County and DOT to not issue vehicle registration renewals until the debt has been cleared. During July, the first month of utilizing this collection method, the City collected 474 of 4,128 outstanding parking tickets, which amounted to \$8,630. Notably, the process was able to collect from individuals who had 42 (\$740), 37 (\$640), and 25 (\$310) outstanding parking tickets.

While the agreement only stops vehicle registration in Story County, it prevents any Iowa-licensed vehicle with outstanding parking tickets from renewing online. This resulted in collection from 83 individuals across 20 different Iowa counties. Included in the collection numbers are three tickets collected for parking in a handicapped spot and 10 game-day parking tickets. Based on these numbers, staff believes the remaining approximately \$80,000 in outstanding parking tickets will be collected through this method over the next 12 months.

ELECTRIC

Ash Pond Reconstruction: Work continues on the Power Plant’s Ash Pond Reconstruction project. This July has been one of the wettest Julys in recent memory, making the removal, drying, and mounding more difficult and time-consuming. The goal is to have all of the old coal ash removed from one side of the pond, dried, and placed in a closed landfill on site.



July 17: This photo shows excavation progress toward creating a clay separation berm, which will become the eastern side of the ash closure area.

August 6: This photo shows the former pond area looking north. The contractor has excavated most of the ash from the southern part to start the drying process on the northern part.



July 24: This photo shows continued work on the separation berm, which was slowed due to wet soil and ash conditions.

August 8: This photo shows compacted ash in the closure area, which will ultimately be covered with a geomembrane to create the final closure area.



CT-1 Turbine: The CT-1 turbine failed on July 15 when material passed through the high-pressure section during operation. The unit has been removed and is currently traveling to Florida to be opened, diagnosed, and closed. The unit should be repaired or replaced before late December.

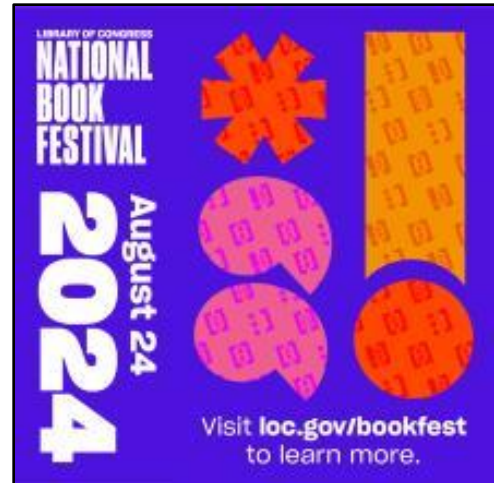


New Electric Rates: Following approval of new electric rates by the City Council, staff is working on communication efforts to get the information out to customers. In connection with the newly-adopted Time-of-Use rates, a cross-departmental team is reviewing 15 proposals for a new Advanced-Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system. Upon a recommendation of a preferred vendor(s), staff will return to the City Council for contract approval, likely in September or October.

Weather and Energy Costs: While the wetter-than-normal weather in July posed challenges for the Ash Pond Reconstruction project, the weather did have some benefits. Temperatures were cooler than normal in July as well, and this led to energy sales and energy prices being down compared to a year ago. Lower-cost energy has benefitted Electric customers.

LIBRARY

Library of Congress National Book Festival: Ames Public Library Director Sheila Schofer and Adult Services Manager Megan Klein-Hewett represented the Iowa Center of the Book at this year's Library of Congress National Book Festival in Washington, D.C. They talked with attendees about this year's Great Reads from Great Places selections for Iowa and met representatives from other states' Centers for the Book.



Mental Health Mondays: Ames Public Library now has on-site office hours with staff from Mary Greeley Medical Center (MGMC) Behavioral Health and UnityPoint Health Eyerly Ball on Mondays. Members of the public can drop in between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. or 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. to speak with staff from MGMC and UnityPoint Health, respectively, about mental health services.

Summer Wrap Up: Ames Public Library's annual Summer Reading Challenge has come to an end with stellar participation! The contest had 1,003 adults, 441 teens, 1,683 children, and 197 babies and toddlers who read a total of over 6.9 million minutes, or 115,000 hours!

Ames Public Library gave away 5,318 free lunches for children and teens this summer, thanks to



funding from the Ames Public Library Friends Foundation, Chevron-REG, and Mary Greeley Medical Center. This program helps combat childhood hunger over the summer, when school lunches are not available to children in need.

As always, the Library also provided a multitude of special programs to keep families engaged, learning, and moving through the summer months.

Voter Registration and Information: Ames Public Library will host the non-partisan League of Women Voters for voter registration assistance several times before the upcoming election. Check for those dates, along with candidate forums and

informational events at www.amespubliclibrary.org/learn-explore/civics-center/voting.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Aquatics: Again this year, the Furman Aquatic Center (FAC) has had to close pool basins and/or slides due to weather or staffing shortages with lifeguards. Weather cannot be controlled; however, patrons do question why more staff are not hired so basins and amenities can always be open. FAC currently has 75 lifeguards, with many serving in other capacities such as shift leaders or swim instructors. FAC lifeguards consist of 39 high school students, 34 college students, and two non-traditional staff. Once school begins, almost all of these employees have classes during the weekdays. Many have other part-time jobs, and 55 are involved in extra-curricular activities. Staff time is limited, especially once the school year begins.

Since FAC opened in 2010, the goal has been to have all basins and slides open from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. This has been challenging in recent years due to some of the aforementioned issues. To increase the number of lifeguards, staff has increased wages, offered certification classes at no cost to FAC employees (current and future), offered flexible work schedules, and experimented with non-traditional recruiting techniques.

Another factor that creates a challenge for staff is that Ames has a longer season than other area pools and stays open for longer hours throughout the season. This includes opening earlier for early morning swims, tot time, water walking, and lap swim and closing an average of one to two hours later each day than peer aquatic facilities. The chart below shows a comparison of hours and season length for area pools.

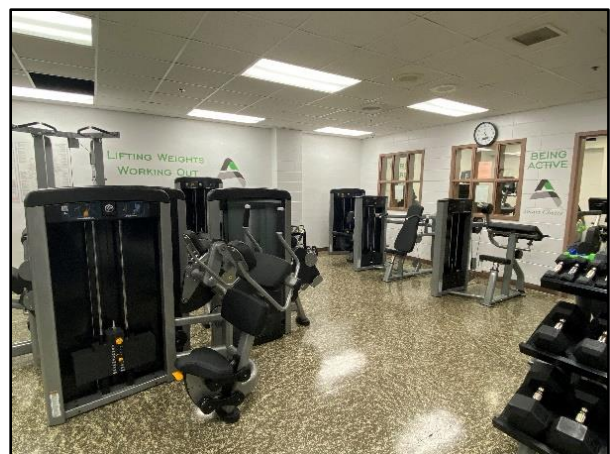
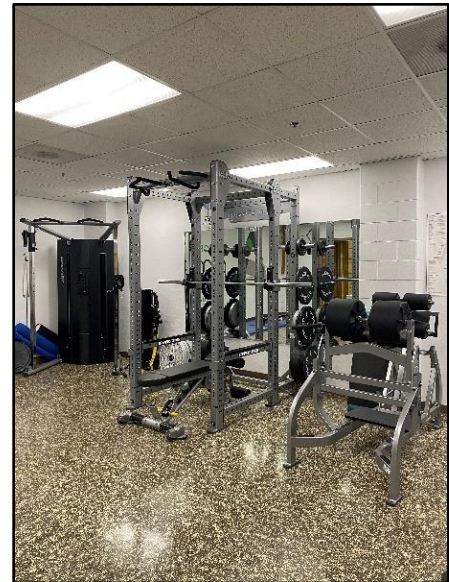
City	Closing Hours	Season Begins	Season Ends
Altoona	6:00 p.m.	May 25	August 18
Ames	8:00 p.m.	May 25	September 2
Ankeny	7:00 p.m.	May 25	August 22*
Boone	8:30 p.m. (M-Th) 6:00 p.m. (F-Sa)	May 29	August 25
Clive	6:00 p.m.	May 25	August 17
DSM-Ashworth & Birdland	6:30 p.m.	May 25	August 11
DSM-Teachout, Northwest, & Nahas	6:30 p.m. June 4 – July 7 7:30 p.m. July 8 – August 11	May 25	August 11*
Nevada	7:00 p.m. (M-F) 6:00 p.m. (Sa-Su)	June 1	August 18
Slater	7:00 p.m.	May 25	August 18
West Des Moines	6:30 p.m. (Su-Th) 8:00 p.m. (F-Sa)	May 25	August 21*

*Open on weekends through Labor Day

Community Center Gym Flooring: The Community Center Gym Flooring will undergo a refinishing project September 9 - 13 which will include sanding, new court lines, and replacement of damaged or warping boards. This project will result in a closure of the gymnasium and weight/cardio room September 9 - 15 to allow for appropriate cure time once the project is completed.

Community Center Gymnastics Room: A portion of the multipurpose space on the second floor of City Hall which has previously been used for Parks and Recreation gymnastics and tumbling programs is being renovated to create office space for new positions within the City. Through the renovation of the Parks and Recreation Administration Offices, new flooring and storage has been added to the Activity Room to be able to serve as the new location for gymnastics and tumbling. Taekwondo has been using this space since 2023 and will continue to share the space with gymnastics and tumbling. The portion of multipurpose space where fitness and dance classes are conducted is unaffected and these classes will remain at City Hall.

Community Center Weight Room: The Community Center Weight Room equipment was upgraded in July with 16 new pieces of strength equipment. One piece of equipment is on back order and will arrive in October. This new equipment will serve the public, personal training clients, and fitness classes.



Fitch Family Indoor Aquatic Center: Construction continues on the Aquatic Center with All Star Concrete installing building footings and foundations. Sande Construction has completed the installation of the surge tanks and much of the deep piping that will go to the various pool basins. Vapor barrier has also been installed below and up the sides of the surge tanks.

Story Construction continues to conduct readings of soil samples from holes being dug and there has been no contamination found thus far. Additionally, there has been little if any groundwater seeping into any of the holes being dug.

Homewood Golf Course: As of August 26, 2024, Homewood Golf Course has had 19,143 rounds played. By that date last year, Homewood had 17,232 total rounds played. The table below shows the current clubhouse rental hours and revenue amounts compared to the same time frame last fiscal year.

	July 1, 2023 – August 26, 2023	July 1, 2024 – August 26, 2024
Paid Event Hours	27	30.25
Revenue from Paid Events	\$2,835.00	\$3,176.25
Non-Paid Events Hours	2	6.5

The public is invited to attend a demonstration of a VertaCat (pictured below), an inclusive golf cart, at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 10, at Homewood Golf Course. Ames Parks and Recreation is exploring the purchase of a VertaCat to have available for public use.



Mini Pitch: Plans and specifications are being finalized for the Mini Pitch Court to be installed in Lloyd Kurtz Park. The plans and specifications will be presented to the City Council in September and then be put out for bid.

Parks: Three staff members attended a weeklong seminar at the West Des Moines Rec Plex hosted by the US Ice Rink Association. Educational sessions included instruction on ice maintenance practices, ice compressor maintenance, and ice painting.

Staff received word in late June from Iowa State University Department of Entomology that a sample of mosquitoes tested positive for West Nile Virus (WNV) at Emma McCarthy Lee Park. Since then, staff has been conducting additional fogging applications throughout the week at the park. Fogging will continue until the threat of WNV is reduced, typically in late September.

The Ames Pickleball Club is donating \$15,000 for a shelter adjacent the pickleball courts in Emma McCarthy Lee Park. The shelter will provide shade and serve as a check-in area for tournaments and leagues.

Windscreens purchased by the Ames Pickleball Club were installed at the Emma McCarthy Lee Park Pickleball Courts by Parks and Recreation staff.

Parks and Recreation Administration Office: The office is undergoing renovations which includes new flooring, painting, and restroom upgrades. The restrooms will be converted to universal restrooms and designed to meet ADA requirements. All rooms except the restrooms have been painted. Cushioned tiles were installed in the activity room (pictured below) which will be used for Taekwondo and gymnastics programs. New flooring will be installed beginning in September. Remaining work includes restroom renovations, installation of new workspaces, and the purchase of new furniture, including conference room table and chairs, whiteboard, TV, and more. This project is expected to be completed late fall.



Wellness: Free drop-in classes were held August 12 - 17 with approximately 284 people attending the classes throughout the week. Participants were asked to bring food in lieu of payment and 26 bags of food were donated to Food at First.

A new session of Group Fitness classes began Monday, August 19, with 488 registrations. Classes continue to be held in-person, virtually, and outdoors.

A new session of Taekwondo began Tuesday, August 20, with 109 participants.

PUBLIC WORKS



Bill Schmitt’s Retirement: After twelve years of service as Resource Recovery Plant Superintendent, Bill Schmitt has retired. Pictured are Bill and his wife Jan Schmitt (Police) at a retirement celebration on August 16 held at the Homewood Golf Course Clubhouse.

Recycling for TVs and Monitors: Resource Recovery recently implemented a new recycling program for TVs and monitors. The units are collected at the Resource Recovery Plant for a fee. A contractor then picks up and dismantles the units so that the materials can be separated into clean, reusable commodities. The United States Environmental Protection Agency requires businesses to

treat computer monitors and TVs as hazardous waste. Fees for this recycling program are as follows: \$30 per unit less than 40”, \$40 per unit more than 40”, and \$60 per projection or console unit.

Rummage RAMPage: The eighth annual Rummage RAMPage was a huge success, raising a record-breaking \$62,400 for local non-profit agencies! Over nine days, the community event helped find new homes for 132,782 pounds of furniture and housewares, all while keeping reusable items out of the waste stream. Over the past eight years, Rummage RAMPage has diverted more than 865,000 pounds of material from landfills and raised a total of \$284,816 for nonprofits serving the community. Staff is grateful for the efforts of volunteers from 51 area nonprofits in making the event possible.

