

Warren County Board of Supervisors



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Warren County Counters City of Indianola's offer to purchase Library and offers to Reverse the 2024 Land Exchange

WARREN COUNTY, Iowa — Today the Warren County Board of Supervisors met to consider the City of Indianola's offer to purchase the current library location. The Library was part of a land swap of properties that occurred back in 2024. Warren County, pursuant to that agreement, is set to take possession of the current library location in 2029. Warren County did not agree to the \$680,000 purchase offer and countered with a best and final offer of \$1.25 million, which is less than the agreed upon assessed value back in 2024 to which all parties agreed. As an alternative, Warren County proposes reversing the 2024 land exchange with the City of Indianola as a collaborative solution that would return ownership of the current Indianola Public Library property to the City while restoring the remaining properties involved in the exchange to Warren County.

The proposal is intended to provide a path forward that allows the City to regain ownership of the library and removes the uncertainty of the library eventually being required to vacate the County-owned building under the current occupancy agreement. The Board believes keeping the library in its current location for as long as the City determines appropriate is in the best interest of the community.

In May 2026, the City approached the Warren County Board of Supervisors regarding purchasing the library property back from the County. The Board of Supervisors and the Indianola City Council subsequently met in joint session in early June, where the City requested that an appraisal be completed for the library property and surrounding parcels.

The property, along with three surrounding parcels, was initially appraised at \$815,000.

The City subsequently requested that the value be reconsidered due to concerns regarding the condition of the roof and the library's chiller system, conditions that were previously addressed in the prior land swap deal when valuations were set and repair/replace schedule was implemented. That schedule increased the financial liability of the county as the possession date neared. Further, on September 21, the City amended its budget to include approximately \$10,000 for replacement of the library chiller compressor. Despite

those conditions already being negotiated, the City requested, a subsequent appraisal valued the property at \$680,000.

Under the proposal, the City of Indianola would regain ownership of the library property without having to make a \$680,000 purchase from the County. In return, Warren County would regain ownership of all parcels transferred to the City as part of the 2024 exchange, including property associated with the former County shop yard.

The Board believes this approach deserves consideration not only as a collaborative solution for the library, but also as a matter of responsible stewardship of taxpayer assets. County supervisors are entrusted with protecting public resources, and the Board does not believe it would be in the best interest of Warren County taxpayers to accept \$680,000 for the library while leaving the City with all of the other property it received as part of the same 2024 exchange.

At the time of the 2024 exchange, the library property and surrounding parcels were valued at approximately \$1.4 million. The County properties transferred to the City—including the former County shop yard, the Temple Building, and the West Annex building on the square—were likewise valued at approximately \$1.4 million. Those comparable values formed the basis of the original property exchange.

Reversing the exchange would avoid the need to establish a new purchase price for only one portion of the original transaction. Instead, it would restore the properties to their pre-2024 ownership, allow the City to regain control of the library property, and provide greater flexibility regarding the library's future without the pressure of a County-imposed move-out date.

The Warren County Board of Supervisors views this proposal as an opportunity for the County and City to work together toward a solution that serves both Indianola residents and Warren County taxpayers.

Warren County has presented this proposal to the City of Indianola and has requested a response by 5:00PM on October 2.

