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was my function." Mauro, speaking of his time as a board member, tells legislators: "Did I do the job I should have? … Evidently, I wasn't paying attention, because it happened."

MAY 22: Albritton declines to answer questions from state legislators, invoking his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

JUNE 1: A state investigation into Iowa Workforce Development alleges that the state agency improperly handed out jobs, pay raises and bonuses. One worker earned $75,000 per year as a supervisor although he supervised no employees, had no defined job duties and worked from home. Other workers were given a total of $15,510 in "retention bonuses," although they had no intention of leaving their jobs.

JUNE 3: The Register reports that Cunningham purchased thousands of dollars' worth of goods and services, including Las Vegas show tickets, with a CIETC credit card issued to Vlassis. Vlassis says he never reviewed the credit card bills to see how the card was being used.

JUNE 19: Deb Dessert, the wife of former CIETC executive Bargman, tells legislators that CIETC paid her $53,000 over three years for consulting work. Dessert charged CIETC $65 an hour for her work.

JULY 10: Brooks and Vlassis refuse to leave the Des Moines City Council after being confronted with 6,500 signatures on petitions demanding their resignations.

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"With all respect, there probably has been some loss of public confidence and credibility at (Workforce Development)," Wilson said, referring to that department's failure to oversee spending at CIETC. "So there's lots of that to go around. And if (Workforce Development) doesn't do its proper role in the future, of supervision and oversight, and if CIETC doesn't do that going forward, similar kinds of problems will surface all over again. And I believe the board has committed to cleaning up its act, getting its house in order, and setting things right and doing things right going forward."

Neil said he was discouraged by CIETC's lack of action.

"Again, let me be very blunt," he said. "… There has been very little done to show that changes are going to be happening — and there are a lot of changes that have to happen. … I think this thing has went far enough. I've not seen changes."

surrounding the agency's use of public money.

CIETC might also continue to function as a stripped-down entity that doesn't provide direct services to job seekers, but merely passes money to other agencies that function as subcontractors. That was how CIETC functioned in the early 1980s until federal officials found that one of the CIETC subcontractors had misspent almost $1 million.

At the time, CIETC was run by a board headed by Des Moines City Councilman Archie Brooks, who had also served as chairman for the subcontractor. Federal officials said CIETC was guilty of inadequate oversight and accounting guidelines. Brooks denied the allegation. CIETC eventually had to repay — with taxpayer dollars — the money that was misspent by the subcontractor.

After that, CIETC officials decided the best way to control the manner in which money was spent was to elimi-

Food Prize campaigns for $13 million

FOOD PRIZE, from Page 1A

government has slowed to a trickle.

"It's taken us a little more time than we anticipated to work out all the logistics," said Ken Quinn, the former U.S. ambassador to Cambodia and president of the foundation, which annually honors the person who has done the most to end hunger.

Quinn

"Now, we see we've got to do some private fundraising."

Quinn maintains hope that the World Food Prize will eventually be in the same league as the Nobel Prize for peace. He envisions the old library as a place where foreign dignitaries meet to discuss food policy, scientists gather to share research and policymakers look for ideas on how to increase food production where it's needed most.

Businessman John Ruan, long a financial supporter of the Food Prize, put $5 million behind the library idea. Taxpayers have accounted for most of the rest, including $5 million from Polk County as part of a larger plan to land a state grant for the Iowa Events Center project. The city of Des Moines also agreed to turn over the library building once a new downtown facility was built.

But when local business leaders went to Washington, D.C., earlier this year to ask for $12 million more for the Food Prize project, they came home with only $350,000.

"With the budget situation here in Washington, it's been difficult to secure funding for many projects," said Dave Townsend, a spokesman for U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin, a Democrat and ranking member of the Senate Agriculture Committee. "Sen. Harkin would like to have seen more."

Delays in the library's move from the 103-year-old riverfront landmark to its copper-coated new home in the Western Gateway Park also inflated construction costs for Food Prize supporters, who have had to alter design plans first drawn up in early 2003.

The World Food Prize headquarters is the last in a line of six downtown Des Moines projects included in an agreement brokered with the state's Vision Iowa board of directors, which provides money for community and cultural attractions. The Iowa Events Center, Science Center of Iowa, Iowa Hall of Pride, Pappajohn Higher Education Center and a new city library all have opened since 2004.

The Food Prize project has been the least visible because, unlike the others, its organizers have until now made no public pleas for money.

City officials said they have yet to receive a formal proposal from the foundation on how it plans to use the old library. Complicating those plans is the building's status as a landmark on the National Register of Historic Places, which puts restrictions on how renovations are done.

"There's due diligence still to be done on their part, clearly. That means understanding what they're getting into," said Andrea Hauer, the city's economic development coordinator. "A lot of work will have to be done to keep it viable, economically and physically."

Eventually, the city must solicit competing proposals for the library building. Hauer said city leaders want a long-term lease and a tenant who will fulfill a "public purpose" in an area that would be central to the proposed Principal Riverwalk.

"Clearly, the Food Prize is a fascinating project that's different from a lot of other projects because of its nature and location," Hauer said.

The library renovation originally was billed as a $14 million project. Ruan revised the estimate to $23 million later that year when he announced his family's $5 million contribution. The price climbed to $27 million in 2003.

Consultants have said the building is in reasonably good shape, and foundation leaders already have begun to choose an architect.

City officials said they expect a lease agreement to be in place before the end of the year. Quinn has said he wants to move in by 2008.

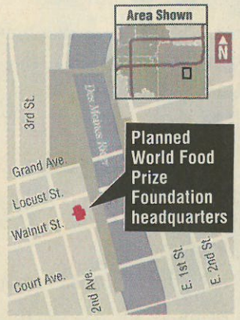
He and his staff plan to use the building for the foundation's annual weeklong awards ceremony. It would also include an agricultural museum, interactive exhibits and meeting rooms. He envisions a showcase that would pay tribute to several Iowans, including Cresco native Norman Borlaug, the "father of the Green Revolution" and winner of the 1970 Nobel Prize; Herbert Hoover, the Iowa-born president credited with saving thousands with food shipped overseas during World War I; Henry Wallace, former vice president; George Washington Carver, agricultural researcher; and Jessie Field Shambaugh, who created the 4-H program.

"We're not after this building to have office space. My goal is to turn this into the focal point of food and agriculture, where leaders come and talk about the important ideas," Quinn said.

Reporter Bert Dalmer can be reached at (515) 284-8136 or bdalmer@dmreg.com

Food Prize facts

The World Food Prize Foundation is a charitable foundation conceived by agricultural scientist Norman Borlaug and sponsored by Des Moines businessman John Ruan since 1990 to focus on biotechnology, food safety and nutrition. The foundation hosts a youth institute and an annual symposium in Des Moines to recognize the top international achievement in feeding the world.



Sources: World Food Prize Foundation and 2005 Internal Revenue Service tax return

THE REGISTER

LOCATION: An office at the Ruan Center. A move to the former downtown city library at 100 Locust St. is planned by 2008.

BACKGROUND: The World Food Prize, founded in 1986 by Iowa native and Nobel Prize winner Norman Borlaug, was moved to Des Moines in 1990.

LEADER: World Food Prize Foundation President Kenneth Quinn, a Dubuque native, was in the U.S. Foreign Service for 32 years and ambassador to Cambodia before he returned to Iowa.

ASSETS: $10.7 million

ANNUAL EXPENSES: $1.5 million

ANNUAL PRIZE: $250,000

KEY PRIVATE CONTRIBUTOR: John Ruan and related enterprises, $401,000

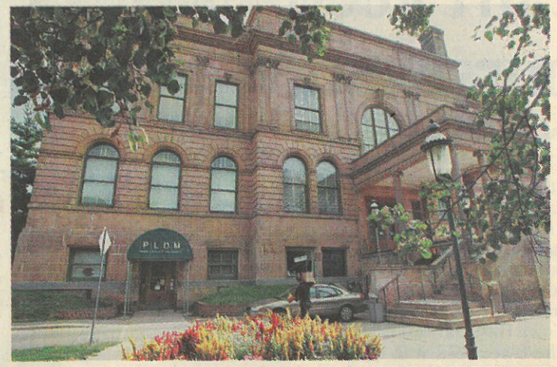
KEY PUBLIC CONTRIBUTOR: State of Iowa, $400,000

STAFF TOP SALARY: President Ken Quinn, $198,833

LIBRARY RENOVATION: $20 million

OPERATING ENDOWMENT: $5 million-$7 million

2006 PRIZE WINNERS: A North Carolina scientist, A. Colin McClung, and two Brazilians, H.E. Alysson Paolinelli and Edson Lobato, shared the award for their work to develop Brazil's infertile Cerrado region into a breadbasket.



DOUG WELLS/REGISTER FILE PHOTO

The former downtown Des Moines Public Library may be the future home of the World Food Prize Foundation. The estimated cost to convert the building is $27 million.

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