

First Jefferson County Council of Governments meeting Thursday

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JEFFERSON — About 50 people are expected to attend the first-ever Jefferson County Council of Governments meeting on Thursday, Sept. 29.

Open to the public, the event takes place at the Jefferson County Fair Park Activity Center. It will begin with a meet-and-greet at 5:30 p.m., followed by a light meal, with the program itself beginning at 6 p.m.

The chief elected officials of each unit of government within Jefferson County, the county legislative delegation and the chief administrative officials for the units of government that have one were invited to the gathering.

“There will be county, municipalities and towns reports and then a lightly structured discussion about how we can work together,” Jefferson County Board of Supervisors Chairperson Jim Schroeder said. “This is a first-time thing, so we’re trying to keep it kind of informal. Really, the main purpose is just to get to know each other.

“We all have challenges,” he continued. “Some of us have the same challenges, no matter if it’s a town or the state Legislature, and some of us have unique challenges. We want to give people and opportunity to talk about those so that we can understand each other better.”

Jefferson County Administrator Ben Wehmeier, who originally proposed the idea of holding the event, agreed.

“At the end of the day, we’re all in this together,” Wehmeier said. “When we started looking at services being provided, it impacts everyone the same. So there’s opportunities that we can work together to provide efficient and effective services. This is one way toward that.”

Wehmeier said that it could be any type of service, pointing to the use of brine by community public works as an example.

“The brine is used in coordination with the county highway shops,” he said. “So there’s a service that we can make from an economy of sales standpoint of providing brine. The communities don’t have to make that investment in terms of actual plant production, just in the equipment to distribute it. It’s an easy location (to access) and it’s an opportunity to provide a unique service that couldn’t be provided before.”

Schroeder and Wehmeier said the discussion topics can be whatever the attendees wish to speak about.

At 7 p.m., there will be a presentation of a statewide transportation summit aired.

“The (summit) was set after

we set this date for the Council of Governments,” Wehmeier said.

“They’re asking every county to host this (summit) for everybody, so we thought this might be a good way to do it.”

The event is expected to conclude at 8 p.m., but Wehmeier said it might run longer to accommodate the transportation summit.