

# December Member Clips

## **Brodhead**

- Brodhead Water & Light donates to local law enforcement

## **Cedarburg**

- CL&W General Manager accepts new role with WPPI Energy

## **Eagle River**

- Eagle River Light & Water donates to several local groups
- Eagle River Light & Water employee hangs holiday decorations

## **Florence**

- Florence Utilities provides donations to local non-profits

## **Hartford**

- Hartford Utilities helps assess electric & gas utilities after garage fireiption

## **Independence**

- Downtown apartment project utilizes local businesses including Independence Light & Power

## **Kaukauna**

- Donations for visitor's bleachers in Unison Credit Union Stadium received from Kaukauna Utilities
- Kaukauna Utilities completing conduit wiring & lighting work on overpass lighting
- Two sessions at common council meeting involved individual water filtration agreements with Kaukauna Utilities

## **Lake Mills**

- Lake Mills Light & Water hosting toy drive

## **Mount Horeb**

- Christian preschool thanks Mount Horeb Utilities commission for grant

## **Oconomowoc**

- Oconomowoc Utilities to provide free take-and-make kits at New Year's Eve event

## **Plymouth**

- City council approves cash flow analysis for Plymouth Utilities projects

## **Prairie Du Sac**

- Prairie Du Sac Utilities mark 110 years
- Prairie Du Sac Utilities contributes \$42,000 to high school solar project

## **Stoughton**

- Sun Prairie & Stoughton Utilities recognized for 'Green Power' participation

## **Sun Prairie**

- Sun Prairie Utilities sticker contest underway
- Sun Prairie Utilities says power outage caused by car crash

## **Waunakee**

- Waunakee Utilities launches first-ever holiday lights contest

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## Brodhead Water and Light donates to local law enforcement

### Utility offers handmade items, funds to support police projects

Locally owned municipal utility **Brodhead Water and Light** supported the community through donations to the police department in late November.

Brodhead Police Chief Brian Raupp received blankets meant to provide support to people in emergencies. These items were recently handmade by volunteers from public power utilities, including **Brodhead Water and Light staff**, during a conference hosted by wholesale power provider WPPI Energy.

**Brodhead Water and Light** Executive Assistant Terri Chapman won the blankets on behalf of the utility during the event. Police officers, firefighters and EMTs will give them out to people in emergencies.

"As a community powered utility, we are happy to be able to support residents in whatever ways we can," Chapman said. "From these blankets to monetary donations that can help children and even keep the city safer, it's important to all of us."

In addition to the blankets, Chapman gave funds to Raupp for a new speed sign and to update the police department's software. She also shared the annual \$200 donation to support their Shop with a Cop program, which provides a positive interaction between police officers and community members. Officers help children from economically disadvantaged families shop for gifts using donated funds for their family members during the holiday season.

**Brodhead Water and Light** is a municipally owned, nonprofit public power utility that serves more than 1,800 customers in Brodhead. It is one of 51 member utilities that make up joint action agency WPPI Energy, headquartered in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin.

Chief Raupp said the following, "We were surprised and extremely thankful to Water and Light for their donations. This allowed us to purchase a new speed board, be able to offer blankets to those in need, and purchase updated squad car laptops to improve traffic safety and officer



Chief Brian Raupp (BHPD) and Terri Chapman, Executive Assistant, Brodhead Water and Light



Chief Brian Raupp, Terri Chapman W&L, Corporal Tylor Hoard.

response to calls for service in the City of Brodhead. We are very lucky to have such great partner."



## City of Brodhead Local Offices for Re-election

The offices of three Alderperson at Large will be up for re-election in the Tuesday, April 1, 2025 Spring Election. All terms are for two years. If you are interested in running for Alderperson, please stop into City Hall for more information or call 608-897-4018 ext 150. City Hall is open Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

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# CL&W general manager accepts new role with WPPI Energy

## Huse appointed interim utility GM

By Christina Luick  
cluick@conley.net.com  
262-224-4166

CEDARBURG — The Cedarburg Light & Water Commission has named Karsten Huse interim general manager for the community’s not-for-profit electric and water utility following the announcement of Ben Collins’ resignation.

Earlier this month, Collins informed the CL&W Commission that on Jan. 6 he will leave his role to become the director of power supply resources for WPPI Energy, Cedarburg’s not-for-profit wholesale electric power supplier.

Collins has been the CL&W general manager since 2022; he replaced Dale Lythjohan who retired from the position after 29 years.

“Serving Cedarburg residents and businesses has been a great privilege for which I am grateful, so

moving on is certainly bittersweet,” Collins said. “Fortunately, with Karsten stepping in to lead this transition, I have no doubt the utility will be in excellent hands.”

Huse began his career with CL&W in 2000 as a lineworker. He has served as the utility’s electric superintendent for 15 years.

“Cedarburg Light and Water has been serving local homes and businesses for well over a century, and our community-owned utility is strong as ever,” Huse said. “We are well positioned for continued success, and I’m excited about all we will continue to accomplish.”

Throughout his tenure at CL&W, Collins served on Cedarburg’s behalf as a volunteer member of the WPPI Energy Board of Directors.

“The public power utilities that make up WPPI’s membership deliver

remarkable value to their communities,” Collins said. “That local, customer-focused model is a big part of what has made my work so satisfying, and I’m especially grateful that in my new role I’ll be able to continue working to support Cedarburg and all the 51 communities that make up WPPI’s membership.”

The general manager for Cedarburg Light & Water Utility is responsible for both day-to-day management of activities and long-term planning, including overseeing the utility’s financial health, operations, maintenance and the delivery of electric power and water to the community.

Founded by the citizens of Cedarburg in 1901, Cedarburg Light & Water Utility serves more than 7,000 homes and businesses in Cedarburg.

Visit cedarburglightand-water.org for more information.

Eagle River, Three Lakes News



LOCAL DONATIONS — [Eagle River Light](#) & Water recently made donations to several local groups, organizations and establishments. From left to right are Walt Gander; Sandy Weber with a \$334 donation for the Vilas Food Pantry; Jesse Roberts of [Eagle River Light](#) & Water; Nancy Brandner with a \$333 donation for Warm The Children; Barb Leveille with a \$333 donation for the Salvation Army; Cheryl Todea with a \$300 donation for Trees for Tomorrow; Mike Sanborn; Karen Sailer with a \$200 donation for the Eagle River Historical Society; Kathy Schmitz with a \$400 donation for the Vilas County Economic Development Corporation; and Norma Yaeger with a \$200 donation for the Headwaters Council for the Performing Arts.  
—Staff Photo By JOSEPHINE HINDERMAN



Dec 11 2024 Page A001 Clip resized 84%



HOLIDAY DECOR — An [Eagle River Light](#) & Water employee hangs holiday decorations along Wall Street, bringing a festive atmosphere to the downtown Eagle River area. —Staff Photo By JOSEPHINE HINDERMAN

Dec 26

2024

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## Florence Utilities provides donations to local non-profits

Florence Utilities is pleased to provide donations to local non-profit organizations and community supporting programs around the holiday season. This year we are providing non-profit organization donations that are summarized below:

- \$500 Donation to the local chapter of the Salvation Army
  - \$500 Donation to the local St. Vincent DePaul
  - \$900 Donation to Florence VFW Post 3635
- "Helping our neighbors in the community is

very important to us at the utility. Our local utility office is staffed by local community members, and we all want to support our community in the best way that we can," said Roger Secrist, Florence Utilities Manager. These

donations were made possible through Value of Local Utility funding from the utility's not-for-profit power supplier WPPI Energy that are provided to Florence Utilities to support their local community.



Pictured from left, WPPI Energy Representative Jesse Roberts, Dorothy Vayda of St. Vincent DePaul), Florence Salvation Army representative Karen Wertanen), and Utility Manager – Florence Roger Secrist.



Left to right, Ken Johnson of VFW Post 3635, WPPI Energy Representative Jesse Roberts, Jim Brolin of VFW Post 3635, Bob Walizcek of VFW Post 3635), Utility Manager - Florence Utilities Roger Secrist, VFW Post Commander Aaron Volling with his beautiful daughter, and Zebulun Shaw of VFW Post 3635.

**TOP-TO-BOTTOM**  
Local News Coverage

From School Schedules to community resources to shopping and dining guides, new businesses, local events and information that matters most to you. Find it all in the **Florence Mining News!** Purchase a print or digital subscription by stopping by the office, calling, or

# Hartford Fire & Rescue fights garage fire Monday morning

HARTFORD — Hartford Fire & Rescue responded to Budd Street for the report of a garage on fire just after 12 a.m. Monday morning,

According to a news release from the department, the first arriving fire engine found the residence's detached garage, two vehicles inside the garage, and one car outside of the garage on fire. Hartford Police Department officers confirmed that all occupants had evacuated the house, as its proximity to the fire was dangerous.

Fire units initiated a rapid attack to extinguish the fire with help from supporting agencies from Slinger Fire Department and St Lawrence Fire Company, along with help from [Hartford Electric](#) Utility and We Energies who assessed the electric and gas utilities. Once the fire was extinguished, EMS crews provided rehabilitation efforts to the firefighters. No one was injured in this incident. Homer's Towing also aided in moving the damaged vehicles to assure that the fire was extinguished.

A fire investigator from Hartford Fire & Rescue along with a detective from the Hartford Police Department conducted an origin and cause fire investigation, and the fire was linked to a vehicle left running in the garage for an extended period of time, the release said. Upon completion of the investigation, the property was turned back over to the homeowner.

The detached garage was fully destroyed, along with the three vehicles. Another of the tenant's vehicles was also minimally damaged by fire and heat. The house and another detached building sustained minimal radiant heat damage thanks to the rapid attack and fire extinguishment by fire personnel.

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## Downtown Apartments Near Completion

By John Klotzbach Editor  
Dec 28, 2024



On the tour of the new apartments were (front, from left) Terry Toale (Banklowa), John Kurtz (County Supervisor, former City Council), Kellie and Brad Cole (Owners), Lisa Kremer (Buchanan County Economic Development Director), and Shawn Bainbridge (Buchanan County Economic Development); (back, from left) Matt Schmitz (City Manager), Ralph Moore (City Council), Jim Thompson (State Economic Development), and Kathy Jensen (City Council). Unavailable for photo: Deb Hanna (City Council).

John Klotzbach Photo

**INDEPENDENCE** – Thanks to entrepreneurial spirit, a \$600,000 Downtown Housing Grant, local business and city support, ten new one –bedroom apartments are coming to downtown.

In May of 2022, Buchanan County Economic Development Commission (BCEDC) and the City of Independence announced building owners Brad and Kellie Cole were awarded the grant.

“The Downtown Housing Grant provided \$20 million in financial assistance for projects supporting local downtown revitalization through new and renovated housing opportunities in communities under 30,000,” Lisa Kremer, Director of BCEDC, said in 2022. “The Downtown Housing Grant Program is a part of Gov. Reynolds’ \$100 million investment to increase the supply of housing options and protect and expand housing opportunities for lowans to live in or near the communities where they work. The funds are made available through Federal American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Relief Funds.”

Part of the grant stipulated there would be a cash or in-kind participation from the City. The city provided parking spaces and waived the building permit fee.

The idea of the grant was based in part on revitalizing the country’s economy after the Corona virus pandemic through investing in infrastructure. To that end the apartment project utilized several local businesses, including: Cy & Charley’s; Independence Plumbing, Heating, & Cooling; Johnson Plumbing; McGraw’s Carpets; MJR Construction; Eric Zieser Construction; Spahn & Rose; Ohl Construction; **Independence Light & Power**, Telecommunication; Walton Drywall; Metrics Architecture; Wolf Painting; R&M Electrical Solutions; and special Thanks to Susi Lampe and the City of Independence, and Lisa Kremer and Buchanan County Economic Development Commission.

On December 18, the Cole’s held a walk through for city dignitaries to show the progress of the project. Joining the tour was Jim Thompson, Downtown Economic Development Specialist with Iowa Economic Authority.

The group congregated at the couple’s business, Cole’s Ace Hardware, before walking upstairs to the apartments. An elevator will be installed in the new year. The ten apartments, varying in size from 55 sq ft to 850 sq ft, are all one bedroom with kitchen appliances and a stacked washer/dryer. There are several windows with interesting views of Independence. Rents have not yet been established, but interested tenants may call Kellie Cole at 563-920-7547 for more information.



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# Little Chute School Board reviews state report cards

By Judy Dixon Hebbe Reporter

The Wisconsin State Report Card, which gave the Little Chute School District an overall score of 73.3, which equates to Exceeds Expectations, was reviewed by the Little Chute School Board at last week's meeting.

Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Angela Wachtel also reported on scores for each grade level, noting that the elementary school and the intermediate school exceeded expectations with scores of 81.4 and 72.9 respectively. The middle school significantly exceeded expectations with a score of 86.4. The high school had a score of 60.6, which meets expectations, and is on track to graduation with a score of 87.4.

The Flex Academy scored 84.4 to significantly exceed expectations and scored 88.6 on a track to graduation. The Little Chute Careers Pathway Academy (LCCPA) scored 78.3 for exceed expectations and 94.4 on a track to graduation.

Donations for the visitors' bleachers in Unison Credit Union Stadium were received from [Kaukauna Utilities](#) in the amount of \$1,000, from EZ Glide Doors and Little Chute Performing Arts Booster Club/Crash your Concessions in the amount of \$500 each. Heartland contributed \$10,000 for a picnic table in the stadium.

The school board also received reports on safety drills held in September, October and November on all three campuses.

Grade 5-12 Associate Principal Sam Appleton and Elementary Associate Principal Rudy Botz reported on their goal and focus for this school year. Appleton will emphasize the importance of engagement by increasing attendance and decreasing the number of behavior incidents from last year by utilizing new strategies and procedures, SEL lessons, communication, changes to FLEX time and an increased focus on those areas at

the high school and LCCPA. The focus in the intermediate and middle schools will be on the social-emotional needs of the students with administrators creating and implementing systems of restorative discipline and behavior practices.

Botz will focus on building community response and creating systems to improve student behavior. He will provide feedback to staff and engage in community circles in order to raise the number of students who respond favorably to questions about grit in the spring panorama survey to 70 percent or greater.

A first reading of the course changes and the course guide was presented by High School Principal Tony Bird. There are minor change in courses, although students will find some restrictions on changing course schedules next fall due to class sizes determined with the initial enrollment.

A draft school calendar was reviewed by the school board. School starts on Sept. 2 and ends on

June 3. Thanksgiving break will be Nov. 26-28, Christmas break from Dec. 24-31, and spring break from March 30 to April 3. Students will also have no school on Oct. 23-24, Jan. 19, Feb. 13 and 16, and May 25. The second reading, followed by action by the school board, will take place at the December meeting.



John "Furnaceman" Kramer

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# Little Chute approves Buchanan overpass lighting and sidewalk plans

By Tom Collins Reporter

Work on one more village overpass bridging Interstate 41 was discussed at the final meeting of the 2024 Little Chute Village Board on Dec. 18.

Trustees considered some possible options for sidewalks approaching the overpass structure as well as who would handle the five lighting structures planned for the overpass.

In terms of the approach sidewalks on either end of the overpass the village board had options to do nothing, to place sidewalks on both sides to match the overpass sidewalks or to place a sidewalk on one side or the other.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation requested a decision by the village in order to complete its construction plans.

The village chose to install sidewalks along the west side of the overpass only noting more development on that side of the overpass. The village expects to pay 20 percent of the cost or \$7,100 for the sidewalk installation and see the DOT pick up the tab for 80 percent of the sidewalk construction costs.

The total length of the sidewalk approach is 627 feet according to the memo to the village board from Village Engineer Matt Woicsek.

The lighting choices for consideration also included doing nothing, having the DOT do the work, or having [Kaukauna Utilities](#) do a share of the installation work. The village board followed the public works staff recommendation regarding lighting.

The DOT will install some infrastructure during their construction period followed by [Kaukauna Utilities](#) completing the conduit wiring and lighting work for \$30,000 plus \$6,100 for engineering and contingencies.

The similar DOT work on the lighting was projected to cost \$41,250. Both trustees and staff members found more comfort in [Kaukauna Utilities](#) doing the work and also taking the responsibility to replace and repair the lighting in the future. The village does not have complete capability to perform that type of work according to Woicsek.

The village board also discussed revised cost share information from Outagamie County regarding improvements along county highways and community shares for that work.

Examples discussed included highways N and OO.

In some cases, the village's share with the county will rise to a 50-50 level with the county. An example of that cost share revision is acquitting right of way. The county formerly paid 100 percent of that cost.

An example of a different cost share equation may be something like a proposed trail along Highway OO. In that case, the county would pay as much as 80 percent with the village asked to pay 20 percent. In some cases, Woicsek suggested the cost share would increase for the village.

The village board also reviewed a \$6,000 credit for a portion of the new village splash pad that apparently doesn't drain as planned. The issue is a small area of the concrete. A saw cut in the colored concrete offers some relief.

Parkitecture representative Katie McDonald told the village board there is no warranty that covers the concrete issue, thus the credit. Her opinion was the village's close working relationship with contractor Vinton Construction would help if the concrete construction error cre-

ates any future problems.

The five trustees present for the Dec. 18 meeting approved the credit.

Trustees also approved a development agreement regarding the Smith Pharmacy project. The approval also includes up to a \$100,000 incentive from the village for the business project.

Many communities in our area, including Little Chute, send representatives to the Fox Cities Room Tax Commission. That body oversees the room tax collections from area hotels, motels and private rentals as well as the Champion Center and the Fox Cities Exhibition Center in downtown Appleton.

Trustees approved a staff plan to have ongoing representation for the village with the room tax body. The Little Chute delegates will be Village Administrator Beau Bernhoft and Community Development Director Jessica Titel on a rotating but continuous basis.

Work continues on a bypass for the Heart of the Valley Metro Sewerage District's interceptor project. The preparation work now will help crews as they do key work on the project in the spring. The current work includes completing the bypass and staging, especially in the lower portion of Heesakker Park and along the riverside trail.

At least two departments are expecting some new personnel soon. The public works department will likely announce the signing of a new operations manager as the calendar changes to 2025. Also at that time at least one veteran police officer from an unnamed jurisdiction is expected to begin patrol work for the Heart of the Valley Metro Police Department.

Police Chief Dan Meister said two other officer candidates are in varied stages of preparation. One is expected to complete training and go on patrol duty early in the year. A third candidate is now in sponsorship by the department and she will need to complete the Fox Valley Technical College police training program plus additional Metro training. Her active duty date likely will be in August.

Finance Director Lisa Remiker-DeWall said \$3.7 million in property taxes were collected as of Dec. 17. Village Hall is the most active collection site with 87 percent of the property tax collections made there so far.

Remiker-DeWall reminded residents they also can pay at the Bank of Little Chute or Capital Credit Union locations as well as other options.

Titel told trustees there continues to be development interest in the village, especially on the north side of Little Chute. That interest is something of a springboard to the future according to Titel.

"This will lead into the future land use planning effort," Titel said.

See Plans, page 4

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2024

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# Plans

*continued from page 3*

Despite winter weather challenges, construction projects continue in the village. A primary construction project is laying the Ebben Pond storm water lines between Holland and Vandebroek roads, according to Woicek. That project caused some temporary road closures recently.

A burned out dwelling at 1313 Miami Circle is on the village's radar. According to Bernhoft, The plan agreed to by an out-of-state

owner and the village was to tear the structure down to the foundation and rebuild the dwelling.

Bernhoft said the distant owner, whom he said lives in Washington state, caused an apparent delay in the plan. According to Bernhoft, the village may need to resort to a raze order for the former dwelling.

July storm water damage in the village and some persistent calls for remediation likely led to a meeting Dec. 19 with interested residents and Public Works Director Kent Taylor regarding next steps to be taken.

Trustees adjourned to closed session at 6:38 p.m. to receive an update on the village's new fire station and to conduct a personnel review. There was no action taken on either matter when they returned to open session.



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TUES, DEC. 24, 2024 - www.timesvillager.com

# City personnel highlight importance of answering tax bill questions

By Tom Collins Reporter

With topics like the school referendum and potential revaluation in mind, Finance Director Will Van Rossum took time during the Dec. 17 Kaukauna Common Council meeting to offer some tips for residents who are reviewing their tax bills and who may have some questions or concerns.

One overall suggestion Van Rossum offered that may assist at least some city residents is a YouTube presentation created last year that breaks down elements of the tax bill. That presentation is available on the Kaukauna Public Library YouTube page under "Property Tax Breakdown."

The video presentation walks viewers through elements of the tax bill according to Van Rossum.

Van Rossum highlighted two new details found on the 2024 tax bill and made mention of each one in a memo prepared for the common council.

One of the new elements is a section highlighting the school district referendum details. It is located at the center of the tax bill.

"This section informs taxpayers about the portion of their bill attributed to the recently passed referendum," Van Rossum wrote. "It also specifies the year the referendum amount will be removed from

the tax bill."

During the Dec. 17 meeting, Van Rossum offered a sample bill with an amount of \$254 for the current bill. He also offered the year 2048 as the year all referendum-related items on tax bills will disappear totally.

He also pointed to the box near the center of the tax bill that shows an amount labeled the Assessment Ratio.

"Currently it is listed at 76.7 percent, indicating the assessed valuation is 76.7 percent of the fair market value," Van Rossum wrote in his memo. "Put another way, the assessed value is 23.3 percent lower than the fair market value."

"This gap between the assessed value and the fair market value artificially inflates the mill rate displayed in the green, highlighted box near the bottom of the table," he explained. "Currently the city's mill rate is shown as \$22.01 per \$1,000 of assessed value."

While it becomes confusing for many residents, that often is an indicator that it is time for a revaluation. In fact that is a direction the city is pursuing to better align the assessed values with fair market values. Van Rossum explained previously that situation benefits many taxpayers.

He added information to that point in his memo to the common

council members.

"Currently, if the assessed and fair market values were equal, the city's mill rate would be \$16.88 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Correcting this disparity would also help mitigate the significant rate increases for most taxpayers."

In one of their many closed sessions during the final council session of 2024, the elected officials considered a contract for the revaluation process. Following that closed session the council voted unanimously to execute a contract with Bowmar Appraisal for the city's expected revaluation process.

The 38-minute open portion of the common council meeting also included several of the various committee and board minutes read aloud along with filing of several other reports.

In addition, the common council repealed and replaced a city ordinance to reflect changes in some highway speed limits in and near the city previously changed by Outagamie County.

The council members also received and placed on file a compliance requirement certification from the federal government regarding any lead line water replacements in the city. The information deals with the federal assistance for that current program.

Council members also approved the appointment of Alderperson Kelli Antoine to fill the vacancy on the city's Merit Incentive Recommendation and Review Committee. The vacancy was created by the recent move of veteran elected official Mike Coenen to another community.

One might say the council members finished the year in a sprint, at least in terms of the number of closed sessions. There were seven closed sessions, or almost as many as Santa's reindeer-powered sleigh when Rudolph is included.

The first closed session results were reported earlier in this story.

Two of the closed sessions involved individual water filtration agreements with [Kaukauna Utilities](#) regarding water filtration matters. One of the sessions centered on Riverside Park while the second regarded a similar water filtration agreement at what was referred to as Pool Hill.

In each case, the matters were discussed in closed session and each time the council members returned to open session motions were made to authorize Mayor Tony Penterman

to sign agreements regarding the water filtration matters at hand for Riverside Park and what was termed the Pool Hill.

A fourth closed session involved possible wayfaring signs in the city. In that case, the council members voted to enter into an agreement with an outside legal counsel to pursue action against vendor ASCM regarding apparent breach of contract pending that firm's failure to provide a detailed completion plan by Dec. 20 of this year.

A fifth closed session involved a possible city property sale along Evergreen Drive in the Commerce Crossing Business Park. Following the closed session discussion, no action was taken.

The sixth closed session discussion centered on a land parcel sales agreement. Once again, no action was taken when council members returned to open session.

The seventh and final closed session of the night regarded an amendment to an existing development agreement regarding a Central Block parcel. Once again, no action was taken after returning to open session.

The night of open and closed sessions adjourned at 9:04 p.m. Following the sessions, the elected and administrative officials likely were ready for a long winter's night of sleep and possible dreams of sugar plums or other holiday-related ways of relaxation.

Their work resumes in the weeks ahead after the calendar turns to January 2025.

## Village reminds residents Heesakker Park sledding hill closed this year

By Tom Collins Reporter

Potential village residents interested in all forms of sledding will have to avoid the steep temptations of their favorite Heesakker Park hill this winter due to the Heart of the Valley construction project in that vicinity.

The presence of a 10-foot construction project dirt pile plus several construction machines at that portion of the park influenced the decision to close the hill to those interested in the pleasures of down-

hill speeding over the snow, according to Parks, Recreation and Forestry Director John McDonald.

The village is offering the alternative choice of a sledding hill at Van Lieshout Park instead of the customary Heesakker Park choice.

With Heart of the Valley Metropolitan Sewerage District construction expected to be completed this coming May, the Heesakker Park sledding hill should be ready for downhill action again next year, according to McDonald.

From the editor's desk...

Quid que cupitissime sum  
vellectae qui odii  
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# Lake Mills Leader

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Lake Mills News Briefs

## Lake Mills news briefs for Dec. 12

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Becky Weber  
Dec 12, 2024

### LAKE MILLS LIGHT AND WATER TOY DRIVE

LAKE MILLS – **Lake Mills Light & Water** is hosting a Toy Drive now thru Dec. 13, from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. You can donate your new and unwrapped toys to 155 South Industrial Drive. For more information, contact the department at 920-648-4026, or visit their website at [www.lakemillslw.com](http://www.lakemillslw.com) in partnership with the Lake Mills Optimist Club and Fire Department.

### TRINITY TREES NOW AVAILABLE

LAKE MILLS – Trinity Lutheran Church, in conjunction with Niemann Ace Hardware and Leader Printing, is holding its 30th Annual Christmas Tree Sale! Christmas trees are sold to help feed hungry people. We have a fine selection of Frasers, Balsams, and White Pines. You can buy your trees at Niemann Ace Hardware 142 E. Tyranena Park Road, or the Leader Printing lot at 322 N. Main Street.

### LAKE MILLS HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR CONCERT DEC. 12

LAKE MILLS – The Lake Mills High School choir concert will be held Thursday, Dec. 12 at 7 p.m. in the Lake Mills High School Auditorium.

### LAKE MILLS OPTIMIST CLUB TOY DRIVE DEC. 13

LAKE MILLS – Optimist Club is able to help assist many local families in need during the Holiday Season by providing toys and clothes for their children and food for their family. As you are getting ready to do your Holiday shopping, don't forget we have toy drive bins at many local businesses or keep it simple by ordering straight from our gift registry <https://www.amazon.com/.../Imoptimists.../23CNO08MPMNBL>. We cannot thank you enough, for all the support we have received through the years for our "Adopt a Family" project. Bins will be collected Dec. 13. Locations include Ace Hardware, Bank of Lake Mills, Dollar General, Farmers & Merchants Bank, Greenwoods State Bank (both locations), Lake Mills Cleaners and Dyers, Lake Mills Market, Rock Lake Nutrition, Ryan's Auto, and TT's Timeout. Monetary donations are also accepted, and can be mailed to LM Optimist, PO Box 517, Lake Mills, WI, 53551.

### TYRANENA LADIES CLUB BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

LAKE MILLS - Breakfast with Santa, hosted by Tyranena Ladies Club, will be held at the American Legion on Dec. 14. Breakfast will be served from 9 to to:30 a.m. Bring your cameras to get a picture with Santa. Tickets are \$5. American Legion Post 67 is located at 129 S. Main Street.

### **ST. PAUL CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS WILL BE HELD DEC. 15**

LAKE MILLS — St. Paul Children's Christmas will be held at the 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. services Dec. 15 at the St. Paul Lutheran Church 1530 S. Main Street, Lake Mills.

### **LAKESIDE LUTHERAN CHRISTMAS CONCERT DEC. 15**

LAKE MILLS — Lakeside Lutheran Christmas Concert will be held at 4 p.m. on Dec. 15 at the East Gym at the Lakeside Lutheran campus.

### **LMHS BAND WITH POP STRINGS/JAZZ BAND DEC. 17**

LAKE MILLS — The Lake Mills High School Band concert with Pop Strings and Jazz will be held Tuesday, Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. in the Lake Mills High School Auditorium.

### **CITY BAND DECEMBER PERFORMANCES**

LAKE MILLS — On Dec. 19 and 23, the band will present Christmas Concerts to residents of Lilac Springs and Trinity Pines. On Dec. 29, members will present the fourth annual holiday concert for the community at the LMHS Auditorium at 2 p.m. LMCB Jazz will once again join the band with holiday favorites at the Dec. 29 concert.

### **LIVE NATIVITY HOSTED BY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH DEC. 23**

LAKE MILLS — The Lake Mills United Methodist Church, 271 E. Prospect St. in Lake Mills, would like to invite the public to their annual presentation of the "Live Nativity" on Monday, Dec. 23 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

### **SAFERIDE PROGRAM TO BE OFFERED NEW YEAR'S EVE**

LAKE MILLS —The Saferide program will be offered New Year's Eve from 5 p.m. to 3 a.m. Rides will be from home to participating locations only and from sponsored location to sponsored location only. Participating locations are Aztalan Inn, Crawfish Junction, TT's Timeout, Hering's Fish Bowl, Sportsman's Pub.

### **FREE COFFEE & CONVERSATION FOR VETERANS**

LAKE MILLS - First and third Friday of every month Coffee with Veterans will be held from 8-9:30 a.m. at Farmers & Merchants Bank community room, 550 W. Tyrannena Park Road.

### **LEADER SEEKING VETERANS, CURRENT SERVICE MEMBERS**

LAKE MILLS - Each year, The Lake Mills Leader contributes to Hometown News Group's "We Shall Not Forget" publication, recognizing those who have served. The staff is again looking to speak with military veterans or current service members of any branch, including the National Guard, for inclusion in the publication. Any veterans or current service members with ties to Lake Mills, Milford or Aztalan who are interested in participating should call 920-648-2334 or 920-297-2073.

### **SUBMITTING A NEWS BRIEF**

LAKE MILLS — News briefs can be submitted by emailing lakemillsleader@hngnews.com to the attention of Becky Weber, or call 920-297-2073. Briefs should include the date, time and location of the event and public contact information.



# Christian preschool thanks Commission for grant

To the **Mount Horeb Utilities** Commission:

On behalf of the Agape Christian Preschool Board of Directors, we would like to express our sincere thanks for awarding our school one of the \$500 community grants for 2024. This funding went toward a much-needed replacement of the storage shed that houses all of our students' favorite bikes and outdoor toys. Thank you for helping us continue to provide a safe and nurturing environment in which our students can grow and thrive. Your support of our school and the community of Mount Horeb is greatly appreciated!

Amy Kellesvig, Director  
Agape Christian Preschool  
MHASD 4K Community Site

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# Noon Year's Eve run and ball drop returns

*Daytime NYE bash in Fowler Park for families*

OCONOMOWOC — There's no need to keep the kiddos up past their bedtime to celebrate the welcoming of a new year. The city's Noon Year's Eve celebration will return for daytime fun, including a ball drop, in Fowler Park.

The event began four years ago after City of Oconomowoc Marketing and Communications Specialist Paige Brunclik attended a daytime event at the Hartland Public Library with her sons.

"We had a ton of fun in just a couple hours inside the library. They even had a balloon drop at noon," said Brunclik.

She came back to work and told her colleague, Community Development Specialist Kristi Weber, about it and they started brainstorming how to create the event Oconomowoc-style.

"We love our parks, so we decided, let's take a chance and plan an outdoor event," Brunclik said.

The goal was to keep it short, simple and just enough fun for kids and families in the afternoon.

The two partnered with [Oconomowoc Utilities](#) to provide free take-and-make kits for a little craft activity at home that evening. Weber crafted a six-foot, glittering orb for the official city NYE ball. The Western Lakes Fire District was then tasked with using its ladder truck to conduct the ball drop.

As plans developed, another city partner stepped in, Silver Circle Sports Events LLC. The local race company offers a free kids fun run during the event. They also bring some rocking music for race hype up and the dance party afterward as folks wait for the ball drop.

"We are proud to celebrate our fourth year of donating our time, equipment and run management expertise to Noon Year's Eve — a small way for us to give back to our hometown community," said Sean



Photo courtesy of City of Oconomowoc

Participants of a past Oconomowoc Noon Year's Eve event wait for the ball to drop from a Western Lake Fire District's ladder truck in Fowler Park.

Osborne, owner of Silver Circle Sports Events.

Silver Circle also has a hot cocoa bar on site. Sales of cups of cocoa are donated to The Silver Circle Foundation, Inc., and will benefit the Downtown Oconomowoc Christmas Light Fund.

Participants must pre-register for the fun run at [silvercirclesportsevents.com](http://silvercirclesportsevents.com) under "Events." There

is no cost for the run, but pre-registration is required to make sure enough medals and race bibs are available.

The Noon Year's Eve event will be held from 10:30 a.m. to noon Dec. 31 in Fowler Park, 500 N. Oakwood Ave., rain or shine. The fun run is at 11:15 a.m. and the ball drop is at noon. There will only be street parking for the event.



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RENOVATION WORK IS UNDERWAY at the 'Laack Block' buildings on Stafford and Mill Streets in downtown Plymouth. The city is in the process of evaluating a restructuring of the parking areas behind Mill Street west of Stafford St. to facilitate the development of the \$16 million project. — Review photo by Ian Johanson

# \$4.3 million in city borrowing expected

by Emmitt B. Feldner of The Review staff

PLYMOUTH – The City Council Tuesday approved a list of projects for their financial advisor, Ehlers, dealing with a number of future items.

Ehlers will begin the process of issuing bonds for several capital projects next year and will conduct an economic analysis of the LAG Family LLC renovation of the Laack Block building in downtown Plymouth.

The pro forma review of the planned luxury hotel/restaurant/event space for the historic building at the corner of Mill and Stafford streets will be the first step in creating a tax incremental district to support the development.

The Waukesha-based com-

pany was also authorized to conduct a cash flow analysis for Plymouth Utilities.

The city is contemplating borrowing \$4.27 million next year for three projects – replacing the Mill Pond dam, reconstructing Collins Street and constructing an electric storage building at the Plymouth Utilities headquarters.

Mayor Donald Pohlman commented that since it has been a number of years since the city did any major borrowing, for many new council members, "This will be the first general obligation issue process you will go through."

City Administrator/Utilities Manager Tim Blakeslee said the tentative schedule is for the council to approve the bond sale in March, with bid opening in April and the final sale in May.

Ehlers will analyze the LAG Family project to determine if it will meet the criteria for city assistance through the creation of the TIF 8 district.

The council approved another item connected with that development and the proposed TIF 8.

Kapur and Associates will provide design services for upgrades to the municipal parking areas behind Mill Street west of Stafford Street.

In a memo to the council, Director of Public Works Cathy Austin said the work will include survey, necessary property acquisition paperwork, regulatory submittals and design/construction documents for the area.

"The idea is to struc-

ture that area similar to the east side of Stafford Street," Blakeslee told the council. "It is required to really help facilitate the (Laack Block) development."

The Ehlers pro forma (\$10,000 to \$15,000) and the Kapur services (\$74,710) will be paid for out of city reserves until the TIF is formed and the city can then be reimbursed from TIF funds.

Plymouth Utilities Finance Manager explained that the Ehlers 10-year cash flow study will help the utilities meet their goal of financial stability in the future.

"As we plan for future projects, we want to make sure that (our) healthy financial position continues," Russo wrote in a memo to council members.

"We're in a very good position," Pohlman said of the utilities' financial status, "but we don't want to overextend."

In other action, the council: Allocated an additional \$13,558 for the first-year cost of replacing in-car and body cameras for the Police Department.

Police Chief Kenneth Ruggles said the initial cost of the five-year project was higher than he originally had told the council.

Blakeslee said the additional amount can be covered out of the city's capital fund thanks to lower costs for other projects.

Approved the purchase of an outage management system for Plymouth Utilities.



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# Prairie du Sac Utilities mark 110 years

**Prairie du Sac Utilities** was recognized Thursday, Sept. 19 during the 2024 WPPI Energy Annual Meeting in Wisconsin Dells. The utility is a member-owner of WPPI Energy, a joint action agency and wholesale energy provider.

**Prairie du Sac Utilities** marked its milestone 110th anniversary this year.

“Reaching this point in history really highlights how steadfast **Prairie** du Sac Utilities is in serving the community,” said Director of Public Works Troy Murphy. “For more than a century, our utility has been working hard and will continue to do so in the future.”

**Prairie** du Sac Utilities is a municipally owned and operated electric and water utility, serving more than 3,500 customers in Prairie du Sac, Wis. It was founded in 1914.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## SPSD completes solar array

Dec 23, 2024



The village of Prairie du Sac, the Sauk Prairie School District, SP High School and Prairie du Sac Utilities come together Dec. 10 to celebrate the installation of a solar on the high school rooftop. SPSD

Through community collaboration, Sauk Prairie High School now has a 150-kilowatt solar array on its roof that will help save the district more than \$45,000 in annual utility costs.

The district plans to install more in years to come.

“This isn’t the last set of panels we’re going to put in the district,” said Superintendent Jeff Wright. “The rebates we received and the money we raised allowed us to save on energy costs. That funding could then be put into the classrooms, teachers, students and programs that make our schools successful.”

Funding for the \$645,491 project was procured in thirds: part Inflation Reduction Act tax credits, part district funds and part grants and community donations. Residents worked together as part of Sauk Prairie Solar Schools to connect with other community members and explain how the technology works. Their efforts raised \$90,000.

That total included a contribution of more than \$42,000 from Prairie du Sac Utilities for the high school project. The next aim is to install a 200-kilowatt array on the roof of Bridges Elementary School and the district administration office, which is set to be completed in 2025. The utility will contribute another \$46,177 for that installation.



PRESS RELEASE

## DNR's Green Tier Program Welcomes Three New Legacy Communities

*By Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources - Dec 19th, 2024 10:02 am*



The city of Sun Prairie recently installed a large solar array at the city's wastewater treatment plant.

Photo Credit: City of Sun Prairie

MADISON, Wis. - The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) celebrates the end of another successful year for the Green Tier Legacy Communities charter with three new members.

The Green Tier Legacy Communities charter is part of the DNR's Green Tier program. Involvement is voluntary for businesses, local governments and organizations looking to work with the DNR to expand and enhance their sustainability practices.

The Green Tier Legacy Communities charter specifically empowers local governments to move toward a sustainable future through initiatives promoting environmental stewardship, economic growth, public health and social equity.

The DNR is excited to officially welcome the city of Sun Prairie, the Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission and the city of Stoughton into the program and looks forward to working with them to improve their communities' environmental performance and outcomes.

Green Tier Legacy Communities (GTLC) is a network that is committed to helping communities pursue actions that result in thriving communities with healthy environments, engaged residents and strong economies. Membership helps participants access funding opportunities and technical assistance, track their progress over time through annual reporting as well as learn from each other's experiences.

Each new community has demonstrated a commitment to pursuing environmental goals, and joining this charter will enhance their ability to achieve them. By connecting with other members to share their progress and knowledge, Green Tier Legacy Communities help each other become more sustainable and resilient. Some of the goals and accomplishments of the new members include:

- **The city of Sun Prairie** helped the community reduce the amount of waste going to landfills by increasing the frequency of recycling pickup from biweekly to weekly. The city is promoting renewable energy by installing the first two municipally owned level 2 electric vehicle charging stations for both public and city fleet vehicles at its City Hall facility and installing the city's largest solar array on the wastewater treatment plant. Sun Prairie's sustainability goals include writing a full climate action plan, completing a greenhouse gas inventory and electrifying 50% of the city's fleet vehicles by 2035.
- **Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission (RPC)** is a multi-service government entity that delivers a variety of federal, state and local programs to eight counties in northeastern Wisconsin. The commission is available to help member counties and communities in the Bay-Lake region with a variety of long-range planning efforts, including environmental projects such as coastal planning, invasive species management and climate resiliency preparation. The commission is a new type of member for the Legacy Communities charter, and we are excited about the potential collaboration opportunities that will come out of this partnership.
- **The city of Stoughton** has completed multiple projects related to energy reduction including the installation of an electric vehicle charging station in the City Hall parking lot, the conversion of all Main Street lights to LEDs and upgrading multiple pieces of equipment across municipal buildings to more efficient versions. The city's utility, **Stoughton Utilities**, has received national recognition nine times from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory for its green power participation and was recognized as a Dane County Climate Champion in 2023. The city formed its Sustainability Committee in 2021 to develop a formal sustainability plan. Approved in November 2024 by the Stoughton City Council, the plan mirrors the environmental priorities of other Legacy Communities and includes goals for energy and emissions, water quality and conservation, transportation systems and community health.

Learn more about Green Tier Legacy Communities on the DNR's Green Tier webpage.

*NOTE: This press release was submitted to Urban Milwaukee and was not written by an Urban Milwaukee writer. While it is believed to be reliable, Urban Milwaukee does not guarantee its accuracy or completeness.*



# Sun Prairie Utilities sticker contest underway

Roberta Baumann | December 2, 2024

Sun Prairie Utilities is hosting a sticker design contest for children in grades K-12. Each child may submit/enter up to two creations with the theme “What Water Means To You,” along with a written statement that explains the design.

The winner will be contacted and announced after the contest closes.

The top design will be made into a sticker, shared with the participants/community, and showcased on several Sun Prairie Utilities (SPU) promotional materials for an entire year.

Customers of Sun Prairie Utilities are eligible to participate by emailing the designs as a PNG, PDF, or JPG to [communications@myspu.org](mailto:communications@myspu.org) by Feb. 28, 2025.

Each entry must include a short paragraph explaining how the design reflects the theme, and all colors must be flat and solid, with no shading, blending, or halftones.

The entries must be original designs and cannot be created using A.I. For more information about the contest including the entry form, visit <https://www.sunprairieutilities.com/sticker-design-contest>

# W. Main Street in Sun Prairie back open after crash

Corey Moen | December 3, 2024

SUN PRAIRIE, Wis. -- Sun Prairie Police is asking residents to avoid the area of W. Main Street/Rickle Road due to a crash that has knocked out power in that area.

**Sun Prairie Utilities** said the outage was caused by a car hitting a switchgear.

There are currently over 1,000 people in the Sun Prairie area who do not have power.

Police said further information will be provided when the road is back open.



Waunakee Tribune

# Waunakee Utilities launches first-ever Holiday Lights Contest

## VILLAGE OF WAUNAKEE

Waunakee Utilities has announced its first-ever Holiday Lights Contest, offering a new way for residents and businesses to celebrate the season through festive displays. The contest invites Waunakee Utilities customers within the Village of Waunakee to decorate their homes or businesses with holiday lights, with the chance to win prizes and be featured on the official Waunakee Holiday Lights Map.

Tim Herlitzka, Waunakee Utilities General Manager, says the contest is a community-focused initiative aimed at bringing neighbors together in a celebration of holiday spirit.

“This contest is all about sharing the joy of the season and celebrating the creativity of our

community,” Herlitzka said. “We look forward to seeing Waunakee shine brighter than ever for the holidays.”

## CONTEST DETAILS

**Registration** — Waunakee Utilities customers within the Village of Waunakee are encouraged to register their decorated homes or businesses by Dec. 15, at [bit.ly/40FR2Oj](https://bit.ly/40FR2Oj). Once registered, each display will be added to the Official Waunakee Holiday Lights Map, allowing the community to easily find and enjoy each decorated location.

**Community Voting** — Once registration closes, Waunakee Utilities staff will narrow down the top contenders. On December 17th, Waunakee Utilities will post the

top displays on its Facebook page, inviting the community to vote and help select the final winners.

**Winners Announced** — Voting will close at 7 a.m. on Dec. 23 after which the three top-liked displays will be announced and awarded prizes.

## KEY DATES

**Registration Deadline:** 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 15

**Facebook Voting Opens:** Dec. 17

**Voting Deadline:** 7 a.m. on Dec. 23

This contest is open exclusively to Waunakee Utilities customers who reside or operate businesses within the Village of Waunakee. For more details or to register, visit <https://bit.ly/40FR2Oj>.