

September Member Clips

Black River Falls

- BRFMU commission hears substation replacement update

Eagle River

- Hydrant flushing scheduled later this month
- River Trail dominates city council discussion
- PFAS in Eagle River treatment plant traced to County G Landfill

Florence

- Free class for caregivers offered by the ADRC of Florence County

Hartford

- Hartford Touch-A-Truck event sees over 650 attendees
- Hartford Utilities grant program supports local businesses

Kaukauna

- City holds ribbon cutting ceremony for downtown alley project
- Kaukauna Utilities is replacing its No. 10 well building on 10th Street in Kaukauna
- Fairy walk at 1000 Islands

Maquoketa

- New holiday décor to grace city

New London

- New London utility crew repairs street lamp

Prairie du Sac

- Prairie du Sac village board meeting

Stoughton

- Council OKs new Stoughton Utilities lease

Sun Prairie

- Colonial Club presents award to Sun Prairie Utilities

- Dane County names Sun Prairie 'Climate Champion'

Waunakee

- Waunakee Village Board to consider 30-acre solar farm
- Waunakee to host first Sustainability Fair

BRFMU commission hears substation replacement update

By Garrett Aleckson

The Black River Falls Municipal Utility (BRFMU) Commission met for its regular meeting Monday, Aug. 25.

BRFMU general manager Casey Engebretson updated the commission on the ongoing process of the German Hill substation replacement.

“They did come and put the batteries and charger in,” Engebretson shared. “We got some materials. The line crew has put in some different rounding and some other conductors in there. We do have an aluminum angle that will go from the transformer to insulators, which then feed into the regulators. We haven’t received the insulators yet, so once we receive them the line crew will install them and put the aluminum bus bar in. They did get the cable trays in for the conductors that will go from the sub house over to the regulators. Right now, we’re just waiting on those insulators and hopefully they can get stuff put together.”

“Is that work that our guys do?” asked commissioner Donald Matthews.

“They’ve been doing what they can,” Engebretson replied. “The battery installation and stuff, there are some things that EPS did. The cable trays and stuff like that, our line crews have been doing.”

In other business, Engebretson discussed a generator switchgear replacement at the

wastewater treatment plant. The generator or programming has been having issues.

“Back in 2007, they put in a whole plant generator at that time, and I think the original plan at that time was to have the ability to put excess energy out onto the grid,” said Engebretson. “They’ve had periodic issues with that switchgear ever since it was installed. There have been a few pieces of equipment where we’ve had power outages and that thing will turn on, and won’t shut off. These last couple of outages we had during the fair, they had a heck of a time with it. They would get it to run, but then it wouldn’t shut down. We reached out to the electrical contractor that we’ve worked with before, and they are familiar with it and they said they’ve seen similar issues with and have replaced them in other communities or businesses. I told them to get pricing on a replacement. We are still early on in the process. We do have money in the equipment replacement fund if we do have to do that.”

In additional business, Engebretson shared with the commission a draft of BRFMU’s 2026 budget. The commission will review the final draft for approval next month, and BRFMU will have another month of data to adjust the 2026 budget.

“What I put in the memo

is, we have a couple bigger items that are not capitalized or maintenance items,” Engebretson explained. “On the electric side, that risk assessment we had for insurance a couple of years ago, we had to get on a testing plan for our transformers, substation relays and all of that equipment. In 2024 we did Plant Two, and we were going to and Plant One this year, but then we had the German Hill transformer failure. Then we had to do a bunch of testing for that replacement transformer. We’ll do Plant One next year. Before, I think it was like \$25,000. For the engineering, I don’t know how fast we’ll get into this Lincoln substation rebuild and voltage conversion, so I just put about \$25,000 in the engineering on that as well.”

“We put \$5,000 for a Well rehab in the budget,” Engebretson continued. “That one is less than what they did this year. This would just be chemical rehab and not taking any pipes out. On sewer, where the UV disinfection tank is, there is some concrete maintenance and epoxy. There is starting to be some erosion. And we did put in the consumer price index for a wage and benefit increase.”

The final budget will be brought back next month for the commission’s approval.

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Hydrant flushing scheduled later this month

Eagle River Light and Water Utility will perform an aggressive flushing of the water system later this month.

Beginning Wednesday, Sept. 17, hydrants on the south side of the bridge will be flushed, and those on the north side of the bridge will be flushed Thursday, Sept. 18. Flushing will begin at 4

a.m. both days.

Mike Sanborn, manager for the utility, noted that during the flushing, residents on city water might find their water to be discolored, cloudy, and have a strong smell of chlorine.

“We would like to assure customers the water will be safe to consume at all times, although it is recommended

to fill containers for drinking before flushing begins,” Sanborn said.

“The water department has been working on the most convenient ways to accomplish this with the least interruption to our customers. This work is done to maintain the high quality of water that we provide to our customers

and to ensure proper operation of the hydrants for fire protection,” he added.

Anyone who has questions can call **Eagle River Light** and Water Utility Mondays through Fridays between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., or by calling 715-479-8121.

River Trail dominates city council discussion

City's audit review went 'really well'

BY MICHELLE DREW
EDITOR

Frustration was palpable during last Tuesday's Eagle River City Council meeting after discussion of the River Trail project dominated approximately an hour of the nearly 2.5-hour meeting.

The topic was on the agenda to discuss creating a resolution of support for the trail project, similar to the one the Town of Cloverland recently inked. But after more than five years of talking about the trail, city aldermen and

-women, River Trail project representatives, and others involved in the process have dug their heels in either staunchly in support of the project, or against.

Most of the information brought forth during the Sept. 9 meeting has already been talked about previously. In reference to that fact, Alderman Dan Dumas said he was "sick of spinning tires on this."

Speaking in support of the trail were Alderman Vic Walshesky, who kicked off the discussion saying he was "100% in favor" of signing a support resolution.

Alderman Jerry Burkett launched his ongoing concerns with the project — including the safety issues

of the proposed trail option that comes down Highway 17/70 into Eagle River and maintenance costs the city would be responsible for — and said that no further action should be taken on the subject until a meeting was set with officials from the town of Lincoln.

"I still don't think it's safe," Burkett added. "I think it should go north." (Another trail option that has been presented includes a route that bypasses the city of Eagle River, and instead directs bicyclists to Sunset Road and out to County Highway G.)

To date, Lincoln officials have not expressed interest in joining the River Trail Commission, composed

of St. Germain, Town of Cloverland and City of Eagle River. The trail route using Highway 17/70 would have to cross town and private property in Cloverland, Lincoln and the city of Eagle River.

Burkett also asked that the opinions of the 22 landowners who would need to sign land-use agreements for the trail to cross their properties be brought into the mix.

Laura VanValkenburg, president of Great Headwaters Trails Foundation, told the council the group is close to finalizing a letter to send to the property owners and expects to send it out in the next couple weeks.

To TRAIL Pg. 8

Eagle River, Three Lakes News

Trail

FROM PAGE 5

Jim Swenson, River Trail Commission chairman, spoke on how beneficial it could be to bring the trail further east into Eagle River, and how the towns “from Mercer all the way to St. Germain” that already host portions of Heart of Vilas have seen great benefits for all types of trail users because of their involvement.

“The benefits for the municipalities, the businesses, the health aspects for everyone, it’s tremendous. And it’s only increased in the six to seven years I’m talking since the commission has been formed,” Swenson said.

Karen Margelofsky,

executive director of Eagle River Revitalization Program (ERRP), went on record saying that even if safety is a concern using the Highway 17/70 route, it’s still much safer than what’s there now.

“There isn’t anything, and right now people are still using it,” she said. “I keep hearing ‘the safety’ (issues), but right now they are on the road biking, with kids, with adults. By doing nothing and saying ‘it’s not safe’ (the proposed trail route), you’re putting the bikers in the biggest risk, the walkers, because you’re saying ‘hey just walk on the highway.’ We’re just trying to direct them to a safer path.”

Dumas said that he supports the concept, but maybe not the route, adding, “I find it hard to swallow that we are not

connected to one of the most beautiful trails in America.”

Ultimately the council decided to set up a meeting later this fall with supervisors from Lincoln in order to discuss their involvement with the project. Burkett indicated he would like those 22 landowners to also be invited to the informational meeting with Lincoln supervisors in order to gauge their support of the project. No date for that meeting was set.

Audit updates, three-way stops and brush dump ordinances

In addition to the lengthy River Trail discussion, the council also received an update on the city’s audit process from Clifton Larsen Allen CPA’s Scott Sternhagen.

“The audit went really

well this year,” he said, adding that the [Eagle River Light](#) and Water Utility audit also went smoothly. Sternhagen gave the city a clean audit opinion, which he described as the “highest honor you can get.”

MSA submitted a change order for the Silver Lake Road Project totaling \$52,936. The spokesman for the company said that order included a number of small projects around the city and was not all relating to the construction project on Silver Lake Road. He further noted the reconstruction of the road was going well.

On the agenda was discussion of the possible conversion of the Sheridan/Silver Lake Road intersection into a three-way stop sign, which died for lack of motion after council members agreed it was not necessary. While they agreed the addition of a stop sign was not necessary, Police Chief Chris Dobbs said that additional speed enforcement was needed on that street.

The council voted to amend the code of Ordinance #599 to create a new section entitled “City of Eagle River Yard Waste Disposal Facility” in the hopes of enhancing the enforcement capabilities of the police department when people dump things illegally at the site.

“We have very little teeth in our ability to cite people who misuse the facility,” Ginner said, noting they’ve experienced a number of

scenarios where people dump non-brush items, including a recent one involving cement blocks.

She added that there is a trail cam in place that captures license plates currently, which makes identification easier for Eagle River Police Department.

Republic Services updates facility

Kathy Linville, municipal sales manager for Republic Services gave a brief presentation of recent updates at the recycling and trash facility. Linville said the facility employs more than 50 local people and provides great benefits to its workers and their families.

Republic Services also is “deeply committed” to nonprofit organizations in the area, offering 100% of its trash services to a number of community events, including many of the larger gatherings put on by Eagle River Chamber of Commerce, as well as Sausage Fest and Phelps Scarecrow Fest. Bleachers also were donated to the local pickleball group.

Linville said the company has put \$1.5 million in updates to the facility here, including an optical sorter that was installed in July. “It can read the type of plastic and sort it properly with a 95-plus percent accuracy rate,” she said.

She also highlighted a new polymer center built in Indianapolis, Ind., built this year that is the first of its kind in the nation. The polymer center takes

mixed plastics and turns them into recyclable pellets that are used to make sustainable packaging.

“We process and send out between 110 and 140 tons of recyclables per day,” Linville said of the company.

In other business

- Mayor Deb Brown said the Eagle River Golf Course brought in \$78,000 over last year, but no full report was given as both golf course employees slated to speak were absent (excused) from the meeting.

- A conditional use permit was granted to Jen Tucci to install a drive-thru at 708 E Wall St.

- Tappy Rentals, LLC - TNT Nutrition was granted a conditional use permit for an electronic sign protruding from the exterior of the building, assuming they adhere to the city’s messaging rules.

- Zoning regulations relating to a minimum lot size for an originally platted residential and office-residential development were amended to allow construction on 50-foot lots, following the recommendation of the Planning Committee.

- The city okayed temporary signage and more for the annual Live Nativity put on each December by Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, Oct. 14, at 6 p.m. Meetings take place the second Tuesday of the month at Eagle River City Hall.



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PFAS in Eagle River treatment plant traced to County G Landfill

Sanborn: 'It was not a surprise'

By Fred Williston

SPECIAL TO THE LAKELAND TIMES

The County G Landfill on County Highway G in the town of Cloverland has been identified as the source of per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and also referred to as the “forever chemical” detected earlier this summer in Eagle River’s wastewater treatment facility.

The landfill is on land owned by Vilas County and leased to the Landfill Venture Group (LVG), a consortium of 13 Vilas County towns and the city of Eagle River.

PFAS have been detected in the region previously, most notably in municipal wells in Rhinelander and the town of Stella in Oneida County.

Mike Sanborn, director of the [Eagle River Light](#) and Water Department, first reported the presence of PFAS at the wastewater facility to the Eagle River city council during its meeting on July 8.

“I don’t have a lot of answers right now,” Sanborn told the council at that time. “The first step is proba-

bly going to be source identification; trying to figure out where it’s coming from. Because it’s not coming from our wells, we know that already. It’s coming from somewhere in our system or from the outside.”

Following that July meeting, Sanborn told *The Lakeland Times* the wastewater treatment plant accepts leachates (solid and liquid wastes) from two sources: the city of Eagle River’s public sewer system and from some area businesses which transport the fluids to the plant via pumper-trucks.

Sanborn confirmed the County G Landfill is one of the businesses which delivers leachates to the facility but stressed at the time no one particular business had been identified as the source of the PFAS contamination.

Expectations

On Monday, Sanborn spoke with the *Times* again and confirmed the landfill leachate had tested positive for PFAS.

“That was pretty much a known, with all the years of garbage and collection out there,” he said. “The stuff’s been around for a long time. It was not a big surprise.”

Sanborn said the first step toward

mitigation was for the wastewater-treatment facility to stop accepting material from the landfill.

The *Times* asked what would become of the landfill’s waste now that the city will no longer accept it.

“I am not sure,” Sanborn said. “I can’t answer that. Unfortunately, that’s a needed thing for the community, too, but I can’t answer what their plan is.”

He said the city facility will be subject to ongoing testing.

“We did test our influent and effluent, also,” Sanborn said. “There is a minor amount coming in through our regular collection system. It’s pretty minor, but still, there is some there, so I think it’s always going to be present. In my opinion, one way or another, there’s just so many sources of it that — over years of use by unknowing consumers — that it was going to be an issue. It’s out there, and it’s going to be a problem for a long, long time to come.”

The facility has conducted its first PFAS test on its effluent — which is released into the river — and the results came back positive.

The PFAS issue is still something the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is learning to

deal with, Sanborn said.

Because of that, he said the agency has not yet put any limits on effluent yet.

“I do think it’s coming but they haven’t done anything about that yet,” Sanborn said.

He also reiterated the city’s municipal wells have all tested negative for PFAS.

In addition, Sanborn said the water-treatment facility will not be required to take any radical remedial action and the situation is still a non-emergency.

“The expectation is that it will not go up from where it’s at now that we’ve identified (and eliminated) the potential source,” he said.

Future action, Sanborn said, depends on “the DNR’s future regulation of the substances.”

In theory, the PFAS detected at the wastewater facility should pass through the system and detectable levels should decline now that the main source of contamination has been eliminated.

“That’s the expectation,” Sanborn said. “It’s going to take time, though. We have a storage tank and it takes time to get rid of it all so it’s all in time. We are following what the DNR’s guidance is.”



Florence Mining News - (1881-1894 & 2005-current)

Free Class for Caregivers offered by the ADRC of Florence County

The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Florence County is sponsoring a Powerful Tools for Caregivers Workshop to all surrounding areas in Wisconsin and Michigan. Participants can choose one of the two options listed:

In person sessions are scheduled every Tuesday for six weeks, starting Oct. 7 through Nov. 11 at **Florence** Utilities Building, 501 Spring Ave, Florence, from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Virtual sessions are scheduled every Thursday for six weeks, starting Oct. 9 – Nov. 13 via Microsoft Teams from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is an educational workshop series designed specifically for the caregiver. You will benefit from this class whether helping a parent, partner, spouse, adult child, child with a disability, neighbor, or friend. As a participant, you will learn how to reduce stress, improve self-confidence, better



communicate your feelings, balance your life, increase your ability to make tough decisions and locate helpful resources all while connecting with other caregivers. Participants will receive a book, "The Caregiver Helpbook." Refreshments will be provided.

Registration is required by Oct. 3. To register, or for more information on the workshop please contact the ADRC by calling 715-528-4890.

Florence Mining News - (1881-1894 & 2005-current)



A special section with ideas, helpful advice and designed especially for readers 55 and over.

ENERGY NEWS
Consumer Information
FLORENCE UTILITIES
A WPPI ENERGY COMMUNITY

**ENERGY NEWS – SEPTEMBER 2025
HYDRANT FLUSHING**

Florence Utilities will flush water mains as needed on Thursday, October 2 from 10 p.m. through Friday October 3 at 9 a.m. To flush the water mains, our staff opens fire hydrant valves to allow water to flow through the pipes. Systematically opening the hydrants enhances water quality by flushing sediment from the main pipelines, verifies the proper operation of hydrants and valves, and ensures that the hydrant is operational in an emergency. During these periods, you may experience fluctuating water pressure and water may be discolored. We recommend you avoid washing clothes during this time. If you do, please check your water for discoloration prior to

washing any clothes. Hydrant flushing scrubs the distribution system and it may temporarily result in discolored or rusty water. This means the hydrant flushing is working. Under normal circumstances, the flushing route is carefully planned to control the direction of water. When a hydrant is opened, there may be a temporary episode of discolored water while fine sediment particles are flushed from the system. There is no health hazard associated with the discolored water. If you see discolored water, run the cold water for a few minutes, allowing new water to work its way into your pipes. Avoid washing laundry until water runs clear. If you experience any problems with water quality or pressure after a hydrant flushing, please contact

Florence Utilities at 715-528-3330.
HEATING ASSISTANCE

The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) provides assistance for heating costs, electric costs, and energy crisis situations. Operating with federal and state funding, the program provides assistance to approximately 225,000 Wisconsin households annually. Most types of fuel are eligible to receive assistance. Whether you use wood, propane, natural gas, electricity or fuel oil to heat your home, energy assistance is available if you qualify. Contact the Florence County Human Services Department at 715-528-6001 to schedule an appointment to determine if you are eligible for financial assistance through Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP). For more information regarding the program see <http://homeenergyplus.wi.gov>.
BUDGET BILLING

It is not too late to consider enrolling in the budget plan for payment

of your utility services for the coming year (September through August). If you would like more information, or are interested in budget billing, please call our office at 715-528-3330.

NATURAL GAS LEAK DETECTION

Natural gas is colorless and odorless. That is the reason utility companies add an odorant with an unpleasant smell to natural gas to help alert you in the event of a gas leak. The unintentional release of gas is potentially dangerous to the public and could cause fires, explosions, injury, and even death. A gas leak or damaged pipeline is indicated by the following signs: a 'rotten egg' odor; a blowing or hissing sound from the ground; dirt blowing into the air or water bubbling; or vegetation turning brown over natural gas facilities. If you observe the above conditions, move to a safe location and call **Florence Utilities** immediately at 715-528-3330 or dial 9-1-1.

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Equal Opportunity Living

West Bend, Daily News



Photo courtesy of the City of Hartford

Attendees check out Hartford Fire & Rescue's bucket truck at Hartford's Touch-A-Truck event on Sept. 6.



Photo courtesy of the City of Hartford

Kids were able to check out the cab of a semi and many other vehicles at Hartford's Touch-A-Truck event on Sept. 6.



Photo courtesy of the City of Hartford

Local youth enjoy checking out one of Hartford Electric's utility vehicles at Hartford's Touch-A-Truck event on Sept. 6.

Hartford Touch-A-Truck event sees over 650 attendees

HARTFORD — Beautiful September weather with sunshine and cooler temperatures set the perfect environment for over 650 people as they came out to enjoy Hartford's Touch-a-Truck event on Saturday, Sept. 6. The event served as an opportunity for kids and adults of all ages to wander into and around vehicles such as semis, tow trucks, tractors, a plow, an ambulance,

and more. The event boasted over 20 vehicles for attendees to check out, brought by a number of organizations including:
■ Homer's Towing Service
■ Laufer Trucking
■ Washington County Sheriff's Office
■ Zuern Building Products & Design
■ Hartford National Guard
■ Riteway Buses

■ Ewald's Hartford Ford
■ Zeller Transportation
■ Lycon Inc.
■ Hartford Police Department
■ Hartford Fire and Rescue
■ Hartford Parks Department
■ Hartford Utilities
■ Hartford Wastewater Department
■ Hartford Department of Public Works
"Without the businesses and

city departments volunteering their time to bring their equipment for free, we would not have this event or near as much success as we do. Thank you to those who participated this year, the city said in a recent statement about the event. "We look forward to seeing you all again next year to celebrate over 20 years of Touch-a-Truck!" Hartford Electric offered its

own expressions of gratitude and pride for its participation in the event, as journeyman lineworker Dan Meier represented the organization by spending a few hours answering questions and giving kids an up-close look at the utility's bucket truck. He also took advantage of the opportunity to hand out some promotional items which were a big hit with the kids, according to the statement.



Sep 25 2025 Page A03 Clip resized 47%



Photo courtesy of Hartford Utilities

Hartford Utilities leadership presents a grant check to Hartford-based manufacturer Broan Nutone for the improvement of its air systems.

From left: Hartford Utilities Energy Services Manager Ashley Sonsthagen, Broan Supervisor of Manufacturing Shared Services Doug Worzalla, Broan Site Operations Director Jon Pomasl, Broan Senior Commodity Manager of Global Sourcing Warren Long, and Hartford Utilities Director Brian Rhodes.

Hartford Utilities grant program supports local businesses

HARTFORD — A Hartford Utilities grant program recently helped Broan NuTone update its facility to save enough energy to power roughly 40 Wisconsin homes. The Hartford-based manufacturer designs and distributes residential ventilation products such as range hoods and automated air quality systems.

The utility supplied \$2,250 in grant funding to the company, which helped it improve its own air quality systems, according to a news release from Hartford Utilities. The funding, provided by Hartford Utilities' wholesale power provider WPPI Energy, covered the cost of a study to identify compressed

air leaks throughout its facility. With the funding, the business was able to upgrade its machinery to increase efficiency and reduce costs at the same time.

"We're proud to be a member of joint action agency WPPI Energy," Hartford Utilities Director Brian Rhodes said. "That partnership helps us keep our community thriving with these types of programs."

Once the study was completed, the work was undertaken with nearly \$4,000 in funding from Focus on Energy, an organization that partners with Wisconsin utilities to help customers save energy. In all, the repairs to vari-

ous machinery eliminated compressed air leaks that had cost the company thousands of dollars each year.

"Hartford Utilities is always looking to help our customers, both residential and business alike, in every way we can," Rhodes said. "This grant is a great example of how we can lend a hand to increase everyday energy efficiency."

This grant program is available to all businesses in the Hartford Utilities service area. To learn more, contact Ashley Sonsthagen at 608-825-1764 or asonsthagen@wppienergy.org with questions, or visit hartfordutilities.org.

Kaukauna, Heart of the Valley Times-Villager

Page 4 Times-Villager

www.timesvillager.com • Wed., Sept. 3, 2025

City holds ribbon cutting ceremony for downtown alley project

The City of Kaukauna officially unveiled its project to give purpose to an unexpected area in the downtown space on Wednesday, Aug. 27.

The Alley Activation Project, which began in April 2024, connected the 2nd Street Alley and 3rd Street Alley near Heritage Mall and The Pub.

Alley Activation is the concept of utilizing alleys to create a space for business and public use, drawing pedestrian activity.

Funded through the WEDC Community Development Investment Vibrant Spaces Grant, the alley and vacant lots between 2nd Street and 3rd Street were converted into an attraction with beautification elements such as outdoor

seating, a paved boardwalk and planting areas, with modern lighting planned for the future.

The Alley Activation Project is a result of a workshop conducted in the fall of 2021 by Ayres Associates Inc. and funded through the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. The city worked with Trevor Frank, architect from Short Elliot Hendrickson, Inc. and longtime Kaukauna advocate, to develop the concepts into a design.

The Alley Activation project also included renovations for the vehicular alley, including updating the storm sewer, burying overhead cables/utilities, and pavement replacement.



Brian Roebke photos
Mayor Tony Penterman cuts the ribbon on the Alley Activation Project along with city officials along with representatives from SEH, [Kaukauna Utilities](#), Rep. Shae Sortwell, and mural artist Shannon Ortnor.



The Alley Activation project also included renovations for the vehicular alley, including updating the storm sewer, burying overhead cables/utilities, and pavement replacement.



Lily Paul, former associate planner for the City of Kaukauna, ran to the ribbon cutting from her duties as a KHS cross country coach to say it was a project that showed collaboration from many city departments and outside organizations.



Kaukauna, Heart of the Valley Times-Villager

wed., Sept. 3, 2025 • www.timesvillager.com

Replacing the well



Brian Roebke photo

Kaukauna Utilities is replacing its No. 10 well building on 10th Street in Kaukauna.



Sep 03 2025 Page 12 Clip resized 44%

Fairy walk at 1000 Islands

The Kaukauna Public Library and 1,000 Islands Environmental Center presented the annual Fairy Walk, sponsored by Kaukauna Utilities on Monday, Aug. 18.

This whimsical experience is designed to immerse participants of all ages in a world of wonder, creativity, and imagination.

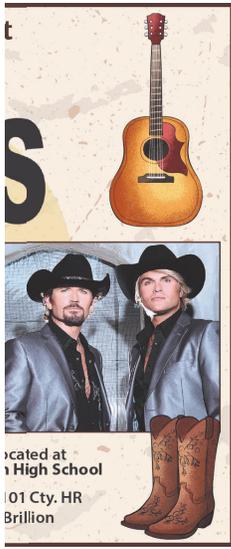
Held at 1,000 Islands Environmental Center, families could enjoy a multitude of fun activities outdoors. The pinnacle of which, was the fairy house building competition. Families submitted fairy houses built of only natural materi-

als prior to the event and participants could enjoy a stroll through the butterfly garden to see and vote for their favorite fairy house.



Brian Roebke photos

Eleanor Schmidt of Sherwood displays her fairy dress.



Services, Inc.



ow

facility

Community



Ayla Pamperin of Wrightstown gets face painting.



Guests could vote for their favorite fairy houses.

New holiday décor to grace city

By **KELLY GERLACH**

News Editor kgerlach@mspress.net

The Maquoketa City Council started Christmas shopping a little early this year.

In a meeting that lasted all of nine minutes last week, the five present council members approved spending almost \$17,665 to buy new, lighted, holiday snowflakes to liven up the downtown this winter.

The figure may seem high, city manager Josh Boldt told the council, but it will pay for 46 pole-mounted snowflakes as well as 16 new hardware sets for repair as needed.

Maquoketa's current snowflakes are outdated and well-used, in need of significant repair and unreliable, Boldt said. The downtown Christmas decorations typically were mismatched until 2016, when the city completed its downtown streetscape project. The snowflakes provided a cohesive look that branded the downtown.

While the snowflakes' cost may sound high, Boldt said, it's necessary for public morale and image.

"Frankly, I'm not thrilled about the price, but I think it's what you do in these kind of things to make a good presentation," Boldt said. "That's what this is about."

Investments such as the holiday snowflakes help Maquoketa "to portray our best foot forward," Boldt said. Otherwise, when some of the bulbs don't work or they are broken, "it maybe looks like it's not enough, where we aren't a high-functioning, spirited community when it comes to these things," he said.

The Maquoketa Area Chamber of Commerce obtained the quotes for the snowflakes and manages the outdoor downtown decor along with Maquoketa Municipal Electric Utility, which installs that décor. The city purchases it with general fund dollars designated in the miscellaneous economic development fund.

The lighted snowflakes should arrive in time for installation this holiday season.

In other council business:

The city's final American Rescue Plan (ARPA) dollars will go to the expansion at Sacred Heart Daycare.

The council gave the last \$40,000 in ARPA funds to the project. The council had committed the funds to the project in 2024 to help with the city's daycare shortage, which became more acute after closures around the COVID-19 pandemic. Various government entities received federal ARPA funds, which had to be committed by Dec. 31, 2024, as a way to stimulate the economy during the pandemic.

Sacred Heart expanded its facility, including two new classrooms for infants aged 0-18 months and toddlers aged 18 months to 3 years. The project also added new office space, a utility closet, and classroom expansion.

Sep 9, 2025 Updated Sep 9, 2025



MSP photos by Brooke Till

Maquoketa Municipal Electric Utility crew member Dylan Knudtson secures Linnea Bodenhofer and Zariah Fritsch in the bucket of the truck before taking them high into the sky for a special view of the park. MMEU and several other organizations entertained hundreds of area residents during the National Night Out event held at First Ward Park in Maquoketa last week.

DAVE SHEFFIELD

National Night Out

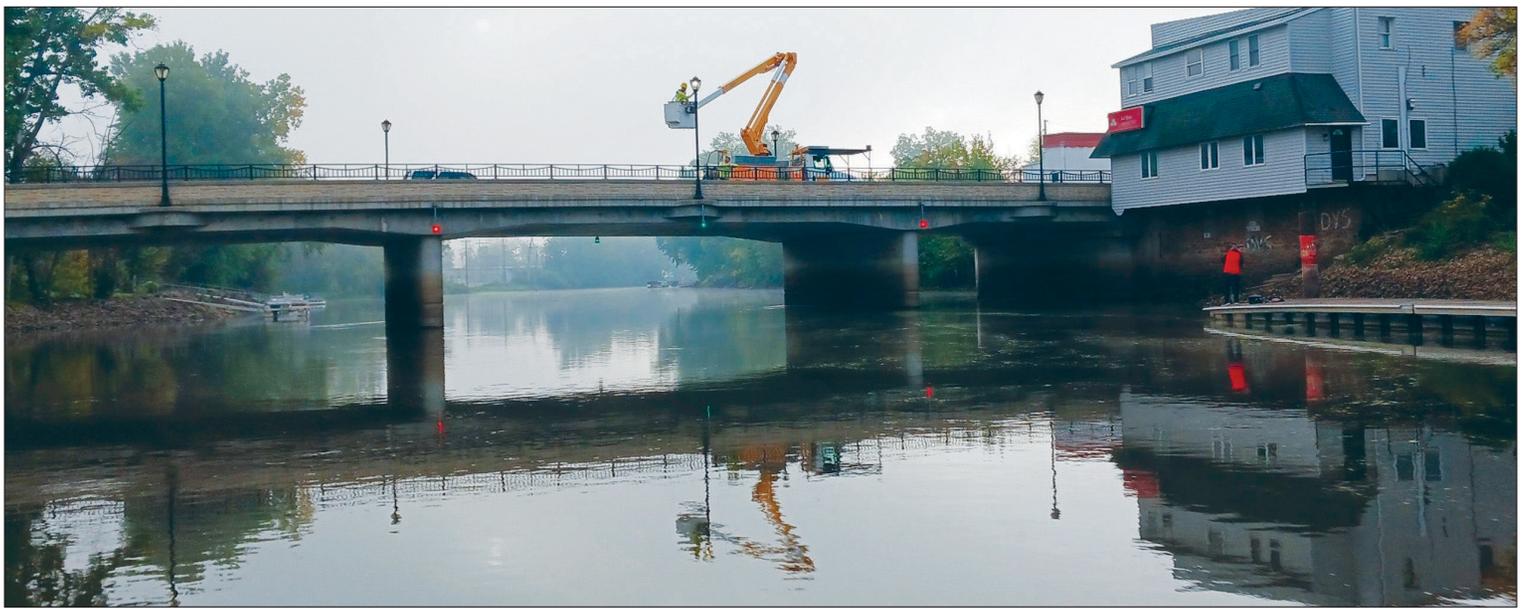


MSP photos by Brooke Till

Elijah Smith, 3, is all smiles as he uses the inflatable purple ball to play a game with some friends last Wednesday night. Local members of the police department, law enforcement center and fire department — along with Maquoketa Municipal Electric Utility and several other civic organizations came together at First Ward Park in Maquoketa to celebrate the annual National Night Out event.



Stevens Point Gazette



A New London utility crew repairs a streetlamp on the Pearl Street Bridge over the Wolf River on Monday, Sept. 22. The river rose above its usual late-summer level from recent heavy rains. John Faucher photo



SAUK PRAIRIE AREA

The Village Board of Prairie du Sac meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Village Hall.

The Village Board of Sauk City meets the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. in the Village Hall. If there are five Tuesdays in month, it meets the fifth week.

The Town Board of Troy meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Troy Town Hall.

The Town Board of Honey Creek meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m.

The Town Board of Sumpter meets the second Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

The Village Board of Merrimac meets the second Tuesday of the month at 5 p.m.

The Town Board of Prairie du Sac meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.

The Town Board of Roxbury meets the first and third Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m.

The Town Board of Merrimac meets the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m.

The Sauk Prairie Police

Commission meets the second Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m.

The Ruth Culver Community Library Board meets the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

The Sauk Prairie School Board meets the 2nd and fourth Mondays of the month at 7 p.m.

The George Culver Community Library Board meets the second Monday of the month at the George Culver Community Library, 615 Philips Blvd, Sauk City, at 7 p.m.

The Happy Hustlers 4-H Club meet the first Sunday of the month, at the Blackhawk Bethlehem Church., 2

p.m.

The Active Strivers 4-H club meet the first Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m., Tower Rock School.

The Sauk Prairie Earthlings 4-H Club meet the second Monday of the month at GraceWay Church, 1375 Lincoln Ave., 5:30 p.m.

The Sauk Prairie Lions Club meets every third Wednesday of the month at The Prairie House in Prairie du Sac.

All are welcome to come, meet some new people, have a good time and help your community. Social time at

5:30 p.m., dinner and meeting at 6:00 p.m.

The Local Alzheimer & Dementia support group meets the fourth Wednesday of the month, 3-4:30 p.m., at Maplewood. Call Theresa Grimes, 643-3383, if you have any questions.

Sauk Prairie Sewing and Quilting Friends meets the second Thursday of the month at the Ruth Culver Library, 1:00 p.m.

Sauk Prairie Community Club meets the second Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m., see saukprairiecommunityclub.weebly.com/meetingsevents.html for lo-

cation and further information.

The Sauk Prairie Optimist Club meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 7 a.m. and, if a fifth Wednesday, at noon at the Sauk Prairie School District Board Meeting room.

There is a speaker at each meeting, the Optimist SPHS Student of the Month is generally honored at the first Wednesday meeting, and the SPMS Middle Level Leader is generally honored at the third Wednesday meeting. Check out our Facebook

See Sauk, continued on page 8



Reedsburg Independent - 03/27/2025

Sauk, continued from page 7

page for further info.

6:8's Community Meals are back! Join us every 2nd Thursday of the Month for a free Community Meal from 5:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m.! All members of the Sauk-Prairie Community are invited to attend! For children up through elementary school we also will be offering a Community Story time led by the Ruth Culver Community Library from 4:30-5:00 p.m.! Come for storytime and stay for dinner! 821 Industry Rd, Sauk City.

Drop in to 6:8's fishing

clinic, for storytelling and fellowship with fellow local fisherfolk, on Mondays, 8 a.m. to noon at 6:8.

Beginners and "aFISHianados" welcome. Services offered, with donations accepted: new line respooling, reel servicing and maintenance, fishing poles and tackle available, hair jig tying. Learn to clean and cook you catch, and where you can fish locally. 821 Industry Road, Sauk City.

Indivisible Sauk Prairie holds its meetings on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the Sauk Prairie Police Depart-

ment Community Room from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. Contact info is indivisible-saukpr@gmail.com

The Friends of Sauk City History meet the first Thursday of each month at 603 Water Street, Sauk City at 11 a.m. Learn about your local history.

The Good Neighbor Clinic is a non-profit organization that provides free preventive, chronic illness and primary care for individuals in the Sauk County area who are uninsured or underinsured. The clinic is now seeing patients again by appointment. If you would like to schedule an appointment, please call 608-643-4749. The clinic is open on Monday and Wednesday from 1:00-5:00 p.m. The clinic is located at 95 Lincoln St., Prairie du Sac WI 53578.

The Good Neighbor Clinic needs volunteers to help staff our primary care clinic. Nurses, medical assistants, EMTs, CNAs, lab techs can all help. There is also a need for a data entry volunteer on Monday and/or Wednesday afternoons. We also need interpreters (paid or volunteer)

who can translate Spanish to English. The clinic is open on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Applications can be submitted through the clinic website at <https://goodneighborclinic.org/> or mailed to the clinic at 95 Lincoln Ave., Prairie du Sac, WI 53578. Phone inquiries: 608-643-6749

The CESA 5 Board of Control Meeting is held the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 626 East Slifer St, Portage, WI 53901.

Need help with your advance medical directives forms? Free assistance is available 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. the second and fourth Thursdays at Sauk Prairie Hospital, 260 26th Street, Prairie du Sac. Call 608-643-7589 to schedule a time. Walk-ins welcome.

On Sunday September 21st at 4 p.m., with a 3:45 p.m. sign up, the Knights of Columbus will be holding their annual Punt, Pass and Kick contest at St. Al's field at 608 Oak Street, Sauk City. Boys and girls ages 8-12 as of September 1st are invited to participate in the con-

test with the 1st place winner in each group moving on to the Diocesan contest. Winners will be determined based on the total distance of their punt, pass and kick. Any questions please call Eric 963-0338. There is no cost, rain or shine! Football or soccer cleats are allowed, recommended, permitted and encouraged.

Just an hour later, at 5 p.m., the Knights of Columbus will be holding the annual Soccer Challenge contest at St. Al's field. Boys and girls ages 9-14 as of September 1 are invited to participate with the 1st place winner in each group moving on to the Diocesan contest. Each player will get 15 shots on goal with varying points depending on accuracy. Please note, there will be two goals set up for the contest. Any questions please contact Eric at 963-0338. There is no cost, rain or shine!

Free Medication Take Back Day

Date: Saturday, October 25, 2025

Location: Sauk Prairie Police Department, 640 13th Street, Prairie du Sac, WI

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Cost: Free
Protect our environment and drinking water by properly disposing of your expired and unused medications at the Free Medication Take Back Day on Saturday, October 25, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. to Noon.

Follow disposal instructions below:

In a Ziploc bag, combine all pills (discard/recycle empty bottles), ointment/creams (discard boxes), and powders. Keep liquids in original containers.

In another bag, place inhalers, injectable medications, and sharps containers.

Sharps containers available upon request.

Note: Discard sunscreen, soaps, moisturizer, and other cosmetics in regular trash.

Sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Sauk Prairie Healthcare Foundation. Special thanks to the Sauk City and Prairie du Sac Utilities, Sauk Prairie Police Department, and Sauk Prairie Healthcare volunteers.

PROTECT YOUR ASSETS FOR YOUR LOVED ONES.

With a little pre-planning, you can assure your loved-ones receive your assets.

Call Tabitha at **608-661-4500** for a consultation.

- APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE - in Madison or by Zoom or by phone



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Sep 04

2025

Page A01

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City of Stoughton

Council OKs new Stoughton Utilities lease

Updates 30-year-old agreement on S. Fourth St. building

BY SCOTT DE LARUELLE
Managing editor

The Stoughton City Council approved an updated lease agreement between the city and Stoughton Utilities at its Tuesday, Aug. 26 meeting that considerably reduces the company’s rent moving forward, while compensating the city for some back rent.

City attorney Rick Manthe said the rental terms of the agreement, which replaces language drawn up in 1995, will be “substantially lower than prior leases for the building at 600 S. Fourth St.

“The lease, we view, is in compliance with current administrative regulation for what charges the utilities can pay to the general fund

of the city,” he said. “So we have it tied to the building depreciation schedule, which is about \$20,000 a year, plus any maintenance costs that are general for the building.

According to the terms, Stoughton Utilities will pay the city \$234,364.22 to satisfy rent payments from March 2023 through the end of 2024.

Skaalendal development news

The council heard a first reading about a proposed General Development Plan for the area known as the Skaalendal, in the Skaalen Development at 1214 E. Main St., the site of the former Badger Car Wash. Manthe said the idea behind the development plan was trying to “make it as consistent as possible with the other parts of the area.”

Turn to **City**/Page 2



Sep
04

2025

Page
A02

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From
A01

City: OKs

New arcade

Continued from page 1

Skaalen president/CEO Kris Krentz said the plan is to build independent living retirement condos, with construction to start this fall.

“It’s right across the street from the beginning of Vennevoll, so (it’s) real easy for us to just add it to our additional condo portfolio and help alleviate our years-long wait list,” he said.

Main Street arcade coming

The council approved a conditional use permit for an arcade/repair facility at 1305 E. Main St., which formerly housed Claws 2 Paws Animal Supply. According to the permit, operating hours would be Friday 2-10 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. To 10 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Contact editor Scott De Laruelle at sdelaruelle@ourkemediagroup.com

The Stoughton Courier Hub

Warren Estness

July 26, 1952 – August 31, 2025

STOUGHTON - Warren Estness, age 73, passed away peacefully holding his wife's hand, on Sunday, August 31, 2025. He was born on July 26, 1952, in Milwaukee, to the late Lloyd and Gladys Estness in Milwaukee, Wis. Warren attended Hawley Road Elementary and Juneau High School. After graduating from Juneau, Warren attended and graduated from United Electronics Institute in Des Moines, Iowa.

Warren was a manager for Ameritech, being in charge of the buildings in the western part of Wisconsin. He owned his home inspection business until the market dropped on the sale of homes. Later, he drove semis for Stoughton Trucking and then retired from Transwood Carriers.

Warren married his high school sweetheart, Linda Fails, and together they raised four children. Warren is survived by his wife of 54 years; daughter, Shannon Estness; sons, Scott (Jennifer) Estness and Jeremy (Melissa) Estness; and an estranged daughter; grandchildren, Kassidy (Casey) Ace, Kennedy (Daniel Wingert) Silbaugh, Chloe (Ben Suter) Silbaugh, Axel and Tyler Schmiede, Brianna, Hailey, Cole and Body Estness; great-grandchildren, Hoyt and Rudy Suter and Raylynn Ace; brother, Terry (Terri); sisters, Caryn (Roger) Landowski and Janet (Bassam) AbuDoleh; and many other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents and in-laws; sister, Gwen Berg; brother, Marvin; and son-in-law, Todd Silbaugh.

Warren enjoyed being up at the family cabin. He especially loved when the grandkids would come in and tickle him and jump on him to wake him up. He enjoyed working on his '66 Chevy Impala Convertible, searching the internet for classic cars and playing Sheepshead with dear friends. He was proud of coaching both of his sons' teams to their championships. Warren was always there to answer questions about cars, boats and house problems. He loved traveling with Linda, especially along their Route 66 trip.

A memorial service will be held at GOOD SHEPHERD BY THE LAKE LUTHERAN CHURCH, 1860 US Highway 51, Stoughton, at 12 noon on Saturday, September 13, 2025, with Pastor

Todd McVey presiding. Visitation will be held at the church from 10 a.m. until the time of the service on Saturday.

Online condolences may be made at www.gundersonfh.com.

Sun Prairie, The Star

Colonial Club presents award to Sun Prairie Utilities

CONTRIBUTED
Sun Prairie Utilities

The Colonial Club recently recognized volunteers during its annual meeting on Aug. 28 and highlighted Sun Prairie Utilities' support with an award.

The Colonial Club is a senior activity center that serves multiple generations by striving to offer opportunities to everyone who walks through its doors. The center provides approximately 25 ongoing programs, along with 40 or more specialized educational offerings and classes for people to choose from.



CORA SEIBT

SPU Operations and Purchasing Coordinator Lori Ewoldt, Colonial Club Executive Director Melody Riedel, and Colonial Club Volunteer and Special Events Coordinator Tamara Sondgeroth pose with Sun Prairie Utilities 2025 Colonial Club Business Leadership Award.

Each year, the Colonial Club honors a business that exemplifies exceptional leadership

and a spirit of volunteerism during its annual meeting and volunteer recognition event. This

year, Colonial Club staff and its board of directors chose to recognize Sun Prairie Utilities with the senior center's Business Leadership Award for the utility's many years of dedicated service to seniors and the center.

"For more than 15 years, SPU has faithfully delivered meals to local seniors, ensuring that some of the most vulnerable members of our community receive the nutrition and connection they need. Their commitment doesn't stop there—they also provide essential support each year by helping with setup for StrawberryFest, our largest public

fundraiser held every June," shared Tamara Sondgeroth, the volunteer and special events coordinator at the Colonial Club Senior Activity Center.

Sun Prairie Utilities is a non-profit municipal water and electric utility that serves residents and businesses in and around the City of Sun Prairie. SPU staff are dedicated to meeting customers' needs while helping to make the community a better place to live and work. The utility is one of the country's 2,000 public power systems — a utility owned by the community it serves.

"On behalf of

everyone at Sun Prairie Utilities, we are truly honored to receive the Colonial Club's Business Leadership Award. This recognition is a reflection of our team's deep commitment to serving our community—not just by providing essential utilities, but by showing up for our neighbors in meaningful ways. Whether it's delivering meals to seniors or helping with events like StrawberryFest, our staff is proud to support the mission of the Colonial Club and the people it serves," explained Jill Weiss, Sun Prairie Utilities general manager.



Wednesday, September 10, 2025 | e-Edition

Dane County names Sun Prairie 'Climate Champion'

For a fifth year in a row, the City of Sun Prairie has been recognized as a Climate Champion. This recognition, presented by Dane County Executive Melissa Agard and the Office of Energy and Climate Change, highlights the city's commitment to advance sustainability for the state and the city through significant efforts in reducing carbon emissions.

“We will achieve the ambitious goals set in the Dane County Climate Action Plan only with the participation of local stakeholders – residents, businesses, faith organizations, nonprofits, schools and local governments. That’s why we are so excited to recognize this impressive class of new Climate Champions, representing so many different sectors,” said County Executive Agard. “The Dane County Climate Action Plan set a path to cut countywide emissions in half by 2030 and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.”

This status comes after the city celebrated a major sustainability milestone earlier this year – the accomplishment of reaching 100% renewable electricity for municipal operations. With the installation of four solar photovoltaic (PV) systems since 2018 and the purchase of renewable energy blocks from Sun Prairie Utilities, all municipal buildings such as City Hall, the Sun Prairie Public Library, the Westside Community Services Building and Wastewater Treatment Plant, along with city operations such as electric vehicle charging stations, traffic lights and street lights are now powered entirely by renewable electricity.

This transition eliminates 5,358 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions, marking a significant step toward Sun Prairie’s broader climate goals.

“Achieving 100% renewable electricity for municipal operations is a major milestone for the city and shows what’s possible when a community commits to sustainability,” said Rose Daily, sustainability & resilience manager. “We’re honored to be named a Climate Champion and excited to continue pushing forward.”

For more information about Sun Prairie's sustainability efforts, please visit www.cityofsunprairie.com/SustainableSunPrairie.



Waunakee, The Tribune Enterprise

Waunakee Village Board to consider 30-acre solar farm

ROBERTA BAUMANN
rbaumann@hngnews.com

The Waunakee Village Board has scheduled a public hearing on Oct. 6 to consider a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for Six Mile Solar Project, a 30-acre solar farm off of Kennedy Drive.

Proposed by OneEnergy Renewables, the 6-Megawatt solar field would be located on a

site zoned for agricultural use.

Lauren Freeman, Waunakee’s community development director and deputy administrator, said currently, staff is gathering information about the proposal for the village board to consider in the CUP review process. Village board members will consider whether the use is compatible with the surrounding uses, or if

the approval should come with conditions such as fencing or landscaping.

The Kennedy Drive location is just south of the Savannah Village neighborhood, and the solar panel field would be about 350 feet from some of the homes, according to information posted by the village on its Facebook page.

More **SOLAR** | **A3**



VILLAGE OF WAUNAKEE

Shown is an image of a OneEnergy project in Black River Falls with sheep grazing. Fencing prevents deer from entering the project area.



Waunakee, The Tribune Enterprise

Solar/from A1

The review process for this project is somewhat of an anomaly. Normally, new development proposals go to the plan commission for consideration, but the village's code of ordinances requires solar and other energy project proposals to be considered by the village board, Freeman said. Also, because of the project's smaller size, it does not require approval from the Public Service Commission, the state agency which oversees utility projects.

"Basically what they're looking at is, is this use compatible with the surrounding land, and are there conditions that can

be put upon the approval to make it more compatible?" Freeman said, adding the public hearing will allow the board members to hear from the community and residents in that area.

"It's really up to the board to determine, do they want to place conditions upon approval, do they want to deny it?" Freeman said.

So far, the proposal is drawing questions and concerns from Village of Waunakee residents, particularly in Savannah Village. A flyer shared with the Tribune Enterprise expresses opposition to the project, citing concerns such as a decrease in property taxes, disruption to wildlife, views,

noise and glare.

According to information submitted to the village from OneEnergy Renewables, the solar project will generate enough energy to power 1,600 homes, cut carbon emissions, and will feed into the grid for MG&E customers. It will have no effect on [Waunakee Utilities](#), according to [Tim Herlitzka](#), [Waunakee Utilities](#) manager.

The panels would come with a 30-year warranty, but the life expectancy is 50 years. OneEnergy's lease with the landowner would be 30 years with an option to extend it for two 10-year periods afterwards.

OneEnergy chose the site because of its

proximity to a substation with "adequate transformer size/load and adjacent to a 3-phase distribution line, so the solar electric facility can interconnect to the grid," according to the company's submittal to the village board. The flat landscape away from wetlands is another factor.

According to Nolan Stumpf of OneEnergy Renewables, the company's Midwest office has completed 55 similarly sized projects in Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota, with 39 in Wisconsin. Each has received differing responses from neighbors, Stumpf said. Other projects have been located close to homes, as well.

"So we're often

working to meet residents in those communities where they are and build really a kind of a shared understanding of what solar is and how it works. Once they're constructed, they're quiet neighbors," Stumpf said.

LAND STEWARDSHIP

According to OneEnergy's submittal, their projects are sited in areas where no critical wildlife habitats exist, and deer fencing is placed around the panels that allow smaller wildlife to move through the area.

OneEnergy indicates that the planting, "pollinator meadow or grazing mix are beneficial to wildlife in the area as it provides more suitable

habitat than the previous land use of conventional row cropping."

Stumpf said the company views the solar farms as both energy and conservation projects, and has land stewardship staff on site that are "really focused on that low growing perennial pollinator establishment to increase water infiltration and soil fertility over the lifetime of the project."

The company uses a pasture mix if it can find a farmer with sheep willing to graze at the site. If not, a pollinator mix allows the company to find a beekeeper to locate an apiary at the site.

More SOLAR | A10

Waunakee, The Tribune Enterprise

Waunakee to host first Sustainability Fair

ETHAN FERRELL

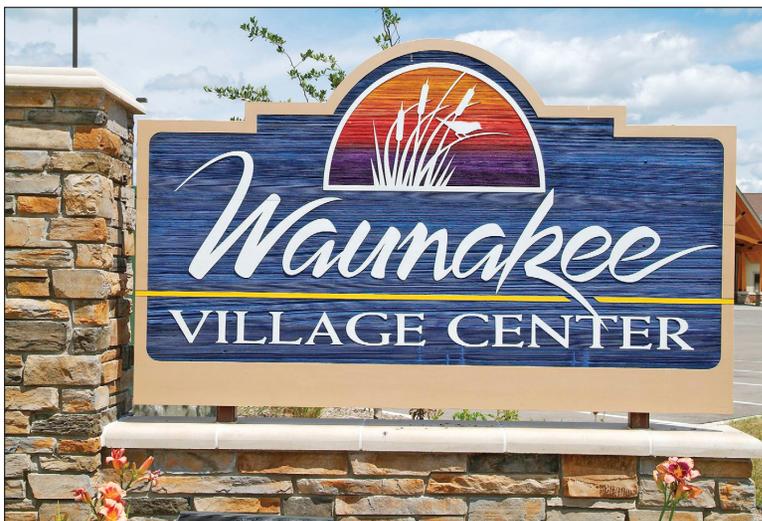
eferrell@hngnews.com

The Village of Waunakee's first Sustainability Fair will be on Tuesday, Oct. 7, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the community room of the Village Center located at 333 S. Madison Street.

The event is set to be free and family friendly, with different activities and local vendors from which attendees can learn more about sustainability.

In total, 17 vendors will be there that Tuesday evening to offer information on their missions, initiatives, programs and services.

Some in attendance are the village's internal departments, like Waunakee Public Works and Waunakee Utilities. Regional partners like the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission, Friends of Six Mile Creek and Focus on Energy will also be showing off their



VILLAGE OF WAUNAKEE

The first Waunakee Sustainability Fair will be held in the Village Center community room on Tuesday, Oct. 7.

sustainability work.

"It should be a really great way to learn more about how to be sustainable in your community, and also just to hear about what different entities are doing to be more sustainable." Waunakee Deputy Administrator Lauren Freeman said.

Freeman continued by saying that the village is

in the "very early stages" of its sustainability journey.

The municipal ad hoc sustainability committee, formed in 2024, has been hard at work developing a sustainability plan for Waunakee. When finished, the document will help to guide future decisions and actions village leadership take to pursue a cleaner,

greener community.

"We're working on finalizing the draft of goals and initiatives for sustainability. So, the idea for this sustainability fair was to really start having that conversation," Freeman said.

While village staff and ad hoc committee members are beginning to look ahead, the event will also be a way

to celebrate the work that has already been underway.

For example, Waunakee Utilities offers rebates for residents who make efforts to use less energy by charging their electric vehicles at home, installing smart thermostats or purchasing Energy Star rated appliances.

Most recently, the utility started offering a \$100 credit for households that install WaterSense labeled toilets, which conserve water usage.

The first-time sustainability fair won't just be about energy conservation though. A key part of the equation is also the waste residents throw away, or don't.

For-profit, waste management organizations will also be taking advantage of the opportunity to show how their sectors are employing sustainable practices. Pellitteri, the village's waste service provider,

Sun Prairie-based Green Box Compost and Purple Cow Organics are all set to be present.

"It's not just about energy efficiency. It's also about food waste and how you are getting rid of your electronics. It's about keeping our Six Mile Creek clean," Freeman said.

The unique make up of the ad hoc committee is one of its qualities that have enabled such an expansive event to take place in the village at this time.

12 total members sit on the committee, three of which are current village trustees while the rest represent a blend of Waunakee, even including some current students in the area.

"The benefit of having a committee that is so large, and has people from all over the community, is that they have connections with all of these different facets that we're hoping to bring to the table," Freeman said.



Waunakee, The Tribune Enterprise

Solar/ from A3

Stumpf noted that the projects provide a benefit to the landowners in terms of local water and soil quality.

“We take a lot of pride in our land stewardship approach to pollinators and prairie habitat establishment, which kind of uses our projects as renewable energy projects, but also conservation projects and rebuilds the nutrients in the soil and lets the land rest over

time,” Stumpf said.

Once the solar field is no longer in use, the panels are removed and the land can revert to just agricultural use.

Another concern is stormwater runoff, and OneEnergy will need a permit from the Department of Natural Resources before it begins construction.

According to OneEnergy, solar projects have little negative impact on neighboring property

values. Information provided to the village cites two studies, one showing that the projects have “a positive effect on values about one-third of the time.” Values can decrease as a result of lack of green space or screening, and OneEnergy says it is “willing to discuss targeted vegetative screening of our sites with neighbors.”

Asked whether screening would be considered for the Six Mile Project, Stumpf said a buffer is

in place to the north and additional plantings could be considered.

The public hearing on the conditional use permit request will be at 6 p.m. Oct. 6 at the Waunakee Village Hall, 500 W. Main St. If the project is approved, OneEnergy expects construction to begin in the spring or summer of 2026, depending on availability of equipment. The construction period would be four to six months.