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Three vie for spot in Algoma District 3

BY KRIS LEONHARDT
 EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

GREEN BAY – Three candidates will vie for a seat on the Algoma City Council in District 3.

That field will be narrowed down to two during the Feb. 20 primary, before heading to the April 2 spring election.

Candidates for District 3 include:

Casey Buhr (Incumbent)

See mayor’s race for information on Buhr.

Bill Bush

Please provide your background, education and experiences that qualify you for the position:

I have a masters plus degree in educational administration. I worked in public education for 36 years, with 25 of those years in administration. The last seven years of my career, I spent in Algoma as the pre-K-12 principal.

What developments would you like to see the city make over the upcoming term?

I would like to see a lot more transparency from the city government to the public. I would like to see an official publication of record, with notices of meetings, agendas and minutes put in this publication. Also, other pertinent documents like the budget. I think the biggest thing is transparency. There are a lot of rumors and innuendos about what is happening, what should be happening and what is not happening.

What means would you
See COUNCIL page 3



Buhr



Bush



Taylor

COUNCIL

from page 1

use to further involve your constituents in the decision-making process?

I think my constituents have to be as concerned as I am with what is going on in the community. Now how to accomplish that; I think the publication of record would be a good start. Making myself available to my constituents; listening to my constituents.

Pastor Kenneth Taylor

Please provide your background, education and experiences that qualify you for the position:

I am 69 years old and have lived in Algoma for 25 years. Married to Naomi Taylor for 45 years. I have three children: Jeremy, Matthew and Misty, who we lost November 2021 to COVID-19, and seven grandchildren.

I attended Trinity Bible College and have pastored for 50 years this coming April.

I owned and operated Wings of Eagles Childcare for 11 years and have worked with many boards and committees during this time

I served on the Algoma City Council 10 years, until a health issue caused me to step down. My

health is back, and I desire to return to the council and serve the citizens of the third ward.

What developments would you like to see the city make over the upcoming term?

As an alderman of the third ward, I would move to see our city government become more transparent in the decision-making process and allow more input into the hands of citizen committees. We need to find ways to communicate to the general public the topics we deliberate and the actions we then consider taking.

As I collected signatures to run for council, the input from seniors was concern regarding the raising of taxes, and the repeated statement: "If they keep going up, I cannot stay in my home." As a senior myself, I want to be the voice for the senior citizens in our community.

We need to bring back the marina committee and a supervisor as a separate entity to oversee the marina area and operation, along with hiring a park and recreation director to oversee the parks and activities for the children of Algoma. With downsizing our committees, we are taking citizens out of the decision-making process and losing valuable input for our government leadership. Our community cannot be led by local government alone, but instead by the citizens' input to our elected leaders.

We are thankful to our tourism business in the summer months, but let's not forget the local people who live here year-round. Our roads and sidewalks need to be addressed. Let's look at more flowers and keep our town looking great for visitors and local families.

The time has come for the city to consider bringing back the wastewater treatment plant under the leadership of the city. Sewer bills are getting out of hand. I have heard talk that the present company would like to take over the water department also. Taking that power out of local control would not be a smart move by our city fathers. There has also been talk of selling the [Algoma Utilities](#). Our utility company is a well-managed business that does a great job taking care of our citizens. An outside company would not take the time or provide the great service that our current staff does for the city.

What means would you use to further involve your constituents in the decision-making process?

My constituents would be welcome to call me; I would welcome the opportunity to sit and have coffee and discuss matters. I would seek out their opinions on the issues we as a city face. Our government has to be of the people, for the people, by the people.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2024

BRFMU discusses water simplified rate increase, electric voltage conversion project

By Garrett Aleckson

The Black River Falls Municipal Utility (BRFMU) Commission met for its regular meeting Monday, Jan. 29.

BRFMU general manager Casey Engebretson discussed doing a simplified rate increase for water rates.

"I think we mentioned it around budget time, but we talked about doing a simplified rate increase for water," said Engebretson. "The last rate increase for water went into effect in December of 2019, so we're over four years since we've had a water rate increase. Julie (Babcock, BRFMU office manager) and I had a discussion about either putting it off and doing a conventional rate increase for a project. The problem with doing a conventional one with a project is that it has to go into effect the same year that the project is completed and in use. That well that we're looking at doing is a two- or three-year process, so we're not going to be able to do that right now. What we're thinking of doing is coming back in the next month or two and proposing a simplified rate increase.

Engebretson explained that simplified rate increases are typically limited increases, adding that in the past they were between 3% to 5%.

In other business, Kevin LaValley, electric operations/power production, provided the commission with the voltage conversion project update.

"The update on the voltage conversion project has to do with the timeline for the equipment that we've agreed to purchase from Barron," said LaValley. "Casey continues to check to see if there are any updates and one of the reasons we check is because Flying J approached us on a previous project that they are moving forward with this summer. That's another electric vehicle (EV) charging station that's about 750 Kilowatts. The one that's from Tesla is 1,000 Kilowatts; this one is three-quarters that size. It looks like the transformer that we're getting from Barron will be available in 2025 and the rest of the equipment will be available in 2026."

"This EV charging station, the substation that's over here, is five MVA (megavolt amperes), so last year it was loaded with Tesla for a short period of time over four MVA," LaValley continued. "It's capable of seven MVA for a limited amount of time, but this new charging station is almost going to max out that substation if everything is on at the same time. The upside is that the demand of those charging stations isn't constant. But that's why we're checking and trying to stay ahead of it."

In additional business, Engebretson gave an update on how the new chemical was going for wastewater treatment. At the last meeting, Engebretson discussed that BRFMU was trying a pilot with the chemical.

"They've pretty much used up all the chemical that they did the pilot on," said Engebretson. "I just talked with Bill (Benz, BRFMU lead wastewater treatment plant operator) today and he said it's working well. They're actually using a little bit less of the chemical, as far as gallons per day. They're maintaining that lower phosphorus level and they've seen no change in the sludge production, so hopefully it'll keep working well. They're getting some more of the chemical now."

In other business, Engebretson discussed the accounting report with the commission.

"The water was over on expenses; what was the thing that drove that over," asked commissioner Jeff Amo.

"There was the unbudgeted well repairs," Engebretson replied. "We typically do the well rehab, but the bowl ended up rotting out, so that was part of it. And the other thing is the payout for Gene retiring with his sick leave and everything. Those are two of the things that contributed. We did have a couple of main breaks, and we didn't budget that \$11,800 for the water system study."

The water department expenses were about \$55,000 over budget for last year, according to the report that was not yet audited.

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"It's important that we reduce the lead in our system as much as possible"

By Christina Luick - News Graphic Staff | Feb 6, 2024



CEDARBURG — The city of Cedarburg and Cedarburg Light & Water are working on a financial assistance program for replacing residents' lead service lines in 2024.

Due to changes in federal and state funding opportunities and processes for Lead Water Service Lateral replacements, the city and CL&W will each need to have their own programs for the replacement of private (city) and public-side (CL&W) lead piping.

The Cedarburg Common Council last week approved an ordinance that provides for financing for replacing private lead service lines, which are the residential sides of the lead service.

The city and CL&W received a low interest (0.25%) loan through the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program. CL&W and city are utilizing these loan proceeds to implement a customer financial assistance program that would help to spread the cost of replacing the private-side lead service over many years in an effort to lessen the burden of a single large expenditure.

"It would be the goal of a loan program to help customers with affordability and cash flow," said CL&W General Manager Ben Collins.

The financial assistance program would give residents a 0% interest loan for a period of 20 years. Collins said they still need to run this plan and its details by the City Attorney.

As of now, in the 2024 Street & Utility Project, 35 homes in the area of Sunnyside Lane and Edgewater Drive will get their lead service pipes replaced. Collins said this number could change and he estimated there is a total between 50 to 55 homes in that area that are within the project's boundaries.

Thirty-one of the 35 homes are estimated to have a service line — starting from the home's water meter to the curb stop — between 40 feet and 50 feet.

Using cost comparisons from 2022, Cedarburg Water & Utility estimated, using a 10 to 30 percent inflationary adder, a home with a service line of 50 feet could pay between \$355.44 and \$444.30 a year for a 20-year, 0% interest loan. For a home with a service line of 40 feet could pay between \$331.13 and \$413.91 a year.

Collins said they will be able to provide the affected residents updated cost estimates after a contractor is hired, which should happen some time in March. The contractor will work on the lead service lines on both the private and public sides.

Collins added that the plan as of now, pending review by the City Attorney and the relevant regulatory bodies, affected customers in 2024 would see a charge on their property taxes that would be due Jan. 31, 2026.

The residents getting their lead service lines replaced in 2024 will have to pay significantly more than what residents paid in 2022.

The city and CL&W were awarded \$600,000 from the DNR Private Lead Service Line Replacement Program for the lead service replacements done in 2022. The city also used some of its ARPA funds to cover some of the costs as well.

In 2022, the final costs were approximately \$5,000 each of the 166 homes that were completed, but with the funds that were available at that time, customers only paid approximately \$500.

"What ended up happening was the federal dollars are now distributed through the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program and have different requirements and that changed the availability of the principal forgiveness funds," Collins said. "The method that is used now to determine eligibility and financial need makes those funds unavailable to cities like Cedarburg, however we believe that removing lead from our water system is important and appreciate any financial mechanism that allows us to help make this initiative and an ongoing long-term program as minimally impactful as possible to our residents and customers and sustainable for the next 10-15 years while all the lead piping is removed from our water system."

The drastic change in costs to residents in 2024 was recognized by the Common Council when CL&W first proposed its financial assistance program in December.

Council members expressed its concern for putting the burden on individual homeowners and frustration of the change in state and federal funding.

Council member Kevin Curley, who lives on Sunnyside Lane, said last week that he didn't like the costs as a homeowner, but he still wants to make sure the city has safe drinking water.

"I think it's unfortunate that we don't have the same level of ARPA funding that'll allow us to continue to do it for free or relatively or to have that not impact homeowners ... I do think it's important that we reduce the lead in our system as much as possible."

"I know that these are hard numbers to swallow but we got to do it and this is going to be our best case scenario as far as what we know right now," said Council member Pat Thome.

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (United States), Section: Local

Monday 19 February 2024

509 words

48158 circulation

This southern Wisconsin city just won an award for the best-tasting water in America

By Claire Reid, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

[Link to Image](#)

Many people know Wisconsin for its milk or beer, but did you know that the state is also home to some of America's best-tasting water?

Earlier this month, Columbus Utilities in Columbus, a small city northeast of Madison, won the gold medal at the National Rural Water Association's 25th Annual Great American Water Taste Test. The taste test and awards ceremony took place Feb. 7 at the NRWA's annual Rural Water Rally in Washington, D.C.

Columbus Utilities beat out 40 other entrants from across the country for the top prize. In order to compete in the Great American Water Taste Test, **Columbus Utilities** also had to win the state's best-tasting water award at the Wisconsin Rural Water Association's water taste test at last year's WRWA Annual Technical Conference. All Great American Water Taste Test entrants had to first win their state association's taste test.

Yesterday, the 25th Annual Great American Water Taste Test Winners were announced!

Gold: Columbus Utilities -WI

Silver: Green River Valley Water District - KY

Bronze: Hudson Gaars Mill Water System, Inc. - LA

Finalist: Town of Saratoga - WY

Finalist: Sunderland Water District -MA pic.twitter.com/hpBjzd6zXE

— National Rural Water Association (@NRWA)

February 8, 2024

"Yesterday, Feb. 7, the city of Columbus, Wisconsin won best-tasting water in the United States!" WRWA wrote on Facebook.

"This water taste test pits water from systems across the nation against each other for the chance to claim that they have the best-tasting water in the United States. After judging elements, which included color, clarity, bouquet, and of course, taste, Columbus, Wisconsin, was chosen as the system with the best tasting water."

The Rural Water Rally brings utility system representatives to Capitol Hill to support funding programs, training and technical assistance. "Rural folks" meet with their representatives and senators and ask them to support America's rural water and wastewater system, along with related bills and programs, WRWA writes.

"This is a chance to tell our stories and show off the excellent work of our rural operators and their successes in the water industry."

Columbus Utilities was founded in 1896. The municipally owned and operated electric and water utility serves

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more than 2,200 customers in the City of Columbus. According to the utility's website, its water quality and capacity are monitored every day by well-trained system operators.

"The Columbus Water Utility is composed of three operating wells, two treatment plants, two in-ground reservoirs and one elevated tower," the company writes. "The combined capacity of the treatment plants is 2,500,000 gallons per day, of softened, iron-filtered water. Fluoride, chlorine and orthophosphate are added to the water just prior to leaving the treatment plants. At the end of 2022, the utility served 2,396 customers in Columbus, with sales of 113,293,000 gallons."

This article originally appeared on Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: This southern Wisconsin city just won an award for the best-tasting water in America

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The winner of this year's Great American Water Taste Test: Columbus, Wis.

Published February 20, 2024 at 4:44 AM CST

LEILA FADEL, HOST:

Good morning. I'm Leila Fadel. If you've traveled to a lot of places, you may have noticed that tap water tastes different depending on where you are. But it tastes the best straight from the faucets of Columbus, Wis., the winner of this year's Great American Water Taste Test. The National Rural Water Association, which ran the contest, judged regional waters based on color, clarity, smell and, most importantly, taste. And Columbus made a splash.

Power out in Evansville after tornado

Evan Bolin | Feb 8, 2024

EVANSVILLE, Wis. (WKOW) -- Power is out in the City of Evansville after a strong storm system that spawned a tornado swept through Rock County.

Rock County Sheriff Curt Fell said the storm damaged six to eight homes in Evansville. He said crews were going door-to-door to confirm that houses were evacuated.

Fell said the storm also downed trees and power lines. Crews from Evansville Water and Light are working to restore power. Fell said they hoped power would be back by Friday morning.

The city did open a warming shelter at the Evansville Fire Department at 425 Water Street.

A number of first responding agencies were called to Evansville to help with the response.

"It's a big community. Rock County is a big community and everybody is stepping up to help," Fell said.

The sheriff said some people were banged up, but there were no injuries reported that required anyone to be taken to the hospital.

Unprecedented February tornado damages buildings near Albany, Evansville

By DAVID WAHLBERG dwahlberg@madison.com

More than 30 homes and other buildings south of Albany and in the Evansville area were damaged by an unprecedented February tornado and severe storm Thursday, but officials on Friday reported only minor injuries and utilities had mostly restored power to places with outages.

Three or four homes had "major damage" and another 15 to 20 had minor damage along Trail Road south of Albany, Green County Emergency Director Gary Ziegler said. At the nearby Sweet Minihaha Campground, two structures were damaged enough to likely be considered totaled, Ziegler said.

"Some sheds were destroyed" in the area, but no homes were destroyed, he said.

The Rock County Sheriff's Office on Friday reported damage "at several locations in and around Evansville." Structure damage ranged from minor to major, with debris closing roadways and power outages spanning from west of Edgerton to Footville, the sheriff's office said.

In Green and Rock counties combined, at least 30 buildings, power lines and other structures were damaged, officials said.

Evansville Community School District schools were closed Friday "due to the storms and loss of power," the district said. A warming shelter has was set up at the Evansville Fire Station.

Alliant Energy had reported more than 700 power outages north of Edgerton. But by Friday morning, only a few customers remained without power, spokesperson Tony Palese said.

"We had crews working overnight to get power poles up," Palese said.

The Rock Energy Cooperative outage map showed about 85 customers without power in the Evansville area on Friday morning. And [Evansville Water & Light](#) reported all power had been restored except for a few customers in the Gibbs Lake Road area.

The National Weather Service issued a tornado warning at 5:31 p.m. Thursday for northeastern Green County, northwestern Rock County, and southeastern Dane County until 6:15 p.m., and later added other tornado warnings, at one point noting that "a confirmed large and extremely dangerous tornado was located near Evansville, moving northeast at 45 mph."

In a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, the weather service station at Sullivan confirmed a tornado on the ground just to the west of Edgerton along the Dane-Rock county border at 6 p.m.. A video posted to Facebook showed a large funnel cloud near Evansville.

Hunter Oller, 20, of Brodhead, and a friend were out fishing when the storm rolled in. They started to drive home but pulled over in the Town of Magnolia where they spotted two partially formed tornadoes and one tornado that

seemed to touch the ground. Oller pulled out his cellphone.

"I was in awe," he said. Oller called it an experience "I won't get the joy of seeing or experiencing for awhile."

A tornado, or even a tornado warning, had not occurred in Wisconsin in February since at least 1950, when the weather service started keeping records on them. At least one tornado was confirmed and the weather service was investigating reports of several more, meteorologist Taylor Patterson told the Associated Press.

The tornado came on a day that broke records for warmth, setting up the perfect scenario for the type of severe weather normally seen in the late spring and summer.

"There wasn't anything inherently unusual about any of these storms when you compare them to other types of severe events we see during the summer and spring," Patterson said Friday. "It's just unusual in the sense that it doesn't normally happen in February."

Winter tornadoes are almost unheard of, especially in northern states.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported that between 1998 and 2022, 31 states across a broad swath of the country, from Washington state in the northwest to New Mexico in the south, Wisconsin in the Upper Midwest over to Maine in the northeast, didn't report a single tornado.

But winter tornadoes like the one in Wisconsin are likely to be stronger and stay on the ground longer with a wider swath of destruction in a warming world, a 2021 study showed. That comes after a 2018 study found that tornadoes were moving farther east, into states like Wisconsin.

The stronger El Nino this year does make it warmer than normal, but it's hard to say from this one event how significant of a role climate change played, the meteorologist Patterson said.

"But with a lot of things that have been going on with climate change, you get more severe events and then you get more impactful severe events," she said.

Tornadoes are most common in Wisconsin over the summer months between May and August. Since 1948, between November and February fewer than a dozen tornadoes total had been reported before Thursday, according to the weather service.

Meteorologists in Wisconsin began to worry about conditions coming together to create severe weather earlier in the week. On Thursday, "we knew that these things were starting to align much more than we had thought two days ago," Patterson said.

"All the ingredients coming together this time of year is what is unusual," she said. "February is normally a month where we're very cold and we're getting snow, which are things that aren't very conducive to tornadoes. Normally, for thunderstorms severe enough to create tornadoes, we need a lot of moisture, we need a lot of warm temperatures and during the winter months we're just normally not in an environment that is conducive for that."

The Chippewa Herald (Wisconsin) (United States), Section: Local

Friday 09 February 2024

1060 words

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Conditions collided in Wisconsin late afternoon on Thursday creating the perfect conditions for tornadoes to form, Patterson said. That included rapidly warming temperatures that topped out at a record-tying 55 in Madison and more moisture with rapidly rising air, creating thunderstorms, Patterson said.

"The other thing that we had going for us is it was really windy yesterday," she said, creating wind shear that is important for creating tornadoes. "That basically helps us sustain that rotation that is needed for tornadoes."

A study released last year found that America will probably get more killer tornado- and hail-spawning supercells as the world warms. The study in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society predicted a nationwide 6.6% increase in supercells and a 25.8% jump in the area and time the strongest supercells will be over land.

State Journal reporters Chris Rickert and Jeff Richgels and the Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Florence Utilities donates hygiene, cleaning items

Staff set to host annual food drive throughout March

St. Vincent de Paul received a hefty donation Tuesday from Florence Utilities staff who brought in nearly \$500 worth of personal hygiene items and cleaning products to aid those in need.

Donations included shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothbrushes, laundry detergent, tissue, toilet paper, shaving cream, dish soap and other assorted items.

“Everyone here at Florence Utilities feels it is vital to support our neighbors,” said Roger Secrist, general manager. “As the community not-for-profit, locally owned utility, we’re committed to supporting our fellow residents.”

The donations were purchased through funding from joint action agency WPPI Energy. As a member owner of the wholesale power supplier, Florence Utilities was provided funds to support the community.



Florence Utilities recently donated nearly \$500 worth of personal hygiene items and cleaning products to the local St. Vincent de Paul.

St. Vincent de Paul will likely see utility staff members again in April because Florence Utilities is gearing up to begin its annual food drive. Food pantries are an essential source of healthy food for those struggling with food insecurity within a community.

“We want to do our part in making sure that no one in our community has to worry about going hungry,” Secrist said. “Our utility staff members have big hearts, and they care about the residents of the town where they live and work.”

Florence Utilities plans to host its month-long drive from March 1 to 31. They will accept drop-offs between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. at the utility office, 501 Spring Avenue in Florence, during regular business hours.

Donations can include non-perishable food items that have not expired or more personal items like soap. Customers who donate will be entered into a drawing to win one of three \$100 gift cards.

Kaukauna, Heart of the Valley Times-Villager

www.timesvillager.com - THUR, FEB. 29, 2024

Kaukauna Utilities repairing No. 4 well after pump/motor failure

Compiled by Brian Roebke
Editor

A failure on the pump/motor for well No. 4 in the City of Kaukauna occurred on Feb. 6, placing the water supply in a first contingency condition, meaning that **Kaukauna Utilities** was at risk if another major failure -- such as a large water main break or another well failure -- occurred on the system.

Given this condition, KU felt the need to act was necessary to minimize the amount of time the water system is in a first contingency condition and contracted with Municipal Well and Pump to remove the pump from well No. 4 so it could assess the condition and cause of failure.

They agreed to charging the same labor rate as they offered this past fall on the well No. 8 replacement.

The **Kaukauna Utilities** Commission learned last week that the labor and equipment charges for removal and reinstallation came in at \$16,240.

Since this was just replaced in 2020 (the average life of a well

pump is about 10-12 years), KU thought it may be able to save some money by reusing the pipe and power cable but the contractor found zinc sleeves were not installed in 2020, so significant degradation has occurred on the well pipe.

"We are not comfortable that this pipe will hold up for the useful life of a new pump, so we believe it should be replaced with zinc sleeves," Engineering & Operations Director Dave Pahl reported. "Zinc sleeves act as a 'sacrificial lamb' as the water will breakdown the sleeves before it attacks the pipe."

He also recommends replacing the power cable since it was not replaced in 2020 and is showing signs of wear. Upon inspection, it was found that the check valve failed causing the pump/motor to be in a locked rotor state, which ended up overheating the motor windings requiring the pump replacement as well.

"Since the pipe is removed, we will have a video of the well taken for current and future records," Pahl reported. "We are also taking this as an opportunity to standardize on

the same pump/motor size which would give us the opportunity to stock a spare in the future."

The cost for equipment, reinstallation, televising, and permitting is \$49,821 with the total contracted cost being \$66,061. KU also has internal costs to reinstall the electrical and variable frequency drive and is estimating total cost at \$80,000-\$85,000. The warranty of the replacement was one year from install, so KU is looking into an insurance claim for the failure.

Commissioners authorized awarding KU's portion of the Kenneth Avenue water relay and the alternate bid for Arthur Street to Feaker and Sons Inc. for \$1,095,144.

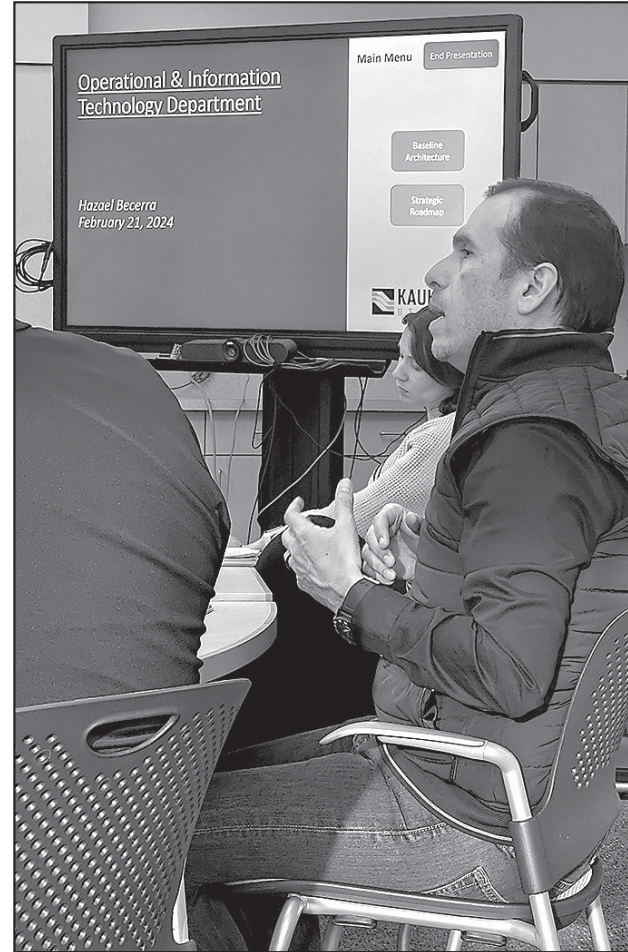
Feaker and Sons Inc. is the lowest bidder and has completed work within the city on **previous** projects in the past. The **Kaukauna** Utilities portion of the bid came in at \$826,864 for Kenneth Avenue and \$268,280 for Arthur Street totaling \$1,095,144 of the total project bid of \$1,945,633. The project was budgeted at \$1,200,000.

Engineering & Operations Director Dave Pahl said the current water main was installed in 1966 and has served its useful life as is evident by the increase in water main breaks and the observed deterioration of pipe on this section over the past 10 years.

Commissioners tabled changes to the seasonal employee hiring policy that were requested by staff due to decreased applicant interest and to maintain competitive in the hiring market.

Staff proposed reducing the hiring age from 18 to 17 years of age, allowing high school juniors to be hired to work the summer prior to their senior year.

See Utilities, page 7



Brian Roebke photo

Manager of Operational and Information Technology Hazael Becerra gave the **Kaukauna Utilities** Commission a presentation on the utility's operational and information roadmap to enable better long-term planning for the utility. A discussion regarding future technologies was included. He noted it's almost his one-year anniversary with the utility and he's enjoyed Wisconsin very much after moving from 1,600 miles away. His favorite discovery about Wisconsin is cheese curds.

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From 006

Utilities

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There was concern among commissioners about the maturity level of 17-year-olds.

Commissioners did authorize staff to hire up to two summer seasonal staff for 2024, two youth apprentice students for the 2024-25 school year, and one IT intern from June 2024 through May 2025.

Commissioners authorized General Manager Michael Avanzi to purchase a 2022 e-Transit vehicle from Les Stumpf Ford for \$39,305 plus title and plate fees or the authority to purchase a new e-Transit from a Ford dealer for \$55,180 if the eTRansit van was sold prior to KU purchasing it.

Les Stumpf Ford is looking to sell the 2022 Ford e-Transit van that has been used as a demo model.

The water department has discussed bringing a van into the fleet for the meter technician role with the thought it will be a more functional vehicle for the daily tasks of the job.

KU hosted an Inspire Student Showcase Tour on Feb. 12 to allow

11 students from local high schools, including Kaukauna and Kimberly, to visit potential youth apprenticeship opportunities.

Human Resources Director Tara Schmitz reported students could learn about different careers at KU, take a tour of Badger Hydro, and hear first-hand about what it is like to be a youth apprentice from KU's very own youth apprentice, Maddie Effa.

The commission approved a contract with Lazer Utility Locating, LLC, for locating underground facilities through February 2027, contingent upon review and approval from legal counsel.

Kaukauna Utilities utilizes a contractor to locate underground electric and water distribution facilities in response to calls that come to Digger's Hotline.



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editor@timesvillager.com

Lake Mills electric rates get first bump in nine years

By Timothy Sullivan

MADISON – Monthly electric bills for average residential customers of the [Lake Mills Light and Water Utility](#) increased by \$3.54 on Thurs. Feb. 1, the first increase in nine years.

Average residential customers previously paying \$95.63 monthly for 617 kilowatt hours of power, will now pay \$99.17 for the same amount of electricity, a 3.7% increase as of Thursday's implementation of the new rates.

Rates for large and small power customers and general service customers increased by 1.99% to 7.56% depending on customer class and usage, according to the rate order the Public Service Commission issued on Jan. 18.

While the utility is allowed to pass along increases in the cost of electricity from its supplier, Lake Mills Light and Water hadn't raised its overall rates since Jan. 2015.

City Manager Drake Daily, only on the job the past 15 months, theorized that the utility was able to operate the past nine years without an overall rate increase through "prudent" financial management.

"It was a commitment to being financially prudent and keeping costs low is what likely played into it," he said. "That resulted in being able to cover investments in infrastructure and operational costs."

Inflation increased operating costs over the years, ate into the utility's net income and prompted it to file for new rates in July.

In recent years, the utility financed upgrades to distribution lines and replaced a transformer, which increased its debt-to-equity ratio. That increased ratio prompted the PSC to require the utility to file another rate case in three years.

That filing would enable the PSC to better facilitate oversight of the utility's finances, according to the rate order.

The PSC even added .07% to the utility's rate of return on its infrastructure investment to better meet its financial demands. The PSC's current rate of return on its infrastructure investment is 6.3%, but the PSC bumped that up to 7.0% to provide additional financial stability, it said.

Daily said that fewer years between rate increases would have been his advice to the City Council even if the PSC didn't request it.

"Going another nine years (without a rate increase) isn't advisable. That's a long time and it can result in significant jumps in rates. It's much more responsible to file cases more frequently," he said.

Despite the many years between rate cases, the utility stayed in the black. The PSC calculated that after combined revenue of \$8.76 million against estimated expenses of \$8.27 million, the utility would have a \$493,518 net operating income and a 4.08% rate of return without a rate increase.

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KEVIN MURPHY

For Adams Publishing Group

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More **RATES** | **A5**



Rates/ from A2

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The new rates are projected to boost annual revenue to \$9.11 million, yield an \$847,136 net operating income and a 7% rate of return.

After filing the rate request in July, the city subsequently adopted the 7% rate of return in the PSC staff's revenue recommendation and no member of the public objected to the rate increase at the Jan. 10 public hearing held in Lake Mills and Madison.

Feb 08

2024

Page A05

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From A02

UPDATE: REA and UPPCO Customers Also Impacted, Power Outage Scheduled for Saturday Night in the Village of L'Anse and Surrounding Areas

Feb 15, 2024

UPDATE: ATC, the American Transmission Co are doing an emergency repair on one of their transmission lines at that time. It is completely outside the Village's control, and the impacted area is larger than the Village's service territory. L'Anse Township, Aura, Skanee, Herman, and other areas will also be without power, including REA and UPPCO customers. ATC says if they don't get this work done immediately it could cause an even longer outage. We wanted to get this information out as soon as possible.

L'Anse Electric Utility customers will be without power for an extended period on Saturday. The Utility Company has scheduled a power outage affecting customers in L'Anse and the surrounding area on Saturday. The outage will begin at 8 pm on the 17th and last until 7 am the following day. Utility workers are working on an emergency repair for a broken transmission pole. Village leadership says that the utility chose to repair the pole at night believing it to be a slower time for area businesses and residents using electricity. The outage will impact the Village of L'Anse and surrounding areas. Please make plans with family, friends, or nearby hotels for those concerned about heat loss during the night. Anyone with questions should contact their utility provider to determine if your home will be impacted.



Village of L'Anse Customers

On Saturday

February 17, 2024

There will be a Scheduled power outage

At 8 P.M. to 7A.M.

ATC needs to complete some
emergency work



WJMN Local 3 (UPMatters.com)

Overnight power outage planned for L'Anse area

by: Ben Raymond

Posted: Feb 15, 2024 / 02:02 PM EST

Updated: Feb 15, 2024 / 02:20 PM EST

L'Anse, Mich. (WJMN) – In a message from L'Anse Village Manager Robert A. La Fave on Thursday, he announced details of an emergency repair needed that will affect people in the community over the weekend.

According to the statement, The American Transmission Company (ATC) alerted L'Anse officials that they will need to repair one of their transmission lines.

The areas of L'Anse village, L'Anse Township, Aura, Skanee, Herman, and other areas will be without power on February 17 between 8 p.m. and 7 a.m. This will also include REA and UPPCO customers.

According to ATC, if the work is not completed immediately, a longer outage could be possible.

Local 3 News has reached out to L'Anse officials to gather more information and ask about the potential for warming shelters or other options for affected homes without secondary heat sources.



L'Anse Electric Utility schedules nighttime power outage for emergency repair

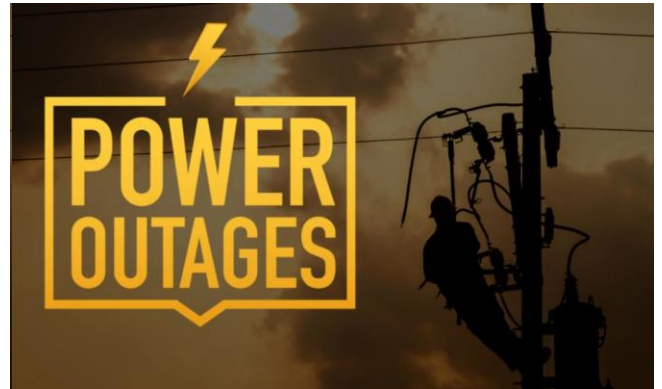
Selena Potila | February 16, 2024

On Saturday, L'Anse Electric Utility customers in the village of L'Anse and the surrounding area will experience an extended power outage. The utility company has scheduled this outage to begin at 8:00 PM on the 17th and last until 7:00 AM the following day. The reason behind this interruption is an emergency repair for a broken transmission pole.

Village leadership has decided to carry out the repair during nighttime hours, believing it to be a slower time for area businesses and residents who rely on electricity. The outage will impact not only the village of L'Anse but also the surrounding areas.

For those concerned about heat loss during the night, it is advisable to make plans with family, friends, or nearby hotels. If you have any questions, please contact your utility provider to determine if your home will be affected.

This report was prepared by Keweenaw Bureau Reporter Thomas Fournier and ABC 10 News Reporter Selena Potila



Village of L'Anse schedules power outage Saturday evening

RANDY CROUCH, Journal City Editor

February 16, 2024

MARQUETTE — The village of L'Anse announced Thursday that it has scheduled a power outage for Saturday evening for emergency repairs to a major electrical transmission line.

The power outage for several parts of Baraga County is slated to run from 8 p.m. Saturday until 7 a.m. Sunday.

According to a Thursday morning Facebook post from Village Manager Robert A. LaFave, the village of L'Anse received word Thursday morning that the American Transmission Company has scheduled the repairs in order to avoid a major interruption of power in the future.

“It is completely out of the village’s control,” LaFave said in the post. “ATC says that if they don’t get this work done immediately it could cause an even longer outage. We wanted to get this information out as soon as possible.”

LaFave said in the Facebook post that the impacted area extends far beyond L'Anse itself, with Aura, Skanee, Herman and several other Baraga County communities being impacted by the planned outage.

In response to the announcement, Baraga County Emergency Management released a statement outlining several safety precautions for residents who may be concerned about a power outage during winter months.

“It’s crucial to take necessary precautions to ensure the safety of yourself and your loved ones,” the release said.

The release recommends the following steps:

- use an alternative heating source: if you have access to a fireplace, wood stove or generator.
- ensure proper ventilation when using alternative heating sources to prevent the buildup of carbon monoxide.
- dress in warm layers and use blankets and limit your time spent in unheated rooms in your house.
- if you have elderly or vulnerable individuals in your neighborhood, check on them to ensure they have adequate heating and assistance if needed.
- be cautious with candles and keep them away from flammable materials.
- stay updated with local news for any developments related to the outage.

Randy Crouch can be reached at 906-228-2500, ext. 570. His email address is rcrouch@miningjournal.net.



Emergency repair to cause power outage in and around L'Anse

Public Radio 90, WNMU | By Nicole Walton
Published February 16, 2024 at 7:42 AM EST



L'ANSE, MI— A power outage is planned for the L'Anse area Saturday night into Sunday morning.

Village Manager Robert LaFave says the American Transmission Company needs to do an emergency repair on one of its transmission lines.

Power will be out from 8 p.m. on Saturday, February 17th through 7 a.m. on Sunday, February 18th. The Village of L'Anse, L'Anse Township, Aura, Skanee, Herman, and other areas will be without electricity, including REA and UPPCO customers.

ATC says if the work isn't done immediately, it could cause an even longer outage.



NEW MEDIA INC.

Old fire station needs a roof

By: Warren Bluhm, News Editor

Published by admin on Mon, 02/19/2024 - 3:37pm

With a new fire station nearing completion, the Oconto Falls City Council must decide what to do about the chronically leaky roof at the old firehouse.

During its regular monthly meeting Feb. 13, council members considered how to address ongoing leaks at the building at the corner of Jackson Street and Cherry Avenue, which is due to be replaced this summer by a new station at the south end of Memorial Park.

Street Superintendent Alan Winkler described the dated, damaged roof at the old facility.

“Basically it’s a rubber roof with ballast on top. It has a 20-year lifespan, and it’s been up there since 1984, so double its lifespan,” Winkler said. “It’s completely dry-rotted. So anywhere there’s been patching, it’s right next to the patch where it tears. So if you patch indefinitely, it’ll just keep going that way.”

Fire Chief Tim Magnin obtained three estimates to replace the roof for between \$100,000 and \$140,000 but conceded that a more temporary patch is working for now.

Alderman Mat McDermid asked whether the council is ready to spend that much money.

“Do we want to do this, or do we want to determine what we’re doing with the building first before we decide to put a \$100,000 roof on something?” McDermid said. “And second, how do we want to pay for it if we decide to do it?”

The options for the building include selling it or turning it over to another department, such as the Street Department or [Oconto Falls Municipal Utilities](#).

“We need to figure out what the future of that building is before we put that kind of money into it,” said Alderman Ashley Bahrke, who added that it’s possible the roof could be reconfigured to store higher vehicles such as the city’s two utility lift trucks.

“I don’t know if that’s a possibility, but we have no idea what we’re using that (building) for,” she said.

McDermid said his preference would be to bring the issue back when the 2025 budget is under discussion, rather than taking \$100,000 or more out of the city’s fund balance.

“It’s patched and dry at the moment? I think we bring it back at budget time,” McDermid said.

New \$2 million ladder fire truck recommended

by Emmitt B. Feldner
of The Review staff

PLYMOUTH – The city will be looking to replace the fire department’s nearly 30-year-old aerial ladder truck.

The Finance and Personnel Committee Tuesday voted to recommend the City Council proceed with the purchase of a new ladder truck for the department.

“We started working on this before I was hired,” Fire Chief Ryan Pafford told committee members.

Committee member Jeffrey Tauscheck concurred, noting that consideration of replacing the truck began in 2015 or 2016.

Noting that the current truck is a 1996 model, Pafford explained it is out of compliance with many safety requirements and needs some repairs.

He compared it to a similar year car which would not have many of the safety and technology features of a new car.

The truck the department is looking at would cost \$2,093,115 from Sutphen Corp. of Ohio.

“Last year the quote was \$1.9 million, now it’s over \$2 million,” Pafford noted.

Signing a contract now for the truck, which has a lead time of 34-36 months for delivery, would lock in the current price and guard against future price increases, Pafford said. It would also give the city time to get financing in place for the purchase.

“We’d likely be financing a major portion of the cost,” City Administrator/Utilities Manager Tim Blakeslee told the committee. He added that the city would be looking at including it with other major projects, such as the Mill Pond dam replacement, next year.

Responding to committee member John Nelson, Pafford said it has not been determined if the truck could be upgraded

to meet standards or how much it might cost.

But he noted that the city had an offer to buy the current truck from another community for only \$100,000. “They just don’t hold their value.”

The new truck would have a 100-foot aerial ladder, the same as the current truck.

Pafford said Sutphen would be willing to bring a model truck to Plymouth for local officials to examine.

The city could be adding a summer intern at City Hall following a positive recommendation from the committee.

“Summer interns are part of municipal government these days,” Blakeslee told the committee. “A lot of students rely on summer internships.”

The four-month internship would cost the city \$4,000, Blakeslee said. For this year, the money could come from the contingency fund and then be budgeted for annually going forward if it is continued.

In a memo to the committee, Blakeslee listed several possible responsibilities and duties for an intern.

They would include supporting office work and providing fill-in for employees on vacation, attendance at staff meetings and conducting “a research project focused on a relevant topic related to local government.”

Blakeslee said the city already has a candidate in mind for the internship, a student from Sheboygan County.

“I think this is a good idea to look forward,” Tauscheck commented. “If it’s successful, it would be a program we could continue every year.”

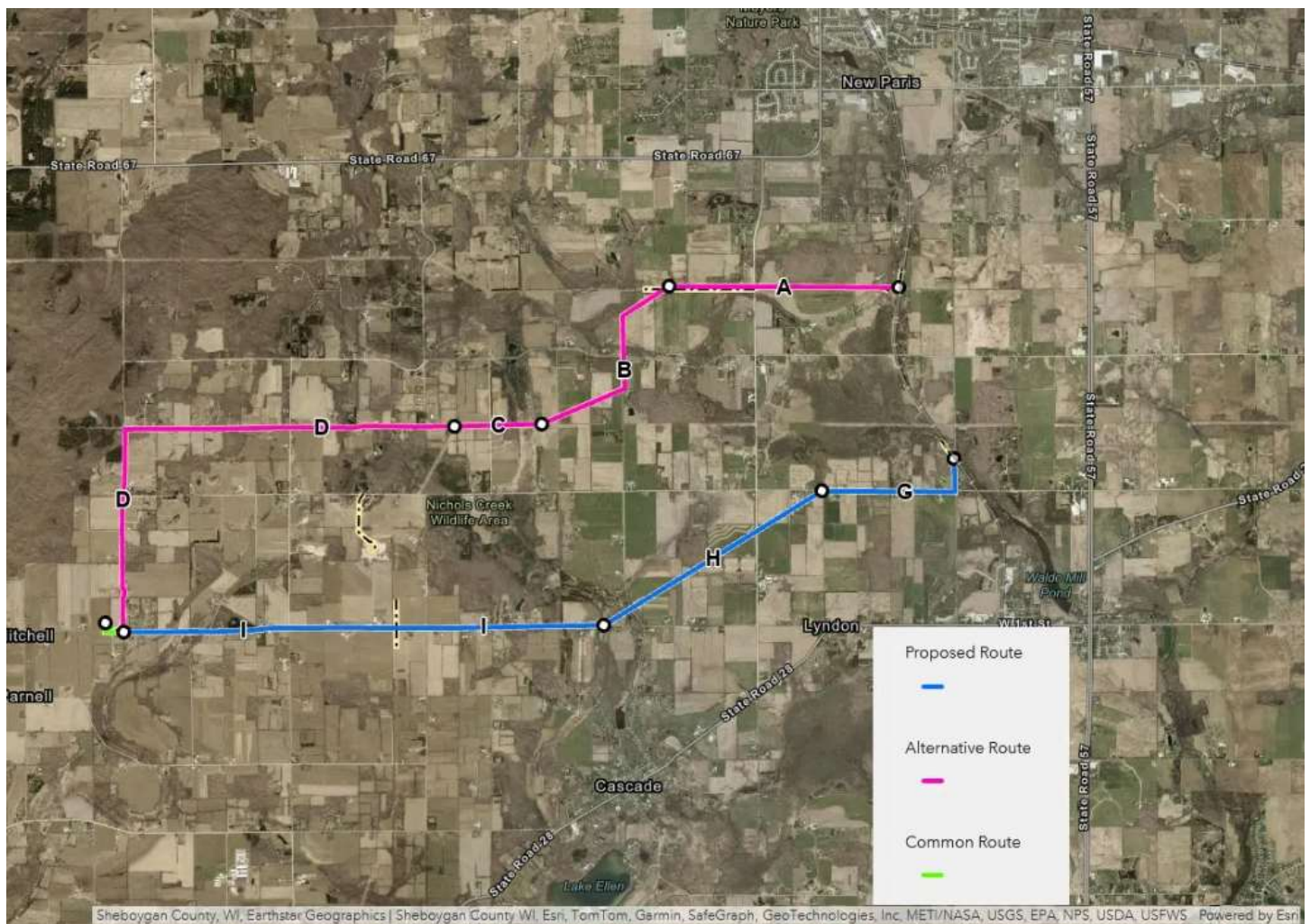
He suggested that the internship program could be extended to Plymouth Utilities as well.

Both the internship and the fire truck purchase must be approved by the full City Council.

Feb 16 2024 Page 002 Clip resized 66%

High-Voltage Lines Project to Improve Plymouth Utility Reliability Up for Public Comment

By Kevin Zimmermann
Feb 28, 2024 | 6:24 AM



The Proposed Power Line Project is Seen on This Map Made Available Through the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

A project proposed by American Transmission Company to construct a new high-voltage transmission line in rural Sheboygan County is up for public review and comment with the Public Service Commission. Plans by **Plymouth Utilities** to build a new substation needed to ensure reliability of its distribution system resulted in the need for the new lines in the Towns of Lyndon and Mitchell. That will require new rights-of-way averaging 80 feet wide. A main route as well as an alternate have been proposed, with nearly all stretches of both within natural areas that don't impact residential developments, and the towers would have a weathered steel finish that blends better with the environment than others.

Environmental and historic preservation studies have already been done, and alternative plans were considered and rejected. Now, the public has about two weeks – through March 15th – to voice its opinions to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin.

Follow this link to access the project website.

(Editors note – This public comment period concerns “environmental scoping” of the project proposal; additional public comment periods will be forthcoming)



Towers Like These are Proposed by American Transmission Company for the Plymouth Reliability Project. Images Courtesy of ATC



Sun Prairie, Star

Eye catching city initiatives to come in 2024

ETHAN FERRELL
ethan.ferrell@apg-sw.com

The City of Sun Prairie is anticipating new developments in 2024 that will bring housing and new programs to the community.

Jake King, Sun Prairie's Communications and Diversity Strategist, recently sat down with the Star to share what new initiatives the community can expect to see in 2024.

Significant expansion projects, a revamp of the city's zoning code and

transportation changes were highlighted by King. Private development, especially when it came to housing, kicked off the discussion.

PRIVATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Two additions to the 900 and 1000 blocks of E. Main St. will make significant steps towards completion in 2024.

The first, and closer to realization of the two, are the Sky Ridge Apartments by NorthePointe Development. Plans for the development at 1050

E. Main St. include a total of 75 affordable dwelling units. Of them, 61 are apartment units designated for age-restricted (senior) housing. Meanwhile, the remaining 14 units are poised to become townhomes with no age-restriction.

So far, the project is trending in the right direction for the planning and approval phases. On March 21, 2023, city council approved the Certified Survey Map to split the Habitat for Humanity-owned land

into three different lots. At that same meeting, the council also conditionally approved the General Development Plan and

Precise Implementation Plan for Sky Ridge on one such lot.

More **INITIATIVES** | **A3**

Initiatives/

from A1

Most recently, city officials and the developer finalized a Tax Increment Financing agreement on Dec. 19, 2023. The city will create Tax Increment District 16 which encompasses the Habitat for Humanity land to facilitate the agreement. Northpointe is projecting \$23.8 million in total construction costs and \$10.1 million as the developments assessed value upon completion, according to staff reports regarding the project.

The second private housing development project, proposed by East Main Street, LLC, at 998 E. Main St. happens to be right next to the Sky Ridge Apartments.

Plans include two market-rate apartment buildings with a mix of studio, one- and two-bedroom options. Between the two buildings, there will be 163 units available.

East Main Street, LLC's plans are in earlier stages than the Sky Bridge development. The developer presented their concept plan for the project



CITY OF MADISON

The first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route will begin service to Sun Prairie in late 2024.



FEH DESIGN

A rendering of the Sun Prairie Public Library expansion project produced by FEH Design consultants.

to the Plan Commission on Jan. 9. Members unanimously expressed their support. On Jan. 16, the Committee of the Whole also heard the same presentation and offered their suggestions for the design and functionality for the site.

Next, East Main Street, LLC will be tasked with creating a General Development Plan and bringing it back to the Plan Commission and eventually the city council. Residents can expect to see more on this front as 2024 progresses closer to March, according to King.

Sun Prairieans can also continue to keep their eyes on the vacant lot at the corner of W. Main St. and N. Bristol St. In Dec. 2023, The Plan Commission and City Council denied approval for a housing and hotel proposal by JCap Development. JCap can bring a revised plan back through the proper channels in the future if they would like. To receive approval, JCap will have to take community concerns into account after many residents spoke out against the scale and design of the project.

City planners will also attempt to update Sun Prairie's primary land development regulations in 2024. This is being done in an attempt to create a zoning code that is more flexible and in line with trending community needs. Changes that are made will be incorporated into the city's comprehensive plan.

"Based on how the community and their needs are changing and evolving, we want a zoning code that reflects that," King said.

PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT

In addition to some private development projects, some city departments will also be improved.

Sun Prairie Utilities is expecting to begin construction on their new 83,000-square-foot facility in the first half of 2024. The project is projected to be completed in 2025, according to the department's website.

The utilities department has been in their current building at 125 W. Main St. for over 50 years. The lack of space in the 19,000-square-foot facility forces the department to house an array of vehicles and equipment off site, according to the SPU website. Residents can check the department's website to view preliminary images of what the new facility, located on Linnerud Drive, will look like.

The Sun Prairie Public Library is also hoping to grow with the community in the near future. The Committee of the Whole approved the design of the library expansion project, with an estimated cost of \$23.5 million, in

September 2023.

Plans to undertake this project have been in the works since 2018, when the library was subjected to an architectural analysis study.

Specifics of the design plan still need to be ironed out over the coming months, but a video walk through of the concept plan is available on the library's website. According to King, construction is expected to begin later in 2024 after the project goes out to bid.

Some key parts of the expansion are:

- A dedicated teen space
- Sustainable energy features and EV charging
- A library of things collection
- Increased room for youth services
- An outdoor amphitheater
- Larger bookstore and café spaces
- And more...

TRANSPORTATION

The Madison Metro Transit service will begin to launch the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system near the end of 2024. The first line to be put in place, BRT Route A, will run east to west from Junction Road to the East Towne area. Eventually the route will extend even further into Sun Prairie.

Currently, Sun Prairie is served by Madison metro via existing metro route A, route W (the Sun Prairie loop) and route S. Transitioning route A to a BRT route will bring larger, all-electric buses, more frequent rides and shorter ride times for those heading west from Sun Prairie.

The terminus for the updated route is set to

be the Sun Prairie Park & Ride at 1704 Reiner Road. BRT buses will then use this stop connect with the city's regular metro routes W and S.

The city of Madison anticipates the BRT system will continue to grow as surrounding municipalities opt into service, like Monona did in December 2023. Madison Metro also says that bicycle connections and pedestrian walkways will be enhanced throughout the corridor of routes.

More robustly, Sun Prairie city staff will also begin to address pedestrian safety in 2024. According to King, Sun Prairie will be developing a Vision Zero Action Plan this year.

In 2021, the city created the Pedestrian Safety Task Force. The task force not only made suggestions regarding speed reduction and signage, but they also helped Sun Prairie join the Vision Zero global campaign. Vision Zero is an initiative to promote safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all and eliminate pedestrian traffic deaths.

City staff will assess existing infrastructure and engineering to then make suggestions and lay out steps to create a safer city, according to King.

These projects are only a glimpse into what the city of Sun Prairie has on deck for 2024. To keep tabs on the aforementioned initiatives and others, residents can subscribe to the city's Big Five newsletter, browse future and former agendas on the city website and continue to follow the Star's coverage.

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Feb 02 2024 Page A03 Clip resized 55% From A01



Feb 05 2024 Page A04 Clip resized 105%

Two Rivers Utilities accepting scholarship applicants

Two \$500 scholarships are available to eligible local high school seniors through Two Rivers Utilities' High School Scholarship Program.

One scholarship will be awarded to a student entering a qualified electrical utility industry training program.

The second scholarship will be awarded to a student pursuing any field of study.

The students' parents or guardians must be customers of Two Rivers Utilities. The scholarships are open to students at public, private or home schools.

All scholarship applications are due no later than April 5 and recipients will be announced in May. For application materials, contact your local school's guidance office or call the utility at 920-793-5550 or visit two-rivers.org/trwl/page/scholarships.



Area fire departments respond to two house fires Tuesday

February 6, 2024

Waupun and Rosendale Fire Departments each responded to house fires in their areas Tuesday, February 6, 2024.

At 8:32 AM, Waupun Fire Crews responded to 701 Brandon Street for a report of fire on the second floor of a house. Upon arrival, smoke was visible coming from the roof vents and second floor windows. First arriving crews confirmed everyone was out of the house and made their way up to the second floor where they were able to locate the fire and begin suppression. Due to fire spread, additional crews were sent to the roof to assist with ventilation and to gain access to pockets of fire that were not accessible to interior crews. Personnel were on scene for 2.5 hours working on fire suppression and overhaul.

The property is owned by Tom Sauer. There are no initial damage estimates at this time however the home did sustain significant fire damage to the second floor along with smoke and water damage throughout. The house is uninhabitable and 1 person is currently displaced and being assisted by the Red Cross. No firefighters or individuals at the scene were hurt during the incident. The fire investigation is ongoing however it appears that the fire originated on the second floor in the area of the chimney for a wood stove that was in use.

Agencies assisting at the fire included: Alto and Brandon-Fairwater Fire Departments, Waupun First Responders, Lifestar Ambulance, **Waupun Utilities**, Alliant Energy, the Fond du Lac County Communications Center, and the Red Cross.

At 6:11 PM, the Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Office and the Rosendale Fire Department were dispatched to a house fire at 211 South Main St, in the Village of Rosendale.

When officers and first fire personal arrived on scene there was smoke coming through the walls and outlets of the house. The first floor of the house appeared to be filling quickly with smoke. It was determined there was a fire inside of the house's walls and ceiling. First deputies and fire personal on scene attempted to control the fire with fire extinguishers until the fire department arrived and they were able to extinguish the fire. The majority of the house was saved with medium interior damage.

The official cause of the fire is unknown at this time but the home owners had a new furnace installed earlier in the day. The house was occupied by four residents who are displaced as a result of the fire. There are no reported injuries as a result of the fire. The investigation is still ongoing.

The Rosendale Fire Department was assisted at the scene by the following departments; Eldorado Fire, Lamartine Fire, RIT Team 1, Rosendale First Responders, and Ripon EMS.

The Reporter (Fond du Lac, Wisconsin) (United States), Section: Local

Thursday 08 February 2024

177 words

3240 circulation

One displaced in Waupun house fire

By By, Daphne Lemke, Fond du Lac Reporter

WAUPUN - One resident is displaced after a house fire Tuesday on Brandon Street in Waupun, and no one was injured.

Waupun Fire crews responded to the residence at around 8:30 a.m. and found smoke coming from the roof vents and second-floor windows. Personnel were on-site for two-and-a-half hours, first suppressing the fire inside the house while additional crews assisted in roof ventilation and additional fire spread.

While there were no initial damage estimates, the fire department there is significant damage to the second floor, alongside smoke and water damage throughout the home. Red Cross is assisting with the displaced occupant.

The department said initial observation in the ongoing investigation indicates the fire originated on the second floor near the chimney, possibly the result of a wood stove.

Alto Fire Department, Brandon-Fairwater Fire Department, Waupun First Responders, Lifestar Ambulance, Waupun Utilities, Alliant Energy and the Fond du Lac County Communications Center assisted with the incident.

Contact Daphne Lemke at dlemke@gannett.com

--- ENDS ---

Waupun house uninhabitable after fire

TERRI PEDERSON
tpederson@wiscnews.com

A house in Waupun was left uninhabitable on Tuesday from a fire that caused significant damage to the second floor.

Firefighters were called to the home of Tom Sauer at 701 Brandon St. at 8:30 a.m. and found smoke was coming from the roof vents and second-floor windows upon arrival, Waupun Fire Chief BJ DeMaa said.

The first crews to arrive confirmed everyone was out of the house. Additional crews were called in due to the fire spreading and were sent to the roof to assist with ventilation and to gain access to pockets of fire that were not accessible to interior crews. Firefighters were on scene for 2½ hours.

A damage estimate was not available, but the home sustained significant fire damage to the

second floor along with smoke and water damage throughout, DeMaa said.

“The house is uninhabitable and one person is currently displaced and being assisted by the Red Cross,” DeMaa said. “No firefighters or individuals at the scene were hurt during the incident. The fire investigation is ongoing however it appears that the fire originated on the second floor in the area of the chimney for a wood stove that was in use.”

Assisting agencies included the Alto Fire Department, Brandon-Fairwater Fire Department, Waupun first responders, Lifestar Ambulance, [Waupun Utilities](#), Alliant Energy, Fond du Lac County Communications Center and the Red Cross.

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