



BELLEVILLE - AREA INDEPENDENT

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Serving the Communities of Belleville, Sumpter and Van Buren

FREE

VBT Board approves 4.88-acre pond for sod farm

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

After a lengthy discussion at its regular meeting on Jan. 21, the Van Buren Township Board of Trustees unanimously approved Todd Waller's 4.88-acre excavation for an agricultural irrigation pond on Martz Road, just west of Elwell Road.

Treasurer Sharry Budd was absent and excused from the meeting.

Director of Governmental Services Ron Akers presented the proposal, explaining that under the township ordinances, the township board makes the decisions on excavations and the planning commission decides on the rules for such a pond to operate.

The proposal now goes back to the planning commission. The commission had considered the pond, but sent the request back to the board for it to make its decision first.

Director Akers said his memo stipulated fencing and a number of things, including a soil erosion permit from the county.

Akers said the township attorney said the township is following the proper procedures.

Supervisor Kevin McNamara questioned the hours of operation and the noise, and how long it would take Waller to dig out an estimated 93,000 cubic yards of soil and truck it from the site.

Waller said the pond he dug on Hull Road had a permit for two years and it took a year and a half.

Waller said the trucks, as with the Hull Road project, will not travel through the city of Belleville, but will take back routes.

He said the Martz Road site will send trucks to Bemis to Haggerty and Bemis to Rawsonville, coming out on Lohr Road.

Waller said Augusta Township held him up on a pond in that township and he went to

(continued on page 13)



Independent photo by Rosemary K. Otzman

Trina Banerjee of Van Buren Township brought a box of cupcakes she decorated as an exquisite bouquet of flowers to the Belleville City Council for council members to sample at their Jan. 21 meeting. Mayor Ken Voigt accepted the box and Police Chief Kris Faull helped hold the box. Banerjee said she has been baking them for more than a decade and bakes them and decorates the cupcakes at her home for friends and family, but now is planning to open a shop in the city. Assisting her was her husband Sampad Mukhopadhyay. She was on the agenda as a new business in the city: Baker Biwy.

City Council agrees to replace two broken fire hydrants

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

Two fire hydrants along East Columbia Avenue at Victory Park are broken and have bags over them marking they don't work.

At the Jan. 21 meeting of the Belleville City Council, a proposal to buy five hydrants at a cost of \$15,177.15 was presented, to replace those two and others that are getting old.

DPS Director Melissa Frierson said they would like to start with five to replace old hydrants, especially those that are broken and then go on to replace more.

Mayor Ken Voigt said he would like to have extras on hand in case of emergencies. He asked if they should get six so one extra will be on hand.

Director Frierson said in an emergency she is able to get one in a day from a nearby fire department. She said the city has some hydrants that are from the 1920s and '30s.

City manager Jason Smith said the city has a total of 110 hydrants. Cost is about \$3,000 each and there is three to six weeks of lead time on orders.

Mayor Voigt asked if the situation is an emergency and city manager Smith replied, "It depends on how close it is to your house."

Frierson said the two at the park will be scrap when replaced. Mayor-pro tem Kelly Bates suggested they might be good for a dog park.

Those hydrants at the park would be used for hookups when the department fights fires across the street, Frierson said.

Mayor Voigt said he doesn't like to impose on other fire departments, but for public safety those two should be replaced at once.

The council agreed to buy two fire hydrants at a total cost of \$6,070.86 and have Frierson come back with the full list of hydrants needed. Mayor Voigt said that it would be good if they could have the list by budget time.

In other business at the Jan. 21 meeting, the council:

- Heard Mayor Voigt give a State of the City report, noting the city is in pretty good shape. He said the police department is up to full strength and the department has a resource officer and an ordinance officer. He said this year he would like to see a new

(continued on page 10)

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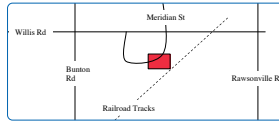
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SECOND FRONT PAGE

Friends of the Library mark 40 years

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

On Saturday, after reports of the 2024 annual membership meeting were approved, reports for 2025 given, and new officers elected, the Friends of the Library celebrated 40 years of service with guest speakers and a pizza party.



Ginger Bruder was pointed out as the only member present who has been part of the Friends for all 40 years, since the organization started in 1984.

The Belleville Library was first started 100 years ago, in the 1920s, said Elaine Gutierrez.

Donna Gilkey-Lavin, who was reelected president, listed some of the events sponsored by the Friends, including Memory Cafe, Classic Movies, Bees on the roof, T-shirts for children in the reading programs (designed by Elena Manalp) and the twice-a-year used-book sales that earn money for the library.

Book sales chairperson Gutierrez reported that the Book Nook in the library lobby has become popular and used book sales there are now bringing \$800-\$900 a month. The total revenue for 2024 in book sales was \$9,411.35.

Gutierrez said Carol Shank has been involved with book sales for 20 years.

Gilkey-Lavin especially pointed out that the Belleville Area District Library does not charge for use of its meeting rooms, like other facilities do. She said the library schedules use of the rooms as available and many groups take advantage of the space.

Gilkey-Lavin said she is a member of the League of Women Voters and they need space to promote voting and voter registration. She said many facilities charge \$200 or more per hour for use of their space, but not this library and it is appreciated.

Guest speakers included State Rep. Reggie Miller, Van Buren Township Supervisor Kevin McNamara, and Library Director Mary Jo Suchy, who had been asked to speak on how the library bridges the communities of Belleville, Van Buren, and Sumpter.

Rep. Miller thanked all those who supported her healing during recent spinal-column surgery.

Supervisor McNamara praised the 40 years of service and commented he was



Officers for the Friends of the Belleville Area District Library were elected at Saturday's annual meeting. From left is president Donna Gilkey-Lavin, vice president Katerina Tyner, secretary Cheryl Owen, and treasurer Manny Lavin.

glad the library built its new building in the city because that left a big parcel over the bridge at the proposed site, where the township can now build a park. He noted the Denton Road Bridge is on schedule.

Belleville Mayor Ken Voigt was unable to attend because he had foot surgery. Samantha Simpson volunteered to read his remarks. She introduced herself as "pro-

tem mayor," as a joke, but some members of the audience thought that's who she was.

Sumpter Township did not send an official to speak, so longtime Friends member Rick Cichewicz of Sumpter Township, made brief remarks on how important the library's media center has been to the community.

Library Board President Sharon Peters,

who also is a member of Friends, said the community is blessed to have Suchy as director. She said Suchy was evaluated at the last library board meeting and received excellent ratings for her work.

After the pizza was served, Michelle Montour, an artist who serves as voluntary curator for the library, offered a tour to show the different artworks now on display.

VBPS hears report on Boys & Girls Club groups

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

At Monday's regular meeting of the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education, Alise Dixon, chief program officer of Boys and Girls Clubs of Southeastern Michigan, explained some of the classes the club has brought to Belleville High School and McBride Middle School.

She said real-world experts are helping find career paths for students, with less school work. She said they teach students what is really going on in the workplace, which doesn't always follow what is in books.

She spoke of robotic coding, eSports, technology, and skill-based programs.

BHS senior Madison Delano spoke about how she signed up for a class because she had an opening in her schedule and she found what was offered was very involved and interesting.

School Supt. Pete Kudlak said the Boys & Girls Club had been part of the district for many years, mainly at Edgemont

Elementary School, but with the recession and COVID it closed.

Now the program is providing a lot of materials and people and the district doesn't pay them anything, but allows them to use school space, he said.

School board member Victor DeLibera said his main focus at the school has been robotics and what she was saying about what the club was doing with robotics was news to him.

"We need to have a conversation," he said and Dixon agreed to talk to him.

Also, when Dixon spoke about the special class for boys only, called "Passport to Manhood," BHS Principal Nicole Crockett was surprised. She said she would like to talk to Dixon about that class and how what is taught there can be continued.

In other business at Monday's meeting, the board:

- Received certificates and gifts from Wayne County RESA to celebrate January as School Board Member Recognition Month;

- Approved a resolution saying this district supports federal legislation for full funding of the 50-year-old IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) program for the disabled. Supt. Kudlak said there was supposed to be full funding from the start, but that never happened. Supporters of more money to support this are taking the resolutions passed by school boards to show the local support and to ask Congress to fund it;

- Approved the 19-page School Board Operating Procedures for 2025. Pearce said its good to review how public comment is taken only at two places on the agenda. She said she has been lax and has responded to people raising their hands to speak and she will no longer do that. She said people who wish to speak must fill out cards and hand it to the board. She said people can speak on subjects at the beginning of the meeting before the board discusses and votes on an issue or at the end after they have decided. She said the board goes over the operating

(continued on page 6)

OPINIONS

Editorial

For some folks, this cold weather is the greatest fun of all

Over the weekend, those who enjoy icy weather had a great time cutting through the 8 inches or so of Belleville Lake ice with a chainsaw to form a giant circle that they made spin – an ice carousel behind Johnny’s on the Lake restaurant.

As it turned, kids and adults jumped on and off the moving ice. A fire pit was added in the center. Great fun.

By Monday it was all frozen up again, but the fun time was preserved on social media.

Others enjoyed the frigid weather by ice fishing, ice skating, and snowmobiling, though the snow in this part of the state is scant.

All this is to say, it’s how you look at things that matter. Some are snuggled down in their homes wrapped in blankets in front of space heaters to stay out of the cold. Others venture out in several layers of clothing to run their errands and get on with their lives.

It will be just a few short weeks before spring is upon us again and January will be a bad memory – for some. Depends how you look at it.

We have to agree with some who say that the five weeks of January have seemed particularly long and especially gray. When the sun popped up, it didn’t seem to warm up the countryside, but it did bring more cheerful attitudes.

And, the folks on the ice carousel over the weekend sure made good use of an icy lake for lots of fun.

EXTRA THINGS I KNOW

...By Rosemary K. Otzman

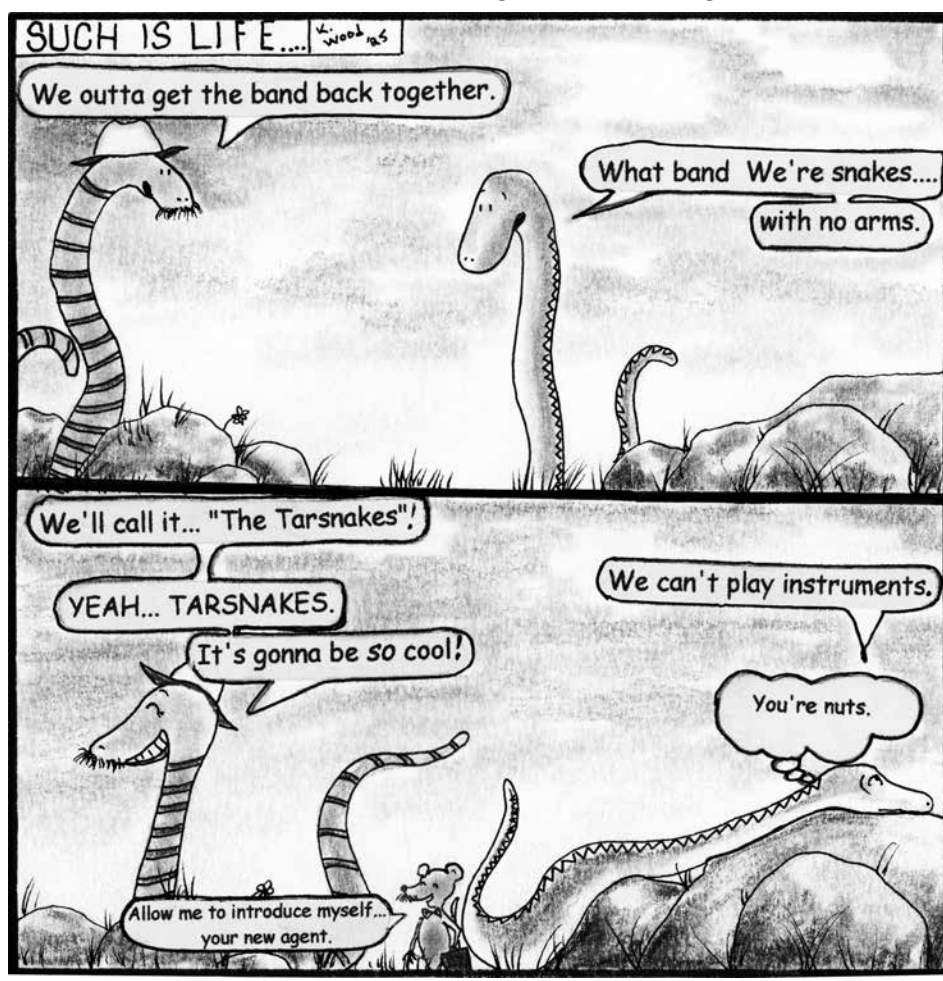
Besides the list of closed businesses in downtown Belleville, there also are several restaurant closings in Van Buren Township. Denny’s has been closed for a few months, one of 15 permanently closed in Michigan. Wendy’s also was permanently shuttered as one of 12 closed in Michigan in mid-December. Twisted Rooster closed early but now the building is being upgraded and turned into a Morning Belle restaurant.

Bryce Underwood, 17, who until December was a BHS senior, reportedly made at least \$10.5 million for agreeing for early enrollment to play on the U of M football team. He was in the news again on Jan. 4, for being given a 2025 Tahoe RST by Feldman Chevrolet of Highland, as part of the U of M deal. The Feldmans are U of M alums.

This is part of the NIL deal (new name, image and likeness). Sports writers are suggesting his new SUV is to drive around the Ann Arbor campus.

Meanwhile, Underwood’s head coach at BHS for the first two years of being a high-school quarterback and winning two state titles for the school, has finished up his two-year suspension and has been hired as a football coach for River Rouge. His hiring was finalized at the Jan. 22 meeting of the River Rouge Board of Education.

After eight years at BHS, the Michigan High School Athletic Association suspended him in 2022 until the 2025 high school football season. The MHSAA determined Crowell violated the undue influence rule when a student at Detroit King said Crowell contacted him prior to



his freshman year.

The MHSAA accused Crowell of picking up and dropping off players at summer practice sessions and 7-on-7 competition.

“I want people to know you didn’t hear me contest their decision because some of the things they accused me of, I did,” he told CBS in January 2023. “I did pick up and drop off because they had no other way. And I did it for a number of years...” Crowell said the student who said he gave him a ride, however, did practice at Belleville, but he never got a ride.

The Mackinac Center for Public Policy has assembled a Business Subsidy Scorecard for members of the Michigan Legislature from 2021 to the present showing the money given to private businesses. Studies show these subsidies tend to produce fewer jobs than promised.

Our local legislators on the list are Rep. Reggie Miller, D-Van Buren Township, and Sen. Darrin Camilleri, D-Trenton. Rep. Miller reportedly voted for 100% of what was proposed to approve \$3,985,000,000.

Sen. Camilleri approved 91.9% proposed for a total of \$5,853,133,278. He voted no on \$512,800,000.

Every school day from 2:15 to 4 p.m., the Busch Branch of the Warren Public Library closes down. The reason for the closure is fights and disruption from teenagers. The closure corresponds with dismissal time at

Fitzgerald High School across the street, which officials say is the source of the chaos.

News reports say Dayton is having the same problem with after-school fights at the library.

The Belleville Area District Library began to have problems with teenagers after school, but rather than lock them out, the administration came up with creative solutions that would make the teens feel welcome, but under tighter rules. No more having pizza delivered to the library to eat inside, for one.

Extra staff was hired as monitors who would interact with the teens, special programs set up for football and basketball game days, and other things. It’s working and we don’t expect to be reporting the Belleville library will be closing for two hours after school each week day.

Belleville Mayor Ken Voigt was unable to attend Saturday’s annual meeting of the Friends of the Library because he had surgery on his foot. He sent prepared remarks and Samantha Simpson volunteered to read them. Simpson introduced herself as “pro-tem mayor,” which she isn’t. She was joking.



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Letters

Romulus City Council changes the rules

To the editor:
 First, I want to say congratulations to Mr. David Jones for filling the vacant council seat. But what happened at the 1/27/25 Romulus City Council meeting was a debacle!

The council passed a resolution at the previous session that any Romulus citizen that met certain criteria could write a letter of intent to fill the vacancy. Those people would be on a ballot for the council to vote on. The resolution stated a vote of 4 or more would win the seat.

Questions arose at the last meeting on what would happen if there is a tie. The mayor suggested a point system that is used with other cities and organizations and the candidate with the highest total points would win the seat. The council rejected that plan with several stating: "we are not children, we'll just keep voting 'til it is resolved."

Well, guess what. The vote came to a tie, three times! The mayor then suggested the point system again. His suggestion wasn't even acknowledged by the council. At that point the council changed the rules and made a resolution that because one candidate had two votes, they would take a roll call to approve that candidate. That even took two rounds of voting!

How can the council make a resolution and just bypass it by another because none of them could agree or would change their vote? Is this setting a precedent that any other items the council votes on and that item doesn't have enough votes to pass, they can just take a roll call and change the vote?

I know one thing for sure, the citizens in attendance were NOT happy on how the council handled this and that may be reflected in this year's election in November. Mr. David Jones, I hope the first thing you tackle on the council is to get a resolution on how to correctly handle any future vacancy on the council.

Jeff Kotlarek for Romulus City Council
 Romulus, MI

Help us feed needy students at Tyler Elem.

To the editor:
 Thank you to those who donated to Team Tigers in 2024. Team Tigers is continuing with their mission to provide backpacks of food to those students in need at Tyler Elementary in 2025. We are looking for donations of the following items:

- Pancake mix, pancake syrup, Go Go Squeeze yogurt, tuna/chicken packets, soup, Hormel Compleats, peanut butter, jelly, Go Go Squeeze applesauce, fruit cups, macaroni, Stove Top stuffing (any brand is fine), potatoes, cornbread mix, buttermilk biscuit mix, beans (bagged or canned - any kind), spaghetti, pasta sauce, canned vegetables, pizza dough mix, pepperoni (shelf-stable), and tomato/pizza sauce.

Your donation can be dropped off at Open Arms Lutheran Church at 7865 Belleville Rd. If you would prefer to make a monetary donation, please make your check payable to Open Arms Lutheran Church. Thank you for your continued support.

Brandon Underwood

Looking for something interesting to do?

To the editor:
 Looking for something fun and interesting to do in Belleville? Well look no more!

Every last Saturday (in each and every month), our favorite librarian, Tara, hosts "The Write Stuff" — a writing class / idea exchange / get together / etc. — at the Belleville library in beautiful downtown Belleville. The class starts at 1 p.m. (ends no later than 3 p.m.) and it's FREE, ladies and gents, and open to all.

You may already be a writer, or just have ideas for stories; short or long. No matter! Tara can help. And, as I already mentioned, ALL are welcome.

Mark your calendar for the last Saturday of each and every month, at 1 p.m., at the Belleville library.

Hope to see you there!

William Wilson
 Sumpter Township

Belleville Area Council for the Arts offers \$1,000 senior scholarships

The Belleville Area Council for the Arts is offering a \$1,000 Visual Scholarship for Belleville High School artists who are seniors. The deadline to apply is the BHS seniors' last day of school this year.

BACA also offers other scholarships, such as Drama Camp for BHS sophomore / juniors.

BACA meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at the Belleville Area District Library or the Van Buren Township Downtown Development Authority headquarters at Harris Park. Membership is \$30 a year.

See BACAART.org for more information on scholarships or membership. To get on the email list, contact: bellartson@gmail.com .

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School Board

(continued from page 3)

procedures once a year;

- Approved up to \$20,000 in additional funds for Tyler Elementary to fix it so radios and cell phones will work properly there. Director of Plant Operations James Williams said that Savage had the worst issue and the quote was revised earlier. He said they actually need \$17,864.74 for Tyler, but he rounded it off at \$20,000 in case a little more is needed. The grand total of the district-wide radio upgrades, programming and cellular BDA DAS is \$306,979;

- Heard board member DeLibera ask that budget line items be identified when money is being spent. He also noted this at the last meeting on another item. He told Finance Director Priya Nayak that he would sit down and talk to her about this at another time;

- Heard Supt. Kudlak announce that McBride's VFW Patriot's Pen Essay Winners were Donald DeYoung, who received a check for \$500 for first place, and Nyemah Pettis, who received a check for \$250 for second place. He also announced Braxtyn Monroe, a second grader, won first place in the Rawsonville Spelling Bee. Lucas Millard, a third grader, won second place;

- Accepted the resignation of Edgemont Speech Pathologist Lauren Trejo after less than a year of service as of Jan. 24;

- Approved hiring first grade teacher Hannah Paduchak for Edgemont Elementary School as of Feb. 3;

- Approved the resignations of Mikayla Mitchell as a Savage Elementary School paraprofessional, after less than a year of service, as of Jan. 16; and the resignation of Katina Hargrove as a bus driver after eight years of service as of Jan. 31;

- Approved the hiring of Joy Evans as a paraprofessional at Edgemont Elementary School as of Jan. 17 and Kyle Mattaush as a custodian in Building and Grounds at a

starting date to be determined;

- Heard Kennedy Robinson, the student participant for the meeting, announce that student council members went to a leadership conference in Livonia and won the right to do presentations at the Grand Rapids state conference. She said the boys' basketball team is undefeated and Kudlak said the boys' bowling team also is undefeated;

- Heard Director of Student Services Julien Frazier announce that Connie Testorelli will be celebrated as Michigan Special Education Teacher of the Year for 2024-25 at the end of February in Grand Rapids. He also said the Unified Basketball team won its last game and lost the one before that. It will be playing at Little Caesars Arena this weekend;

- Heard Kudlak remind everyone that this Saturday the Van Buren Education Foundation event is at the BYC to earn funds for the schools. He also announced a girls flag football league is being formed by Candice Price;

- Heard Delibera say that in the future he will bring the information he has on various studies on lighting in the schools;

- Heard Pearce say this is the time of year where college decisions are being made by seniors and some are disappointed they were not chosen for the colleges they wanted. "You will end up where you're supposed to be," she said, adding it is a very competitive situation and they shouldn't feel bad; and

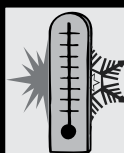
- Went into closed-door session at the end of the meeting to consider reinstating student 24-25-004. After coming back into regular session the board voted to reinstate the student with conditions.

Board vice-president Dionne Falconer presided at the meeting. President Amy Pearce said she had thought she would not be present for this meeting, so she asked Falconer to preside. She said it would be good practice for Falconer, who was elected vice president at the last meeting.

Pearce said she actually will be gone for the next meeting, so Falconer will preside at the next meeting, as well.

Trustee David Shall was absent from Monday's meeting.

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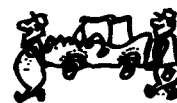
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Obituaries



Carl Londa Phelps, III

CARL LONDA PHELPS, III

(April 29, 1967 – January 25, 2025)
Carl Londa Phelps, III, age 57, of Van Buren Township, passed away January 25, 2025. He was born on April 29, 1967, in Ypsilanti, Michigan, son to the late Carl (Denise) Phelps II and Juliann (Larry) McArthur. Loving father of Nick (Amy) Grabiec and Breanna (Keaton) Phelps; proud grandfather of Aniyah; brother of Carla Phelps, Doug and Joey McArthur, Mark and Steve Whitehead. Carl worked for Roush Racing for many years. In his spare time, he enjoyed fishing, snowmobiling and spending time up north with his best friend/cousin Kathy. Funeral service will be held on Thursday, January 30, 2025, 1 p.m. at the Village Funeral Home of Ortonville, 135 South St. The family will receive friends on Thursday from 11 a.m. until time of service. Kindly keep Carl and his family in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. To leave a condolence, please visit: www.VillageFH.com

DALE EDWIN FRANK

(April 4, 1946 – January 19, 2025)
Age 78, of Van Buren Twp. Survived by wife Regina; son James Frank of Texas; daughter Sharon Frank of Colorado. Arrangements by Brown Funeral Home. Interment with mother in Independent Order of the Odd Fellows Cemetery in South Dakota.
www.davidcbrownfh.com

CAROLANN JONES

(May 14, 1957 – January 22, 2025)
Age 67, lifelong Belleville-area resident. Survived by husband Kenneth; three children, Ken's two children; two sisters. Celebration of life will be announced soon. Arrangements by David C. Brown Funeral Home.
www.davidcbrownfh.com



Daryl Ronald Bauman

DARYL RONALD BAUMAN

(December 29, 1951 – January 24, 2025)
Daryl Bauman, age 73, of Van Buren Township, MI, passed away on January 24, 2025, at his home, after a courageous battle with Lewy Body Dementia. He was born on December 29, 1951, in Detroit, MI, to Desmond and Olga (Kolesnikoff) Bauman. After his high school years, he married the love of his life and began his family. Daryl loved to hunt and enjoyed deer camp very much. In addition, he also was an avid snowmobiler. Daryl really loved Christmas time and having parties in general. He enjoyed his family and friends greatly and loved to be a jokester with them. He will be greatly missed. Daryl is survived by his loving wife of 52 years, Patricia Bauman of Van Buren Township, MI; his children, Christina (Brandon) Tikkanen, of Saline, MI, Bradley (Karen) Bauman of New Boston, MI; his siblings Nina Normandin of Belleville, MI, Roberta (Skip) Baldwin of Belleville, MI; his grandchildren, Mackenzie, Kelsey, and Connor Tikkanen of Saline, MI, and Macy, Milly, and Maya Bauman of New Boston, MI; his extended family friends, Ed (Elaine) Whitman of Brownstown, MI, and the Harris Family of Belleville, MI; as well as many nieces, nephews, cousins, neighbors and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his brother Desmond Bauman, sister Paula LaRowe, and his brother-in-law, Dave Normandin; and sister-in-law Arlene Bauman.

A visitation was held at the David C. Brown Funeral Home, 460 E. Huron River Drive, Belleville, MI, 48111 on Sunday, January 26, 2025, and a visitation and service on Monday, January 27, 2025. Pastor Gordon Moore officiated. A Celebration of Life, was held after the service. A private family entombment was Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at Michigan Memorial Park in Flat Rock, MI.

DEBORAH PORTERA

(November 28, 1953 – January 26, 2025)
Age 71, of Ypsilanti. Survived by husband Paul; children Robert and Laura; grandchildren Hudson, Hunter and Brooklyn; and sister Robin. Memorial service Feb. 6 at Brown Funeral Home. Funeral mass Feb. 7 at St. Anthony Catholic Church.
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BHS at-home games

- **Friday, Jan. 31** – Boys and Girls Bowling vs. Wayne Memorial, 3 p.m., at Lodge Lanes; Boys Basketball vs. John Glenn (Freshmen, 4 p.m.; JV, 5:30 p.m.; Varsity, 7 p.m.)
 - **Tuesday, Feb. 4** – Girls Basketball vs. Livonia Franklin (JV, 5:30 p.m.; Varsity, 7 p.m.); Boys Swim & Dive Dual Meet vs. Carleton and Thurston, 6 p.m.
- Jamie Cichowski
Athletic Secretary
Belleville High School

Musings
 By Janet Millard
 Independent
 Advertising Director



The Belleville Band Boosters have announced the date of their annual BHS Jazz Band Spaghetti Dinner. Mark your calendar for March 1 from 5 to 8 p.m. in the BHS Commons. For only \$15 you get a great dinner plus enjoy the Jazz Band.

February brings the Wayne County Polar Plunge for Special Olympics on the 15th being hosted by the Belleville Yacht Club again this year. Check-in begins at 10 a.m. and the plunge is at noon. Register at: give.classy.org/wayneco25. You don't have to plunge to raise money but I assume that is half the fun!

Many of you say you enjoy my column but I'm hoping you also are looking at the advertising. Did you notice the new ad for Belleville Tax & Accounting that started last week? The women are still working hard on taxes right here in the Professional Building, but under a new name – Haven Group! I expect it will be a number of years before they retire, so pretty much business as usual. Also, did you notice the new ad for Main Street Pups? So cute!

Another first-time ad last week was the

Mother's Day Market in May. You will see this ad run once a month through April. Wayne County Community College will be a great venue with lots of room to view the many vendors and crafters. I think this is just the first of many events by Swanky Lady. Don't you just love that name?

I am certainly enjoying Rosemary's articles on events from 30 years ago. I should remember all this but some have certainly faded from my memory. It is really important that we remember our history so the same mistakes aren't repeated.

Do you have a business item you would like to see in this column? Call Janet Millard at (734) 699-9020.

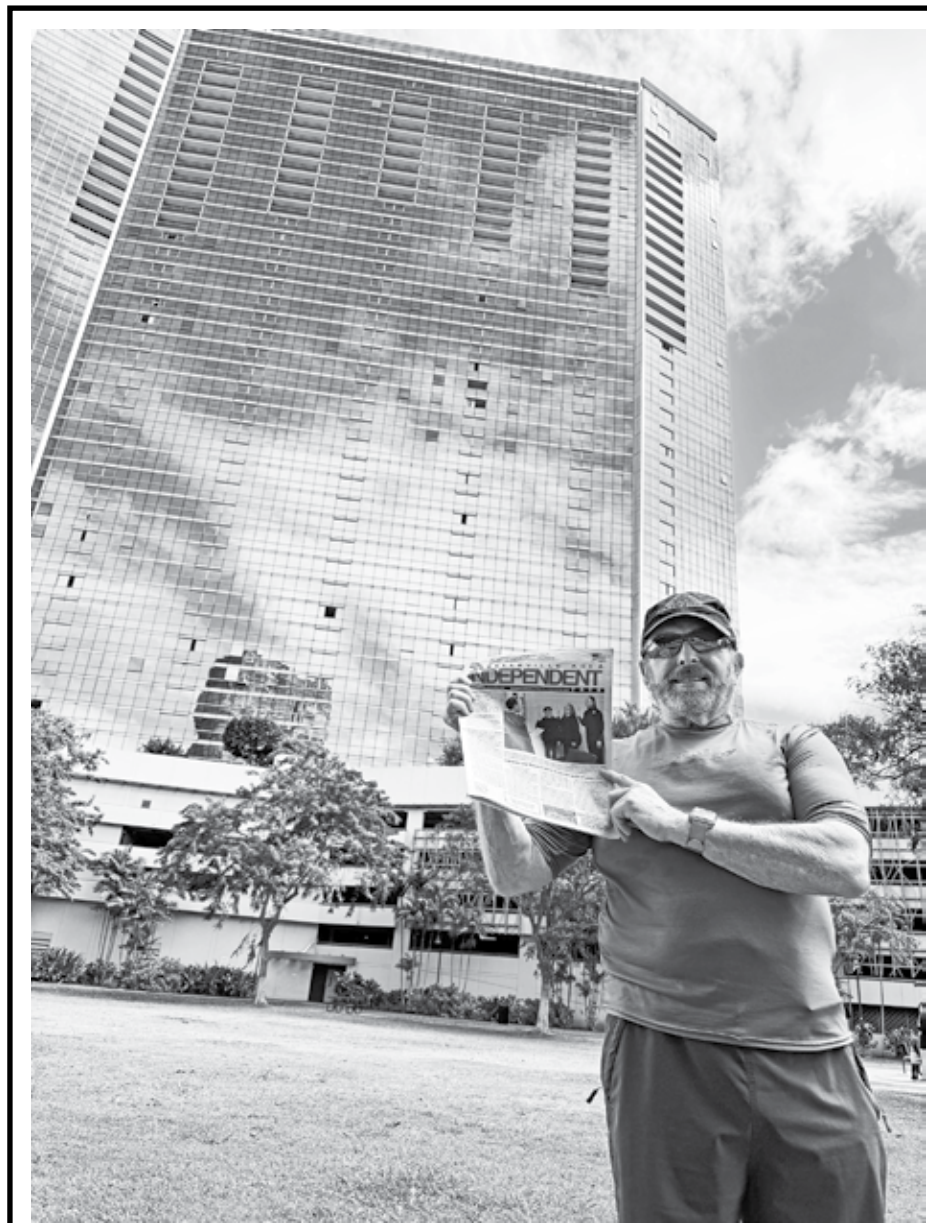


- Jan. 28 – Ralph Tucker
- Feb. 4 – Myrtle Wood
- Feb. 6 – Chad Klavinger

Do you have a birthday soon? Does someone you know have a birthday? Let us know and we will print the name as soon as possible. For more information, call (734) 699-9020.



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They're reading the *Independent* Everywhere

Vietnam-era Marine, and Van Buren Township resident James Wigginton, continued his quest to climb the tallest building in every state on Jan. 26 with his 48th state climb in Hawaii, holding last week's *Independent*. He is climbing the steps of the tallest buildings in each state for a new World Record to bring awareness and funding to Folds of Honor, which has provided over 17,000 scholarships to the families of fallen military and first responders over the last 17 years, and the Punya Thyroid Cancer Foundation, which has helped fund research and treatment at the University of Michigan for Drs. Worden and Haymart. Contributions can be made at: Foldsofhonor.org and the Punya Thyroid Cancer Endowment Fund at <https://giving.umich.edu/basket/fund/796525>

You, too, are invited to submit a photo of you reading the *Independent* in an exotic location. Please include the name and address of the person you wish to get the free subscription when it is printed. Include your phone number if you want us to let you know just before goes in the paper. A person may use this offer to get a total of two free subscriptions – and no more.

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The Plan is to Deliver in February

VBT Planning Comm. recommends new height, setback for Belleville Rd.

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

At its regular meeting on Jan. 22, the Van Buren Township Planning Commission unanimously approved sending revisions to the Belleville Road Overlay District ordinance to the township board for consideration.

This was after a public hearing where nobody spoke.

Vidya Krishan, senior principal planner from McKenna Associates, said in a memo, that higher heights are prevalent in almost all new commercial enterprises and mixed-use buildings.

“While the existing height and story limit is reasonable for many commercial uses such as restaurants, retail stores, etc., that function in single or two-story buildings, uses that require additional stories and height such as home improvement stores and hotels are challenged by the limitation,” she wrote.

She said based on research into similar uses in other communities, she recommends an amendment to provide more flexibility for future developments.

The current ordinance calls for maximum building height of 4 stories or 40 feet. The amendment says 4-story buildings may be permitted up to 50 feet, provided that setbacks increase as stated.

In other business at the 53-minute meeting, the commission:

- Approved a 12-month extension of its expired site plan for DTE’s construction of

a 1,900-square-foot garage addition to its facility on Haggerty Road. The property has been bid up and awarded, so construction should begin soon, said Alysha D’Agnolo, project manager;

- Discussed the non-residential PUD (planned unit development) draft and decided to wait until they have a final draft before setting a public hearing on the ordinance. There were questions about allowing site condos in an area meant for industrial and office and other concerns. Gage Bellow of McKenna Associates was asked to change the draft and send the new ordinance to committee members and commission members before the next meeting. A public hearing will be set once the ordinance is ready;

- Heard Director Ron Akers summarize the 2024 Planning Commission Annual Activity, Master Plan Update and Public Participation Report, as required by law. Commissioner Jeff Jahr said, “2024 was a busy year.” The lengthy report was unanimously approved to be sent to the township board for consideration;

- Learned Canton Township has sent the planning commission its draft Master Plan and is asking for comments;

- Learned on the Feb. 12 meeting the pond excavation approved by the township board will be on their agenda, as well as the Pulte Homes project;

- Heard Akers announce that a joint meeting of the Van Buren Township, Belleville, and Sumpter Township was scheduled for 5 p.m., Jan. 29, in the Cozadd Room of the Belleville Area District Library; and

- Learned Brittany Zantop, who has been doing the secretary reports for their meetings, has been promoted to a zoning specialist position to help fill the vacancy left when Dan Power resigned. Director Ron Akers said she will do site inspections and planning stuff and, “The township is still in good hands.” Akers said the township has had a difficult time replacing Power, so it is able to promote those from within who have the knowledge to do some of the work.

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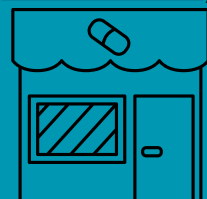
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Independent photo by Rosemary K. Otzman

Members of the Belleville City Council were asked by city manager Jason Smith to write their top priorities for city departments for the 2025 year on sheets of paper he posted on the wall behind the council table. From left are Mayor Pro-Tem Kelly Bates, Mayor Ken Voigt, and council members Randy Priest, Jeremiah Beebe, and Julie Kissel. The next step is to work the goals into the budget.

City Council

(continued from page 1)

boardwalk, repairs to the war memorial, and road upgrades and he doesn't want to raise taxes. It would take \$12 million to do it all, he said;

- Two items, a presentation by a bond attorney and a resolution of a proposal to bond for \$3.5 million, were removed from the agenda before the meeting;
- Discussed how much residents now are charged to pay their utilities with electronic checks, debit/credit cards, or over the phone. They can still walk in as in the past and pay without an extra fee;
- Was provided the 2024 crime statistics for the city, with the calls for service being 4,276, up from 3,528 in 2023. "We're getting busier," said Police Chief Kris Faull;

• Took part in a goal-setting exercise where they got up from the council table and wrote their goals for the different city departments on pieces of paper hung on the wall by city manager Smith. The results will be used to prepare the upcoming budget;

- Renewed the Cityworks software program for another year for \$14,580;
- Approved purchase of CINTAS first aid and eyewash stations at the DPW building and city hall. Director Frierson said the detox box at the DPW building had not been maintained and someone should be coming monthly. She said the cost of \$600 is to install and then there is a monthly cost to replace whatever is removed. She said it is required by OSHA to have an eyewash station on wheels. Chief Faull said police have an eyewash station upstairs at city

hall, but that is not handicapped accessible. The council approved a station downstairs. The total price was not announced;

- Approved the request of Tiger Village for a charitable gaming license. After approval by the city, the request goes on to the state for approval. Greg Cooper, a retired teacher and president of Tiger Village, explained that the program rewards student academic progress with cash and they need to raise funds. He said they would not raise funds at football games, because that's when the football supporters have their time. They were planning to have their sales at basketball games. He said there are 30 students now in the program and only seven will get the cash award;
- Went into closed-door session to discuss tentative union agreements with the Police Officers Association of Michigan and the GELC unions.

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Belleville Lake to mark 100 years in existence

By Don Sherman
Van Buren Township

A century ago, Henry Ford had a full plate. The Ford Motor Company was manufacturing 10,000 Model Ts *per day*, selling them across the U.S. and exporting them to 11 other countries. But somehow the 62-year-old motor magnate found the time to invest time and resources in additional fruitful activities.

Teamed with his pal Thomas Edison, Ford sought to exploit the energy available from Huron River water flowing through his vast land holdings a few miles west of his Dearborn, MI, home. This 130-mile-long river begins in northern Oakland County with 26 tributaries draining 908 square miles of Michigan lands. On its way to Lake Erie, the happy Huron crosses four additional counties.

Ford and Edison constructed two hydroelectric dams: one near today's Rawsonville Road, the other at French Landing, some eight miles to the south. DTE still receives over 3500 kW per annum from these generators. A few existing homes in the micro-community known as Rawsonville were sacrificed as the Huron River grew into Belleville Lake. And major revisions were necessary in the local county road network.

In 1925, a 120-foot riveted steel truss bridge was erected to connect the town of Belleville with adjoining roads. After 60 years of service, that bridge was replaced with a three-span reinforced concrete structure providing four traffic lanes. A smaller bridge on nearby Denton Road was closed for replacement in the fall of 2022. Reconstruction is progressing nicely and

the new bridge should open this fall. The Edison-Ford effort yielded three new lakes. One appropriately named Ford Lake is in Washtenaw County. Tiny Edison Lake lies just east of Haggerty Road. The largest body of water—Belleville Lake -- is within walking distance of today's Belleville Presbyterian Church. Residential properties adjoining this lake are highly prized; according to local realtor Susan Weis, one recently sold for \$2.2-million. The town of Belleville still strives to serve the area's commercial needs.

Belleville Lake is eight miles long; it covers 1,270 acres and has a maximum depth of 30 feet making it an attractive fishing and boating site. Four lovely parks abut the lake and there are two public boat launches. In the dead of winter, brave souls venture onto the frozen surface with skates, skis, snow machines, and hovercraft.

One of the most interesting uses of the lake is the Ice Carousel created by realtor Tim Craiger near Johnny's on the Lake Bar & Grill. This 120-foot-diameter chunk of foot-thick ice rotates majestically thanks to an electric outboard motor. A central firepit and a wealth of beverages keep carousel riders cozy.

More than a dozen fish species -- some of which are up to three feet long -- populate the lake. Unfortunately, there are frequent "catch and release" advisories issued when algae infestations bloom in hot summer months.

During World War II, Ford's friend Charles Lindbergh conducted touch-and-go amphibious aircraft maneuvers on a one-mile-long stretch of Belleville Lake adjoining Van Buren Park. During summer months, the University of Michigan's women's rowing team uses that same bay for practice and races.

Asked what sort of Belleville Lake birthday celebration might occur, Van Buren Township supervisor Kevin McNamara replied that he isn't aware of any such plans. He also acknowledged that the annual Fourth of July fireworks jubilee or the re-opening of Denton Road would provide an excellent opportunity to toast our magnificent lake. Watch this space for coming birthday party news.

ORPHAN OF THE WEEK MORTY



MEET MORTIMER (AKA MORTY)!

Morty is a 5-year-old, large mix breed with a striking white coat adorned with black spots and expressive, gentle brown eyes. This sweet, calm guy is as lovable as he is handsome. Though he's a bit of a big guy, Morty has a soft and easy-going nature that will melt your heart.

He's well-mannered and knows several commands, including "sit," "stay," "come," "down," "wait," and "fetch." If you've got treats on hand, he's all ears—Morty is very food motivated, which makes him easy to train and redirect if needed. He's also a toy enthusiast and loves playing with both people and on his own. Whether it's a squeaky ball or a tug toy, Morty is always up for a fun game!

Morty is a curious dog when it comes to other animals. He's not overly excited or pushy with dogs, and he's shown mild interest in cats with a laid-back attitude. He can pull a bit on the leash, but with a slip lead and nose loop, he walks like a dream, especially when there's a treat involved.

Though he's calm in his kennel and enjoys napping on his bed, Morty would thrive in a home with older children due to his size and tendency to jump when excited. He's potty-trained and has kept his kennel clean, proving he's a smart and reliable companion.

Morty came to us from the Brownstown Animal Shelter and is ready for his forever family. If you're looking for a sweet, loyal, and playful pup who'll be your new best friend, Morty is your guy!

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Independent photos by Rosemary K. Otzman

An open house at Van Buren Township on Jan. 23 invited the public in to study the plans for the Belleville Road widening project between Tyler and Ecorse roads, which will go out for bids this fall and take about a year to complete once it is begun. The straightening of the intersection of Belleville/Tyler roads is part of the project, along with a sidewalk on the east side, north from Tyler.

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VBT

(continued from page 1)

court. "That's why I'm Augusta Township supervisor now, I guess," he said.

McNamara said the only complaint the township had on his Hull Road operation was on tracking out.

Akers said the township sent notices to all property owners within 300 feet and got only two responses. He said one response was in favor of the project and one expressed concerns.

Akers said the ordinances covering ponds are old and so the board may put a six-month moratorium on new ponds until the ordinances can be brought up to present laws.

Waller said his new venture is to grow sod for golf courses which requires irrigation.

Trustee Kevin Martin asked what will happen to the pond once Waller is gone. Will it just be a big pond on a residential

property? Waller said he doesn't know what will happen after he dies.

Trustee Donald Boynton said five acres for a pond is awfully large. He said other sod farmers he researched show roughly half that amount. He said three acres seems like enough.

"Under the Right to Farm Act I have a right to farm and decide how much irrigation I need," Waller said.

He complained that he has been fighting the township for over a year for this project.

Michael Levitt, an attorney representing Waller, said his client can decide under the state law and his pond is 4.88 acres and nothing in Michigan law says he can't put in a pond under five acres.

Trustee Martin said the board didn't get this project until the last 2-3 months and it wanted to ask him some questions and he didn't show up. The request was delayed until Waller could attend a meeting.

Waller said he applied when Dan Power

was director of planning and economic development.

"We don't believe he needs an excavation permit," Levitt said, noting a Washtenaw County judge said it wasn't needed and the Right to Farm Act preempts the ordinance.

Waller said Treasurer Budd, who was absent from that meeting, questioned his pond and McNamara said he wanted to point out that Budd didn't own the property on which Kenworth built, as reported.

A man from Augusta Township said he was in favor of the pond.

McNamara said the main person against it "is me" and that's why he is seeking a moratorium on ponds until the ordinances are updated.

The Augusta Township man asked why it took so long to come to the board and Trustee Martin said, "It takes time." The man accused the board of taking notice of what was happening in Augusta Township and board members denied that.

Supervisor McNamara said he has concerns about longterm trucking and, "We're not going to blow up like Canton," he said. "It'll be slow and easy."

In other business at the Jan. 21 meeting, the board:

- Heard Clerk Leon Wright promote Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and the great man who did so much for so many people. Clerk Wright also announced this year's Blue Cross Blue Shield increase is 5.91%. He said under the program the township is using, it only gets charged for employees going for treatment each month. He said this saved the township \$237,000 from last April 24 to today. Supervisor McNamara said the township expected a larger BCBS increase and put it in the 2025 budget, so the lower figure is good news;

- Heard Stephanie Richards introduce herself as Wayne County Sheriff's Department Community Liaison officer for Western Wayne County, servicing 15 municipalities. Deputy Richards said the Sheriff's Department wants to know what the communities need. McNamara said the township has a strong tie to Wayne County Sheriff's Department because of the lake;

- Approved promotions of Kendyl Zantop, who has worked for the township for 10 years, to the position of Municipal Services Coordinator; Brittney Williams, who has worked for the township for four years, to Planning and Zoning Specialist; and Karen Pecsenye from the Water Department to the Township Clerk's office; and Brad Barbaza, who worked for the township for three years, to IT director;

- Approved the personal services agreement and hired Matthew Smith as Community Center Facilities Specialist starting Feb. 4. He is coming from a position at the University of Michigan;

- Approved the 142-page Safe Streets for All Action Plan, which determined the top five locations in the township for fatal and severe injury accidents over the past five years. The top location is Ecorse at Denton and at Beck, which is recommended solved by a \$13 million upgrade that includes a Michigan Left Blvd. from west of Denton Road to east of Beck Road. The other most-dangerous locations are Ecorse at Haggerty Road (\$750,000 to fix), Haggerty at I-94 North Service Drive (\$850,000), Haggerty at I-94 South Service Dr. (\$920,000), and Tyler/Belleville roads (already funded) which are being realigned as part of the Belleville Road Widening Project. McNamara said the next step for upgrades is funding and the data in the plan can be used to get grants. McNamara said since the township is so small, it has to go through the county for certain grants. He also said the township needed to evaluate its entire road system, so it did;

- Approved six-month moratoriums on new applications for gas filling stations and soil removal, mining, and ponds, with those applicants currently in the system moving ahead. McNamara said, "We have enough gas stations. We need to stop until we can get a handle on it." Akers said they have two new gas stations at the same

(continued on page 15)

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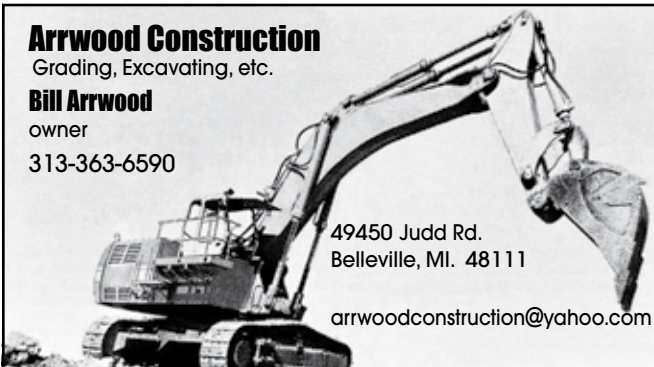
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Things to do in the Belleville area...

• **Friday, Jan. 31** – Dinner, 5 p.m. until gone at the Van Buren Eagles, 3996, 9961 Beck Rd. Also, Trivia with DJ to follow at 7:30 p.m.

• **Friday, Jan. 31** – A Night of Family Feud provided by the Auxiliary at Pvt. James D. Donovan VFW Post 78, 39270 W. Huron River Dr., Romulus, (734) 941-3030. Doors open at 6 p.m.; game starts at 7 p.m. Up to six players per team, \$5 per player. Bring snacks to share at your table; drinks can be purchased in the club room.

• **Sunday, Feb. 2** – St. Anthony Men's Club 55th annual raffle, drawing between 2-3 p.m., St. Anthony Parish Center, 409 W. Columbia Ave., Belleville. \$10,000 grand prize, need not be present to win. 2nd prize is \$1,000 and 3rd, 4th, and 5th prizes are \$500 each. Only 300 tickets printed. If fewer than 250 tickets sold, raffle will revert to a 50/50 format with five prize of 40%, 4%, and 2%. Contact: Pete Pitzen, (734) 699-8563.

• **Friday, Feb. 7** – Dinner, 5 p.m. until gone at the Van Buren Eagles, 3996, 9961 Beck Rd. Also, DJ/Karaoke Mix Anthony Richendollar at 7:30 p.m.

• **Friday, Feb. 14** – Dinner, 5 p.m. until gone at the Van Buren Eagles, 3996, 9961 Beck Rd. Also, meat auction at 6:30 p.m. and two-person band, Flaunt Love.

• **Saturday, Feb. 15** – Polar Plunge to benefit Special Olympics of Michigan will take place at the Belleville Yacht Club with registration beginning at 10 a.m. and the plunges at noon.

• **Sunday, Feb. 16** – Ypsilanti Symphony Orchestra at 3:30 p.m. at Lincoln High School Performing Arts Center, 7425 Willis Rd., Ypsilanti. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$6 for students/ seniors/children, and \$30 per family. www.ypsilantisymphony.org

• **Friday, Feb. 21** – Dinner, 5 p.m. until gone at the Van Buren Eagles, 3996, 9961 Beck Rd. Also, Trivia with DJ to follow at 7:30 p.m.

• **Friday, Feb. 28** – Dinner, 5 p.m. until gone at the Van Buren Eagles, 3996, 9961 Beck Rd. Also, DJ/Karaoke Mix Anthony Richendollar at 7:30 p.m.

• **Saturday, March 1** – BHS Jazz Band performs for the annual spaghetti dinner at the BHS Commons, 5-8 p.m. Spaghetti is \$15.

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VBT

(continued from page 13)

intersection. He said the ordinances were written in 1973 and have had no substantial changes since then. This will give the township time to update the ordinances to comply with state law;

- Approved a \$26,741.43 Canon Color Wave T series large format printer system for the Water and Sewer and other departments so GIS information and blueprints can be copied and printed. The current copier is 7.3 years old and they no longer can get parts to repair it. The old one is worth \$1,500 on trade in, so McNamara said it is being given to the Communications Department, so they can make banners;

- Approved the purchase from low-bidder Serve Electric to install generators for the Harmony Lane Pump Station and the Water Tower in the amount of \$278,000. The Harmony Lane generator is 25 years old and is operating well, but should be replaced and the new generator at the Water Tower will back up the Great Lakes Water Authority SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) system. There are seven GLWA units that have to be monitored. There are 14 lift stations with 12 having generators, with 2 in the parks. The township plans to order four at a time and start replacing them; and

- Heard Wright say that when the township is looking at ordinances, he would like to help out the Homeowners Associations in the township, especially

his HOA, by giving them more teeth. Trustee Bryon Kelley said, while they are at it, he'd like them to look at rental ordinances for landlords. Wright said there

is one place that is renting out rooms in a house in a residential area. They are not family because they don't look like family. McNamara said they would look into it.

American Pickers returning to Michigan to find collections

The American Pickers are returning to Michigan and plan to film episodes of the History Channel hit television series throughout this area in March 2025.

American Pickers is a documentary series that explores the world of antique "picking." The hit show follows skilled pickers in the business, as they hunt for America's most valuable antiques.

They are excited to find historically significant or rare items, in addition to unforgettable characters and their collections.

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America's past along the way.

The Pickers have seen a lot of rusty gold over the years and are always looking to discover something they've never seen before. They are ready to find extraordinary items and hear fascinating tales about them.

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Charter Township of Van Buren Public Notice

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES - JANUARY 21, 2025

Supervisor McNamara called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room. Present: Supervisor McNamara, Clerk Wright, Trustee Boynton, Trustee Martin, Trustee Frazier and Trustee Kelley. Absent/Excused: Treasurer Budd. Others in attendance: Deputy Supervisor Selman, Recording Assistant Beaudry, Director of Community Services Renaud, Deputy Director of Community Services Dohring, Network Systems Administrator Barbaza, Director of Public Services Luckett, DDA Director Coburn, Director of Water and Sewer Lawrence, Director of Municipal Services Akers and an audience of eight.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE AGENDA: Supervisor McNamara outlined the items appearing on the agenda.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: Wright moved, Kelley seconded to approve the agenda. Motion Carried.

ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Boynton moved, Kelley seconded to approve the Consent Agenda: Board Meeting Minutes of December 3, 2024, Prepaid List of December 5, 2024, Prepaid List of December 11, 2024, Voucher List of December 17, 2024, Prepaid List of December 19, 2024, Prepaid List of December 30, 2024, Prepaid List of January 9, 2025 (2024 and 2025 Expenses), Prepaid List of January 16, 2025 (2024 and 2025 Expenses), Approval of the Municipal Services Coordinator and Planning and Zoning Specialist Job Descriptions, and Approval of the Promotional Personal Service Agreements for Brittney Williams, Kendyl Zantop, Karen Pecsénye, and Brad Barbaza. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC HEARING: None

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E / ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS:

Clerk Wright honored and recognized the contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; Clerk Wright discussed the over \$270,000 in health care costs the Township has saved by using a pay by use method of health insurance; and Stephanie Richards from Wayne County Sheriff Raphael Washington's office introduced herself as the Community Liaison for Western Wayne County.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Unfinished and New Business): A resident of Augusta Township expressed support for Todd Waller and his 5-acre pond request and another resident expressed concern for the pond creation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Wright moved, Kelley seconded to approve a request by Todd Waller for the excavation, removal, and off-site hauling of roughly 93,000 cubic yards of soil to create a 5-acre pond for agricultural purposes. Motion Carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Wright moved, Kelley seconded to approve the Personal Services Agreement for Matthew Smith. Motion Carried.

Martin moved, Boynton seconded to approve the VBT Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan. Motion Carried.

Wright moved, Frazier seconded to approve Resolution 2025-01: A Resolution to Defer the Review of New Applications Pertaining to Gasoline Filling Stations Under the Van Buren Township Zoning Ordinance Until June 21, 2025 and Resolution 2025-02: A Resolution to Defer the Review of New Applications Pertaining to Soil Removal, Mining and Ponds under Chapter 42, Articles 3&4 of the Van Buren Township Code of Ordinances Until June 21, 2025. Motion Carried.

Martin moved, Boynton seconded to approve the purchase of a Canon Color Wave T series printer system in the amount of \$26,741.43 to be paid from Water and Sewer Fund Operating Supplies 592-536-740-000/592-537-740-000 and Building and Grounds 101-265-740-000. Motion Carried.

Wright moved, Kelley seconded to approve Serve Electric to install generators for Harmony Lane Pump Station and the Water Tower in the amount of \$278,000 to be split between Sewer Capital Outlay Fund 592-537-971-004 and Water Capital Outlay Fund 592-536-971-004. Motion Carried.

REPORTS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: None

BOARD COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

Clerk Wright asked the Board to look into ordinances that back home owner's associations in an effort to give them more enforcement options and Trustee Kelley asked the Board to look into a rental property registration ordinance to keep track of Township rental properties.

ADJOURNMENT: Boynton moved, Kelley seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m. Motion Carried.

Leon Wright, Township Clerk
Kevin McNamara, Supervisor
Published: January 30, 2025

City of Belleville Public Notice

CITY OF BELLEVILLE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 6, 2025 - 7:30 pm

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE

2. ROLL CALL

Council Member Beebe	Present
Council Member Kissel	Present
Council Member Priest	Present
Mayor Pro-Tem Bates	Absent - Excused
Mayor Voigt	Present

3. PRESENTATIONS & CITIZENS COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

a. Presentations

i. Plante Moran - Budget Overview

1. Kelly Howey, from Plante Moran, presented an overview of the city's current budget, noting that the general fund balance is in great shape. She also noted that the cost of staffing is still being looked at.

b. Citizen Comment

i. Mike Renaud

1. Expressed concerns about the estimating of water bills during the transition to new meters throughout the city.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

a. No motion or second was made on this item.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda groups routine meeting discussion points into a single agenda item. In so doing, the grouped items can be approved in one action, rather than through the filing of multiple motions.

- a. Approval of Minutes
 - i. None.
 - b. Communications
 - i. None.
 - c. Council Follow Up List
 - d. DPS Report
 - e. Special Events
- No items on the consent agenda to approve.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. None.

7. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

a. None.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS DISCUSSION

a. None.

9. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES

a. Accounts Payable

i. None.

b. Departmental Expenditures

i. None.

10. CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

- a. Happy New Year to everyone.
- b. Would like to address short-term property rentals with the Planning Commission.
- c. A pole has been installed for the new tornado siren; the siren itself will be installed later.
- d. Installations of water meters throughout the city currently stand at 35.7% completed.
- e. The 2025 goal setting session will most likely take place at the next meeting.
- f. The revised GELC and POAM union contracts will be presented at the next regular meeting.
- g. An L-4029, the form that sets tax millage rates, will possibly be presented at the next regular meeting.

11. CITY COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

- a. Council Member Priest
 - i. No comments
- b. Council Member Kissel
 - i. There will be a Planning Commission meeting this Thursday, January 9th, at 6:30 p.m.
 - ii. The Michigan Municipal League Housing Survey is now online.
 - iii. The city's Master Plan refresh continues to move forward.

c. Council Member Beebe

- i. Enjoys the Council Meetings being held at 6:30 p.m.
- ii. Encourages residents to get their new water meters installed.

12. MAYOR'S COMMENTS

a. Sends condolences to Mary Jane Dawson and family on the passing of Rick Dawson.

13. CITIZENS COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

i. Rosemary Otzman

a. Asked if there will be another joint planning session with the Planning Commission.

14. ACTION ITEMS FOR NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING

a. None.

15. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Motion by Priest, supported by Beebe to adjourn at 7:16 PM.

No objections were noted.

Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted by
Briana Hootman

City Clerk/Treasurer

Published: January 30, 2025



City of Belleville Public Notice



City of Belleville State of the City 2025

In a nutshell, the City of Belleville is in pretty good shape. City Council and the City administration have taken many steps to improve our fiscal and operational position, and we have a plan to address the challenges that we still face.

I'd like to give some context regarding how we got where we are today. I apologize in advance for the length of this report, but context is important to consider.

Background

The City has a Downtown Development Authority (DDA). DDAs were created by the state legislature to encourage and implement development and redevelopment in downtowns and thereby increase tax base. This was done at a time in the 1970s when traditional downtowns were fading, and malls and strip centers were taking their place. DDAs are semi-autonomous. They make decisions independently of the municipality they fall within. The Mayor appoints DDA board members with City Council approval and the City Council approves the DDA budget. The DDA district in Belleville encompasses the entire Main Street/downtown area, Belleville's industrial park, the Columbia Court senior housing facility and the Victoria Commons subdivision. There are several ways that DDAs are funded. Most commonly, DDAs use a mechanism called Tax Increment Financing (TIF), DDAs can also assess up to 2 mils of property tax within their district but Belleville's DDA does not assess a millage. It is funded solely through tax increment financing. Tax increment financing works as follows. A tax increment finance district was established as part of the DDA. A TIF district can include all or part of the DDA district. In Belleville's case, the TIF district's borders are the same as the DDA's. As of the date that the TIF district is established, (which in Belleville's case is 1985), the DDA captures the increment of tax that occurs on any improvement within the district. The problem with Belleville's DDA and TIF districts is that relative to the overall size of the City, they are too large and capture too much of the City's general operating millage. In the 90's, the DDA spearheaded the development of

Victoria Commons subdivision and at that time a maintenance agreement between the DDA and the City was established to help cover some of the City's general fund costs within the district. This scheme worked well for the City for many years until approximately 2015 when the DDA board decided to arbitrarily cut the amount of money the City received. This cut along with the accumulated statutory Headlee tax rollbacks and cuts in State revenue sharing which occurred several years earlier caused the City to make several cutbacks. As such, the police department operated at less than full strength (including having a part time police chief), as did the Department of Public Works. In addition, a great deal of deferred maintenance occurred and many public works projects that would have been small jobs if done in a timely manner became bigger jobs and thus much more expensive. The city's parks, Hillside Cemetery and other public areas were overgrown and looked unkempt. In addition, the City's engineers declared that the City's streets were in generally poor condition and that to bring them up to be in good condition would be prohibitively expensive. The City also cut back on important programs such as street sweeping and fall leaf pickup.

In 2019, the City Council decided that things had become critical and under then Mayor Conley's leadership, the City's pressing fiscal issues began to be addressed. The Council conducted an advisory vote by the citizens, and they approved an increase to the public safety millage. Additionally, under former City Manager Robinson, the maintenance agreement between the City and the DDA was renegotiated, and that funding was increased. Many other things have been done to improve the City's fiscal position since then including establishing a capital purchase fund and implementing a 5-year capital purchase plan. The City also recently began investing in the Michigan Class Fund, which pays a competitive rate of interest on the City's funds until they are needed for expenses. This will provide a not so insignificant additional stream of income for the City. In addition, the City has engaged a grant consulting firm and has aggressively sought out appropriate grant funding for various purposes. Most recently and by example, the City received a grant to cover most of the cost of a sorely needed new fire truck, a relatively modest grant for street improvements in Harbor Point Subdivision and received a \$750,000 grant from the State Legislature to fund necessary improvements to the lake bank at Horizon Park on High Street. The City Council and administration are focused on securing further grant funding where available and in creatively leveraging the revenue that we collect to make necessary improvements.

Department of Public Works

In 2024, the entire Department of Public Works was reorganized and reequipped.

The yard and the DPW buildings were cleaned out and reorganized. The roof on the main DPW building which had been leaking for years was replaced and the internal damage from the leakage was mitigated and repaired. Weekly street sweeping was reintroduced as well as the fall leaf pickup program.

City Hall

At City Hall, the 40-year-old roof which had been leaking was replaced. In July of 2023, the City's IT system had a catastrophic failure. It took 100s of hours and a great deal of effort by the city administration and our accounting firm to recreate the significant data that was lost. We engaged a consultant to evaluate our system and then bid out replacement of the system. We hired a new IT provider to rebuild the system complete with the necessary redundancy and data protection. No IT system is completely secure but ours is now very robust. Our water meter system began to show its age, and the reader system began to fail so we bid out replacement of the entire system and awarded a contract for its replacement. The chosen vendor is currently in the process of replacing all the meters.

Public Safety

In terms of public safety, we have made significant progress in the past year. The fire department also got a new roof because theirs was also quite old and had been leaking. The kitchen has been replaced. The new fire truck is in service and other improvements are planned in the new year including a new generator to keep the fire hall powered up during any electrical utility failure, and improved drainage in the fire truck bays among others. In the police department a new patrol vehicle has secured at a favorable price, and more importantly, we brought the department up to full strength. There aren't too many departments anywhere that can make that claim. The police hiring climate has become very competitive nationwide. We also selected a new school resource officer to replace Chief Faull and an ordinance officer.

Downtown

The City is continuing to work closely and with our DDA to help promote and implement events in the downtown by providing necessary city support. The DDA supplied the funding to purchase land at Fifth and Liberty to expand the municipal parking lot. It also purchased the former Belleville Hardware building and has tentative plans to establish a business incubator using the building. The DDA will also provide funding for the repairs to the War Memorial and to the High Street municipal parking lot.

Planning Commission

The Belleville Planning Commission undertook the herculean task of updating our master plan. The City administration also conducted a refresh of the Parks and Recreation plan to position us for further

grant opportunities.

Parks

The City's parks received needed attention in 2024. At Horizon Park, the goats returned to clean up the lake bank, the long dormant irrigation system was repaired and made usable, improvements were made to the lawn, the brick along the sidewalk was reset and emergency repairs were made to the boardwalk. At Victory Park, necessary repairs were made to the playground equipment and a series of grant funded improvements were made to the park. These include a new fence along East Columbia, and new centrally located bathrooms were constructed. More grant funded improvements will occur in the new year at Victory Park including improvements to Victory Station and the installation of a pickleball court.

At Village Park on Savage Road more grant funded improvements were started. Two new pickleball courts are being installed, improvements are being made to the pond fountains and an invasive weed mitigation program is being bid out and will be implemented in the spring.

Doane's Landing Park was cleared of many years of overgrowth which greatly improved the view of the lake. The overgrowth behind the welcome sign was similarly cleared away to improve lake viewing.

A new "vest pocket" park was dedicated on North Liberty at the intersection of First Street. It is now known as Pump House Park. This little gem of a park is an example of a public/private partnership executed to perfection. Thanks to the efforts of the Belleville Yacht Club which provided the many, many man hours and material required to stabilize and improve the building and clear the lake bank, the Belleville Area Garden Club which did a remarkable job with the landscaping, the City DPW Department which helped prep the area and the Belleville Rotary Club's Cozadd Foundation which provided the funding for the landscaping including the brick pavers. Our community has restored, repurposed and made a useful quaint historical structure at negligible cost to the taxpayers.

Hillside Cemetery

At Hillside Cemetery, the roads were all repaved using a couple of very generous private contributions and City funding. A private contractor was engaged to perform lawn maintenance, the non-potable water system was repaired and made functional after many years of neglect and many dead trees were removed and other trees were trimmed. Work here will continue.

Transportation

On the transportation front, a grant was secured through SEMCOG to conduct a road safety audit for Main Street from High to Five Points. This study was presented to the City Council and includes many practical suggestions to improve

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City of Belleville Public Notice



(continued from page 16)

traffic safety on our busiest artery. The “Horseshoe” severely deteriorated roadway at Harbor Point was finally replaced using a relatively small but very helpful grant and City funding. The most deteriorated sections of Church Street, which is one of the City’s most heavily traveled roads was also replaced as soon as the Harbor Point project was complete.

Moving Forward

In the coming year we also have big plans. The improvements to the lake bank at Horizon Park will commence this spring and we are actively seeking the most beneficial and cost-effective way to update/improve the boardwalk. Improvements are also coming to the War Memorial this year and to the High Street parking lot once some drainage issues are corrected. The improvements to Victory

Park and Village Park and the cemetery outlined previously will continue in the new year. We are proceeding forward with a multi-year plan to bring our roads all to at least “good” condition. We are starting in the spring with repaving High Street and North Liberty. These are also very heavily traveled. We are also focused on repairing the Main and Liberty/ Denton intersection before the Denton Road bridge is finished so that traffic doesn’t have to be interrupted a second time. Our philosophy has been and will continue to be making improvements to roads based on their level of use and overall condition. This, for example, is the reason we started with Harbor Pointe. The Horseshoe was in the worst condition by far of all city roads and it received the most traffic of all the roads in the subdivision. That is why it was selected. We will also be doing more sidewalk and road repairs in

house where appropriate. We will continue to use those criteria in crafting our roads and sidewalk plan going forward. Our companion philosophy and the very reason that we are not replacing all the roads at once is that as a council, we do not want to raise taxes. If we were to borrow the money to conduct all the road repairs needed at once (which could well exceed 12 million dollars), it would require a substantial increase in the millage rate to make the bond payments over many years. While we are not opposed to borrowing money for needed projects, we would rather take a little more time to do the major repairs to not raise taxes. It took many years for things to get in the condition that they are in, but we believe that we can substantially improve our situation in a much shorter amount of time. The voters approved an advisory vote in 2019 to increase our millage rate for

public safety and it is this council’s feeling that the aggregate millage that the City assesses is currently sufficient. As you can see from my previous comments, we are doing everything that we can to find grant funding sources, to use our current funding creatively and, to seek out private/public partnerships where appropriate.

We will continue to seek out and implement best practices and to maintain a mindset of continuous improvement and customer service. In my opinion, we have changed the culture of the City for the better and we will continue to do so because Belleville deserves nothing less.

Kenneth R. Voigt, Mayor
City of Belleville

Publish: January 30, 2025



City of Belleville Public Notice



CITY OF BELLEVILLE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 16, 2024 - 7:30 pm

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE

2. ROLL CALL

Council Member Beebe	Present
Council Member Kissel	Present
Council Member Priest	Present
Mayor Pro-Tem Bates	Present
Mayor Voigt	Present

3. PRESENTATIONS & CITIZENS COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

- a. Presentations
 - i. BFD – Collette McClinton
 - 1. Firefighter Collette McClinton was presented with a plaque and helmet in honor of her retirement from the department.
 - ii. Holiday Light Contest Winners
 - 1. City Manager Smith announced the following winners of the city’s holiday light contest:
 - a. 243 Aberdeen Ct.
 - b. 336 Victorian Ln.
 - c. 392 Light Tower Ct.
 - d. 20 Menlo Park Dr.
 - e. 85 Carmell St.
 - f. 86 Bedell St.
 - g. 184 S. Biggs St.
 - h. Garden Fantasy on Main
 - i. Friends Fine Floors
 - b. Citizen Comments
 - i. None.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Motion by Priest, supported by Kissel to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion Carried.

MOTION: Motion by Beebe, supported by Priest to move items 8a and 8b to the end of the General Business section of the agenda.

Motion Carried.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda groups routine meeting discussion points into a single agenda item. In so doing, the grouped items can be approved in one action, rather than through the filing of multiple motions.

- a. Approval of Minutes
 - i. December 2, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting
- b. Communications
 - i. MMRMA Monthly Acknowledgements
 - ii. Belleville Police Department – November 2024 Statistics
- c. Council Follow Up List

d. Special Events

MOTION: Motion by Beebe, supported by Kissel approving the consent agenda items as presented, with a correction to the minutes, adding Brian Camiller’s last name.

Motion Carried.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. None.

7. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

8. GENERAL BUSINESS DISCUSSION

a. Resolution 24-037 – 2025 City Council Meeting Schedule

MOTION: Motion by Bates, supported by Priest approving Resolution # 24-037 as presented.

Motion Carried.

b. Resolution 24-038 – 2025 City Purchasing Policy

MOTION: Motion by Kissel, supported by Beebe approving Resolution # 24-038 as presented.

Motion Carried.

c. Resolution 24-039 – Board and Commission Appointments

MOTION: Motion by Priest, supported by Bates approving Resolution # 24-039 as presented.

Motion Carried.

d. Time Clock System

MOTION: Motion by Beebe, supported by Bates approving Andrews Technology as the selected time clock service provider for the city, at an annual cost of \$2,160, with a one time fee of \$14,905.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Council Member Beebe	Aye
Council Member Kissel	Aye
Council Member Priest	Aye
Mayor Pro-Tem Bates	Aye
Mayor Voigt	Aye

Motion Carried.

e. Type 3 Road Closure Barricades Purchase

MOTION: Motion by Kissel, supported by Priest approving a purchase of type 3 road closure barricades for the city.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Council Member Beebe	Aye
Council Member Kissel	Aye
Council Member Priest	Aye
Mayor Pro-Tem Bates	Aye
Mayor Voigt	Aye

Motion Carried.

f. City of Belleville/POAM Tentative Agreement

g. City of Belleville/GELC Tentative Agreement

MOTION: Motion by Bates, supported by Beebe to move in to Closed Session at 8:13 p.m. to discuss both the GELC and POAM tentative agreements with the city.

Motion Carried.

MOTION: Motion by Bates, supported by Beebe to leave Closed Session at 9:07 p.m.

Motion Carried.

9. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES

- a. Accounts Payable
- b. Departmental Expenditures
 - i. Advanced Roofing
 - ii. Axon
 - iii. CMP Distributors
 - iv. R&R Truck Repair
 - v. Sunbelt Rentals
 - vi. Washtenaw Mutual Aid

MOTION: Motion by Bates, supported by Kissel to approve Accounts Payable and Departmental Expenditures in excess of \$500, as presented.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Council Member Priest	Aye
Mayor Voigt	Aye
Council Member Kissel	Aye
Mayor Pro-Tem Bates	Aye
Council Member Beebe	Aye

Motion Carried.

10. CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

- a. Thank you to the city employees who worked at the Winter Fest.
- b. Wishing everyone happy holidays.
- c. The city did not receive the US DOT smart grant that was applied for.
- d. Participated in a Ford Lake Dam emergency tree call with Chief Faull, and it went well.
- e. The switch to new water meters in residents’ homes is about 32% complete.
- f. The tree removal in Hillside Cemetery is almost complete.
- g. Will be meeting with EGLE to review the city’s water quality.
- h. Snyder Electric has been at the DPW building working on the electrical in the kitchen.
- i. The Master Plan Housing Survey is now online.
- j. City Works was on-site last week to provide training to employees on their program.
- k. The city’s financial audit results should be ready to present at the second regular Council meeting in January.
- l. Will be attending the MME Winter Workshop in late January, and has been asked to be the Chair of their Advocacy Committee.

11. CITY COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

- a. **Bates**
 - i. Winterfest was fun and had a large turnout.
 - ii. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
- b. **Priest**

i. Winterfest was fun and had lots of children in attendance.

ii. Happy holidays to everyone.

c. Kissel

- i. Loved the lights put out by residents during the Holiday Light Contest.
- ii. Winter Fest looked like it was fun.
- iii. Meeting toolbox kits are available from Giffels Webster.
- iv. Accepted to the Economic Development and Land Use Committee through the MML.
- v. Welcome Alvis Briggs to the Planning Commission.
- vi. Happy Holidays to everyone.

d. Beebe

- i. Winterfest was fun.
- ii. Happy holidays to everyone.

12. MAYOR’S COMMENTS

- a. Echo everyone’s comments regarding Winter Fest, and congratulations to the committee for a successful festival.
- b. The soup crawl at the Winter Fest sold out in a half hour, with approximately 13 restaurants participating.
- c. Congratulations to Collette McClinton on her retirement.
- d. Thank you to the Rotary Club for their work on the Horizon Park gazebo.
- e. Thank you to Council for approving the board and commission appointments.
- f. Went before the State Senate recently to testify on behalf of Senator Camilleri’s bills regarding the dumping of hazardous waste, both of which passed.
- g. Happy with the progress on the Denton Rd. bridge.
- h. Would like Jason to speak to Hennessey Engineering about repaving Liberty St., as there should be enough money left over in the budget.
- i. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone.

13. CITIZENS COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- i. Public Safety Director Faull
 - a. Kudos to the Fire Department for hosting a great dinner following Winter Fest.

14. ACTION ITEMS FOR NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING

a. None.

15. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Motion by Bates, supported by Beebe to adjourn at 9:26 PM.

No objections were noted.

Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted by
Briana Hootman
City Clerk/Treasurer
Published: January 30, 2025

Van Buren Township Police Dispatch Log

There were 300 dispatch calls reported by Van Buren Township police this week including the following.

Sunday, Jan. 19:

0003 – assist fire dept., Martz Rd.
0044 – road hazard, Belleville Rd./S. I-94 Service
0141 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Belleville Rd.
0416 – noise complaint, Water’s Edge Ln.
0814 – intrusion alarm, Tyler Rd.
0926 – threat, rest area
0951 – family trouble, Dorchester Dr.
1004 – intrusion alarm, N. I-94 Service Dr.
1023 – welfare check, E. Huron River Dr.
1120 – intrusion alarm, Haggerty Rd.
1244 – civil matter, Belleville Rd.
1355 – civil matter, Hull Rd.
1435 – mental subject, Outer Dr.
1644 – welfare check, N. I-94 Service Dr. / Old Rawsonville Rd.
1700 – motorist assist, Michigan Ave./Denton Rd.
1945 – disorderly, Belleville Rd.
2003 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Edison Lake Rd.
2209 – property damage accident, Michigan Ave. / Denton Rd.
2223 – trespassing, Belleville Rd.

Monday, Jan. 20:

0000 – intrusion alarm, Haggerty Rd.
0007 – disorderly, N. I-94 Service Dr.
xxxx – repossession, Parkwood Dr.
0243 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Park Estates Dr.
xxxx – repossession, Ecorse Rd.
xxxx – repossession, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0738 – intrusion alarm, Ecorse Rd.
0836 – harassment call, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0936 – intrusion alarm, Ecorse Rd.
1030 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Lighthouse Dr.
1113 – 911 welfare check, McBride Ave.
1148 – sexual assault, S. I-94 Service Dr.
1442 – welfare check, Western St.
1618 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Dewitt Rd. / N. I-94 Service Dr.
1720 – mental subject, Tyler Rd.
1830 – motorist assist, Rawsonville Rd./Martz Rd.
1839 – traffic offense, Belleville Rd./Tyler Rd.
2042 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd. / N. I-94 Service Dr.
2115 – property damage accident, Hull Rd. / Martinsville Rd.
2125 – animal complaint, Beck Rd.
2203 – domestic, Tallgrass Ct.

Tuesday, Jan. 21:

0118 – welfare check, Holly Ln.
0327 – harassment call, Belleville Rd.
0414 – intrusion alarm, Ash Dr.
0432 – domestic, Denton Rd.
xxxx – fraud, Belleville Rd.
xxxx – fraud, Belleville Rd.
xxxx – fraud, Belleville Rd.
xxxx – fraud, Belleville Rd.
0928 – motorist assist, Belleville Rd./Tyler Rd.
1039 – ordinance violation – all 7300 MICR codes, Rawsonville Rd.
1111 – threat, Parkwood Dr.
1236 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Riggs Rd.
1242 – animal complaint, Parkwood Dr.
1310 – animal complaint, Lauren Ct./Elwell Rd.
1557 – larceny, Oak Blvd.
1803 – malicious destruction of property, Kirkridge Park Dr.
1835 – breaking & entering, Harmony Ln.
1845 – welfare check, Martinsville Rd.
1904 – personal injury accident, Ecorse/Edwards
1953 – welfare check, Lenomar Dr./W. Walden
2006 – assist citizen, Ecorse Service A Dr./Denton
2001 – domestic, Sumpter Rd.

Wednesday, Jan. 22:

0030 – vehicle lockout, Sumpter Rd./Hull Rd.
0047 – 911 welfare check, Brandi Dr.
0452 – intrusion alarm, Belleville Rd.
0724 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Van Born Rd.
0841 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd. / Ecorse Rd.
xxxx – intrusion alarm, Belleville Rd.

1100 – hospice death, Crowley Ave.
1102 – civil matter, W. Huron River Dr.
1109 – civil matter, Fret Rd.
1114 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, N. I-94 Service Dr.
1121 – dumping complaint, Belleville Rd.
1142 – fraud, Lake Crest Dr.
1256 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Fret Rd.

1353 – motorist assist, Belleville Rd./N. I-94 Service Dr.
xxxx – private property impound, Haggerty Rd.
1440 – property damage accident, Ecorse/Haggerty
1517 – fraud, Monterey Dr.
1601 – property damage accident, Mott Rd./Justine
1615 – intrusion alarm, Kent Dr.
1742 – road hazard, Hayes St./Hamilton St.
1848 – civil matter, S. I-94 Service Dr.
1858 – leaving the scene of a property damage accident, Haggerty Rd.
1932 – family trouble, Brandi Dr.
xxxx – intrusion alarm, Haggerty Rd.

Thursday, Jan. 23:

0034 – harassment call, Parkwood Dr.
0052 – welfare check, Belleville Rd.
0055 – disorderly, N. I-94 Service Dr.
0203 – assist other dept., Haggerty Rd./W. I-94
0230 – motorist assist, Haggerty Rd./W. I-94
0523 – intrusion alarm, E. Huron River Dr.
0711 – welfare check, Belleville Rd./Tyler Rd.
0744 – assist fire dept., E. I-94/Haggerty Rd.
0746 – property damage accident, W. I-94/rest area
0751 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd. / Van Born Rd.
0850 – motorist assist, Ecorse Rd./Visteon Way
0908 – vehicle lockout, Lighthouse Dr.
0915 – misc. complaint, Grove Rd.
0921 – misc. complaint, Grove Rd.
0921 – misc. complaint, Grove Rd.
0922 – misc. complaint, Grove Rd.
0923 – family trouble, Lighthouse Dr.
0938 – ordinance violation – all 7300 MICR codes, Robson Rd.

1001 – assist other dept., EB I-94/Rawsonville Rd.
1008 – property damage accident, E. I-94 / Rawsonville I-94 ramp E.
1022 – private property/property damage accident, Belleville Rd.
1025 – property damage accident, E. I-94 / Belleville Rd.

1037 – civil matter, Kirkridge Park Dr.
1150 – welfare check, N. I-94 Service Dr.
1308 – found property/child, Westlake
1313 – unattended death, Kirkridge Park Dr.
1320 – malicious destruction of property, Samuel Barton Dr.
1321 – trespassing, N. I-94 Service Dr.
1401 – misc. complaint, Savage Rd.
1404 – misc. complaint, Savage Rd.
1404 – misc. complaint, Savage Rd.
1404 – misc. complaint, Savage Rd.
1526 – leaving the scene of a property damage accident, Richard Run Dr.

1543 – road hazard, Belleville Rd./Van Born Rd.
1558 – family trouble, Fret Rd.
1609 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd.
1642 – ordinance violation – all 7300 MICR codes, S. I-94 Service Dr.

1720 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Tyler Rd. / Belleville Rd.
1844 – parking complaint, Belleville Rd.
1820 – welfare check, Jackson Ct.
xxxx – intrusion alarm, Briarcliff Dr.
2024 – intrusion alarm, Belleville Rd.
2057 – juvenile complaint, Belleville Rd.

Friday, Jan. 24:

0125 – welfare check, Ecorse Rd.
xxxx – repossession, Oak Ln.
0523 – noise complaint, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0639 – intrusion alarm, Brookview Dr.
0815 – missing person, Parkwood Dr.
0940 – ordinance violation – all 7300 MICR codes, W. Huron River Dr.
0944 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, W. Huron River Dr.
1157 – misc. complaint, N. I-94 Service Dr.
1454 – property damage accident, Michigan Ave.
1538 – juvenile complaint, Savage Rd.
1538 – juvenile complaint, Savage Rd.
1538 – juvenile complaint, Savage Rd.
1538 – juvenile complaint, Savage Rd.
1539 – juvenile complaint, Savage Rd.
1650 – malicious destruction of property, S. I-94 Service Dr.

1650 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, S. I-94 Service Dr.
1713 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Sondra Dr.
1822 – threat, Colonia Rd.
1830 – missing person, Quirk Rd.
1825 – assist other dept., E. Huron River Dr.
1942 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Harmony Ln.
2104 – animal complaint, Belleville Rd.
2122 – domestic, Kirkridge Park Dr.
xxxx – private property impound, Kirkridge Park
2255 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Hull Rd.
2347 – harassment call, Oak Ln.

Saturday, Jan. 25:

0734 – welfare check, Belleville Rd.
xxxx – repossession, E. Adams
1106 – motorist assist, Belleville Rd./Westlake Cir.
1119 – assist fire dept., Sumpter Rd.
xxxx – private property impound, S. I-94 Service
1239 – civil matter, Tyler Rd.
1314 – domestic, Sadie Ln.
1400 – trespassing, Village Center Dr.
1424 – personal injury accident, W. I-94/Belleville
1433 – property damage accident, N. I-94 Service Dr. / Belleville Rd.
1627 – threat, Ayres Ave.
1642 – intrusion alarm, Sumpter Rd.
1703 – domestic, Denton Rd.
1724 – suicidal person, America
1815 – mental subject, E. Sadie Ln.
1923 – trespassing, Michigan Ave.
1938 – assist other dept., Ecorse Rd.
2002 – personal injury accident, W. I-94/Belleville
2005 – welfare check, W. Huron River Dr.
2013 – property damage accident, 2013 – Belleville Rd.

2103 – leaving the scene of a property damage accident, Park Estates

Also, on this log are 122 traffic stops, 48 of which are on the I-94 and I-275 freeways.

Belleville Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, Jan. 19:

0112 – animal complaint, Bedell St.
1100 – property check, E. Huron River Dr.
1321 – assist other dept., Main St.

Monday, Jan. 20:

0054 – intrusion alarm, E. Huron River Dr.
1436 – property damage accident, W. Columbia
1800 – property check, Denton Rd.

Tuesday, Jan. 21:

0418 – intrusion alarm, W. Columbia Ave.
0507 – repossession, Carmell St.
1656 – animal complaint, Victorian Ct.

Wednesday, Jan. 22:

0813 – intrusion alarm, E. Huron River Dr.
0928 – ordinance violation – all 7300 MICR codes, Potter Dr.

1152 – misc. complaint, Sumpter Rd.

Thursday, Jan. 23:

1254 – welfare check, Carmell St.
1318 – 911 welfare check, Belle Villa Blvd.
2235 – welfare check, Menlo Park Dr.

Friday, Jan. 24:

1017 – property damage accident, W. Columbia
1045 – welfare check, Parkwood St.
1330 – motorist assist, Robbe/S. Edgemont Ave.
1634 – property damage accident, Main St.
1756 – leaving the scene of a property damage accident, Roys St./Main St.

Saturday, Jan. 25:

1212 – welfare check, Main St.
1703 – assist citizen, Main St.
1828 – threat, Main St.

There are 106 reports on this week’s log and 83 of those are traffic stops.

Sumpter Township Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, Jan. 19:

0033 – fire dept. assist, 45000 bl. Judd Rd.
0223 – family trouble, 24000 bl. Karr Rd.
0919 – fire dept. assist, 19000 bl. Crandell Ave.

1021 – animal complaint, 22000 bl. Fenster
1639 – civil matter, Hampshire Dr.
1715 – welfare check, Washinton St.
1746 – fire dept. assist, Wayside Dr.
1908 – alarm, 18000 bl. Martinsville Rd.
2032 – 911 hangup, 44000 bl. Arkona Rd.

Monday, Jan. 20:

0024 – civil matter, Magnolia Dr.
0154 – 911 hangup, Hickory Dr.
0211 – civil matter, Birch Dr.
0624 – animal complaint, 42000 bl. Judd Rd.
0924 – follow-up investigation, 45000 bl. Arkona
0936 – family trouble, Rustic Ln.
1045 – narcotic possession, Willis R./Sharon Ct.
1209 – alarm, 22000 bl. Martinsville Rd.
1450 – assist other agency, 10000 bl. Rawsonville
1557 – property damage report, 47000 bl. Wear
1634 – fire dept. assist, 22000 bl. Karr Rd.
1758 – harassment complaint, Birch Dr.
1805 – follow-up investigation, Redwood Dr.
1822 – suspicious vehicle, Delaware/Maine
1953 – fire dept. assist, Edgewood Dr.

Tuesday, Jan. 21:

0053 – traffic complaint/road, Wear/Sherwood
0643 – alarm, 8900 bl. Rawsonville Rd.
0718 – felony warrant arrest, Willis/Sherwood
1110 – suspicious circumstance, 23000 bl. Elwell
1149 – fire dept. assist, Oregon St.
1235 – follow-up investigation, 43000 bl. Judd
1255 – follow-up investigation, 23000 bl. Elwell
1303 – civil matter, Maine St.
1323 – suspicious circumstance, 46000 bl. Wear
1349 – assault, Idaho St.
1452 – citizen assist, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1508 – fire dept. assist, 42000 bl. Willis Rd.
1554 – suspicious vehicle, Rawsonville/Willis
1558 – follow-up investigation, 8200 bl. Rawsonville Rd.

1658 – 911 hangup, 48000 bl. Harris Rd.
1701 – 911 hangup, 46000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1717 – fire dept. assist, 21000 bl. Sherwood Rd.
1720 – misdemeanor warrant arrest, Idaho St.
1739 – fire dept. assist, Washington St.
1836 – fire dept. assist, Florida St.
1953 – suspicious vehicle, 23000 bl. Martinsville

Wednesday, Jan. 22:

0137 – fire dept. assist, 19000 bl. Haggerty Rd.
1556 – animal complaint, Oakville Waltz Rd. / Haggerty Rd.

1622 – citizen assist, Timberlane Dr.
1651 – citizen assist, 42000 bl. Willow Rd.
1927 – misdemeanor warrant arrest, Bemis/Elwell
2115 – 911 hangup, Birch Ct.
2136 – welfare check, Birch Dr.
2234 – noise complaint, 17000 bl. Savage Rd.

Thursday, Jan. 23:

0414 – fire dept. assist, 46000 bl. Claxton Dr.
0730 – suspicious circumstance, 50000 bl. Wear
0908 – neighbor dispute, Mulberry Dr.
0928 – fire dept. assist, 48000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1106 – fire dept. assist, 22000 bl. Bohn Rd.
1137 – civil matter, 44000 bl. Wear Rd.
1144 – citizen assist, Hampshire Dr.
1326 – traffic complaint/hazard, 23000 bl. Bohn
1331 – mental health call, Nevada St.
1743 – fire dept. assist, 50000 bl. Eyvind Dr.
1812 – property damage accident, Edgewood Dr.
1928 – welfare check, Wyoming St.
1931 – animal complaint, 19000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
2242 – death investigation, Arizona St.

Friday, Jan. 24:

0234 – fire dept. assist, Magnolia Dr.
0750 – animal complaint, 42000 bl. Willis Rd.
0858 – civil matter, 48000 bl. Roy Ct.
1118 – animal complaint, 18000 bl. Martinsville
1151 – fire dept. assist, 44000 bl. Willow Rd.
1247 – follow-up investigation, 18000 bl. Martinsville Rd.

1334 – citizen assist, Birch Dr.
1437 – civil matter, 49000 bl. Judd Rd.
1720 – civil matter, Hampshire Dr.
1833 – traffic complaint/hazard, 10000 bl. Rawsonville Rd.

1842 – family trouble, Colorado St.
1929 – 911 hangup, 51000 bl. Wear Rd.
2136 – noise complaint, 17000 bl. Savage Rd.
2144 – assault, 48000 bl. Sully Dr.

Saturday, Jan. 25:

0038 – suspicious person, Colorado St.
0128 – fire dept. assist, 22000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
0734 – assist other agency, 10000 bl. Rawsonville
1420 – welfare check, 20000 bl. Sherwood Rd.

(Continued on page 19)

Sumpter Township Police Dispatch Log

(continued from page 18)

1454 – follow-up investigation, Redwood Dr.
 1522 – property damage accident, 51000 bl. Willis
 1526 – follow-up investigation, 23000 bl. Sumpter
 1737 – follow-up investigation, 48000 bl. Sully Dr.
 1912 – assist other agency, Oregon St.
 2236 – suspicious circumstance, 20000 bl. Sherwood Rd.
 2237 – 911 hangup, 42000 bl. Judd Rd.
 Also on this week's log are 248 patrol checks, 118 traffic stops, and 14 misc. details.

Sumpter Manager Anthony Burdick retires as of Jan. 31

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

The retirement of Sumpter Township Manager Anthony Burdick at the end of the day on Jan. 31 was unanimously accepted by the township board at its Jan. 14 meeting. Supervisor Tim Bowman was absent and excused from the meeting.

The board immediately approved posting for the job of township manager to fill the position.

Treasurer Bart Patterson conducted the meeting in the supervisor's absence.

In other business at the 39-minute, Jan. 14 meeting, the board:

- Heard Stephanie Richards of the Wayne County Sheriff's Department introduce herself as the department's liaison officer for Western Wayne County communities. She said the sheriff wants to know the needs of the communities and so she is available for people to tell her what is needed. Trustee Matt Oddy said years ago, they would see Sheriff's cars just cruising through the township and that would make people take note. He said he would like to see that again;

- Heard their new Wayne County Commissioner Allen R. Wilson introduce himself and say he would stay until the end of the meeting to talk to officials and residents;

- Appointed Helen Teall, Sandi Armstrong, Maria Beaudrie, and Karen Woodington (alternate) to the Board of Review with a term to expire in January 2027;

- Approved a posting to hire a full-time Clerk's office employee, a union position per the AFSCME contract;

- Approved terminating the employment of probational fire fighter Andrew Sherwood-Landskroener, effective immediately;

- Approved extending the temporary part-time status of the Clerk assistant Gabreilla Massel, ending March 23;

- Approved directing all employment applications, resumes, and related documents to the Clerk's office, particularly to Deputy Clerk Samantha Herman, for the foreseeable future until the role of Human Resources Specialist is fulfilled;

- Approved the interview committee's recommendation to hire Debbie Nogle, effective Jan. 15, as Human Resource Specialist at a base salary of \$83,500 per year, with standard benefits and DC pension pending accepted completion of pre-hire background and drug screening. The township manager and attorney will draft standard employment agreement and terms;

- Approved sending Sgt. Sean Hudson to the Eastern Michigan University School of Police Staff and Command at a cost of \$3,500, with 75% of the cost covered by a MTPP grant and the rest by state training funds;

- Approved four police personnel to attend the 2025 Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police Winter Professional Development Conference from Feb. 4-7 in Grand Rapids at a total cost of \$2,160;

- Approved list of 2025 regular meeting dates for the Parks and Recreation Committee;

- Heard Clerk Don LaPorte announce that the fire vehicle sold at auction brought \$15,420. It was replaced by a vehicle purchased with an ARPA grant. Trustee Tim Rush said he will be setting up Sky Watch training for this spring and Huron Township has an interest in participating; and

- Also heard Clerk LaPorte report that Priority Waste had a truck in the ditch so it is not picking up trash on a number of roads he listed, saying they are waiting for the county to come out and put sand on those roads.

The video of the Jan. 14 meeting was not posted on the township's website until Jan. 24. It contained a message: "Due to equipment malfunction beyond our control, this meeting has poor audio and video quality." The Independent report of this meeting is based on this video.

More looking back: 30 years ago, this is what was happening in the tri-community

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

We are celebrating completion of our 30th year of publication by printing stories from our earliest issues to show what was happening in Belleville, Van Buren, and Sumpter.

In our fourth issue of the *Independent* on Jan. 26, 1995, which had 16 pages, our front-page story was headlined: "Police arrest gang leader, 3 others."

There was a front-page picture of three Belleville police officers who got awards for their investigation and arrests in the Jan. 15 stabbing in the Belmont Manor parking lot. Honored were Cpl. Kenneth Voigt, Cpl. Carl Arnett, and Cpl. Harry Vern Taylor. Also in the picture were Police Chief William Zsenyuk and Mayor Glenn Silvenis.

Also, in the Jan. 26, 1995 paper there were the following stories:

- The DNR extended the public comment period on the Willow Creek cleanup to Feb. 11, but not the full 30 days requested by the public, which had many questions. The cleanup plan had been at the Ypsilanti District Library and a copy was also placed in the Fred C. Fischer Library in Belleville.

- Sumpter Township was advised by the DNR that the requested vertical expansion of Carleton Farms landfill owned by City Management is approved. Sumpter officials unanimously supported the expansion, but Wayne County said it would go to court to block the expansion. Township attorney is Levon King.

- The Tuskegee Air Wing announced it would come to the Sumpter PNA Hall on Feb. 12. Crystal Harris, president of the Sumpter Progressive League asked for free use of the PNA Hall and Sumpter agreed to co-sponsor the event.

- The newly renovated PNA Hall in Sumpter reopened with an open house. The newspaper's Quilt Block of the Week was the PNA Hall, which was built by members of the Polish Farmers' Society. It was named after the Polish National Alliance, an insurance group. Marilyn Locke, chairperson of the Community Quilt project, did the block on the PNA Hall.

Registration Dates

Early Bird: 12-1-2024 - 12-31-2024

Regular: 1-1-2025 - 2-28-25

Late Registration: 3-1-2025 - 3-15-2025

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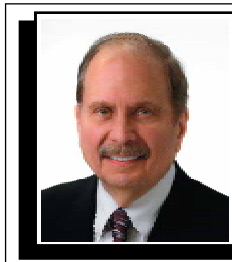
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12935 LAKE POINT PASS, VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP
LARGE BELLEVILLE LAKE BRICK RANCH Features 3 Bedrooms, 3 Baths, 2,739 SQ FT, Bruce Premium Hardwood Floors, Skylights, Fireplaces, 2 1/2 Car Garage \$695,000



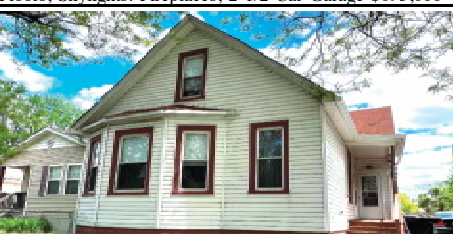
6757 BELLEVILLE RD, VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP
LARGE COLONIAL Features 4 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, 2 Kitchens, On 5.88 Acres and a 2.5 Car Garage and 3.5 Car Garage for the gardener or craft person. \$378,000



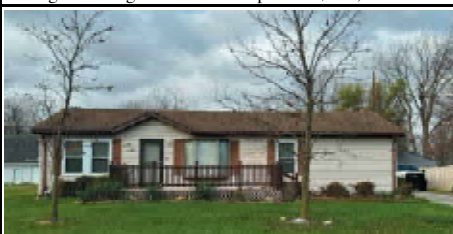
13300 EDGEDALE, VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP
THIS IMPRESSIVE VICTORIAN home offers an open family room and dining room with Hardwood floors showcasing the arched windows. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms \$269,900



8525 CHERRY HILL, SUPERIOR TOWNSHIP
IN A MOST PRIVATE WORLD. Premium Kitchen, 4 bedrooms (First Floor Master), 3 1/2 Baths, 4,400 Sq Ft, Finished Basement, 40x60 Pole Barn on 5 1/2 Acres. \$1,150,000



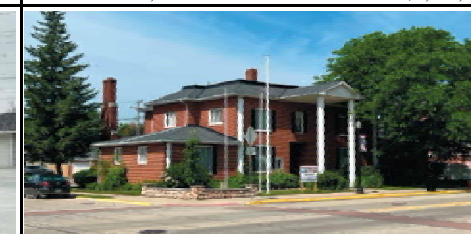
3066 23RD STREET, DETROIT
IMPRESSIVE 4 Bedroom, 2 Bath, Full Basement, Two Kitchens and Just down the street from Slow's Barbeque, Corktown & Michigan Central Train Station + More. \$125,000



7678 MARLOWE, VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP
UPDATES EVERYWHERE 3 Bedroom 2 Bath Ranch with Premium Kitchen and Baths, Sunroom, 2 1/2 Car Garage, Newer Furnace, AC and Wtr Htr almost 1 Acre \$275,000



10312 JACKSON, VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP
COMPLETELY RENOVATED Updated Kitchen with All New Appliances, Impressive Bath, New Flooring, Pella Windows, New Siding, Roof, Cement, 2 1/2 Car Garage \$265,000



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PENDING
3 ACRES - COMMERCIAL CORNER AT SUMPTER AND WILLOW NOW \$150,000

GRANT & WAHRMAN 4 ACRES LT IND BY METRO AIRPORT \$250,000
2 PARCELS Burtin Road Augusta Township One is **SOLD** Perc. Haggerty 1.5 AC VAN BUREN \$70,000

WILLIS RD 1 AC SEWER & WATER \$60,000
WILLIS & MARTINSVILLE 1.64AC \$65,000
JUDD RD AC \$39,500
HURON TWP VAC ASH .87 ACRES \$29,900
GRANT ROMULUS 1.8 AC LT IND \$59,500
50540 BOG RD ONE HALF ACRE \$55,000

4 PARCELS ON THE CORNER OF BEMIS AND MARTINSVILLE PRICED \$40,000 and \$51,000 1 PARCEL LEFT
VACANT LOUISA DREAM LOT \$55,000
BROWNSTOWN 27102 DEBIASI \$85,000
VACANT MARIO ANN ROMULUS \$33,000
CORNER OF SHERWOOD & ILIDD ROAD SUM \$200,000
SOLD
19+ ACRES BREST RD, TAYLOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROPERTY - PAVED STREET NEAR INKSTER ROAD. \$550,000



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