



BELLEVILLE - AREA INDEPENDENT

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Serving the Communities of Belleville, Sumpter and Van Buren

FREE



Belleville planners approve site plan for Johnny's rebuilding

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

The Belleville Planning Commission, at its regular meeting Feb. 12, approved the site plan for the rebuilding of Johnny's on the Lake restaurant at 146 High St.

Interim city manager Steve Jones told the planners that after they approve the conceptual version of the project the plans go to the building department which deals with the details of the work.

Steve Dumont, owner of Designstruct of Hazel Park, presented the plans to the commission. His company is a design/

build general contractor that has been in business for 39 years. He said Johnny's owner, David Nuculaj, hired him to take a look at the building.

He said the restaurant is not taking advantage of its position on the lake which is "a terrible waste."

He showed drawings of the proposed three-tier dining areas facing the lake and said an elevator will be installed for handicap use. The stairs will stay in place.

They will be adding 36 tables to the restaurant.

The three stories, which feature outside

dining with a balcony on top, will create a bigger presence on the lake, he said.

Dumont said they will get rid of the two large ramps now in place.

He said accordion windows on the first two levels will allow those dining areas to be opened completely to the outside breezes.

The restaurant will have two menus, Nuculaj said, noting a limited menu will be for the outside dining. He said they will be able to use the downstairs kitchen, which is hardly used now, and his outdoor smokers.

Commissioner John Juriga said his wife

had glimpsed the plans over his shoulder while he was preparing for the meeting and commented, "This will be a destination." The other commissioners agreed.

"And rooftops," Juriga continued. "Everybody loves rooftops."

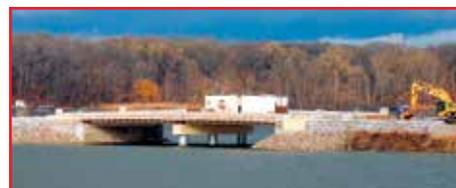
Dumont said the top tier will be on the roof of a one-story building, since the bottom area is below grade. He said there will be 42" high open railings.

Juriga made the motion to approve the site plan, seconded by commissioner Raytheon Martin, and the vote was unanimous.

(continued on page 6)

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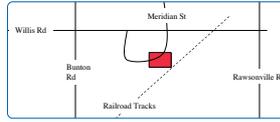
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SECOND FRONT PAGE



Independent photos Rosemary K. Otzman

Most of the seats were taken in the Van Buren Township meeting room as the planning commission decided whether to grant a request for preliminary site plan for the proposed data center. Many in the audience were contractors who supported the project and the many jobs available during construction. Another room across the hallway with a television monitor contained around 20 or so additional people watching the action.



Present for the more than five-hour meeting were, from left, recording secretary Christina Harman; Vidya Krishnan of McKenna Associates planning consultants; Paul Kammer of Fishbeck Engineers; planning commissioners Peter Creal, Medina Atchinson, Treasurer Sharry Budd, Brian Cullin, Jeff Jahr, Jackson Pahle, Bernie Grant; and Ron Akers, director of municipal services.

VBT planners approve first step for data center on 5-2 vote

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

After almost five hours of discussion in front of a roomful of visitors at its Feb. 11 regular meeting, the Van Buren Township Planning Commission approved, on a 5-2 vote, the request for a preliminary site plan for the Project Cannoli Data Center.

The applicant was PDC AK LPIC, LLC c/o Panattoni Development Co., which presented more than an hour's worth of information on the 282.2-acre proposal north of the I-94 Service Dr. between Haggerty and Hannan roads and south of Wayne County Community College and I-275.

Voting no on approval were commissioners Jackson Pahle, who has been against the data center from the start, and Bernard Grant who wanted to postpone a decision until the next meeting, so they could get more information. He was especially concerned about what the substation would look like on the seven acres set aside for it. "It could be unsightly," he said.

Director of municipal services Ron Akers said the substation is a big question and it has to go through its own site plan and is not a part of the site plan before them. Although the planning commission

usually has the last word on a site plan, commissioner Jeff Jahr included in his motion to approve, the stipulation that the township board be directed to approve a development agreement to address details. He said these would include long-term monitoring of the sound and the impact of wet weather situations, to limit impact on the community.

The motion also included stipulations from reports of the commission's planning consultant, engineering consultant, and fire department. The motion approved reducing the number of parking spaces required, approving an eight-foot security fence, and not accepting a proposal to put money aside for future sidewalks.

Grant said he wanted to postpone the decision until March because, "Once its past preliminary, it's a done deal ... a massive development agreement."

After the preliminary site plan approval, the next step is the detailed, engineering documents that are presented for final site plan approval by the commission.

Commission chairman Brian Cullin said if it's postponed, another development could move in there.

Jahr said the commission has had a lot of public input and the applicant

has addressed concerns. He said the commission was asked to assess technical compliance with the ordinance and, "They are in compliance."

He said the commission is moving past the preliminary stage and this is not the final approval.

"There were lots of questions asked and I believe the board should have a development agreement," he said.

Jahr said he values Grant's opinion but, "We can't table because you want to delay it. I want to get this moved to the township board."

During the information from the developer, Panattoni said it is the largest private developer in the world and this project will use Michigan contractors, including civil engineer Kimley-Horn, DTE, Walbridge general contractor, Syskon engineers.

Trey Brice, with a law firm in Detroit, spoke twice during the meeting stating that what they want to build are all permitted uses by right under the ordinance, with no variances requested. He said it meets all the requirements and the plans are evolving as they meet with the county, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, and other authorities. Later he said the project is compliant and

exceeded requirements. "State law says the project should be approved," he said, adding, "It will bring jobs and will be the largest taxpayer in the township."

It was noted that the end user of the data center will be revealed before the final site plan approval and a non-disclosure agreement with the township keeps that business information private for now. It will not be crypto mining, said Adam Kramer of Panattoni.

Josh Capps of Panattoni said the water for the data center will come from the Great Lakes Water Authority and the data center will pay Van Buren Township water rates. A 20' water line will be built by the township to the development site.

Commissioner Medina Atchinson said she visited Panattoni's data center in New Albany, OH and found since it was built in 2019, there has been just one complaint and that problem was taken care of.

She said she watches Charles Payne and he said when a community says no to a data center, it's committing community suicide. She asked for the down side to a data center coming to the township and Kramer said there is a lower job count of about 60 for the center. Construction will take a lot

(continued on page 8)

O P I N I O N S

Editorial: **Keep the legal notices where the public notices**

We are alerted, once again, to a movement in the state legislature to allow municipalities to post their legal notices and public notices on their own websites. Currently the state requires notices to be posted in a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the municipality is located.

When a notice is published in a newspaper, that is permanent. The print on the paper doesn't change. There are no computer glitches and there can be no intentional changes to it.

Our *Independent* is in the archives of the Belleville Area District Library from its first issue on Jan. 5, 1995. At the beginning, the Rotary Club paid for the local newspapers to be digitized and archived in the library and the Clark Historical Library, where they keep newspapers from across the state. Now, the library has this covered in its budget. There now is just one local newspaper. There will never come a time where you can't find somewhere an *Independent* and an important legal notice the way it was when printed.

Those who want to "save money" by not printing notices in the paper, neglect the people who do not have access to digital communications. Some do not wish to have cell phones or internet and they would not be able to see their municipalities' notices.

It's important to know where your tax dollars are going. Keep the legal notices where the public notices.

EXTRA THINGS I KNOW

...By Rosemary K. Otzman

At the Feb. 10 meeting of the Belleville Area District Library board, board secretary Joy Cichewicz sadly announced that her bees didn't make it through the winter. It could have been the weather, but maybe it was something else, she said.

Joy has given well-attended programs at the library on her bee hives on her Sumpter Township home. She has had more time to work outside since she retired as a librarian from the Ypsilanti Public Library in downtown Ypsilanti.

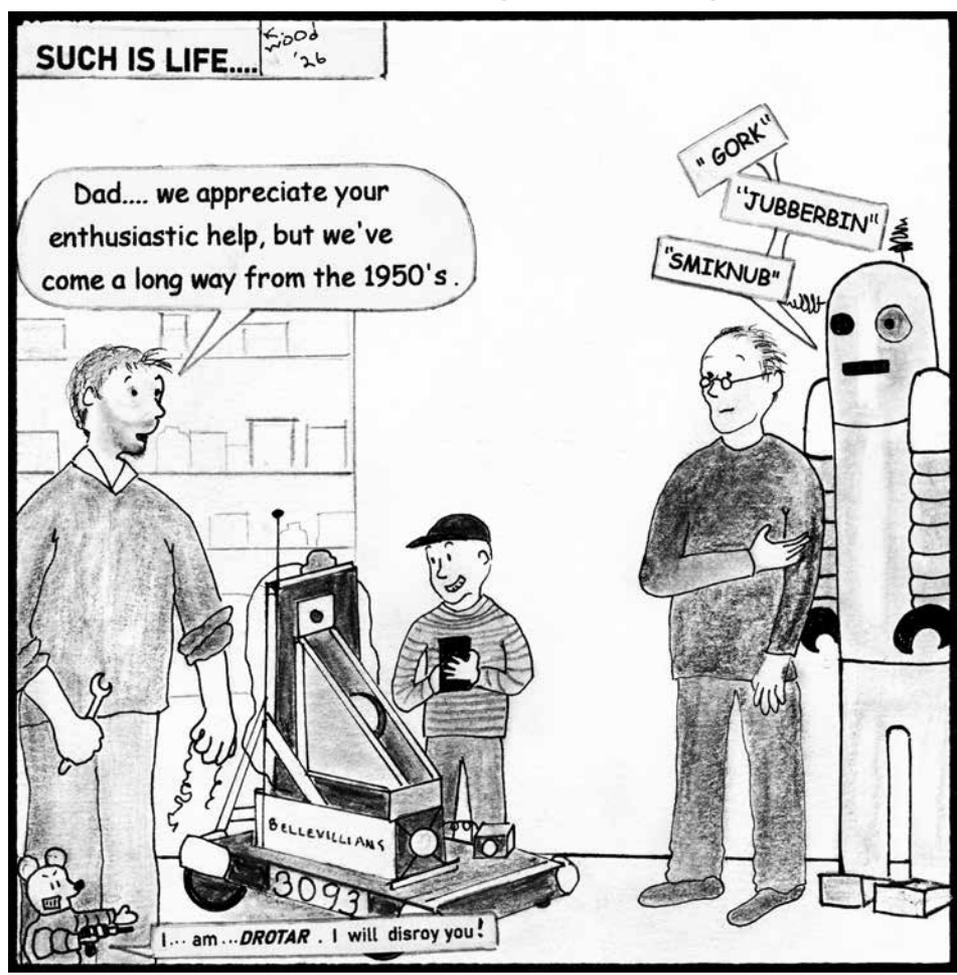
Janet Millard and I attended a zoom meeting with members of the Michigan Press Association last Friday. MPA leader Lisa McGraw and attorney Jen Kukarski from Butzel Long explained it has been three years since the new law went into effect on legal/public notices in Michigan.

Jen said notices are legal, historical documents and can be used in law suits, long after publication. She said the new law requires retaining an archive of the notices. There are 72 hours to post the notice on line after receiving it and it also goes on the statewide website.

Digital notices are not legal, she said. Currently only print notices in newspapers are legal in Michigan. She said print is permanent.

"Some municipalities are making their own rules and violating the law," Jen said, asking those on the zoom to call her or Lisa to report violators.

The zoom session was held because there have been rumblings that a Michigan House Republican caucus wants to change the law to allow notices to be put on local government websites, which they say will



save money.

They say that more of the public reads digital versions than read the papers, but Jen pointed out that many people do not have access or want access to digital information. Those wishing to change the law say there aren't enough newspapers these days to publish in each county.

But Jen said there are 83 counties in Michigan and 82 of them have print newspapers, so it's possible to print them in a newspaper in your county, as required.

Whether municipalities have to print the minutes of meetings, as well as public and legal notices, is up to the municipality's charter or their local ordinances. The Belleville City Charter calls for publication.

Charter townships, such as Van Buren, also must publish a synopsis of meetings, signed by the supervisor and clerk, which it does. How detailed it is, is up to them.

General law townships, such as Sumpter, have other rules, but must produce for the public a draft of the minutes five days after the meeting and a copy of the approved minutes within eight days of adoption. If a township has more than \$143 million of taxable valuation, it is required to publish in a newspaper of general circulation.

It was confirmed on Sunday that a warehouse at 7525 Cogswell Rd. in Romulus has been purchased by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for Immigration and Customs Enforcement

(ICE) to use as a detention center for about 500 illegal immigrants. It is south of Ecorse Road and just east of Hannan Road, near Metro Airport.

It was estimated that building the facility will bring 1,458 jobs and tax income of \$33 million to Romulus. A federal office facility will be set up in Oakland County.

ICE has also been using Willow Run Airport to move detainees.

When a holiday is on a Monday, the municipal meetings that usually are on Mondays are moved to Tuesday.

Since there are already meetings that meet regularly on Tuesdays, that leaves me with two meetings on one night.

What to do? I select the municipality that has the best recorded meetings and then go to the other one. That's what happened this week.

Belleville City Council moved to Tuesday because of the holiday and so it was the same night as Van Buren Township's regular meeting. I decided to attend the Belleville meeting and watch VBT later by video.

Ever since we started covering Belleville City Council three decades ago the public has been asking it to broadcast its meetings live on cable. Never happened. They do zoom sometimes, but that only shows part of the council and it's hard to hear.



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Letters

McBride game on Feb. 20 not public event

To the editor:
 Thank you for your recent coverage of the upcoming events at McBride Middle School. The staff and students were thrilled to see the Unified team featured on the front page.
 Could you please clarify the following details in the next edition:
 • The pep rally and game on Feb. 20 against Parker Middle School takes place during school hours and is not open to the public.
 • The Showcase Game on March 4 at 4 p.m. against Frost Middle School is open to the public, and we would love to have the community attend.

Jessica McIntyre
 McBride Middle School

There used to be a hospital in town?

To the editor:
 It's Don Keith. I was getting my hair cut at Denny's and I mentioned the letter and read it to everyone. One guy said thank you for writing it. He was surprised to meet me.
 Anyway, I was talking with a client that lived in Belleville years ago... He told me that there was a hospital in town. I was blown away!
 You know what would be interesting to have? A decades map of the city to help people learn what was in town over the years. Maybe the Belleville Museum could do it on its building, too.
 When I worked in Milan, the local paper, the Milan Reader or something like that, had a man who wrote historical stories about the town and what went on in the past. Very cool!
 Did anyone complain about my letter? I hope not. Maybe "The Incubator" idea will spark some interest in it.

Donald Keith
 Sumpter Township

Editor's Note: The writer had a letter and picture published last week concerning

unshoveled walks. He also suggested that the old hardware store be made into an incubator. That's what the DDA had planned to do originally. Plans are still up in the air.

Things to do in the Belleville area...

- **Friday, Feb. 20** – Van Buren Public Schools Education Foundation is holding a Disney Trivia Night at the Belleville High School Commons (cafeteria). Doors open at 6 p.m., trivia starts at 7:15 p.m. Tickets at \$10 per person for those ages five and up include four rounds of play. This fundraiser will include a raffle for a Disney Trip, prize for trivia winner, mini games, raffle baskets, and a special prize for best-dressed Disney Group. Pizza, drinks and snacks available for purchase.
- **Friday, Feb. 20** – St. Aloysius Fish Fry starts at 4:30 and runs to 7 p.m. every Friday until Easter. Cod/shrimp dinners, baked or fried, \$15, credit/debit accepted, dine-in/carryout/curbside. Pizza \$6. Kid's meal, \$9. Church is at 37200 Neville St., Romulus. (313) 688-3725
- **Friday, Feb. 20** – Fish Fry starts at 5 p.m. at the Van Buren Eagles, 9961 Beck Rd., Van Buren Township, every Friday until Easter. Public welcome. Menu includes cod, shrimp, hush puppies, French fries, chicken wings, onion rings, more. DJ Anthony Richendollar.
- **Saturday, Feb. 21** – The Van Buren Community Players present "Journey into Narnia the Musical" from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. for ages 12-17 years. Free creative youth class. Explore musical theater. Build performance confidence. Sing, dance, act. At Van Buren Community Center, 46425 Tyler Rd. Information: (734) 699-8921
- **Saturday, Feb. 21** – "Telling Your Stories, Finding Your Roots" will be put on at 2 p.m. at the Belleville Area District Library by Omer Jean Winborn and Cheryl Garnett of the Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society. They will present expert guidance on African American family history research.
- **Sunday, Feb. 22** – Cockpit Day is from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Michigan Flight Museum, 47884 D St., Belleville, (734) 483-4030. Have you ever wondered what it's like to look inside the cockpit of a jet? Some of the museum's static aircraft will be on display. This extra feature is included

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Belleville Plan

(continued from page 1)

Absent from the meeting were chairman Jim Courage and commissioner Tara Edwards. Vice-chairperson Julie Kissel presided. She also is a city councilperson. Gerald Keeder III attended his first meeting after being sworn in as a commissioner.

In other business in the almost one-hour meeting, the commission:

- Heard Juriga give a brief summary of his concerns for the erosion of the banks along Belleville Lake, collapsed trees in the water, and buildings along the shoreline that need to be removed. He said he voiced these concerns at the recent tri-community planning commission session. Kissel said she had talked with Van Buren Township supervisor Kevin McNamara earlier and he had told her how the township has hired a firm to work on options;

- Heard Kissel announce a meeting of the tri-community planning commission's subcommittee will be on March 19 and people are welcome to attend. If anyone wants to attend, she said to just give her a call. She said they will be talking about issues that affect the three communities of Belleville, Van Buren, and Sumpter;

- Heard interim city manager Jones give a summary of all the projects under way in the city. He said Johnny's will be a nice addition to the lakeside and there will be a nice bridge, when it is done. He said the Liberty Street water main work is under way and there was a slow down, but 800-1,000 feet of pipe is underground so far and it should be done in a couple more months. Once all the pipe is in the ground, services will be added and then the street will be milled and paved. He said they are close to moving into a new city hall and the next meeting of the commission is expected to be in the new building;

- Heard Juriga ask what are the plans for the present city hall and mayor Ken Voigt called out from the audience, "Demolition." Jones added that once it is emptied out it will be put up for sale. It may be demolished, he said;

- In response to Juriga's question about whether there will be a boat race this year, heard Jones reply that there will be no race this summer because of work on the bridge. The racers who were here before are interested in coming back, he said, so that could be the following summer, he said;

- Heard commissioner Martin ask about incentives to attract new businesses. He said the city has a vacant hardware store and vacant drug store on Main Street and the barber he uses doesn't use his front door on Main and everything is from the back door. Kissel said the Feb. 17 city council meeting has tax incentives on the agenda. Jones added that he has suggested the planning commission review the sign ordinance which hasn't been looked at in a number of years to make it business friendly, and as current and fresh as possible;

- Heard Martin praise the city manager for following through immediately on his call for help by sending out the DPW to clear

snow off a sidewalk in Victoria Commons for students trying to get to school while slipping and sliding all over the place;

- Heard commissioner Alvis Brigris say he thinks the commission should look at AI explicitly and encourage those businesses to fill the city vacancies. He said the Van Buren Township data center is starting to concern him. He asked what would happen if it all goes south and Van Buren is left with the liability. Brigris also said with all the data centers proposed for this area, the communication at Willow Run and Wayne County airports could be damaged;

- Heard Juriga ask if there is an ordinance officer now to replace the police officer who served in that role before he left. Kissel said there isn't but every one is pitching in and citations are being written;

- Heard commissioner Keeder introduce himself since this is his first meeting since appointment. He said he is a civil engineer. He agreed with others saying the businesses in town should be promoted so those outside the community know what's here. He said he lived on Ford Lake for six years and didn't know Belleville was here. "Then I needed Secretary of State and here you are!" and

- Heard Kissel say the commission is now fully staffed. She said it's nice to see work on Hayward's moving along. Also, they are getting ready to move city hall and anyone who wants to help can let her know. She said the next meeting will have a public hearing on the new Master Plan.

Library board selects John Juriga to fill seat of Alma Hughes-Grubbs

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

After a report from the bylaws committee, the Belleville Area District Library Board at its regular meeting on Feb. 10 passed a resolution to fill the vacancy created by the Jan. 7 death of elected board member Alma Hughes-Grubbs.

According to the bylaws, the vacancy is filled by a majority vote of the remaining board members and since it is more than 140 days before the next board election on Nov. 3, the appointed board member will only serve until Dec. 31.

There are four, four-year seats up for election on Nov. 3 and Hughes-Grubbs vacancy will be filled by fifth place on the ballot, for two years to fill the remainder of her term.

The deadline to file for a place on the ballot is the middle of July.

The resolution appointed former, longtime board member John Juriga, who did not run for reelection last year. All five board members present voted in favor of the appointment, with treasurer Tanya Stoudemire absent.

Juriga was invited to take a seat at the board table immediately. He is to be sworn

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Obituaries

FRANK STEVE MATE, III
 October 9, 1953 – February 3, 2026
 Age 72, of Sumpter Township, passed away at his home while playing cornhole, one of his favorite things to do, with friends, in his new pole barn. Survived by wife Cynthia, children William and Jayme, 8 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren, two sisters. David C. Brown Funeral Home. www.davidcbrownfh.com

Upcoming Meetings

- Monday, Feb. 23 – Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education, 7 p.m., BHS Commons
- Tuesday, Feb. 24 – Sumpter Township Board of Trustees, 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 25 – Van Buren Township Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m.
- Monday, March 2 – Belleville City Council, 6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 3 – Van Buren Township Board of Trustees, 6:30 p.m., with 5 p.m. work/study as needed.
- Monday, March 9 – Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education, 7 p.m., BHS Commons
- Wednesday, March 11 – Van Buren Township Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m.
- Thursday, March 12 – Keystone Academy School Board, 5 p.m. Also, Belleville Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.

Things to do

(continued from page 5)

with the price of admission. More Open Cockpit Days planned for May 17, Aug. 23, Oct. 18.

• **Tuesday, Feb. 24** – “The Shared Harvest: Building Community Through Our Local Farm” will be presented at 6:30 p.m. at the Belleville Area District Library by Melanie and Shane Convery of Crated Earth Farm. They will give an inside look at how we grow food that feeds both the body and the community. Sponsored by Rotary Club and the library.

• **Thursday, Feb. 26** – “Observing the Night Sky” will be presented by the Warren Astronomical Society outside the Sumpter Media Center, 43465 Sumpter Rd., at 6:30 p.m. This will be an evening of star gazing. If the weather is bad, the meeting will be moved inside the media center for a program.

• **Friday, Feb. 27** – Taco & Margarita Night from 5 to 7 p.m. at the James D. Donovan/Romulus VFW Post 78, 39270 W. Huron River Dr., Romulus, (734) 941-3030. Proceeds support the auxiliary.

• **Friday, Feb. 27** – Fish Fry starts at 5 p.m. at the Van Buren Eagles, 9961 Beck Rd., Van Buren Township, every Friday until Easter. Public welcome. Menu includes cod, shrimp, hush puppies, French fries, chicken wings, onion rings, more. Trivia free to play.

• **Saturday, Feb. 28** – Belleville Library Chess Tournament from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the library’s Cozadd Room. All ages welcome. Compete for honors and prizes. Registration required. Call (734) 699-3291 or visit <https://www.belleville.lib.mi.us/>

• **Wednesday, March 4** – “Mackinac Straits History” will be presented by historian Andrew Kercher at 6:30 p.m. at the Belleville Area District Library. Mackinac Island boasts a rich history of indigenous cultures, fur trading and fudge. He will share his experiences of wearing a wool uniform and winter life on the island while working at the Grand Hotel.

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VBT Plan

(continued from page 3)

of workers, however, and Kramer pointed out the audience contained representatives from many local contractors, who were there to support the project.

Plans call for construction of three data processing and computer center buildings, one administrative office building and one network service building.

Thirteen people got up to speak in the public comment part of the meeting, which started at 9:17 p.m. Four were in favor and the rest voiced concerns on transparency, well water, noise, eagles nest, electricity, housing values, rules for decommissioning, and moratorium.

After the vote was taken, the orderly crowd vacated the meeting room at 10:15 p.m. and the meeting then continued.

Commissioner Pahle said he wanted to make a motion to reconsider a vote the commission had taken on the non-residential PUD (planned unit development) ordinance at a previous meeting. It had been unanimously approved and he had seconded the motion to approve. The ordinance was sent on to the township board for approval.

Pahle said residents have concerns that the PUD was put in place to clear the way for the data center. He said if they revote and go through it again, the residents will hear the details.

Director Akers said the ordinance can be brought up at a future meeting. The commission has the ability to look at it again.

Vidna Krishnan of McKenna Associates said the ordinance doesn't involve uses and didn't have anything to do with a data center.

Chairman Cullin said the commission had a public hearing on this. He said the commission always asks the public to become involved.

Commissioner Peter Creal, who was on the subcommittee that worked on the ordinance, said they came up with a plan and, "We followed the process."

"I want to accommodate the public," Pahle insisted.

Krishnan said she could write out the details so the public can study them.

"I want to make a motion," Pahle persisted.

Creal said two public hearings were held. He said an educational process could be used to show what is in the ordinance.

"I beg people to come to meetings," Atchinson said.

"We didn't make it for a developer," said Jahr, who also was on the subcommittee.

Pahle made a motion to reconsider the vote on non-residential PUDs. There was no second to the motion.

Creal suggested composing FAQs (frequently asked questions) and their answers.

"You can't take back an action," Krishnan said.

"We sent it to the board," said Treasurer Sharry Budd who sits on the commission.

"No."

"You cannot reconsider a vote," Krishnan insisted. "You tell us what you want to change. I'll be glad to discuss it at a future meeting, line by line."

Pahle withdrew the motion. He said it could be discussed at a future meeting.

"Are you going to do this with every ordinance?" Budd asked. "Someone calls you and you make a motion to reconsider?"

The meeting, which started at 5:30 p.m., adjourned at 10:37 p.m.

Before the meeting began, there was a handful of demonstrators with signs and petitions outside the front door of township hall. Three television cameras and crews were set up in the meeting room and broadcast reports thereafter.

Court Watching

Carlos Isaiah Payne

Carlos Isaiah Payne, 30, of Van Buren Township had his probable cause conference on Feb. 3 on a charge of second-degree murder, two charges of interfering with a crime report and a charge of felony firearm on Nov. 3 in Van Buren Township. His preliminary exam is set for March 10.

He was video-arraigned in custody on Jan. 8 and bond was set at \$200,000/10%. The probable cause conference was set for Jan. 20 and the preliminary exam for Jan. 27. At the Jan. 20 hearing, the dates were changed. The defendant remains in the

Wayne County Jail.

Drake Allen Sluder

Drake Allen Sluder of Sumpter Township was video-arraigned in custody on Jan. 16 on a charge of being in possession of methamphetamine/ecstasy on Jan. 14, 2026 in Van Buren Township.

His probable cause conference was set for Jan. 27 and his preliminary exam for Feb. 3. Personal bond was \$5,000.

He failed to appear on Jan. 27 and a bench warrant was issued.

Shawn Darnell Bell

Shawn Darnell Bell is charged with fleeing police and operating while license suspended on Sept. 16, 2025. He was arraigned on a warrant on Dec. 30, 2025 and personal bond was \$1,000. His pre-exam hearing was Jan. 13 and was adjourned at the request of the defense. The preliminary exam was Feb. 3 and he was bound over to circuit court for a Feb. 17 arraignment on the information.

Christina Ann Bowling

Christina Ann Bowling was charged with possession of methamphetamine / ecstasy and possession or sale of a taser on Jan. 13, 2026. A pre-exam hearing was Jan. 27 and the exam held Feb. 3. The taser charge was dismissed. She was bound over to circuit court on the controlled substance charge for a Feb. 10 arraignment on the information. She pled guilty to a reduced misdemeanor count of use of controlled substance and was sentenced to a fine of \$128, 40 hours of community service, and 18 months of

probation.

Eric Allen Brackman

Eric Allen Brackman, 51, of New Boston failed to appear for three preliminary exams on Feb. 3 and so a warrant for his arrest was issued. He is charged with possession of narcotic or cocaine on April 25, 2023 in Van Buren Township; assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder, possession of methamphetamine, domestic violence-third offense notice, and assault with a dangerous weapon (felonious assault) on Nov. 16, 2024 in Huron Township; and possession of methamphetamine on Dec. 13, 2024 in Huron Township.

Amy Michele Cox

Amy Michele Cox is charged with operating under the influence of liquor - 3rd offense, and two counts of possession of controlled substances on July 16, 2023. Her preliminary exam was held Feb. 3, 2026 and she was bound over to circuit court for a Feb. 17 arraignment on the information.

Angelique Lana White

Angelique Lana White is charged with two counts of operating while under the influence of liquor-third offense notice, assaulting a police officer, and operating while license suspended on July 18, 2025. Her preliminary exam was set for Feb. 3. And in a Feb. 10 pre-exam hearing the assaulting a police officer charge was dismissed. She was bound over for a Feb. 24 arraignment on the information in

(continued on page 12)



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At halftime during Friday's Belleville High School boys' basketball game, four Alumni Athletic Awards were presented to, from left, Diajah Ruffin, class of 2012; Sam Villa, Sr., class of 1963, accepted by his widow Diana; Sam Villa, Jr., class of 1982; and Ryann Kilgore, girls' basketball coach, 2007-14.

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Independent photo by Rosemary K. Otzman

Officials from the planning commissions and building departments of the communities of Belleville, Van Buren Township, and Sumpter Township gathered to compare notes at a one-hour meeting on Jan. 29 at Belleville High School. Representatives of the three communities regularly meet to report on their projects and to share issues. The next meeting was scheduled for July 29 in Belleville's new city hall, which is expected to be in operation by then.

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Gov. Whitmer signs legislative ban on classroom cell phones

On Feb. 10, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed two bipartisan bills intended to improve focus during class time by minimizing digital distractions.

Senate Bill 495 and House Bill 1411 call for Michigan school districts to create action plans that keep devices away during class, with exceptions for emergencies and academic use.

Gov. Whitmer originally called for this change during her 2025 State of the State address.

“I’m proud to sign these bipartisan bills that will help prioritize academic success and support youth mental health,” said Gov. Whitmer in a news release.

“We know that when students put their phones down, their grades go up. These bills will help keep kids focused in the classroom and break their growing dependency on screens and social media. We could all benefit from looking up at the world instead of down at our phones.”

State Senator Dayna Polehanki, D-Livonia, said in the news release: “With nearly 20 years of experience as a public school teacher, I know firsthand how much student cell phone use impedes the ability to focus and learn in the classroom.

“And we all know that our educators are tasked with plenty enough already, so the

last thing they need is the distraction of a cell phone going off while they’re trying to teach.

“That’s why I’m proud to have championed this bipartisan, bicameral legislation that ensures phones are kept out of the hands of kids during the most critical time of the school day – when they’re in the classroom. I’m grateful to everyone who played a role in getting this important policy across the finish line,” she concluded.

State Rep. Mark Tisdell, R-Rochester Hills, said, “We’re in the middle of a mental health crisis that is hurting kids. Getting cellphones out of the classroom will help protect young, developing brains, and I’m glad we were able to work together to get this done.

“Next, I’m working on legislation to give parents more control over how their children use social media. Social media is addictive by design; we’ve got to break the spell so kids can be free to be kids again,” Rep. Tisdell said.

More than half of the states across the U.S. and several schools in Michigan have already implemented policies that address phones in the classroom. These schools have seen positive results, including a rise in test scores, fewer instances of cyberbullying, more use of school libraries, and improved social skills among students, the news release states.

These bill will help Michigan students succeed by removing one of the most disruptive distractions in the classroom and by helping kids prioritize their academic success and mental well-being.

District will have control over their phone policies, allowing local leaders to consult with teachers, parents, and community members on what works best for their schools.

This allows for flexibility in deciding how students can access their devices in case of emergency and on productive ways phones can be used as academic tools, the news release concludes.

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Court watching

(continued from page 8)

circuit court.

White also is charged with two counts of operating while intoxicated-3rd, fleeing a police officer, assaulting a police officer, and reckless driving on July 17, 2022. She was bound over to circuit court on Dec. 3, 2025. Her pretrial was set for Feb. 19, 2026 and a jury trial for March 23.

Jarell Deonte-Irell-Fitzjeri Seuell

Jarell Deonte-Irell-Fitzjeri Seuell, 31, of Ypsilanti and formerly of Sumpter Township, was arraigned by 34th District Court Judge Teresa Patton in custody on Jan. 21 on 11 bench warrants. Five charges were out of Van Buren Township in 2023 and 2025, five out of Belleville from 2023, and one out of Sumpter Township in 2025. The bench

warrants were for contempt of court for failures to appear for court dates on those charges.

An in-person pretrial before Judge Oakley was set for Feb. 12. He failed to appear, so a show-cause hearing was set for March 26 and then changed to Feb. 26.

Patricia Lynne Corser

Patricia Lynne Corser, formerly of Belleville and Ann Arbor and now in a homeless shelter, was charged with possession of a narcotic or cocaine less than 25 grams on Feb. 27, 2024 in Van Buren Township. Personal bond is \$5,000. A warrant had been entered into LEIN and she was arraigned on Feb. 10, 2026. A preliminary exam before Judge Oakley was set for Feb. 24 and she is to have no mood-altering drugs without a doctor's prescription.

(continued on page 13)

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This unit is middle-school aged. It is the Belleville Tiger Elite Junior Guard. Coaches are Allie Caparaotta, Monica Schurg, and Ryann Lacey.

BHS to host Michigan Winter Guard competition on Feb. 22

Eighteen winter guard units from across the state will perform in the Michigan Color Guard Circuit Winter Guard Competition beginning at 11 a.m. at Belleville High School on Sunday, Feb. 22.

After competition all day, the awards are scheduled to be presented at 2:12 p.m.

Three units from BHS will compete: those of middle-school age, high-school age, and those aged 18 and up.

Belleville bands are hosting the event in collaboration with MCGC and the Belleville Community Guard programs.

The event is open to the public. Admission is \$10 each, with those five and under entering free. There will be local vendors on site.

Along with the three Belleville teams, units are expected from Farmington, Chelsea, Wayne, Grand Rapids, Dearborn, Clinton Township, St. Clair Shores, Romulus, Traverse City, Macomb, Flint, Swartz Creek, and Detroit.

Belleville Community Guards Administrative Director Sarah Moon said local teams will be going to the Michigan State Championships in Lansing on March 28.

Belleville Community Guard programs combine both the Belleville Color Guards and Belleville Tiger Elite Winter Guards to offer year-round guard programs

for performance and competition opportunities. Programs are available for ages 9-18+.

Court Watching

(continued from page 12)

Jacquelyn Lee Marker

Jacquelyn Lee Marker of Sumpter Township is charged with domestic violence on Jan. 28, 2026 in Sumpter Township. Her pretrial was set for Feb. 10 before Judge Oakley. Bond is \$5,000/10% and she cannot return to the protected address.

On Feb. 10, this misdemeanor was paired with two felony counts of assaulting a police officer on the same day so the pretrial and the preliminary exam on the felony charges were all set for in person on Feb. 24.

Jordan Bailey Reuter

Jordan Bailey Reuter of Cottreville, MI, was due for his probable cause conference on Feb. 10 on a charge of criminal sexual conduct – 2nd degree (multiple variables) on Nov. 29, 2024 in Sumpter Township. He was video-arraigned in custody on a bench warrant on Jan. 28, 2026. Bond is \$20,000/10% and was posted on Feb. 4.

(continued on page 19)

Veterans of Foreign Wars 4434 and Polish Legion of American Veterans 167
44170 Bemis Road, Belleville MI 48111

For hall rentals call 734-697-0505 and leave a message with your contact information.

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4434 meets on the last Monday at 7:30pm

Polish Legion of American Veterans Post 167 meets on the first Tuesday at 7:30pm

Membership applications for either the PLAV 167 and/or VFW 4434 can be requested at a membership meeting or by email.

CONTACT:

PLAV:
thekennedys247@att.net

VFW:
jebstone63@gmail.com

Honor Guard:
kestral1215@gmail.com

Photo courtesy of C.M. PLAV Post 167



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District Library

(continued from page 6)

in at the March 10 meeting by 34th District Court Judge Lisa Martin.

Maria Jackson-Smith, of the bylaw committee, reported the committee met Jan. 27 and after discussion recommended to ask Juriga to fill the seat.

"It is gratifying to learn a former colleague expressed a willingness to fill in on the board," said board president Sharon Peters.

Later board member Daniel Fleming, who had been elected to fill Juriga's seat on the board, said he misses Hughes-Grubbs who was a cheerful face across the board table from where he sits, "But I'm glad John's here."

Peters agreed. "We still feel her absence." She said several board members attended her funeral service in downtown Detroit. She said Juriga and another former longtime board member Mary Jane Dawson also attended the service.

She said they brought copies of the *Independent* with the story of her death and her picture on the front page to share with the family.

"We showed them that in our small town, Alma was front-page news," Peters said.

She also mentioned the editorial on an inside page that said, "Alma Jean Hughes-Grubbs was so warm and loveable, you would never know she was a retired Detroit cop."

Peters said at the funeral, Hughes-Grubbs was highly honored as a police officer with a police color guard and a speaker who had run for mayor of Detroit.

In other business at the one-and-a-half-hour meeting on Feb. 10, the board:

- Heard Peters read off her suggestions for board members she could assign to

(continued on page 17)

INDEPENDENT CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE

SAYLOR BEAL AIR Compressor, 2 stage, 5 hp, 80 gal, 3 phase & 220 converter \$800. Foldable engine hoist, 2 ton \$300. Heavy duty aluminum loading ramp, 38" x 109" \$600. (313) 565-8596 call Mike 03/05

6 FT BLADE for a 3-point hitch. Heavy duty. \$325 OBO. (734) 697-9527 03/05

HEAVY DUTY MAXIMA SCOOTER new batteries, runs good. (734) 383-0708. \$2,500 02/26

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MICHIGAN MEMORIAL - 2 grave sites for sale. Catholic section 540, Block 23. \$7,800 OBO. (734) 699-4048 03/05

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FOOD GRADE BARRELS Plastic &- metal. Inventory & pictures at www.mattsbarrels.com, call or text (734) 474-5981. Located in Willis. 03/12

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"Trust, but verify."

- Ronald Reagan

Notice to Advertisers - private gun sales:

It is the responsibility of both the classified seller and buyer to ensure they understand all laws applicable to private gun sales in Michigan. The *Belleville-Area Independent* is not responsible for the legal compliance of classified buyers and sellers.

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WANTED - ANY SIZE MEN'S JEANS for the homeless. Please drop off at Bladez's 601 E. Huron River Drive. (734) 697-5600 TFN

WANTED - SMALL CONTAINERS of shampoo, toothpaste, etc. to take to homeless in Detroit. Drop off at Bladez's. 601 E. Huron River Dr. (734) 697-5600 TFN

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Notice to Advertisers:

The *Belleville-Area Independent* will not be liable for failure to publish an ad as requested or for more than one incorrect insertion of an advertisement. In the event of any error or omission in printing or publication of an advertisement, you must notify us within five days of publication or on the date of insertion, if an ad is scheduled as part of a package, so there is time to correct subsequent publications. The *Independent's* liability shall be limited to an adjustment for the cost of the space occupied by the error with a maximum liability being cancellation of the cost of the first incorrect advertisement or republication of the corrected advertisement. Under no circumstances shall the *Independent* be liable for consequential damages of any kind.

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE:

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, or an intention, to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.



Sumpter Twp. reports \$358,911 savings from joint fire grants

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

The Sumpter Township Fire Chief Jamie Goode reported the department saved \$358,911 from the grants it recently received

for turnout gear and other equipment from a joint grant with other departments.

Chief Goode reported the grant total at the Feb. 10 meeting of the township board. He also said the department has installed 212

smoke detectors and 40 carbon monoxide detectors in the community.

Clerk Don LaPorte said the emergency medical calls are growing and there were 133 incidents in the last 31 days and the chief

is the only full-time fire official. The board might have to look at that, he said.

Chief Goode said from 2020 to 2025 the department had a 58% increase in calls.

Trustee Matthew Oddy later remarked that the population is higher in the trailer parks and 30% of the township residents live in trailer parks. He said a person living in a trailer park should be paying the same for fire service as other residents since it takes the same amount of resources to get help to them. And, it is the same for police service, he said, referring to the special fire and police millages.

Supervisor Tim Bowman asked if it was required for police to write traffic tickets in a mobile home park?

Township attorney Rob Young said the manufactured housing community has great lobbyists to keep the status quo. He said mobile homes pay \$3 per month per unit or \$36 per year. Young said at some point the state legislature will have to take a look at this.

“We can’t discriminate against the manufactured housing community,” Young stated.

Supervisor Bowman said he has seen township officers writing tickets in the trailer parks and this is private property.

“We all know they make a killing,” Bowman said referring to the owners of the parks. He said years ago they used to have pickup trucks with “Security” on the side and these would patrol the parks.

Now he said he has watched police go into the trailer parks, policing private property.

This will change only if the law changes, Young said, adding if police are called, they come, but if not called, the township can’t treat apartments different than other residents or those in manufactured housing.

Bowman still was concerned that police were writing traffic tickets.

Public Safety Director/Police Chief Eric Luke said 15 mph is the speed limit in the parks set by the Motor Vehicle Code and police enforce the state code. He said 30 to 35% of the township’s population is in the parks and what they pay is 2% of the millage amount.

“If we did not go in and patrol, they would blow up,” Chief Luke said, adding officers watch for school bus passing, stop sign violations, and careless driving. He said that the park residents pay less than others is not the residents’ fault.

“I can’t get over it. We are patrolling private property,” Bowman said.

In other business at the Feb. 10 meeting, the board:

- Bowed their heads before the meeting started as Pastor Robert While of Grace Baptist Church in Belleville prayed over them and the community;

- Discussed at length and then approved on a 6-1 vote the meeting minutes of the Jan. 19 Parks & Recreation committee and the proposed schedule of events for the year, including an expenditure of \$1,400 to reserve a bus for the March 19 casino trip. Added to the motion, after treasurer Bart Patterson said the committee needs to have budget figures

(continued on page 16)

Public Notice

OFFICE OF THE WAYNE COUNTY DRAIN COMMISSIONER

MCKINSTRY DRAIN

NOTICE OF DAY OF REVIEW OF APPORTIONMENTS

The Wayne County Drain Commissioner will hold a Day of Review of Apportionments on the following date, time, and location:

DATE: Tuesday, March 3, 2026
TIME: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
LOCATION: Van Buren Township Hall
46425 Tyler Road
Van Buren Township, MI 48111
QUESTIONS: (313) 536-0355

The Day of Review is an opportunity to review the tentative apportionment of benefits for each parcel and municipality within the McKinstry Drain Drainage District.

The following is a list of any county, township, city, or village to be assessed: Wayne County, Canton Charter Township, and Van Buren Charter Township.

Attendance At the Day of Review:

- No appointment is necessary.
- The Drain Commissioner, engineers and/or other staff members will be available to assist individuals and make revisions where necessary.
- The computation of costs for the Drain will be available.

Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in the Day of Review should contact the Drain Commissioner’s Office at (313) 536-0355 (voice) or through the Michigan Relay Center at 7-1-1 (TDD) at least 24 hours in advance of the Day of Review to request mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance.

Submitting Comments

Comments on the apportionment of benefits may be submitted in writing or verbally at the Day of Review. Comments may also be submitted in writing before the date of the Day of Review to:

MAIL: Wayne County Drain Commissioner
400 Monroe Street, Suite 400
Detroit, Michigan 48226
EMAIL: ESDHelp@waynecountymi.gov

Comments submitted in advance must be received by the Drain Commissioner prior to the Day of Review to ensure that they will be considered.

Assessments & Appeal

Drain assessments are collected in the same manner as property taxes and will appear on your winter tax bill. If drain assessments are being collected for more than one (1) year, then at any time you may pay the assessment in full with any interest to date, which will avoid further interest charges.

You may appeal the Drain Commissioner’s determination of apportionments to the Wayne County Probate Court within ten (10) days.

Notice of Letting

The following additional information can be found on the Notice of Bid Letting on the Drain Commissioner’s website at: <https://www.waynecountymi.gov/Government/Departments/Environmental-Services>:

- A description of the lands constituting the drainage district;
- Number and length of sections, the average width and depth of each section, and if the drain will be closed, the amount and specifications of all tile or pipe required;
- Location, number, type, and size of culverts or bridges to be installed, if any; and
- Conditions upon which the contract will be awarded.

Sumpter Twp.

(continued from page 15)

for the events and this last-minute casino trip isn't on their schedule and it's in three weeks.

Trustee James Frazier said you can't book a bus without money and the committee doesn't have a fund for expenditures. Clerk LaPorte said the events, including this new one, need to be sent to the township insurance company to make sure there are no issues. Patterson voted no on the approval;

- Approved the Severe Weather Policy revision, without explanation;
- Approved a separation agreement between the township and Debbie Nogle effective Jan. 23;
- Approved the position description for the Human Resources/Finance Assistant position;

- Heard township manager Ken Marten report he will be attending a session on data centers put on by the county and the township is working on wording for a moratorium on data centers. He said a meeting with the county about Judd Road paving is planned. He also reported the EPA has found that an adjoining property to one that was found polluted also has problems. The permit for a grade change brought this to light. The original permit was granted June 20, 1972, he said;
- Heard Hassan "Sammy" Nassar complain about a letter from Hennessey Engineers asking for a survey of the former Hughes property at 17450 Savage Rd. where he now wants to open a used-car lot. He said that other properties can do whatever they want and the planning consultant told him he didn't need a survey. Now he has to pay \$10,000 for

a survey. "I'm fed up," he said. "A neighbor is beating me up... I've been misguided. I spent a half a million dollars and now this." He said he called the county six times and his neighbor "is driving me crazy." He asked the board for help and Oddy suggested the township manager get together with the attorney and planner to figure it out. Attorney Young said the building department might need a survey. They will talk to Hennessey and take a look at the situation;

- Heard Laura Perry of Dundee introduce herself as a candidate for Michigan House District 31, saying she will be running on the conservative end of the ticket;
- Heard the deputy clerk announce that those township residents in the Huron

Township School District will have an election on May 5;

- Heard trustee Tim Rush say that severe weather starts in April and he would like to set up a one-hour Skywarn session. He said when the sessions were first presented there were many people who attended. He said in recent years there are fewer, so if you would attend a session to let him know, so they can decide whether to hold the session this year; and
- Went into closed-door session at the end of the meeting to consider negotiations for three unions. When the board came back into regular session, the board voted to direct the attorney to proceed as discussed in closed session.

Charter Township of Van Buren Public Notice

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN PLANNING COMMISSION NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the Charter Township of Van Buren Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on **March 11, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.** The meeting will be held in person at Van Buren Township Hall, located at **46425 Tyler Road, Van Buren Township, MI 48111**, in the Board Room.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments:

- **Cul-De-Sac Length**
 - Article 6 Section 6.111(C) pertaining to Cul-de-sac length within site condominium developments. The proposed amendment will reduce the maximum permissible length of cul-de-sacs from 1,200 feet to 600 feet to align with Chapter 78 provisions and support efficient emergency response access.
- **Car Wash Regulations**
 - Article 5: Development Standards for Specific Uses. Regulations include specifications on separation distance required between car washes, a limitation on the number of car washes permitted within a defined area, environmental impact study submittal as it relates to runoff generated from car washes, access from major thoroughfares, maximum impervious surface permitted, and traffic impact studies to be completed by the Township Engineer.

Please address any written comments to the Van Buren Township Planning Commission at, 46425 Tyler Road, Van Buren Township, MI 48111 or by e-mail at rakers@vbtmi.gov. Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on the hearing date and all materials relating to this request are available for public inspection at the Van Buren Township Hall prior to the hearing.

Van Buren Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aides and services to individuals with disabilities who are planning to attend. Please contact the Van Buren Township Planning & Economic Development department at 734-699-8913 at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting if you require assistance.

Posted: February 12, 2026
Published: February 19, 2026

City of Belleville Public Notice

2026 MARCH BOARD OF REVIEW

NOTICE TO THE TAXPAYERS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE CITY OF BELLEVILLE

The **BOARD OF REVIEW** of the City Of Belleville will be held on the following dates:

March 3rd, Tuesday
9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
(Organizational Meeting)

No Appeals Heard at this Meeting

March 3rd, Tuesday
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

March 10th, Tuesday
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.; 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

REVIEW IN PERSON IS BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

Taxpayers/Property Owners may appeal by making an appointment to appear before the Board of Review **OR** by letter appeal (personal appearance is not required).

Letters of appeal must be received by noon MARCH 10, 2026.

Appointments to appeal in person may be scheduled by calling the Assessing Office at 734-252-4314 between 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. by MARCH 3, 2026.

The tentative ratios and the estimated multipliers for each class of real property and personal property for 2026 are as follows:

Commercial	46.81%	1.068
Industrial	46.53%	1.074
Residential	47.06%	1.062
Personal	50.00%	1.000

Briana Papin
City of Belleville

Publish: Thursday, February 12, 2026
Thursday, February 19, 2026
Thursday, February 26, 2026

District Library

(continued from page 14)

the seven different committees for the year. Those who want to change any of the assignments were to let her know their wishes;

• Heard library director Mary Jo Suchy report that the price of salt has gone up dramatically, resulting in an increase in fees from the library's snow removal company. The company also is concerned about delays in delivery of salt due to the recent demand. She said the library paid \$6,000 for salting in January. She said the company they use has been in business for

19 years and say this is the worst they've ever seen. "Spring cannot come soon enough," she added;

• Heard Suchy announce changes in the Youth/Teen Department. Tara McCann is stepping away from her duties as head of Youth/Teen Services to focus on being a youth/teen librarian. Librarian Karen Dubke is in training to assume the role of head of the department and the transition will be complete March 9. Both expressed they are happy with their new roles. Suchy said Dubke is young and has a lot of energy;

• Learned that due to a contribution from the Friends of the Library, the library is offering free book bags to new parents and

their babies. Each bag contains a board book to keep, plus information and tips about early literacy and the library. Also, Tonies are now available for checkout in the children's room. Tonies are audio players with figurines for kids. The Toniebox plays songs and/or stories when you place a Tonie figurine on top. Suchy brought a free book bag and a Tonie to show the board;

• Heard Suchy tell of upcoming events, including the Feb. 26, 6:30 p.m. "Observing the Night Sky" put on by the Warren Astronomical Society outside of the Sumpter Media Center. If the weather is bad, a program will be put on inside the media center. Also, genealogists from the Fred Hart William Genealogical Society

will provide expert guidance on African American family history research at a program called "Telling Your Stories, Finding Your Roots" on Saturday, Feb. 21 at 2 p.m.;

• Learned the recent annual meeting of the Friends of the Library was well attended. Suchy said she spoke at their meeting, telling how instrumental they are in all that the library does, including helping to fund the jazz programs, the Memory Café, and summer reading programs. Nikki Pickeral made a thank-you video for them, featuring attendees from some of the programs, library staff, and others;

• Was invited to "The Shared Harvest: Building Community Through Our Local Farm," sponsored by the Rotary Club and the library at 6:30 p.m., Feb. 24. Melanie and Shane Convery of Crafted Earth Farm will give an inside look at how we grow food that feeds both the body and the community. This session is designed to connect people with the local food system; and

• Heard Nikki Pickeral announce her program "Sincerely Yours, Local History Through Letters," is set for 7 p.m., March 11, at the library. She will read letters that have been archived at the Belleville Area Museum and share information they reveal about the Belleville area.

Charter Township of Van Buren Public Notice



2026 MARCH BOARD OF REVIEW

NOTICE TO THE TAXPAYERS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF VAN BUREN CHARTER TOWNSHIP

VAN BUREN
CHARTER TOWNSHIP

The **BOARD OF REVIEW** of the Charter Township of Van Buren will be held on the following dates:

March 3rd, Tuesday
2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
(Organizational Meeting)

No Appeals Heard at this Meeting

March 9th, Monday
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.; 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

March 11th, Wednesday
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.; 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

REVIEW IN PERSON IS BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

Taxpayers/Property Owners may appeal by making an appointment to appear before the Board of Review OR by letter appeal (personal appearance is not required).

Letters of appeal must be received by noon MARCH 11, 2026.

Appointments to appeal in person may be scheduled by calling the Assessing Office at 734-699-8946 between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. by MARCH 3, 2026.

The tentative ratios and the estimated multipliers for each class of real property and personal property for 2026 are as follows:

Ag – 45.65%	1.0640
Com – 49.83%	1.0731
Ind – 48.33%	1.0185
Res – 45.85%	1.0449
Personal – 50.00 %	1.0000

Leon Wright
Van Buren Charter Township

Publish: Thursday, February 12, 2026
Thursday, February 19, 2026
Thursday, February 26, 2026

Keystone Academy boys win NHA regional basketball tournament

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

The boys' varsity basketball team at Keystone Academy in Sumpter Township took first place at the National Heritage Academy's regional basketball tournament recently held at Arbor Prep High School.

This was announced at Keystone's board of directors regular meeting Feb. 12. The team went undefeated, finishing the day with a 4-0 record.

In other business at the 38-minute meeting, the board:

• Approved allocating \$2,000 to match the PTO's \$2,000 to provide two scholarships to graduates of Keystone;

• Approved the 2026-27 school calendar;

• Approved a resolution to relinquish federal funds for Title III Immigrant Student Allocations. It was explained that NHA recommends saying, "Thanks, but no thanks," to the offer of \$74 per pupil for a total of \$400 to the school. The cost to the administration is more than the grant. Immigrants make up fewer than 1% of the student body;

• Took no action on a proposal to pay \$2,950 per person for expenses for board members to attend the June 23-26 Charter School Conference in New Orleans. No board member was interested in attending;

• Learned the school raised \$1,450 for Mott Children's hospital through a candy gram fundraiser; and

• Was informed an order for the bench to honor retired board member Vesta Losen has been placed.

Van Buren Township Police Dispatch Log

There were 384 dispatch calls reported by Van Buren Township police this week including the following.

Sunday, Feb 8:

0122 – 911 welfare check, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0156 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, N. I-94 Service Dr.
0258 – parking complaint, Stratford/Churchill
0338 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, N. I-94 Service Dr./Old Rawsonville Rd.
0358 – property damage accident, Michigan Ave. / Denton Rd.
0633 – intrusion alarm, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0605 – family trouble, S. Belridge Dr.
0828 – intrusion alarm, Rawsonville Rd.
xxxx – welfare check, Tallgrass Ct.
1141 – intrusion alarm, Lake Point Pass
1143 – traffic offense, S. I-94 Service Dr.
1203 – threat, Lake Villa Dr.
1238 – threat, Pond Bluff Dr.
1253 – disorderly, Belleville Rd.
1254 – civil matter, Holly Ln.
1256 – intrusion alarm, Cobblestone Ct.
1411 – property damage accident, Dellor St.
1439 – intrusion alarm, Robbe Rd.
1449 – 911 welfare check, Preswick Ct.
1540 – welfare check, Maple Dr.
1618 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Belleville Rd.
1632 – hospice death, Fay Dr.
1711 – animal complaint, Florence Ln.
1848 – abandoned auto, Ironwood Dr.
1858 – property damage accident, W. Huron River Dr. / Rawsonville Rd.
2315 – family trouble, Parkwood Dr.

Monday, Feb. 9:

0006 – assist other dept., Belleville Rd.
0009 – property damage accident, Michigan Ave. / Dellor St.
0031 – traffic offense, E. I-94/Belleville Rd.
0744 – intrusion alarm, Forestdale Dr.
0747 – intrusion alarm, Van Born Rd.
0826 – intrusion alarm, W. Huron River Dr.
0827 – larceny, Samuel Barton Dr.
1153 – misc. complaint, Tyler Rd.
1301 – domestic, S. Ponderosa Trl.
1307 – traffic offense, Redwood Dr./Holly Ln.
1338 – domestic, S. I-94 Service Dr.
1341 – larceny, Belleville Rd.
1356 – prisoner transport, S. Wayne Rd.
1514 – civil matter, Bayshore Dr.
1502 – domestic, S. I-94 Service Dr.
1605 – intrusion alarm, W. Huron River Dr.
1653 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd. / Brookview Dr.
1745 – warrant arrest, Tyler Rd.
1804 – property damage accident, Ecorse/Beck
1850 – breaking & entering, S. Ponderosa Trl.
1856 – assist fire dept., Sadie Ln.
1923 – assault & battery, Lighthouse Dr.
2003 – threat, Lighthouse Dr.
2036 – larceny from auto, Red Oak Dr.
2036 – property damage accident, Michigan Ave.
2358 – domestic, Basswood Cir.

Tuesday, Feb. 10:

0002 – PPO violation, Vernon St.
0144 – intrusion alarm, Sumpter Rd.
0044 – intrusion alarm, Van Born Rd.
0049 – fight, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0222 – mental subject, Chinkapin Dr.
0439 – noise complaint, Lake Villa Dr.
xxxx – repossession, McBride Ave.
0914 – ordinance violation – all 7300 MICR codes, Tyler Rd.
0916 – disorderly, Timberland Dr.
1009 – animal complaint, Hoeft Rd./Hull Rd.
1018 – welfare check, S. Belleville I-94 ramp W / W I-94
1244 – motorist assist, Ecorse/I-275
1323 – motorist assist, Tyler Rd./Belleville Rd.
xxxx – intrusion alarm, Haggerty Rd.
1523 – family trouble, Westlake Cir.
1538 – welfare check, Belleville Rd.
1711 – assault & battery, Rawsonville Rd.
1731 – welfare check, Belleville Rd./S. I-94 Service Dr.
1850 – vehicle lockout, Beck Rd.
1935 – parking complaint, Rawsonville Rd.
xxxx – repossession, E. Archwood Dr.

2015 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd.
2025 – assist citizen, Brookside Dr.
2327 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Hickory Woods
2330 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Tyler Rd.
2334 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Rawsonville Rd.
2347 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Belleville Rd.
2349 – assist fire dept., S. I-94 Service Dr.
2354 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Belleville Rd.

Wednesday, Feb. 11:

0022 – intrusion alarm, Sumpter Rd.
0425 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Elwell Rd./W. Huron River Dr.
0753 – welfare check, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0943 – larceny, Parkwood Dr.
1041 – suicidal person, Sondra Dr.
1138 – suicidal person, W. Columbia Ave.
1136 – 911 welfare check, Country Ln.
1139 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Belleville Rd.
1234 – fraud, Belleville Rd.
1235 – fraud, Belleville Rd.
1322 – motorist assist, Quirk Rd./Tyler Rd.
1337 – malicious destruction, Edison Lake Rd.
1511 – leaving the scene of a property damage accident, Outer Dr.
1509 – warrant arrest, Tyler Rd.
1522 – assist fire dept., Parkwood Dr.
1622 – property damage accident, Tyler/Belleville
1630 – 911 welfare check, E. Huron River Dr.
1638 – private property/property damage accident, Belleville Rd.
1721 – welfare check, Village Green Ln.
2112 – domestic, E. Huron River Dr.
2128 – traffic offense, Dellor St.
2206 – intrusion alarm, Belleville Rd.
2237 – misc. complaint, Meadows Ct.

Thursday, Feb. 12:

0012 – intrusion alarm, Belleville Rd.
0427 – domestic, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0529 – assist other dept., Bemis Rd.
xxxx – misc. complaint, Holly Ln.
xxxx – misc. complaint, Lake Crest Dr.
0736 – larceny from auto, Lancaster Dr.
0740 – assist fire dept., Tyler Rd.
0823 – larceny, Belleville Rd.
0824 – misc. complaint, Tyler Rd.
0903 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Chloe Ct.
0931 – motorist assist, Westlake Cir./Belleville Rd.
0934 – welfare check, homestead
1024 – private property/property damage accident, Belleville Rd.
xxxx – lost property/child, Belleville Rd.
1148 – sexual assault, S. I-94 Service Dr.
1308 – fraud, Walden Ct.
1312 – threat, E. Schooner Dr.
1334 – neighbor trouble, Arthur St.
1340 – juvenile complaint, Stamford Rd.
1421 – property damage accident, Sumpter/Bemis
1640 – misc. complaint, Red Oak Dr.
1641 – lost property/child, Lake Villa Dr.
1832 – trespassing, Peachtree Ln.
2156 – parking complaint, Belleville Rd.
2352 – 911 welfare check, W. Archwood Dr.

Friday, Feb. 13:

0006 – warrant arrest, Rawsonville I-94 ramp E. / E. I-94
0050 – intrusion alarm, Sumpter Rd.
xxxx – repossession, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0306 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Ecorse Rd.
0412 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Denton Rd.
1008 – assist other dept., E. Huron River Dr.
1101 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Patty Ln./Jeremy Rd.
1145 – intrusion alarm, Pond Bluff Dr.
1145 – 911 welfare check, Sadie Ln.
1156 – welfare check, Timberview Ct.
1346 – intrusion alarm, Robbe Rd.
1403 – civil matter, Ormond Dr.
1219 – misc. complaint, Tyler Rd.
1242 – assist fire dept., Van Buren St.
1529 – trespassing, Freedom Way
1536 – lost property/child, Belleville Rd.
1633 – traffic offense, E. Huron River Dr.
1803 – larceny, Rawsonville Rd.
2106 – welfare check, S. I-94 Service Dr.
2211 – assist fire dept., Haggerty Rd./Van Born

2224 – welfare check, Parkwood Dr.
2327 – disorderly, Parkwood Dr.

Saturday, Feb. 14:

0014 – noise complaint, Kirkridge Park Dr.
0048 – intrusion alarm, Belleville Rd.
0134 – noise complaint, Parkwood Dr.
0140 – welfare check, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0223 – shooting, Parkwood
0541 – suicidal person, N. I-94 Service Dr.
xxxx – repossession, Denton Rd.
0944 – larceny from auto, Belleville Rd.
1030 – welfare check, Borgman Ave.
1028 – intrusion alarm, S. I-94 Service Dr.
1205 – motorist assist, Tyler Rd./Hannan Rd.
1247 – intrusion alarm, Hull Rd.
1335 – intrusion alarm, Hanover Dr.
1428 – assist other dept., W. I-94/Belleville Rd.
1434 – disorderly, Belleville Rd.
1503 – misc. complaint, Cobblestone Creek Dr.
1507 – welfare check, McBride Ave.
1545 – found property/child, Tyler Rd.
1601 – intrusion alarm, Van Born Rd.
1627 – private property/property damage accident, Belleville Rd.
xxxx – intrusion alarm, Van Born Rd.
1643 – juvenile complaint, Riggs Rd.
1653 – assist other dept., EB I-94/Rawsonville Rd.
1914 – assist citizen, Oak Ln.
2006 – larceny, Bemis Rd.
2058 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, S. I-94 Service Dr.
2100 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Belleville Rd./S. I-94 Service Dr.
2206 – 911 welfare check, Bemis Rd.
2215 – intrusion alarm, Ecorse Rd.
2324 – found property/child, N. I-94 Service Dr.
Also, on this log are 200 traffic stops, 16 of which are on the I-94 freeway.

Belleville Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, Feb. 8:

0214 – assist other dept., Harbour Pointe Dr.
0435 – assist fire dept., Harbour Pointe Dr.
1429 – property check, Denton Rd.
1546 – intrusion alarm, Henry St.

Monday, Feb. 9:

1033 – welfare check, Carmell St.
1114 – civil matter, Sumpter Rd.

Tuesday, Feb. 10:

0055 – assist other dept., Sumpter Rd.
0944 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Edison Ave./High St.
1105 – civil matter, N. Liberty St.
2115 – civil matter, Main St.
2224 – 911 welfare check, Belle Villa Blvd.
2237 – property check, N. Liberty St.

Wednesday, Feb 11:

0154 – intrusion alarm, W. Columbia Ave.
0254 – intrusion alarm, South St.
xxxx – assist fire dept., Breakwater Ct.
0808 – family trouble, Owen St.
1136 – suicidal person, W. Columbia Ave.
xxxx – overdose, W. Columbia Ave.
1420 – parking complaint, High St.
1544 – assist fire dept., W. Columbia Ave.

Thursday, Feb. 12:

1034 – assault & battery, Main St.
1315 – parking complaint, Potter Dr./E. Huron River Dr.
1320 – ordinance violation – all 7300 MICR codes, Potter Dr.
1613 – civil matter, W. Columbia Ave.
1751 – misc. complaint, Main St.

Friday, Feb. 13:

1624 – welfare check, N. Aberdeen Ct.
1702 – civil matter, Carmell St.

Saturday, Feb. 14:

1515 – property damage accident, Main St.
1537 – assist other dept., Wexford Ave.
1618 – animal complaint, Main St.
1750 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, W. Columbia Ave./Church St.
1830 – 911 welfare check, Sumpter Rd.
2059 – suspicious person/vehicle/circumstance, Main St./N. Liberty St.
There are 68 reports on this week's log, 36 of which are traffic stops.

Sumpter Township Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, Feb. 8:

0042 – juvenile matter, 19000 bl. Martinsville
0103 – suspicious person, Virginia St.
0115 – family trouble, Utah St.
0127 – fire dept. assist, 22000 bl. Fenster Ave.
0149 – welfare check, 28000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
0459 – welfare check, Montana St.
0738 – alarm, Mulberry Dr.
1025 – animal complaint, Willis/Rawsonville
1047 – animal bite, 26000 bl. Martinsville Rd.
1454 – family trouble, Rustic Ln.
1457 – welfare check, 22000 bl. Sherwood
1717 – mental health call, Nevada St.

Monday, Feb. 9:

0041 – family trouble, 488000 bl. Sully Dr.
0110 – fire dept. assist, 47000 bl. Willow Rd.
0706 – larceny complaint, 26000 bl. Elwell
0717 – larceny complaint, 17000 bl. Sully Dr.
0746 – property damage accident, 47000 bl. Bemis Rd.
0828 – animal complaint, Willis/California
1120 – mental health call, 48000 bl. Willow
1225 – assault, 27000 bl. Elwell Rd.
1310 – fire dept. assist, 49000 bl. Wear Rd.
1315 – civil matter, 47000 bl. Wear Rd.
1325 – death investigation, California
1438 – traffic complaint/hazard, Oakville Waltz Rd. / Sherwood Rd.

1811 – suspicious circumstance, 44000 bl. Wear Rd.
1955 – welfare check, Wyoming St.
2055 – fire dept. assist, 22000 bl. Elwell Rd.
2114 – welfare check, 45000 bl. Dunn Rd.
2117 – fire dept. assist, Alaska St.

Tuesday, Feb. 10:

0707 – assault, Utah St.
0756 – 911 hangup, 47000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1139 – 911 hangup, Willis/Rawsonville
1143 – fire dept. assist, 20000 bl. Haggerty
1351 – harassment complaint, 24000 bl. Sumpter Rd.

1608 – juvenile matter, 21000 bl. Clark Rd.
1807 – assist other agency, 23000 bl. Sumpter
1957 – assist other agency, 23000 bl. Sumpter
2050 – follow-up investigation, Rustic Ln.
2135 – assault, Magnolia Dr.

Wednesday, Feb. 11:

0006 – follow-up investigation, Rustic Ln.
0126 – noise complaint, Hickory Dr.
0424 – 911 hangup, Birch Dr.
0814 – traffic complaint/hazard, Bemis Rd. / Martinsville Rd.

1009 – alarm, 43000 bl. Arkona Rd.
1018 – family trouble, Tamarack Dr.
1118 – ordinance violation, 47000 bl. Willow
1223 – fire dept. assist, Birch Dr.
1343 – assist other agency, 17000 bl. Savage
1423 – follow-up investigation, out of township
1450 – fire dept. assist, 20000 bl. Martinsville
1509 – welfare check, Rustic Ln.
1736 – juvenile matter, Mulberry Dr.
1826 – fraud complaint, Creekside Dr.
2042 – welfare check, Tamarack Dr.
2048 – 911 hangup, Arizona/California

Thursday, Feb. 12:

0455 – fire dept. assist, Delaware St.
0525 – breaking & entering report, Rustic Ln.
0539 – alarm, 45000 bl. Willow Rd.
1455 – fire dept. assist, Birch Dr.
1728 – follow-up investigation, Wyoming St.
1811 – assist other agency, Carriage Ln.
1820 – family trouble, 21000 bl. Clark Rd.
1837 – follow-up investigation, 21000 bl. Clark Rd.
1904 – missing person report, 17000 bl. Martinsville Rd.

2026 – follow-up investigation, out of township
2143 – fire dept. assist, 22000 bl. Elwell Rd.
2145 – 911 hangup, Birch Dr.
2222 – civil matter, Rawsonville Rd./Willis

Friday, Feb. 13:

0014 – citizen assist, 46000 bl. Harris Rd.
0028 – assault, Birch Ct.
0522 – assist other agency, Texas St.
0924 – juvenile matter, 21000 bl. Clark Rd.
1111 – civil matter, 46000 bl. Willis Rd.
1254 – 911 hangup, Country Club Blvd.
1327 – fire dept. assist, Huron Twp. PD
1629 – juvenile matter, 21000 bl. Clark Rd.

(Continued on page 19)

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Chamberlain charged in Aug. 15 crash that killed Sumpter woman

Christopher Allan Chamberlain, 23, of Van Buren Township was video-arraigned in custody by 34th District Court Chief Judge Brian A. Oakley on Feb. 11 on a charge of reckless driving causing death on Aug. 15, 2025 in Van Buren Township, a 15-year felony.

Chamberlain is also charged with felony commission with motor vehicle - adult advisory, with driver's license suspension, if convicted.

The defendant is scheduled for a probable cause conference on Feb. 24 and a preliminary exam on March 3. Personal bond is \$5,000 and there are no special conditions for his bond.

The charges stem from a three-vehicle, head-on crash on Haggerty Road just south of the North I-94 Service Drive in Van Buren Township that took the life of Janet Lynn Schonscheck, 64, of Sumpter Township. She was pronounced dead at the scene.

At about 11:15 a.m. Aug. 15, the Van Buren Township Public Safety Department and Huron Valley Ambulance were dispatched to the site.

In a police report at the time, Detective/Lieutenant Kenneth Floro said the preliminary investigation showed that a red Chevrolet Silverado was traveling northbound on Haggerty Road when the vehicle crossed over the center line and collided with a burgundy Ford Explorer that was traveling southbound on Haggerty Road.

A third vehicle, a silver BMW, that was traveling southbound on Haggerty was

also involved in the collision.

The township fire department had to extricate the driver of the Chevrolet Silverado from his vehicle. The driver, aged 22 at the time, was treated at the scene and then transported to Trinity Hospital - Ann Arbor by Huron Valley Ambulance, where he was further treated for his injuries and listed in stable condition.



Chamberlain

D./Lt. Floro said Janet Lynn Schonscheck, who died at the scene, was driving the Ford Explorer. The driver of the BMW was not injured in the accident and was released at the scene.

The preliminary details of this crash indicate that excessive speed may have been a contributing factor, D./Lt. Floro reported at the time.

After the arraignment on Feb. 11, Van Buren Township Police Chief Jason Wright said, "The death of Janet Schonscheck is tragic, and my thoughts and condolences remain with her family and friends."

Court Watching

(continued from page 13)

Probable cause conference was held Feb. 10 and the preliminary exam set for Feb. 17. On Feb. 10, the exam was removed from the calendar and a probable cause conference set for Feb. 24.

Amber Marie McWatters

Amber Marie McWatters of Sumpter Township was video-arraigned in custody on Feb. 11 on a charge of domestic violence on Feb. 10 in Sumpter Township. A remote pretrial was set for Feb. 24 and personal bond set at \$1,000. She is not to return to the location of the offense or any contact the complaining victim.

Octavius Terrell Smith

Octavius Terrell Smith of Van Buren Township was video-arraigned in custody on Feb. 11 on charges of carrying a concealed weapon and driving while license suspended on Feb. 11 in Van Buren Township. His probable cause conference was set for Feb. 24 and his preliminary exam for March 3. Personal bond is \$1,000.

Sumpter Township Police Dispatch Log

(continued from page 18)

- 1655 - 911 hangup, 44000 bl. Judd Rd.
 - 1727 - juvenile matter, 21000 bl. Clark Rd.
 - 1841 - civil matter, 44000 bl. Harris Rd.
 - 1856 - property damage accident, Willow Rd. / Rawsonville Rd.
 - 2036 - civil matter, Virginia St.
 - 2315 - shots fired, Utah Ct.
 - 2357 - suspicious circumstance, 44000 bl. Harris Rd.
 - Saturday, Feb. 14:**
 - 0228 - operating while intoxicated arrest, Rawsonville Rd./Judd Rd.
 - 0426 - suspicious circumstance, Sumpter Rd. / Bemis Rd.
 - 0923 - 911 hangup, 45000 bl. Clay Rd.
 - 1020 - larceny complaint, 47000 bl. Wear
 - 1026 - larceny complaint, 17000 bl. Martinsville Rd.
 - 1146 - family trouble, Delaware St.
 - 1323 - follow-up investigation, out of township
 - 1350 - civil matter, Virginia St.
 - 1500 - fire dept. assist, 40000 bl. Judd Rd.
 - 1502 - juvenile matter, Redwood St.
 - 1541 - follow-up investigation, Second St.
 - 1729 - follow-up investigation, Mulberry Dr.
 - 1732 - 911 hangup, Sumpter Rd./Dunn Rd.
 - 1810 - suspicious circumstance, Arkona Rd. / Martinsville Rd.
 - 2122 - family trouble, Carriage Ln.
- Also on this week's log were 150 patrol checks, 32 traffic stops and 12 misc. details.



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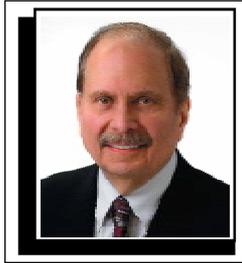
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