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MARCH 6, 2024

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DCFD Spaghetti Supper This Saturday

The Dodge Center Fire Department will be holding their annual fundraising spaghetti supper this weekend, Saturday March 9th at the fire hall in Dodge Center. Volunteer fire departments make up two thirds of the 29,000 fire departments in the United States. Of the one million firemen in the country 65% are volunteers.



The menu includes all-you-can-eat spaghetti, garlic toast, green beans and cookies. Milk, lemonade and water will be served as well. Serving starts at 4pm and continues until 7:30pm. The suggested donation is \$7.00 for adult and \$4.00 for children. The Girl Scouts will also be on hand selling cookies. Carry out is available.

24th Annual Business Expo



Just a couple weeks before the Dodge County Business Expo at the Triton School.

The event will be held Saturday March 23rd starting at 8am in the Triton Gym. Over 100 vendors and exhibitors are expected and a \$1.00 farmers breakfast will be served for attendees.

This year there will be five food truck on hand with lunch for sale. Coltan and the Haymakers will be performing live music from

11am to 2pm. A pine wood derby qualification will take place during the day and there will be entertainment for the kids as well as many businesses and vendors displaying their products. Be sure to mark your calendar and plan to attend this year's Expo.

Claremont Fireman's Breakfast



416 people served at the Claremont Fireman's Breakfast on Sunday, March 3rd. 123 items were donated for the silent auction to benefit the Claremont Fire Department.

(additional pictures on page 8)

January Dodge County Commissioners Meeting

The Dodge County Commissioners met in regular session January 9, 2023, in the Commissioner's Room at the Dodge County Government Services Building, Mantorville, MN, at 9:30 a.m.

(continued on page 4)

Announcements

- GriefShare support group meet Sundays, 3-5 pm, at Anchor Of Hope Church, 203 East Main Street, Dodge Center, MN. Contact Dale E Rood at 507-633-2772 for more information. Registration is available on the GriefShare website or by calling Pastor Rood. This is for anyone experiencing the loss of a loved one, friend, or other significant person in their lives.
- The United Methodist Church of Dodge Center at 20 First Street NE offers a dine in and carry out meal from 5:00-6:00pm the third Wednesday of each month.

Do you have an announcement?
Email: hometownmessenger@gmail.com

Triton FFA Steak Feed



The Triton FFA steak feed was held Saturday, February 24th. A great crowd of around 500 were served at the Faith Community Church building in West Concord where the annual event was held from 4 to 8pm *(additional pictures on page 8)*

Thursday, March 7th *Lady's Happy Time* 4:30 to 6:30p.m.
Open Mic 7:00-10:00p.m.

Thursday, March 21st *Open Mic* 7:00-10:00p.m.

Friday, March 22nd *Live Music! Jaggedease* 7:00-10:00p.m.

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Down on the Farm/ Up at the Cabin How to Make Friends in a New Community: Being Helpful

By Monica & Claudia Vanderborght

When all is said and done, it still takes time for a home purchase to close. Monica finally had a purchase agreement on a small farm: 20 acres with rolling topography and some fenced pasture, a barely nice four-bedroom home with attached garage, and a huge 40' x 90' pole barn. And still some summer remained to make local friends before her teaching job began in September.

Monica's daughter was grown with a family of her own – it's difficult to make friends when your kids are adults. But church would be a key to meeting some local folks and maybe some farmer friends. (Farming sounded like fun, but Monica realized that she knew nothing and would have a lot to learn.)

Monica settled into a local community church. Although the congregation was small, it was welcoming. With instant friends: there were two female veterans, a single middle-aged teacher, and a few families who farmed. Having time on her hands before house closing and school starting, Monica of-

fered to help her new friends with whatever was needed. One family invited her to help trim grape vines in their vineyard; it was hot, sweaty work, standing on a steep hillside -- but Monica liked being outdoors and loved learning new skills.

One Sunday, Monica listened to the teacher exclaiming frustration about her basement renter: the gal was behind on rent, causing problems, and refusing to leave. Monica had heard many stories from her dad about how difficult it was to evict tenants, usually costing thousands of dollars and causing months of frustration. Monica is a problem solver, had experience with renters, and loves to help others; she offered her new friend help in evicting the tenant.

"Let's make this official," Monica suggested. "Write up a lease and I will pay you \$1 in rent to make the contract legally binding."

Contract in hand, Monica packed a few clothes, her cooler and grill, the air mattress, a few miscellaneous essentials, and moved into the other basement bedroom. The difficult tenant had gone away for the weekend, so while she was gone Monica helped pack her belongings.

Anything that might be used as a weapon (knives, tools) were stored at the bottom of the box, clothes and dishes on top. Two days later, the delinquent renter returned and discovered Monica -- her new, helpful roommate.

The shouting and cursing began, including pleas like, "Where I am supposed to go? I have nowhere to live! How am I supposed to move? I have nowhere to go..."

After pointing out that this was not the homeowner's or Monica's problem, Monica ignored her. The homeowner simply repeated her requests for rent owed.

Knowing that possession is nine-tenths of the law, Monica was careful not to leave the apartment. When dinner time came and she wanted to use the grill, Monica simply locked the bedroom door and climbed in and out of the window!

The tenant was -- of course -- furious and threatened to call the police. Both the homeowner and Monica agreed that was a wonderful idea (much to the chagrin of the apartment squatter). A very nice officer came to the home, understood the dilemma, and asked to speak with each person individually.

When it was her turn, Monica presented her driver's license and military identification (knowing that many officers had served in the

military).

"I have my own home," Monica explained, "but I am just trying to help my friend, the homeowner."

"You know this isn't the normal way of doing things," the officer said.

To which Monica completely agreed. So the officer phoned the chief for advice on the legalities of the situation.

"Good news and bad news," the officer told the young lady. "No, the homeowner cannot force you to move out. You have a legal right to stay and make the homeowner go through the normal eviction process. The bad news is that Monica, having a legitimate lease, also has a legal right to stay."

Within 24 hours, still shouting and cursing, the delinquent renter packed up the rest of her belongings and moved out. Monica left a day or so later.

Lefse

Recipe by Mrs. H.V. Anderson

Ever long to make fresh lefse yourself? Here is a recipe that is time proven.

- 5 cups mashed or riced potatoes
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp butter or cream added while potatoes are hot
- Let stand while covered until real cold
- Add 2 cups flour, work in real well
- Take a small piece and roll real thin, using as little flour as possible
- Bake on top of stove, turn real often until slightly browned all over



MAIL

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For advertising information call
Terry at 507-951-7417

or email:

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DODGE CENTER

Faith Lutheran Church

308 2nd St. NW, Dodge Center
Pastor Jessica Bakken Busch • 507-374-2174
Traditional Worship 8a.m.; Fellowship 9a.m.
Christian Education 9:15a.m.
Contemporary Worship 10a.m.

Grace Lutheran Church

404 Central Avenue N, Dodge Center
Rev. Elliott Malm • 507-633-2253
https://gracedc.church
Worship 9a.m.; Sunday School 10:30a.m.

Praise Fellowship Church

602 Central Avenue S, Dodge Center
Roger Langworthy • 507-374-6400
Kids Church 9:15a.m.; Sunday Worship 9:30a.m.

Dodge Center Methodist Church

201 1st St. NE, Dodge Center
Rev. Chad Christensen • 507-374-6885
Sunday Morning Worship at 8:15a.m.,
Fellowship Time Following

St. John Baptist De La Salle

20 2nd St. NE, Dodge Center • 507-374-6830
Mass Saturday 5p.m.

Living Water Assembly Church

104 1st St. NW, Dodge Center
Roy Andrews • 507-374-6561
Sunday 10a.m.

Dodge Center SDA Church

410 3rd Ave. SW
Dodge Center • 507-374-6895
Sabbath School 9:15a.m.; Saturday Worship 11a.m.

Anchor of Hope Church, a 7th Day Baptist Congregation

203 E. Main St., Dodge Center • 507-374-6755
Saturday 10a.m. Worship; 11:45a.m. Sabbath School

Bible Lutheran Church

(American Assoc. of Lutheran Churches)
11 1st Ave. N.E., Dodge Center
www.biblelc.org • 612-803-1212
Sunday School 9:15a.m.; Worship 10:30a.m.
(weekly sermons available on YouTube and on website)

First Congregational Church

12 Second Street NW
Dodge Center, MN 55927 • 507-633-6873
www.congregationalchurchdc.com
Keith Mosier, Pastor

Area Church Directory

Jesus Recreates Us

If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! — 2 Corinthians 5:17

God loves, reasons, and creates. So do his children, made in his image and likeness. But instead of honoring the good, doing the right, and creating the lovely, we fell into sin (Genesis 3). As a result, we despise, pervert, and destroy our world and our relationships. Though we are still able to do some good (by the grace of God), it is painfully obvious that we do not live up to our created potential. We willfully do wrong, hurt others, and destroy.

It is hard to imagine the disappointment and heartbreak God must have felt when we first turned against him. God might well have destroyed humanity and started over. And in a way he did make a new start. God sent his Son, Jesus, to bear his image without falling into sin; Jesus was fully human, like us in every way (see John 1:14; 3:16-18; Hebrews 2:17; 4:15). He loves and thinks and creates as a human made in God's image should. He hit the restart button on human nature.

The miracle of salvation through Jesus is that we can become part of the new creation and the new world he creates. We can become part of God's family again. With the new life he makes possible for us, Jesus saves!

Dear Jesus, thank you for being the first responder for all of creation. You have given us a new start. Help us to live faithfully in your name. Amen.

CLAREMONT

1st Presbyterian Church

200 East Street, Claremont • 528-2320
Pastor Doug Walters
Sunday Worship at 10:00a.m.

St. John Lutheran Church

4532 SE 84th Avenue, Claremont • 528-2404
Pastor Alan Broadwell
Sunday Service at 10:30a.m.

WEST CONCORD

Faith Community Church

305 State Street N, West Concord • 507-527-2244
Pastor David Brederland
Sunday 9:30a.m. Worship; 10:45a.m. Sunday School
www.fcwc.org
Facebook: WC Faith Community Church

Hegre Lutheran, ELCA

51939 Highway 56 Blvd., Kenyon • 507-527-2353
Sunday: 9:15a.m. Sunday School; 10:30a.m. Worship

Trinity Lutheran, ELCA

301 Highland St., West Concord • 507-527-2778
Pastor Chad Christensen • trinitychurchwc.net
Sunday worship video is posted on Facebook:
Trinitylutheranchurchwestconcordmn
Sundays 9:45a.m. Worship in building and live streamed on Facebook
Sunday School 10:30a.m.
Tuesday Men's Bible Study, 7:00a.m.
at church and via Zoom
Call church for more information on ministries and events.

Church of Christ

55087 200th Ave., West Concord • 507-527-2723
Pastor Peter Moen
9:00a.m. Sunday School; 10:30a.m. Worship
concordchurchmn.com

Zwingli United Church of Christ

"The Berne Church"
23148 Co. Hwy. 24, West Concord • 507-356-4340
Pastor Karen Larson
Sunday 10:00a.m. Worship; Find us on Facebook

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OBITUARY

Brian Linton Vail



Brian Linton Vail, age 76, died February 27, 2024 at Cottagewood Senior Communities in Rochester, MN. He was born September 17, 1947, in Breckenridge, MN to Shirley and Charles Vail and grew up in Milnor, ND graduating in 1965 from Milnor High School.

Brian worked for the railroad, for the rural electric cooperative and custom combining.

He obtained a degree in elementary education at Valley City State College, taught one year in Hoople, ND then in West Concord before returning to trade school in Mankato for air conditioning and heating. He worked with his good friend Neil Wheeler in construction before operating 'Brian's Repair' for many years.

Brian loved music and dancing. He enjoyed taking care of HVAC needs of people in the surrounding communities and gathering with friends in West Concord for coffee. He was a loving father and grandfather.

Brian is survived by his wife Eileen (Schutt), son Shane (Kathy), grandson Joshua; sisters Sherry Lemmer and Jill (Rick) Arnold; brothers Bruce (Angie) and Kent (Carla); in-laws Pat (Dick) Kuehn, Judy (Don) Olson, Ron Else, Pamela, Marcy, Robert (Darla) and Michael (Deb) Schutt.

He was preceded in death by daughter, Nikki, parents, sisters Candace Quick, Sheila Casey and Beth Newton, and in-laws Hannah and Arnold Schutt, Karen Edison, Delmont Schutt, and Deanne Else.

Services will be held March 8th at Trinity Lutheran in West Concord with visitation at 10 and the service at 11 a.m. Burial will be at Lakeside Cemetery in Milnor, ND at a later date.

In lieu of flowers please consider a memorial contribution to the Fire Department or the American Legion in West Concord.

Minnesota Farm Bureau to Host Day on the Hill

EAGAN, Minn. – The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) is set to host its annual Day on the Hill on National Ag Day, March 19, 2024.

The event invites members from across the state to come together at the state Capitol to share the stories and impact of agriculture. Last year, nearly 130 members made the trip.

“The agriculture industry plays a significant role in the state of Minnesota, and we're looking forward to highlighting that at Day on the Hill,” said MFBF Director of Public Policy Pierce Bennett. “Seeing our members connect with elected officials and share their stories is always exciting.”

Members will gather at the Minnesota Department of Revenue at 10 a.m. for a briefing before heading to the Capitol steps to hear from agriculture leaders and elected officials around 11:15 a.m. There will also be a tractor on display on the mall, along with facts about Minnesota agriculture. From there, members will head into the Capitol to meet with their local elected officials.

If you are interested in attending, visit www.fbmn.org for more information or contact your local county/regional Farm Bureau. Free bus transportation is available from select parts of the state.

About the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation

To ensure Minnesota's agricultural vitality, the Minnesota Farm Bureau amplifies its members' voices through engagement, grassroots advocacy and agricultural awareness. Learn more about our efforts as an advocate for our over 30,000 members and 78 county and regional Farm Bureaus at www.fbmn.org.

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Insurance Brokers of Byron

505 Frontage Rd NE
Byron MN 55920
Phone: 507-775-7280
Email: a.sanders@insurancebrokersmn.com

North Risk Partners Rochester

2048 Superior Drive, Suite 100
Rochester, MN
Phone: 507-288-7600
Email: jesse.stenke@northriskpartners.com

DODGE CENTER FIRE DEPARTMENTS ANNUAL FUNDRAISING

SPAGHETTI DINNER



COME AND SUPPORT OUR DEPARTMENT WITH SOME YUMMY ALL YOU CAN EAT SPAGHETTI, GARLIC TOAST, GREEN BEANS AND COOKIES!

Saturday, March 9th 2024
4:00pm-7:30pm

\$7.00 (Adult) \$4.00 (Child)

Suggested Donation

Dine-in or carry out available

January Dodge County Commissioners Meeting

(continued from page 1)

Chair John Allen called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Mr. Kohnhofer reported that according to Minnesota State Statute § 331A.03 the county must advertise bids in a qualified newspaper.

In addition to or as an alternative, the county may publish advertisement in a recognized industry trade journal or on the county's website. The Highway Department has been advertising on the County's website and legal paper. Due to the limited distribution of the legal paper, the Highway Department would like to continue to use the county's website as the official publication for all bids and request related to transportation construction and maintenance projects/materials. The proposed resolution will recognize the Dodge County website as the standard method for advertising the Highway Departments projects going forward. The County Engineer recommended that the Board approve the resolution to establish the Dodge County's website as the alternative method to disseminate solicitations of bids and requests per Minnesota State Statute § 331A.03 Subd.3 (b). Commissioner Peterson offered the following resolution (#2024-02), seconded by Commissioner Toquam: WHEREAS, Minn. Statute § 331A.03 Subd.3 (b), allows a county to use its web-site or recognized industry trade journals as an alternative to disseminate solicitations of bids, requests for information and requests for proposals; NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Dodge County Board of Commissioners hereby resolves: BE IT RESOLVED, the County of Dodge will use the Dodge County website, www.dodgecountymn.gov, as an alternative means to disseminate solicitations of bids, requests for information, and requests for proposals for transportation related construction and maintenance projects. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any dissemination by alternative means must be in substantially the same format and for the same period of time as a publication would otherwise be required under Minn. Statute § 331A.03 Subd.3

Ms. DeVetter informed the Board that Dodge County has been awarded \$42,674.75 from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Urban and Community Forest Re-Leaf Grant program for the removal of 43 ash trees infected with Emerald Ash Borer at Fairview Care Center. Funds from this grant will also be used to plant 50 new container stock trees at the site to replace the removed trees and restore the site. There is no match for this grant and prevailing wage requirements do apply. The county had received preliminary quotes from contractors for purposes of grant application but a formal contract is not in place. Motion by Toquam seconded by Kenworthy to approve and authorize the Project Manager to sign the proposed grant contract with Minnesota DNR and proceed with a

contract for tree removal and replacement services at Fairview Care Center.

Ms. Cornelius reported that in the matter of the application of Dodge County Wind, LLC for a Certificate of Need, a Site Permit, and a Route Permit for the up to 259 MW Large Wind Energy Conversion System and associated 161 kV Transmission Line in Dodge, Mower, and Steele Counties, Minnesota, written comments will be accepted through January 10, 2024, by 4:30 p.m. The Environmental Services Director shared with the Board the following comments which she plans to provide regarding the Dodge County Wind, LLC project: There are three parties involved with this project: Dodge County Wind (DCW), Dodge County, and Mower County. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) filed with this project is between only two of the three parties. Dodge County was asked to be part of the MOU and declined to sign. The preferred route of Dodge County, the county where the majority of the transmission line will be installed, is and will remain State Hwy 56. From the beginning of this proposed project, Dodge County firmly held the position that based on Minnesota Statute, the county does not have the authority to allow private utilities into County Road right of way (ROW). MNDOT also took the same stance as the reason why the proposed utilities could not be located within State Road ROW. However, in what appears to be an effort to accommodate private utilities such as the NextEra DCW project, legislation has been recently changed to allow private utilities into road right of ways. It is Dodge's understanding that the main driver for this change was due to the challenges of obtaining private landowner easements/permissions for the transmission line route associated with NextEra's Dodge County Wind (DCW) project. It appears the DCW project will serve as a pilot project for this new legislation. As a result of these legislation changes, the County and MNDOT's road ROWs now are "open" to having private utilities in them. Dodge County is unsure how the alternate route became labeled "the preferred route" as at no time did representatives from Dodge County or its townships use such a term. The alternate route was indicated by the road authorities to be "possible" NOT "preferred". For example, the proposed leg running along CR K (700th St) has always been stated as not an option due to ROW width and as such will not be permitted and yet it remains on the maps. The leg running along CSAH 4 (710th St) is in only a slightly wider ROW but is being "squeezed" in with little room for road maintenance and improvement. Although the alternate route has been indicated to be possible and preliminary pole placements have been reviewed, Dodge County still retains the authority to permit utilities and accommodate them when possible. It has always been established that the TH 56 ROW is much wider and more amenable to such a transmission line. Therefore, with both route options available, in the best interest of Dodge County, it only makes sense that fewer impacts to private property would result from the straightest route and within the largest road ROW, which in this case is the State Highway 56 route. To further expand on the private vs public utility aspect of this project, Dodge County would request that,

regardless of route selected, the transmission line have an operations permit as a condition of the project. This will ensure the project owner or any future owner is held responsible for the line for the entire service life of the line, not just during construction. The topic of potential stray voltage's impact to livestock from the proposed transmission line have been brought up by concerned producers in Dodge County. Farmland and livestock are important assets to Dodge County and are part of its agricultural character, identity and economy. While there is much debate on this topic, in deference to these concerns, the choice of a route option that limits impacts to livestock producers would be preferred by Dodge County. Upon reviewing the route options, if the hybrid option is selected, the transmission line may potentially impact 6 feedlots that have over 30 animal units, and 4 of them along 710th Street are over 150 animal units. For someone who may not be familiar with animal units, it is not always a one for one. For example, one of the feedlots mentioned previously has 510 dairy cows and 40 buffalo. The Hwy 56 route does not have any feedlots over 30 animal units. At a minimum, if Dodge County's preferred route is not selected, then DCW should provide a stray voltage baseline testing at the farms, at no cost to the livestock producers prior to the line installation. In addition, a surety bond that would cover post installation stray voltage testing costs should be required if issues were to arise at a feedlot, after construction and during operation of the project. There are several conditions that Dodge County would request to be added as a condition of the permits for this project. Dodge County is requesting that a stormwater bond be required to mitigate potential stormwater impacts from the DCW project. Placing the poles in the ROW will be putting them very close, if not in the drainage path which could increase the potential for increased runoff and flooding. As an agricultural county, preventing and mitigating impacts to farmland from stormwater would be a priority. As most of Dodge County is relatively flat, the smallest obstruction can have a great impact during flooding and spring thaw events. Additionally, groundwater contaminants are a hot topic right now in the State of Minnesota, es-

pecially the Southeast region. Stormwater runoff is generated from rain and snowmelt events. During construction projects, the runoff collects and transports pollutants like garbage debris, chemicals, oils, and sediment that can damage our streams, rivers, lakes and ultimately, groundwaters. All construction projects disturbing one acre or more are required to apply for an NPDES Construction Stormwater permit and develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP). The NPDES permit and SWPPP are approved by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), acting on behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to enforce the federal Clean Water Act. Dodge County requests that the NPDES permit and SWPPP be reviewed by MPCA on a monthly basis during active construction to ensure it is adequately being maintained and enforced. Dodge County requests that DCW prepare an Emergency Response/Disaster Plan which would provide contact information, protocols, local emergency response resources and financial security to address impacts and private property damage resulting from natural disasters and/or turbine failure occurring at the project site. While DCW has stated that the likelihood of a fire or failure is low, having a plan in place will assist local responders and serve as an information and financial resource for local citizens who may claim private property damages associated with these events affecting the DCW project. Dodge County has put considerable effort into researching issues and costs related to decommissioning as it relates to larger energy projects. To ensure the project does not interfere with future land usage and maintenance, Dodge County would request that if the project is not repowered, DCW will decommission the project and remove all of the project facilities. This means that rather than only removing to a depth of 4 ft, all below-ground cabling would be removed. A Decommissioning Bond should be required and should be maintained throughout the life of the project as a condition of the permit. Provisions for disposal due to repowering or disasters should also be considered.

(continued on page 5)

Celebrate the American Legion's 105th Birthday

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Saturday - March 16th, 2024


7:00 – 11:00 AM

\$8.00 dozen

West Concord Legion Hall

East Main Street

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January Dodge County Commissioners Meeting

(continued from page 4)

Due to the volatility of the salvage market, the bond should be in an amount sufficient to cover all the project's decommissioning cost without consideration of salvage value for the life of the project.

Currently, there is no local disposal or recycling facility, and none planned, that will accept wind turbines so the costs for transport and disposal should also be included in this bond. The amount of the bond shall be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure it is adequate to cover decommissioning expenses. Additionally, Dodge County does have concerns that the few disposal sites that do exist will be inundated with materials from all other wind projects which could significantly affect transport and disposal costs in the future. It is Dodge County's experience that turbines are replaced at roughly an 8 to 10-year timeframe, rather than lasting the life of the project. Has this factor been addressed in your decommission plan and will that affect the cost of disposal? While the DWC Project does not require local zoning land use permits and is exempt from Dodge County Zoning Ordinances performance standards, all the ancil-

lary activities associated with project construction, operation and maintenance are not. For example, it was mentioned at the public hearing that a lot of the laborers during the construction phase will be bringing in campers/RVs to live in. Dodge County has limited campsites and strict zoning rules on campers/RVs. In addition, permits would also be required for any contractor's yards associated with the project. These rules will be enforced. In conclusion, Dodge County recognizes that there will be some benefits from this project. However, there are also some potential disadvantages from this project. As a result, Dodge County appreciates a thoughtful approach and appropriate conditions on the permit to alleviate, to the extent possible, negative impacts to Dodge County. Commissioner Toquam reported that she read the entire letter and felt it was well written. Ms. Toquam also felt Ms. Cornelius' points were very valid and clear as far as what Dodge County is expecting. Commissioner Toquam stated she liked the fact that there weren't much for grey areas within the letter that was written. Ms. Toquam noted the one area that she didn't think about was the campers/RV's so it was interesting to see that information included. The Environmental Services Director stated this is just one example. Mr. Cornelius informed the Board that she thinks that sometimes it gets lost that while Environmental Services isn't permitting the whole project, they are permitting everything else that comes into our county, so if there are any zoning violations that occur because of this, they would address them like they would any other violations.

Commissioner Peterson stated this is being presented as something that is a benefit to the citizens of Minnesota, and although some of the energy created from this system may go to Minnesota, it could also go anywhere. Mr. Peterson reported he was skeptical on some of the statements that the developers told the county, such as they can't go underground with the transmission lines because it's too expensive, or that they can't go to the Steele County Transfer Station or the Byron Sub-Station because of cost. Mr. Peterson commented Dodge County Wind wants to be recognized as a public utility, and if you want to be recognized as a public utility, then the benefit of the project should be for the citizens. Commissioner Peterson believes everything that they are doing is for the benefit of the company and that they want the best profit that they can make, and the most money they can make. They also want to go the cheapest way they can vs what's the most effective way for them to go. Mr. Peterson stated he wasn't sure how to word it, but he felt Dodge County should to include the following comments in the letter regarding the Dodge County Wind project: 1. Dodge County is skeptical about what their true comments to us are about, and why this is the only route that they can use. 2. Dodge County Wind wants to use this route because it offers the most financial gain for them. Ms. Cornelius informed the Board that this comment period for the project was basically to look at the EAW and what they had written, and determine if we felt anything was obviously missing. The Environmental Services Director noted that she approached this as

these comments are our safe net, and if the project gets forced down this path, then these are the conditions that have to be associated with it. Ms. Cornelius reported that if Dodge County Wind is going to make this happen, then they need to be aware that Dodge County is going to ask that several things be included with this project as conditions. That's what this comment period is meant for. The Environmental Services Director reported there will still be another comment period when the Judge releases their findings and their final, then we'll get one more chance to make our rebuttal to that. The tentative date for the PUC meeting is in April 25th, 2024 where the Environmental Services Director and County Engineer will go again and voice their opposition to a certain route, discuss our preferred route, if the project is going to move forward, offer up alternative things that they feel should be looked at, or provide input if it is determined that neither of the proposed routes seems viable. It was Commissioner Peterson's option that a comment should be included in the letter that states underground power lines by far are the most environmentally friendly way to go with transmission lines. Ms. Cornelius indicated that they can include a paragraph about the underground power lines in the letter. Mr. Kohlhofer stated the challenge is that it's all about profitability, even when Xcel does a project, it's about profitability. Xcel Energy isn't going to do a project that they are going to lose money on.

(continued on page 6)

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January Dodge County Commissioners Meeting

(continued from page 5)

The County Engineer reported that to go underground with this kind of wattage, it is his understanding that it would have to go in a concrete conduit and it would also have to be insulated, which makes it an uneconomical project.

Mr. Kohlhofer believes the fight will then be that Dodge County is going to be asked to tell them why we can't accommodate them above ground like we do every other power company. Commissioner Peterson reported there are a number of utilities that are going underground now, and in states like Florida. The County Engineer noted the reason we insulate the transmission lines up here is due to permathaw. Mr. Kohlhofer informed the Board that the ditch would never freeze if we had a power line of this size in the ditch. Ms. Cornelius reported Mr. Peterson has brought up a valid point, and they could touch on the point that developers are receiving a lot of subsidies from the State for this project. So, when they say the cost to them, what does that mean? The Environmental Services Director questioned how much of it is actually a cost to them and how much is actually being subsidized by money they are receiving from the state, which is ultimately money we're giving to the state. Ms. Cornelius stated we could go at it from that angle. Mr. Peterson stated that's what he was getting at, they are making a profit, they just want to make more of a profit each time. The County Engineer noted it's not a bad comment to include. Mr. Peterson reported that he wants the Judge this is ruling on this to see this comment. Commissioner Allen agreed with Commissioner Peterson's comments and adding a paragraph to the letter that states that Dodge County believes that Dodge County Wind is looking at profitability, nothing else. Mr. Allen stated although we will get another chance to comment on this project, he felt it might be a good idea to add this paragraph to this letter and the letter for the next comment period. Ms. Cor-

nelius indicated that they could write something up to this effect that could be included in this letter. Mr. Allen felt the additional language should be added to this comment letter, rather than the next one so everything is in there to begin with, instead of waiting a few months and asking for additional conditions. The Environmental Services Director reported that she can add this information that was brought up at the Board meeting to the proposed comments. Commissioner Allen suggested that Commissioner Peterson work with Ms. Cornelius to add the additional comments that were brought up at the meeting to the comments she plans to send regarding the Dodge County Wind Project. Commissioner Toquam stated it seems fitting to add the language to this comment letter because the comments are related to the EAW, which is the Environmental Assessment Worksheet. So, if we are talking about the environment, this is also a fitting place to put those comments. The County Engineer pointed out, if they go down Highway 56, the fight there is that once they get to Mower County they have to go east because they have narrow right of ways. Mr. Kohlhofer pointed out if they go Highway 56 and they bury the line in Mower County, they will have less burial to do. They don't have to bury it along Highway 56. Commissioner Peterson suggested that Ms. Cornelius include an additional comment stating that Dodge County is requesting that underground installation of the transmission line be further explored. Motion by Toquam seconded by Peterson to approve and authorize the Environmental Services Director to submit written comments regarding the Dodge County Wind, LLC project as presented with the addition of a request to further explore underground installation of the transmission line.

The Director of Land Records discussed with the Board the 2023 fire abatement requests. Included in the Board packet was a list of fire abatements that were received for taxes payable for 2023. The county's abatement policy requires the County Board's approval in order to process damage abatements. Each of the properties on the list were inspected by the county's appraisal staff and it was determined that they qualify for an abatement. Commissioner Kenworthy reported that Gerald Lee is in the process of rebuilding his home. They are not living in the home yet, but they have started rebuilding it. Mr. DeCook reported it's good to know that

they are rebuilding, it's part of this process. Land Records wants to see stuff rebuilt and people moving back into these homes. It was noted the added value of the rebuilt properties will get added to the tax base in future years. The Director of Land Records informed the Board that Jacob Peterson is the fee owner of parcel 18.029.0201, not Noah Peterson as listed on the abatement list. Commissioner Toquam noted there are a couple of properties in her area that are on the list that she believes are in active violation of the county's ordinance and possibly one that is in Commissioner Kenworthy's area. Ms. Toquam questioned whether or not those property owners would still receive the abatements. Mr. DeCook stated this would be a question for the County Board. If they feel an active violation is a reason not to give an abatement, they can deny that request. Ms. Toquam reported that she is referencing the Hamersma property and the Peterson property. Commissioner Toquam noted the Sletten property is possibly in violation too. Commissioner Kenworthy confirmed that the Sletten property is in violation of the county's ordinance too. Commissioner Toquam stated that we struggle in this area to enforce this stuff, and have any teeth in the enforcement portion of these and keeping these properties cleaned up and in compliance. The Director of Land Records reported that not approving fire abatement requests for properties that are out of compliance would be a change in the process they've had since he's been working at Dodge County. Mr. DeCook suggested that the Board make this a recommendation for future years so his Appraisers have that communication with the taxpayers beforehand. Going forward, the Director of Land Records could come to the Board with a list of fire abatement requests and include a note from the Environmental Services Director that indicates which properties are in violation and what those violations are so the Board would have a more formal reason to deny the request. Commissioner Allen questioned why the Board would approve these now and not take action now on the properties with violations. It was Commissioner Allen's opinion that if the county didn't do something now to address these violations, they may as well forget ever enforcing any of these problems because we don't have any teeth. Mr. Allen felt this would be the easiest way to address these types of properties that are out of compliance. Commissioner Peterson agreed with

Commissioner Toquam and Commissioner Allen's comments and wanted to know if the Appraisers have told the property owners anything different relating to the approval of the abatement requests. Mr. DeCook informed the Board that the Appraisers go out and do the review, collect the abatement and tell the property owner that the fire abatement request will be brought to the County Board for approval. No guarantees have been given regarding the fire abatements. Commissioner Allen wanted to know what the feeling was from the rest of the Board. Mr. Allen stated either we are going to do something to address this or we aren't, because we have no teeth in this and we can't afford to go after every property in violation. Commissioner Toquam stated we have an ordinance in place, things in place, rules in place and then we have things like the fire abatements, and even though they are in violation of the county's ordinance we're going to give them money and reward them for being in violation. Ms. Toquam commented when she went through the list it just didn't feel right to approve the properties that are in violation. Commissioner Allen wanted to know if there was any reason that this request has to be acted on today and couldn't be pushed back two weeks. The Director of Land Records stated he believes the four other properties should be acted on today just so they can get that process rolling. Mr. DeCook reported these people have gone through a tragedy, and the sooner we can get some money to them, the better. For the other three, if they are in violation, he has no problem tabling those requests and getting something more formal from the Environmental Services Director that says what the violations are. Mr. DeCook informed the Board that he would like to have some parameters for this. If the property owners are in violation because they are working with their insurance company before they do anything, Mr. DeCook wasn't in favor of denying those abatement requests, but if they were in violation because of other things like building without a permit or they have a bunch of junk on the property that is not a part of this process, then he could see a reason to deny the request. Commissioner Allen wanted to know if the County Attorney wanted to weigh in on the discussion.

(continued on page 7)

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January Dodge County Commissioners Meeting

(continued from page 6)

Mr. Kiltinen reported one thing they should keep in mind when taking action on requests like this is whether or not the property owners were aware that they were in violation or a letter was sent to them informing them that they were in violation of the county's ordinance. Commissioner Toquam stated she thinks it would be a good idea to give the whole fire abatement list to the Environmental Services Director. Ms. Toquam suggested that the Board approve a fire abatement list for those they know aren't in violation after the list has been reviewed by the Ms. Cornelius. The Board discussed removing the abatement approval requests for the three properties in question until they have been cleaned up. It was the consensus of the group that it may be harder to get the property own-

ers to clean the properties up or have any leverage to get the properties cleaned up once they have received the fire abatements. Mr. DeCook suggested approving the abatements this year and then changing the policy on how they handle these abatement requests moving forward. The Director of Land noted that next year the Appraisers would be instructed to inform the property owners with violations that they would have to clean up their property before they would qualify to receive the abatement. Commissioner Allen and Commissioner Peterson agreed that the violators shouldn't be rewarded. Mr. Allen wanted to know if they could post-pone action on this request today. Mr. DeCook suggested approving the abatements that aren't in violation so the families that were impacted by this traumatic event could get the assistance they need. Motion by Toquam seconded by Tjosaas to approve and authorize the 2023 fire abatements for Gerald Lee, Allison DeRome, Hannah Neitzell and Coy Borgstrom as requested and table action on Chad Hamersma, Timothy Sletten and Jacob Peterson until the Environmental Services Director has had a chance to review the properties and determine if there are any active violations on the properties.

The Dodge County Commissioners met in regular session January 23, 2024, in the County Board Room at the Dodge County Government Services Building, Mantorville, MN, at 5:00 p.m. Chair John Allen called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Sletten stated he is contesting the after the fact fee that he is being asked to pay for starting construction on his property without a zoning permit. Timothy Sletten reported that he never received a letter from the county informing him that he needed to apply for a zoning permit before he started rebuilding his home which was destroyed by a fire. The notice was mailed to the property address where the fire occurred which was unoccupied. Environmental Services has several documents on file that show when they had conversations with Mr. Sletten about this property and rebuilding on this property that clearly explain the process and the deadlines associated with rebuilding. Mr. Sletten stated that his contractor was told by someone at the county that they didn't need a building permit because the basement was intact, therefore his builder began construction on the home. Mr. Sletten then received a letter from the county to cease and desist, which he did. Terry Sletten reported that he has applied for a zoning permit, but is being charged three times the cost

of the permit because it's considered an after the fact zoning permit application. Mr. Sletten is asking that his zoning permit be approved, the zoning permit fee be reduced and that his fire abatement be approved. Commissioner Allen stated that he believes the builder didn't hear or understand what he was told regarding rebuilding, he probably heard the building permit is free due to the fire, and thought they wouldn't need a building permit. Terry Sletten informed the Board that he pays his taxes and does what he's asked to do. If he had known that he needed a zoning permit to rebuild the house, he would have applied for a zoning permit. Commissioner Kenworthy stated this is a totally different dynamic. Mr. Sletten owns the home, but rents it out. Mr. Kenworthy reported he struggles with the building permit comment, because you always have to have a permit to build. Commissioner Kenworthy believes there was a misinterpretation about what is and is not needed as far as the permit goes. Mr. Kenworthy reported he is a little more lenient on the fee. Mr. Sletten stated he is willing to pay his fair share. Commissioner Kenworthy informed Mr. Sletten that the county has to put these types of penalties in place so people that are being dishonest are penalized.

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Dr. Lakan Daniel Quest of Filipino Martial Arts (FMA) recently graduated two new black belts: Lilli Blezek and Lilly Quest, at West Concord on Wednesday, February 28, 2024.

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The club is family friendly; often enrolling several family members at the same time. In FMA, weapons are often taught first before the open hand. Understanding how to handle a force multiplier (a weapon) gives one a firm grasp of what is most effective in a self-defense situation.

The club meets at Milton Township Hall at 6pm on Wednesdays. New students must be 9 years of age to participate. Contact Dr. Quest at www.facebook.com/QuestFMA/

St. Patrick's Event in West Concord



This is the last week to get tickets for the St. Patrick's event at the Bell Tower Center in West Concord. The event will be held Saturday March 16th starting at 6:30pm. Social hour with a cash bar starts at 6:30pm with the meal served at 7pm. Dinner includes corned beef and cabbage, carrots, potatoes and dessert. Water and coffee is provided with a cash bar for pop and alcohol. There will be games, prizes and music. Ticket includes one spin of the Blarney Wheel for free prizes.

The event is sponsored by the West Concord Park and Rec, Cardinal Club and the West Concord Historical Society. Cost is \$30.00 per ticket and they are available while supplies last at West Concord City Hall through Friday March 8th. All ages are welcome.

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January Dodge County Commissioners Meeting

(continued from page 7)

Motion by Kenworthy seconded by Peterson to reduce the zoning permit fee to the regular fee of \$400.00 for Mr. Sletten's property (10.017.0100) with no fines or penalties.

The Director of Land Records informed the Board that MN Statute 505.04 requires the County Recorder to provide storage for all official plats. The last time a cabinet was ordered was around 30 years ago. This will be their third cabinet. The cost of the cabinet (Enduro No. 200), shipping, and storage sleeves will be around \$6,000.

Mr. DeCook is requesting the Board approve the purchase of a new plat cabinet. The estimate that they received was from Government Forms and Supplies was \$5,915.

Mr. Kohlhofer informed the Board that the process to revoke the designation of the North side of CR K, from TH 56 to CSAH 9 as a county road and turn it back to Ashland Township has progressed throughout the past year. Discussions were held with Ashland Township officers and a public hearing was held January 8, 2024. During the public hear-

ing it was generally agreed by everyone present that this 3-mile section of CR K fits more appropriately at the township level. These roads are within 3 miles of more improved county roads and they do not substantially make connections between other county roads or destinations. They do not fit in the county network and are more suited to be township roads. County Highway staff will meet with township officers and a list of projects and improvements will be developed. These projects will be completed by the county during the 2-year mandatory transition period. Included in the Board packet was a resolution which revokes CR K, from TH 56 to CSAH 9, as a county road and places it under the jurisdiction of Ashland Township. The Highway Department is requesting that the Board pass the proposed resolution revoking CR K, from TH 56 to CSAH 9. Commissioner Kenworthy wanted to know why the Board is being asked to approve the turn back of the north side of the road when they haven't talked to the south side of the road, Hayfield Township. The County Engineer reported that they haven't had any controversy on the south side of CR K so they didn't think it would be an issue to move forward with the north side of the road. Mr. Kohlhofer noted that a hearing is scheduled for Hayfield Township in April. Mr. Kenworthy stated he was apprehensive to approve this request without talking to all the parties involved. Commissioner Peterson offered the following resolution (#2024-03), seconded by Commissioner Tjosaas. The resolution mo-

tion was rescinded. It was the consensus of the Board that the County Engineer needs to bring this request back after Hayfield Township has had an opportunity to consider the request.

Ms. Cornelius and Ms. Cole were present and requested that the Board vote in favor of the proposed resolution to issue 2024 licensure to the following waste haulers: Waste Management, Freeborn County Coop Oil, Skjveland Enterprises, Kruckeberg Services, Hometown Haulers, LRS of Minnesota, LLC, Veit Disposal Systems and Aspen Waste Systems.

Dave Swenson, a representative of the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument Committee, thanked the Board for partnering with them in the creation of the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument and providing a place to call home in Mantorville. The Minnesota Gold Star Monument Committee donated \$10,000 back in 2022 for the care of the memorial. Today committee representatives were present to provide another installment in the endowment of \$15,000 for a total of \$25,000. Their hope is that this amount will facilitate the perpetual maintenance and care of the Memorial. Mr. Swenson reported the Gold Star Memorial Committee will continue to have annual events to promote the Memorial. They want to make sure no tax dollars went to take care of the Memorial, and reported should the need arise or the \$25,000 has been depleted, they will be here to help.

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Talking Colorectal Cancer with U of M



Dr. Emil Lou

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ple 54 years or younger — an 11% increase from 1995. As a whole, in the U.S., colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer among men and women with nearly 150,000 new cases each year.

Emil Lou, MD, PhD, FACP, a physician-scientist and gastrointestinal oncologist with the Masonic Cancer Center, University of Minnesota Medical School and M Health Fairview, answers questions on the symptoms, treatment and screening for colorectal cancer.

Q: What is colorectal cancer?

Dr. Lou: The term colorectal cancer describes all cases of cancer that start in the colon or rectum. Broadly, this term may also be used to describe cancers that start in the small intestines or appendix, which are relatively less common but nonetheless treated similarly. The way I usually describe the anatomy to patients is that we eat food that passes through the esophagus, stomach and into a long and winding part of the digestive tract called the small intestines before passing digested remaining portions to the colon and the rectum.

Q: How is colorectal cancer detected? What are the symptoms?

Dr. Lou: Colorectal cancer is one of the few cancer types for which we have accessible, validated and approved methods of screening in order to find the cancer early. A central purpose of cancer screening is to detect cancers at an earlier stage, hopefully at a point where it is treatable and even curable. Many cases of colorectal cancer can be first found on a colonoscopy. However, in other patients, the cancer may be found when symptoms de-

velop, such as bleeding in the stool, abdominal pain or other concerning symptoms that require further evaluation. It is vital that people recognize these symptoms and bring it up to their doctors and other care providers as soon as possible if the symptoms cannot be explained by other causes. Early and accurate diagnosis of colorectal cancers can make a difference in improving outcomes.

Q: What is the recommended age to screen for colorectal cancer?

Dr. Lou: There are longstanding expert guidelines that suggest starting colorectal cancer screenings at age 50. One exception to this rule is if you have had a close relative — like a parent or sibling — diagnosed with colorectal cancer at a relatively young age. For example, if a parent were diagnosed at age 52, then it would be recommended that their child start colorectal cancer screenings as early as 10 years before the age of their parent's diagnosis. In this case, age 42. Another exception would be, at any age, if you were to develop unusual symptoms, including abdominal cramps or bleeding in the stool, that — after medical evaluation — could not be explained by any other cause. In that case, colorectal cancer should be at least considered and screened for. With recent reports of more young adults (under 50-55 years old) being diagnosed with colorectal cancer, there has been more debate about whether Americans should consider screening sooner than age 50. In the years to come, we may see recommendations for screening at earlier ages.

Q: What are the treatment options for colorectal cancer?

Dr. Lou: The treatment options for colorectal cancer are mainly determined by the stage of the cancer. Stage means how far the cancer is from where it began and is classified as stages 1, 2, 3 or 4.

Cancers that remain contained and small at the time of diagnosis — considered early stage — may be removed by a surgeon. The surgery, in those cases, is performed with the goal of curing it. The success rate can be very high. When the cancer has escaped into lymph nodes — small sacs that naturally surround our organs and give fluid back to our bloodstream — that means the cancer is in a higher stage, often called stage 3. In this case, a standard recommendation would be surgery followed by some form of chemotherapy, with the goal of reducing the risk that the microscopic cancer cells can spread and cause the cancer to return in the future. Stage 4 is the highest stage and occurs when the cancer has spread to other sites from where it started. Chemotherapy is the standard recommended treatment. In some cases, if there is very limited spread, surgery may also be offered. Over the past decade, there have been a lot of promising advances in genomic testing of tumors. More and more, we can use that information to tailor treatment to an individual patient's form of cancer using targeted therapy and possibly immunotherapies. These advances show a lot of promise for treating this form of cancer more effectively.

Dr. Emil Lou is an oncologist at the University of Minnesota Medical School, Masonic Cancer Center and M Health Fairview. His areas of expertise include colorectal, pancreatic, esophageal and gastric cancers.

Here's Where To Buy Your Minnesota Country Salute CD Buy the FINAL Minnesota Country Salute CD

Once again the net proceeds from this years Minnesota Country Salute CD will go to the Minnesota Military Family Foundation and Minnesota Wheels of Honor. Starting Veteran's Day you'll be able buy your copy at any one of these locations and make sure the service men and women and first responders of Minnesota have the support they need.

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A decade ago while sitting on his porch, Neil Freeman came up with the idea of tying together two groups that BOB FM supports. The Homegrown artists of Minnesota and the military member support organizations.

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WEST CONCORD SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 5 2024

The special meeting was held at the City of West ConCORDS Bell Tower Center (401 Main Street)

PRESENT: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen and Councilmember Collin Ripley.

ALSO PRESENT: Administrator Kimberly Klejeski, City Clerk-Treasurer Lauren Highfill, Fire Department Chief Chad Finne and Ambulance Director Peter Moen.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Citizens of the City of West Concord expressed concern regarding the suspension of the Ambulance service. The City of West Concord and Chief Chad Finne and Ambulance Director Peter Moen were present to present their request to the City Council and answer questions from the public. Peter Moen and Chad Finne clarified with the public that the Ambulance Service was seeking a temporary 6-month contract with the Dodge Center Ambulance to provide daytime Ambulance Services Monday through Friday between the hours of 5:00am and 5:00pm due to volunteer staffing shortages. In addition, it was communicated that first responders will be on call as available during the contracted hours to first respond to medical emergencies.

RESOLUTION 2024-01 RESOLUTION APPROVING MN/DOT AGREEMENT NUMBER 1054839

A Motion was made to approve Resolution 2024-01 with the Mn/DOT for Agreement Number 1054839 Project S.P 2006-32 (T.H.56), Agreement Number 1054839 by resolution. Construction on this project is expected to begin in 2024 on Trunk Highway Number 56 from CSAH 24 to Southview St in the City of West Concord.

MOTION: Motion to approve Resolution 2024-01 Mn/DOT Agreement Number 1054839

Motion was made by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, seconded by Councilmember Collin Ripley.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen and Councilmember Collin Ripley.

ley. Nays: None
ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Adjourned at 7:07pm

Motion was made by Mayor McCool, seconded by Councilmember Collin Ripley.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen and Councilmember Collin Ripley.

Nays: None

Mayor Jeffrey McCool Attest:

By: _____
Lauren Highfill,
City Clerk-Treasurer

WEST CONCORD CITY COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 16, 2024

Meeting was held at the City of West ConCORDS Bell Tower Center

PRESENT: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

(Arrived at 7:00 pm)

ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk-Treasurer Lauren Highfill, Library Director Heather Frederick, Maintenance Supervisor Keith Clammer, Fire Department Chief Chad Finne, Dan Vrieze of Peoples Services and Tom Weiner of Construction Management Services.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Burt was present to discuss her concern regarding the tree in her yard. She asked the Council consider her request to keep the current plan to save the tree as part of the 2024 Street Reconstruction Project.

Sandra Sullivan was present to discuss her concern regarding the Street Reconstruction Project. Sandra is concerned about the building of an additional parking area outside the Bell Tower Center as well as 2024 increases in Stantec Service fees. Sandra wanted to know if the additional parking area would be a part of the Street Reconstruction Project assessment of residents or if the city would be liable for the cost of improvement.

STRIKE

The Council Agreed to Strike Item 2F – Ambulance

Billing Service Update
CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of City Council Meeting Minutes of December 21st, 2023

Approval of Truth in Taxation Public Hearing Meeting Minutes of December 21st, 2023

Approval of Cannabis Moratorium Meeting Minutes of November 16th, 2023

Approval of Sewer, Water and Storm Water Assessment Meeting Minutes of November 16th, 2023

Approve Payment of Claims, dated 12-15-2023, in the amount of \$214.21

Approve Payment of Claims, dated 12-27-2023, in the amount of \$33,946.97

Approve Payment of Claims, dated 12-29-2023, in the amount of \$7,827.92

Approve Payment of Claims, dated 1-11-2024, in the amount of \$30,264.38

Approve Payment of Claims, dated 1-11-2024, in the amount of \$9,040.14

Approve Payment of Claims, dated 1-11-2024, in the amount of \$1,050.20

Approve Payment of Claims (Bond Payments), dated 1-18-2024, in the amount of \$46,502

Approve Payment of Claims (Bond Payments), dated 1-18-2024, in the amount of \$299,228.75

Approve Payment of Claims (Bond Payments), dated 1-18-2024, in the amount of \$645.00

Resolution 2024-02 : To Accept donation from Claremont Area Chamber of Commerce for the West Concord Fire Department

Resignation of Part-Time Police Officer Matthew Summer (January 10th, 2024)

City of West Concord Economic Development Authority December 4th, 2023, Minutes

MOTION: Motion to approve Consent Agenda.

Motion was made by Councilmember Christina Peterson, seconded by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

CITY BUSINESS DISCUSSION WITH COUNCIL REGARDING

DAN RABES LAND LEASE FOR 2024

Dan Rabe was present to request a renewal of his Land Lease for 2024 of the 6 acres of tillable agricultural fields located North of the brush dump and West of 6th Street (Parcel A of the Al Organ Property). Dan is requesting the same terms as his 2023 Lease.

MOTION: Motion to approve Dan Rabes Land Lease of 6 acres of the Al Organ Property with the City of West Concord.

Motion was made by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, seconded by Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

TOM WEINER OF CMS WAS PRESENT TO DISCUSS UPDATES TO CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICE FEES (CMS) FOR 2024

Tom Weiner of CMS was present to discuss the new fee schedules for 2024. He requested that the City Council review the current plans and select the fee structure the city wants to utilize. The Council requested an outline of the new CMS Fee Schedules for further review. Tom explained that a 10% increase in service charges began January 1st, 2024.

DISCUSSION REGARDING ADDING A FEE TO THE CITY FEE SCHEDULE FOR COMMERCIAL FILL OF WATER PER 1000 GALLONS

Keith Clammer explained that there was a previous discussion regarding updating the fees for Commercial fill of water with the City of West Concord. Currently, Keith is requesting no action.

JOYCE HOTTINGER WITH THE WEST CONCORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY WAS PRESENT TO REQUEST A CREDIT FOR WATER/SEWER SERVICE

Joyce presented a concern regarding her water bill which showed a 119-thousand-gallon increase in water usage. A plumber was called

and could not find anything that would explain such a steep increase from the previous months' usage. The mayor explained that the city doesn't normally adjust water bills. Due to the extreme nature of the billing differences the Council considered the request. The Council reviewed the account information and agreed it was most likely a mistake in the reading. A motion was made to average the eleven correct months (excluding October the incorrectly billed month) and adjust the October bill accordingly. The West Concord Historical Society will be credited the amount for the incorrectly billed month.

MOTION: Motion to credit the West Concord Historical Society for the incorrect water billing for the month of October.

Motion was made by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, seconded by Councilmember Collin Ripley.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

RESOLUTION 2024-03: DESIGNATIONS OF CITY OFFICIALS

Designations remained the same from 2023 except for an update designating The Hometown Messenger/West Concord Messenger as the City of West ConCORDS Legal Paper for the year 2024.

MOTION: Motion to approve 2024-03 Designations of City Officials.

Motion was made by Councilmember Christina Peterson, seconded by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

RESOLUTION 2024-04: APPOINTMENT OF ACTING MAYOR

MOTION: Motion to approve resolution 2024-04 Appointment of Acting Mayor

Motion was made by Councilmember Christina Peterson, seconded by Councilmember Collin Ripley.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

Abstain: Councilmember Crystal Nielsen

RESOLUTION 2024-05: AUTHORIZATION AND APPROVAL FOR CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO PAY INCIDENTAL BILLS

MOTION: Motion to approve resolution 2024-05 Authorization and approval for City Administrator to Pay Incidental Bills.

Motion was made by Councilmember Jeff Burse, seconded by Councilmember Collin Ripley.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

RESOLUTION 2024-06: APPROVING 2024 FEE SCHEDULE (CMS FEE SERVICE FEE UPDATES AND COMMERCIAL FILL AMENDMENTS)

The 2024 Fee Schedule was presented with updates to the Water and Sewer Billing as presented by Jeanne Vogt at the December City Council Meeting and approved by the West Concord City Council. Other updates included the Internal Revenue Service increased mileage rate for 2024 of .67 cents per/mile. Updates to the Construction Service Management fees were not included in the building Fee Schedule updates. Further review of the CMS and building fee schedule are necessary.

MOTION: Motion to approve Resolution 2024-06 Approving 2024 Fee Schedule.

Motion was made by Councilmember Collin Ripley, seconded by Councilmember Jeff Burse .

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

RESOLUTION 2024-07: STATING CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

(continued on page 13)

WEST CONCORD CITY COUNCIL MEETING (continued from page 12)

MOTION: Motion to approve Resolution 2024-07 Stating City Council Committee Assignments

Motion was made by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, seconded by Councilmember Collin Ripley.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

MOTION TO APPROVE 2024 FIRE RELIEF ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

President Jacob Froyum
Vice President Jeremy Chilson

Treasurer Matt Coy
Secretary Kayla Woodard
Trustee Rich Braithwaite and Dylan Persinger Woodcock

MOTION: Motion to approve 2024 Fire Relief Association Officers as listed.

Motion was made by Councilmember Jeff Burse, seconded by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

MOTION TO APPROVE 2024 FIRE DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

Chief Chad Finne
Deputy Chief Jake Froyum
Ambulance Director Peter Moen

Fire Captain Rick Braithwaite

Ambulance Captain Kayla Woodard

Secretary Joe Budin
Training Committee Kyle

Benson

The mayor indicated that the Salary was taken out at the last budget meeting. Chad Finne, Fire Chief, communicated it was his understanding it was left in the Budget. The Council agreed to move forward with the Motion of approving officers with the amendment of exclusion of pay. Further consideration will be addressed with City Administration and the Personnel Committee.

MOTION: Motion to approve 2024 Fire Department Officers as listed with the amendment to exclude pay for Officers.

Motion was made by Councilmember Christina Peterson, seconded by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

MOTION TO APPROVE 2024 LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS

President Colleen Hayne
Vice President Karen Peterson

Secretary Michelle Lee
Board Members Kalya Froehlich-Burse, Pat Hanson, Heather Phillips and Lois M Johnson

MOTION: Motion to approve 2024 Library Board Members as listed.

Motion was made by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, seconded by Councilmember Christina Peterson.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

MOTION TO APPROVE 2024 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEMBERS

President Curt Rapp
Vice President AJ Vontaufkirchen

Board Members Angela Larson, Steve Boe and Dan Rabe

Council Representatives – Mayor McCool and Councilmember Collin Ripley

Secretary - Zach Bubany
MOTION: Motion to approve 2024 Economic Development Authority Members

Motion was made by Councilmember Christina Peterson, seconded by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

MOTION TO APPROVE WEST CONCORD AMBULANCE SERVICE AREA AGREEMENT WITH DODGE CENTER AMBULANCE

The Council agreed to approve the motion on the agreement with the amendment that the Attorney must first approve the contract before it is signed. The Mayor reiterated to the public that the contract is a temporary six-month contract with Dodge Center Ambulance for weekday service from 5am to 5pm.

MOTION: Motion to approve West Concord Ambulance Service Area Agreement with Dodge Center Ambulance with the amendment that the approval is pending the City Attorney's approval.

Motion was made by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, seconded by Councilmember

Jeff Burse.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

MOTION FOR CITY COUNCIL TO POST JOB POSITION FOR THE CITY OF WEST CONCORD

On January 17th, 2024, the City Conducted a closed meeting for the employee Administrator Kimberly Klejeski. The parties, the city Council and the Employee, determined it is in the best interest of both parties that the employment of Kimberly Klejeski with the City of West Concord be discontinued. As such the Personnel Committee has now sought immediate approval to post the Job Description for a new Administrator.

MOTION: Motion to approve the posting of the Administrator Job Position for the City of West Concord.

Motion was made by Councilmember Collin Ripley, seconded by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

REPORT OF OFFICERS – MOTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS MOTION TO HIRE HOLLY BURROW FOR 2023 TAX SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF WEST CONCORD

It was recommended by Mayor McCool that the council consider hiring out the Services of Holly Burrow to complete end-of-year tax items.

MOTION: Motion to approve Holly Burrows' services to complete the 2023 taxes as needed for the City of West Concord.

Motion was made by Councilmember Christina Peterson, seconded by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff

Burse.

Nays: None

MOTION TO RECONSIDER SAVING THE TREE

Councilmember Collin Ripley addressed the Tree that is being saved as a part of the 2024 Street Reconstruction Project. There is concern that the tree may not survive the reconstruction project and the design of the road to save the tree would be unnecessary and look aesthetically wrong. According to Joe Palen of Stantec, as discussed at prior meetings, the tree may or may not survive. The Council ultimately decided that, considering there is no guarantee, they want to give the tree a chance to survive and continue with the current plan to try and save the tree. No motion was necessary as the vote to save the tree is the consensus of the council and was approved at the January city council meeting.

MOTION FOR TREE REMOVAL

Quotes for the removal of the pine tree near the Fire Department and quotes for the Emerald Ash Borer project tree removal were discussed. Quotes for the Pine Tree removal from Carr's Tree Service were \$1400 and from Boyum Tree Service \$300.00. Quotes for the Emerald Ash Borer tree removal project were \$6565.35 from Carr's Tree Service and \$5,200 from Boyum Tree Service. The Council motioned to accept the lowest-priced quotes from Boyum Tree Service.

MOTION: Motion to accept the \$300.00 quote from Boyum Tree Service for the Pine Tree Removal near the Fire Department.

Motion was made by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, seconded by Councilmember Christina Peterson.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

MOTION: Motion to accept the \$5,200 quote from Boyum Tree Service for Emerald Ash Borer Tree Removal project.

Motion was made by Councilmember Collin Ripley, seconded by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey Mc-

Cool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

MOTION TO APPROVE FUNDS TO INSULATE THE WELL HOUSE.

A motion was made to approve funds to insulate the Well House per the recommendation of Dan Vrieze of PeopleService and City Maintenance Supervisor Keith Clammer. The estimated cost of the project is \$700.00 for insulation plus the cost-of-service hours. The council agreed the insulation is immediately necessary to avoid future problems that could arise with the freezing of pipes in the well house.

MOTION: Motion to approve estimated funds to insulate the Well House.

Motion was made by Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, seconded by Councilmember Collin Ripley.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Crystal Nielsen, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

MAYORS REPORT

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has changed sewer plant and water treatment facilities requirements for allowances on Chloride and Sulfates. The city is aware of the requirements and is working with PeoplesService, the State of Minnesota and City Departments to address the situation.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Adjourned at 8:21pm

MOTION: Motion to Adjourn

Motion was made by Councilmember Mayor McCool, seconded by Councilmember Collin Ripley.

Ayes: Mayor Jeffrey McCool, Councilmember Christina Peterson, Councilmember Collin Ripley, and Councilmember Jeff Burse.

Nays: None

Mayor Jeffrey McCool

Attest:

By: _____
Lauren Highfill, City Clerk-Treasurer

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Rainfall Monitoring Network Seeks Volunteers

Participants provide important data about precipitation, climate trends

By Minnesota DNR

The Minnesota State Climatology Office is seeking rainfall monitors for the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network. The network includes more than 20,000 volunteers nationwide who measure precipitation in their backyards using a standard 4-inch diameter rain gauge.

Participants submit their precipitation reports online. The data from backyard rain gauges are a critical source of information

and it's beneficial to add more volunteer weather observers each year, even in areas where there are already volunteers.

"Rainfall and snowfall amounts can vary widely over a short distance, so a variety of reports is helpful in the same community or area," State Climatologist Luigi Romolo said. "We have some areas in greater Minnesota that have very few reporting stations. The more we have across the state, the better information we all have."

"Over time, as more volunteer reports make our precipitation maps more accurate, these observations provide critical guidance on Minnesota's changing climate," Romolo added. "This is also a great educational activity for families with kids and a rewarding hobby for anyone interested in weather or climate."

Volunteers are particularly needed outside the immediate Twin Cities metro area. Volunteers receive training on how to observe weather trends and how to submit their precipitation and weather event reports. All training material is available online. Parti-

cipants must purchase or provide a standard 4-inch diameter rain gauge (available at discount through CoCoRaHS) and have internet access to submit reports.

For the past four years, Minnesota has won the "CoCoRaHS Cup" for recruiting the most new volunteers of any state. "We're hoping Minnesotans will again come through in

2024 to keep the cup in Minnesota and, more important of course, to improve our state's precipitation recording," Romolo said.

To sign up or for more information, visit CoCoRaHS.org opens in a new browser tab or contact Luigi Romolo at luigi.romolo@state.mn.us opens in a new browser tab.

Ask A Trooper

By Sgt. Troy Christianson of the Minnesota State Patrol

Question: I have been thinking about getting a dash camera for my vehicle. If I do, where can I place it?

Answer: When it comes to placing things up in the windshield or dashboard area Minnesota has restrictions as a concern for obstructed vision and safety. Dash cameras are allowed if the driver feedback and safety monitoring equipment are mounted immediately behind, slightly above, or slightly below the rearview mirror. Some other things allowed are:

- sun visors
- rearview mirrors
- global positioning systems or navigation systems when mounted or located near the bottommost portion of the windshield.
- electronic toll collection devices
- an identifying device for a transportation network company when the device is mounted or located near the bottommost portion of the windshield (with restrictions on color and manner.)

You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober. Help us drive Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths.

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota send your questions to Sgt. Troy Christianson – Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848. (Or reach him at, Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us)



DODGE CENTER SUMMARY COUNCIL MINUTES

Monday, February 12, 2024

This published information is a summary of the full minutes of the February 12, 2024 Dodge Center City Council meeting. A copy of the full minutes is available for viewing at City Hall, 35 East Main Street or online at www.ci.dodgecenter.mn.us.

Present: Bill Ketchum, Gary Trelstad, Cathy Skogen, Paul Blaisdell, Lee Mattson, Mark Barwald, AJ Gengler, Jeremy Dostal and Kathy Freeman

The City Council approved the following items:

- Agenda and consent agenda to include: January 22, 2024 City Council Minutes, Payment of Bills, Marshall Airport Entitlements Transfer; Dodger 56 Tax Increment District; Public Hearing Set on Facilities Plan; American Legion Temporary Liquor License and Resolution 2024-009 A Resolution Appointing Election Judges for Upcoming Presidential Primary;
 - Ordinance 160, Second Series – An Ordinance Amending City Code Chapter 6 Regarding Building Permit Fees;
 - The hiring of 5 new volunteers at Ambulance Services;
 - Ambulance Services Contract with West Concord;
 - Purchase of a new radio and stair chair for Ambulance Services with monies donated to Ambulance Services;
 - Hire of applicant for Fire Department pending background check;
 - Public Hearing set for March 11, 2024 on the Permitted Encroachment Ordinance;
 - Amended job description for the Community Development Specialist and Community Development Technician and the salary range for the Specialist position;
 - Hiring of Karla Tate as 2024 seasonal City gardener at a rate of \$17.51/hour;
 - American Legion's request to hold a raffle on April 13, 2024;
 - Taft Engagement Letter for DCA EMS Special Taxing District;
 - Hire of Rachel Jensen as Assistant Manager at Aquatic Center for the 2024 season at a salary of \$20.50/hour;
 - Hiring and payment of fireworks company for Dodger Days event.
- Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm

Food & Water Watch Files Opening Brief In Ninth Circuit Factory Farm Water Pollution Case

Lawsuit seeks to expand and strengthen industry regulation under the Clean Water Act

Food & Water Watch filed an opening brief on behalf of the national advocacy group and 12 other organizations in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals this week. The groups are seeking to expand and strengthen factory farm pollution regulation under the Clean Water Act, regulation that the industry has evaded for more than 50 years. The case challenges the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) denial of a 2017 petition for rulemaking to revise the agency's failed regulations.

Food & Water Watch Legal Director Tarah Heinzen issued the following statement: "America's tens of thousands of factory farms are flushing unimaginable quantities of contaminated animal waste into America's waterways. While the EPA refuses to act, it's only getting worse. Biden's EPA cannot hand-wave its role in this mounting clean water crisis any longer. We need real action from federal regulators to crack down on factory farms' free pass to pollute. Our lawsuit seeks to finally upend more than fifty years of ineffective factory farm water pollution regulation."

13 groups sued Biden's EPA last summer over the agency's denial of a 2017 petition asking EPA to initiate a rulemaking to overhaul its ineffective factory farm regulations. Petitioners' lawsuit asks the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to reject EPA's denial and require it to reconsider key reforms proposed in the 2017 petition that have the potential to expand and strengthen water pollution permitting for factory farms, also known as concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs).

The brief advances three main arguments:

EPA's refusal to make any updates to its failed factory farm program runs counter to its obligations under federal law;

EPA's plan to study factory farm water pollution rather than regulate it as federal law requires is unlawful; and

EPA's refusal to narrow its overbroad "agricultural stormwater exemption" for factory farm pollution is unlawful. This regulatory loophole unreasonably exempts a huge swath of harmful factory farm discharges from regulation, and has single handedly enabled thousands of factory farms to evade Clean Water Act permits altogether.

Petitioners are Food & Water Watch, Center for Biological Diversity, Center for Food Safety, Dakota Rural Action, Dodge County Concerned Citizens, Environmental Integrity Project, Helping Others Maintain Environmental Standards, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, Kewaunee CARES, Land Stewardship Project, Midwest Environmental Advocates, and North Carolina Environmental Justice Network.

The petitioners are represented by Food & Water Watch and Earthrise Law Center.

Eden Progressive Gophers 4-H Club Pancake Breakfast

Profits donated to upgrade WC Legion kitchen.

Hot pancakes, eggs, breakfast sausage, milk, juice, & coffee.

Date: Sunday, March 17, 2024

Where: West Concord American Legion

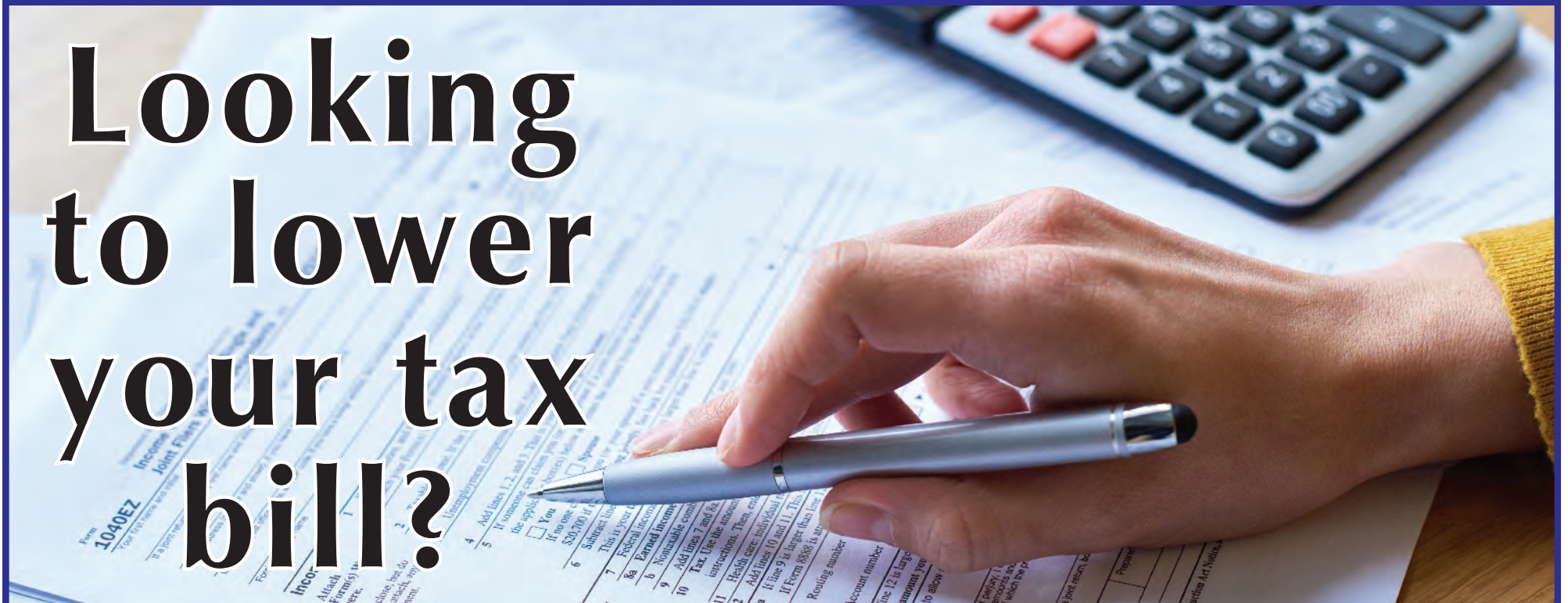
Time: 8a.m.-12:30

Suggested Price: \$8 for 5 yrs old-adults; 4 years old & under free



Same price • Same great 4-H'ers

Looking to lower your tax bill?



It's not too late to reduce your taxable income for 2023 with a contribution to your retirement account.

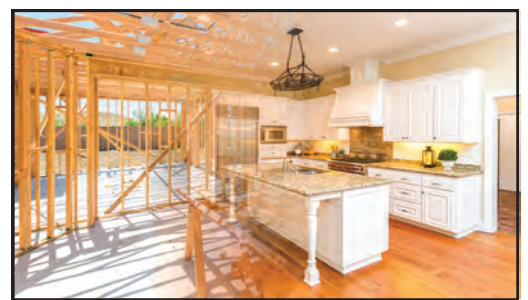
Whether you have an existing account or would like to open a new Traditional or Roth IRA, there's no time like the present to start planning for the future. We offer a wide range of investment choices and expert guidance to help you make the most of your retirement savings.

Call or stop in today!

There's still time to make a contribution to your IRA for the 2023 tax year.

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