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Sweeney is new RKLD chair

By Jeff Brown
Special to the Reporter

The Rock-Koshkonong Lake District (RKLD) board of commissioners has two new members and a new chairman.

At the district's annual meeting in Fort Atkin-

son on Saturday, Aug. 10, 286 electors voted Jim Jelinek and Mark Meyer to the board. Jelinek and Meyer were the top two vote getters, with 254 and 175, respectively. Treasurer Ray Lunder came in third with 124 and lost his seat on the board. Joan Huedopohl, the board's secretary, chose not to run for re-election.



Nearly 300 electors turned out for the annual meeting of the Rock-Koshkonong Lake District on Saturday, Aug. 10 at Fort Atkinson High School.

Photo by Jeff Brown

In a board meeting held immediately after the annual meeting adjourned, Commissioner Al Sweeney was elected chair by a 5-2 vote. Jelinek was elected secretary and Meyer treasurer; those votes also came by 5-2 margins.

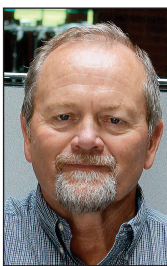
The backdrop

The election of Jelinek and Meyer came five days after chairmen of four of the five towns with land in the district called for a new board in a letter to the editor of this newspaper.

In the letter, the chairmen of the Towns of Albion, Fulton, Koshkonong and Milton wrote "We need new board members who will follow accepted policy and procedures for spending, auditing and accounting transparency. Three of the seven members submitted a policy and procedure resolution to address long entrenched bad practices, but were not successful in passing that resolution . . . It's time for new thinking at RKLD."

The policy the chairmen referred to in the letter was made by Sweeney, along with Commissioners Mike Shumaker and Kerry Hull, in March. It would require to board to approve all expenditures over \$2,500. For two meetings in a row the proposal was snarled in a series of snarky duels over parliamentary procedure, and then-chairman Steve Proud didn't include discussion of the proposal on the agendas of the two most recent board meetings.

In the letter the chairmen also complained



SWEENEY



JELINEK



MEYER

See **LAKE DISTRICT BOARD**, 2

Edgerton School District

Aid boost means school levy drop

By Jeff Brown
Special to the Reporter

A boost in state school aid in the biennial state budget approved earlier this summer means Edgerton School District residents will be paying slightly less in property taxes next year.

Dr. Tad Wehner, the school district's director of finance and personnel, delivered the news during his presentation of the district's proposed 2019-2020 budget at the district's annual meeting Monday night, Aug. 12.

Wehner told the 14 people who attended the meeting (not counting District Administrator Dr. Pauli, Wehner, and the nine members of the board of education) that the school district will receive an additional \$263 per pupil this school year. That means an extra \$500,851 in revenue, Wehner said.

The total levy proposed by the school district was \$11,774,633, up 1.98 percent from 2018-2019. Because of the additional revenue from state aid, the proposed mill rate would drop from \$10.44 in 2018-2019 to a projected \$10.38 for 2019-2020.

The levy is made up of the following category amounts:

- Operations, \$8,502,043
- Debt, \$3,075,482
- Non-referendum debt, \$72,108
- Community services, \$125,000.

Wehner commends board

Wehner told the board and audience members that the school district's reserve fund is projected to equal 22.2 percent of the district general fund balance. That puts it in the middle of the recommended range of 20-25 percent Wehner said, although he cautioned that the fund balance would fluctuate until the results of the year-end audit become known in September.

Wehner also said that the passage of the \$1.25 million operational referendum last November meant that Edgerton

was no longer the lowest among the districts of Cambridge Evansville, Fort Atkinson, Milton and Stoughton when it came to per-pupil revenue.

Despite the fiscal challenges last year that made passage of the operation referendum essential, Wehner said, the school district was able to avoid layoffs and widespread wage-freezes, and even managed to find a way to add teachers (to keep class sizes down) and support staff (to help students with needs beyond general education). Wehner commended the board for its role in achieving that.

Be it resolved

Following Wehner's presentation, electors took the following actions before adjourning:

—Set annual salaries for school board members as follows: president, \$500; treasurer, \$500; clerk, \$500; vice-president and other members, \$300 each.

—Authorized the school district to reimburse board of education members for necessary expenses as long as they provide proper documentation

—Authorized the school district to arrange for the sale or disposal of surplus property

—Set the date for the 2020 annual meeting as the same date of the first regular meeting of the board of education that occurs in August

—Set the school district tax levy for 2019-2020 at \$11,774,633.

A call for patience

After electors approved the levy, board president Matt Towns asked them to be patient with the school district during the upcoming school year, when a major renovation project at Community Elementary School will temporarily displace students and staff.

"We've asked everyone who's remotely involved with kindergarten or fifth grade and everyone in between to be patient in places and situations

See **SCHOOL DISTRICT**, 2



From left: Fire Chief Randy Pickering, Natalie Gould, Mark Boeche and wife, Stephanie, Ashlyn Oren and Rep. Don Vruwink and the two awards from Vruwink and Sen. Janis Ringhand.

Photo by Tristan McGough

Citizens honored for heroism and meritorious public service

By Tristan McGough
Special to the Reporter

It was a stellar night at the regular board meeting of the Edgerton Fire Protection District on Aug. 8, 2019, as six individuals were honored for all-star acts of bravery and exceptional accomplishments.

Perhaps the most dramatic of all were the four awards relating to the recent fire that devastated the home of Mark and Stephanie Boeche at 933 E. Meadow Circle in the Town of

Fulton just after midnight on July 5, 2019 (see The Edgerton Reporter, July 10, 2019 for coverage). The Boeche family was in the audience, as were the awardees; however, these presentations were bookended by two other awards of accomplishment regarding Fire Chief Randy Pickering.

Since being awarded the 2019 Volunteer Fire Chief of the Year Award by the Wisconsin State Fire Chief's Association (WFFCA) on June 21, 2019, Pickering has been re-

ceiving a steady stream of congratulations and other accolades, and this night was another peak presentation moment as State Representative Don Vruwink honored Edgerton's own with a special proclamation.

Read in length, the nine "Whereas" clauses gave the audience a sense of the range and depth of Pickering's effect on the communities he's impacted, the industry he's been

See **EFPD AWARDS**, 5



Fire Chief Randy Pickering, Andrew Lyga, Travis Lauer and Rep. Don Vruwink face the applause of attendees over their two heroism awards signed by Wisconsin Representative Vruwink and Senator Ringhand.

Photo by Tristan McGough

Town of Albion

Officials back down on road discontinuance

By Tristan McGough
Special to the Reporter

After three years of working to get to "Final Resolution No. 19-05: Resolution Vacating Portions of Various Town Roads," the Board of Supervisors of the Town of Albion at its Aug. 6, 2019, regular meeting backed down from approving it upon overwhelming objection by stakeholders along the affected roadways, which all happen to be gravel roads.

During the prolonged Public Hearing (PH), about a dozen town residents took their turn on holding forth from the floor, very often going past the allotted three-minute time limit set by officials, which became difficult to curtail when someone was on a roll.

At issue were portions of six of the town's identified gravel roads slated for discontinuance; however, a sizable contingent of affected residents who depend on those roads for getting to and from home were very vocal, insistent and pretty plain-spoken about what they'd like to see done with the board's proposal.

Among many other things, the fact that residents were only notified days ago by legal process server and have about 40 days to deal with the resolution—where the Board had three years to do so, many antagonists argued—"was not fair" and, consequently, "we should have more time to consider it."

Against that domestic wall of stiff opposition, Chair Robert Venske laid out the rationale for why the Board was moving in the direction it was. "The only reason we're doing this is because we're losing money on maintaining these roads."

The Chair indicated that the town gets \$2,389 per mile for town road maintenance from the shared revenue pool that's correlated to federal, state, county and other tax streams and which is mingled and distributed by formula. With 51 miles of township roads, Albion receives around \$121,839 a year from the State for road maintenance.

Supervisor Abigail Staff did

See **TOWN OF ALBION**, 8

| Gas Watch | |
|--|-------------------|
| Nat. Average..... | \$2.643 |
| WI Average..... | \$2.600 |
| WI lowest - Appleton..... | \$2.390 |
| Janesville..... | \$2.480 |
| Milton..... | \$2.490 |
| Newville..... | \$2.490 |
| Edgerton | \$2.490 |
| Evansville..... | \$2.590 |
| Fort Atkinson..... | \$2.580 |
| Stoughton..... | \$2.590 |
| Cambridge..... | \$2.590 |
| Madison..... | \$2.430 |
| Milwaukee - range.. | \$2.420 - \$2.990 |
| Latest prices reported for one gallon of unleaded gasoline according to local observations and GasBuddy.com as of 5:00 p.m., Monday, August 12, 2019. Prices listed are the lowest in each city, which may be one or more stations | |

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