

# MERGER

Continued from 1

vertising opportunities. “As most people know, it has become increasingly more difficult to maintain newspapers large and small across the country,” Porter said. “The pandemic made things worse with the loss of event adver-

tising. But steep increases in printing costs, postage and personnel also added expense during a two-year revenue drought.”

However, those were not the only factors in the decision to sell, he said. “My wife and I are nearing retirement age, so we knew this was a probability within the next several years. We were not

yet actively seeking a buyer, but in today’s economic climate, it would be a huge risk to turn down a legitimate offer.”

He said Better Newspapers, Inc., is a logical fit because many of their newspapers are located in the MetroEast and in Douglas County where his newspapers circulate. “We’ve been chop-

ping the pot in those markets,” he said, “so it makes sense to pool our resources. I’m proud of the work we’ve done, and I’m looking forward to being a part of the solution to ensure that our communities will continue to be served by newspapers that they can be proud of, too.”

Publisher Greg Hoskins welcomed Porter to the staff

and said he believes the communities will be served even better through this consolidation. The merger will bring more resources to the papers, and Porter will be able to focus on editorial content without the burden of overseeing the business and delivery side of three newspapers.

“We have a lot of exciting plans for these communi-

ties,” Hoskins said. “David is well-known in the communities and in the industry for his writing and reporting skills. Our team will be stronger with him on board, and the communities will be better served as well.”

Better Newspapers, Inc. owns more than 30 newspapers in Illinois and Missouri.

# CITY

Continued from 1

Hoel then gave his report to the board. He noted that upgrades continue at the Sadorus pump station, with pumps 2 and 3 being completely replaced. He said that pump 1 was to be replaced this week. Hoel stated that the pump station has been on and off bypass repeatedly during this transition, and that we have been managing water levels and flows during those times on bypass when we are unable to pump. He noted that the new SCADA instrumentation and controls are being installed, programmed and tested at the same time as the new hardware. Hoel ended by stating that Justin Smith has done an exceptional job of managing these conditions and that we have not experienced periods of low water

levels or pressures.

The council also approved a Professional Service Agreement (PSA) with Milano and & Grunloh for Meadowview Water Main Engineering in the amount of \$100,000. As announced at the last meeting, the City of Tuscola was awarded a \$550,000 grant for the replacement of water mains in Meadowview Subdivision. This cost includes design engineering for an estimated fee of \$55,000 and construction engineering for an estimated fee of \$45,000. Currently, they are anticipating a late winter bid opening on the protract and Spring 2023 construction. The interim months will be used for final design and permitting. With this, the council approved a PSA with Milano & Grunloh for grant administration in the amount of \$30,000. It was explained that his amount covers grant

administration, which is necessary for complying with the specific provisions of the CDBG grant.

### The council also:

\* Approve the minutes of the June 13 previous minutes.

\* Approved the May 2022 financial report.

\* Approved the payment of bills in the amount of \$177,017.40.

\* Approved a pay request from Donohue & Associates for Joint Agency Water Line Engineering in the amount of \$12,624.88.

\* Approved a pay request from Beniach Construction for Progress Blvd. Extension in the amount of \$46,578.71. This includes final adjustments for quantities, and it also includes the addition of pavement striping. It was noted that there were additional quantities of striping beyond the estimate that represent an increased

cost of \$1,500.

\* Approved a pay request from B & T Drainage for Joint Water Agency Water Main in the amount of \$81,214.01.

\* Approved a pay request from B & T Drainage for Joint Water Agency Valve Installation.

\* Approved a request to conduct fundraising for Kiwanis Kids Days Collection on October 28-29, 2022.

\* Approved a Community Building lease with alcohol for Friends of the NRA Banquet on July 10-11, 2022.

\* Approved a Community Building lease with alcohol for Beth Rutledge for wedding reception July 22-24, 2022.

\* Approved street closure for Rally Point Fitness Veterans’ Event on August 27, 2022.

\* Approved a PSA with Clark Dietz for General En-

gineering Consulting Service. It was explained that as part of the Capital Improvements Planning effort that was approved last year, the city has identified the need to conduct a more formal assessment of sidewalk conditions. This will help them prioritize repairs and plan for annual improvement budgets. Clark Dietz Engineers has assigned an intern to conduct the assessment and record findings, then they will prepare condition maps and a formal report for the city’s later use. The estimated cost of the effort is \$5,000, which is within already budgeted amounts.

\* Approved a right-of-way License Agreement for TCUSD#301 electric line. It was noted that as part of the renovations being made at the schools, the contractor is planning to upgrade the large transformers and electrical service on the west side

of the high school, near the back circle drive. Ameren will be relocating the overhead service underground, which means it will come under Van Allen Street. The new line will be considered a service connection, making it to the school districts and not Ameren’s. In similar instances in the past, the city has granted a right-of-way license to the private property owner (the school district, in this instance) to allow the use of the right-of-way and to memorialize that for future references, JULIE locates, ect.

\* Noted that the annual appropriations ordinance has been drafted and is available for public review at City Hall. A public hearing will be held prior to the July 11 city council meeting.

\* Approved adjourning until the July 11, 2022 city council meeting.

## my Personal side

By Craig Hastings



**Remember a couple of years back when there was a big push by the federal government to raise the minimum wage?** It started the last couple of years under the Trump Administration and appeared, at least for a while, to be working well. The average household income was reported to have risen by as much as \$6000. A pretty good number for sure but would it last? The Biden Administration promised to build on that number in January of 2020. The Biden Administration has failed miserably. The wage hikes have remained stable but the price of consumer

goods have skyrocketed. Not only have the prices of everyday consumer goods risen, but some are scarce in parts of the country. Who could have ever predicted a shortage of infant baby formula. New cars couldn’t be purchased because semiconductor electronics couldn’t be manufactured fast enough. Not only couldn’t they be manufactured fast enough, Americans discovered these vital components were being manufactured in Taiwan. Therefore there was no emergency manufacturing fix that could be made with our federal government.

Every American auto

manufacturer had and still has new vehicles sitting ready to be delivered but they can’t be because of what should be simple computer components. With new vehicles not being able to be purchased, of course the price of used vehicles went through the roof. What majority of people purchase used vehicles? Low income and average income workers either can’t afford new vehicles or don’t want their budgets stretched to fit a new vehicle payment. This dilemma was the start of many more budget breakers for the low income and average income Americans. Without even getting into the billions of taxpayer dollars being spent (wasted) on the southern border crisis, the average hard working American worker continues to have less money to provide for their families even with the pay increases we’ve witnessed over the past two years or so. So why is this happening?

The American worker

has never in my lifetime and probably never will, gain any additional purchase power through any action by Federal or State governments to increase minimum wage amounts. It’s simple math. When American manufacturers and retail sales businesses are forced to pay their workers more money because of some government mandated action to do so, of course they will simply raise their own prices of doing business and pass them on to the consumer. Those same consumers who thought they were going to finally have a little more purchase power because of the smoke and mirrors pay raise their bosses were forced to give them. Only because our government forced their bosses to raise their pay. It’s a vicious circle that has been going on for more than fifty years. I do believe this latest round of you raise me and I’ll raise you game is the worst I’ve seen. Gasoline prices are the highest in history with no end in sight. President Biden blames Russia. Food prices in every category are at all time highs. President Biden blames Russia. In America some food products are scarce or can’t be found at all. President Biden blames Russia. If everything wrong in America is because Russia

is fighting a war in Ukraine causing America to spend billions of dollars there, then get the hell out of the war! But Biden won’t get out and nor will elected Democrats and most Republicans support an effort to withdraw support in Ukraine. But why won’t they if it’s breaking the backs of average Americans?

Because these elected officials are not average income Americans. They don’t care if you and I struggle to make ends meet because they don’t and never will have to worry about spendable income. I’ve never been a big believer in conspiracy theories our government might be mixed up in but, this gasoline price craziness has me taking another look. Not only does gasoline continue to rise in price but so have new and used vehicles that burn that gasoline. Adding to these mysterious price increases affecting the gas and oil industry that never happened under the Trump Administration are Democrats making public statements urging Americans to buy electric cars if they’re not happy paying for gas! Now I’m even suspicious. They make no mention in their public statements concerning an infrastructure that doesn’t exist to recharge these electric ve-

hicles once you leave home. And of course they express no concern about the price of electric vehicles nor has there been any information at all about the cost involved in replacing the battery packs in electric vehicles. We are decades away from going completely electric on our highways.

Most of you do know that there are motor fuel taxes built into the price of gasoline that fund building new and repairing old roadways and bridges right? A huge portion of that funding comes from the money you spend on a gallon of gasoline or diesel fuel. So why haven’t your elected officials told you just how they plan to make up this lost revenue once every vehicle on the road is electric? Has anyone told you what the plan is on how to dispose of those gigantic battery packs in electric vehicles? If you don’t think you know, I have an idea. When you replace your \$8000 battery pack in your electric vehicle you will also be required to pay a disposal fee. When there is finally an infrastructure to charge all of these electric vehicles all across the country you will be charged not only a tax to recharge your vehicle but you will also pay a charge for the use of the charge port and you will pay a regulated price for the amount of electricity you use to recharge your vehicle. You’ll have too. Electric vehicles will do just as much damage to our roads as gasoline vehicles do and the money maintenance required will indeed come from everyone driving anything on these roadways, using the traffic lights, crossing the bridges, and mowing the grass etc. None of that changes!

I’m not against electric vehicles or hybrid vehicles but, both need to co exist with our current gasoline vehicles. And in time should the American consumer make the decision that electric is best then let that change gradually meld into the traffic flow system we’re using now. Our government has to stop forcing this on the American people or they will forever resist. Let this be the people’s decision to make for each of them on their own. If electric is better it will be obvious to the majority of Americans. Give us the freedom to make our own decisions here without government interference.

*(The views and opinions expressed in the submitted columns are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of The Journal.)*




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**INSPECTION: FRIDAY, JULY 8<sup>TH</sup> & SATURDAY, JULY 9<sup>TH</sup> • 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM EACH DAY**

**HIGHLIGHTS:** '80 JD 4640 2wd tractor, 7,962 hrs.; '77 JD 4430 2wd tractor, 7,318 hrs.; '65 JD 4020 2wd tractor, showing 4,626 hrs.; '62 JD 4010 2wd tractor, showing 1,041 hrs.; '59 Oliver 880 2wd tractor, non running; '89 JD 9500 2wd combine, showing 581 eng./338 sep. hrs., 3,507 eng./2,565 sep. total hrs.; '92 JD 920F 20' platform, fore/aft, sells complete w/Unverferth HT25 25' head cart; JD 643 6 row 30" corn head; JD 750 15' grain drill; JD 7000 6 row 30" planter; '04 JD 926 mower conditioner; '99 JD 456 round baler; New Holland 315 Hay Liner small square baler; Bush Hog HT210 2-basket hay tedder; '10 Tube Line AC800 8 bale accumulator; '11 Tube Line AC8006G 8 bale hay grabber; '10 Tube Line AC8006G 8 bale hay grabber; New Idea 751 pull-type mower conditioner; JD 640 5-bar hay rake; Fox silage blower; Loader mount bale spear; EZ-Haul 25' in-line hay trailer; International 490 20' disk; Case-IH 6500 9-shank disc chisel; JD 940 24' field cultivator; JD 1000 24' field cultivator; 9-knife 3-pt. NH3 applicator; JD 400 15' 3-pt. rotary hoe; International 133 6 row 30" cultivator; International 710 3-bottom plow; JD 666H 3-bottom pull-type plow; JD 666H 4-bottom pull-type plow; '11 Chevrolet 3500 HD 4wd pickup, 79,654 mi.; '68 Chevrolet 65 grain truck, 30,248 mi.; '06 Trailerman 25' flatbed trailer; Sure-Trac 7'x16' flatbed trailer; Brent 410 grain cart; '73 Hillsboro 300 bu. grain trailer; DMI 300 bu. gravity wagon; Killbros 250 bu. gravity box w/ hyd. seed auger; Mayrath 10'x70' swing away auger; JD MX8 8' 3-pt. rotary cutter; Shop Built 400 gal. pull-type sprayer; Servis R900 8' 3-pt. blade; JD T7150 manure spreader; Danuser 3-pt. post hole digger; 5' 3-pt. tiller; Bale Master 3000 3-pt. bale unroller; 3-pt. bale tote; Wallace 5' 3-pt. box blade; (3) Wooden hayracks on gears; Additional Farm Support Items & much more!

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