



Ladysmith News

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Thursday, March 24, 2022

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Ladysmith students perform Page A12

Police cite multiple 'swatting' calls

Ladysmith school evacuated after bomb scare call

By Luke Klink

Students and staff at Ladysmith Middle & High School were evacuated last Thursday, after law enforcement received a threat of a bomb in the building.

The caller making the threat warned a bomb was placed in an English room at the school. The caller also advised the person who left the bomb was wearing a red and white shirt, a black jacket and blue jeans.

No bomb or dangerous devices were found.

"Nothing was located," Ladysmith Police Chief Kevin Julien said.

Emergency crews began responding the school at 12:35 p.m., March 17.

Precautionary measures were taken, starting with getting everyone safely out of and away from the building.

Students and staff were directed to the far east end of the school's main parking lot, about 100 yards from the school. The school enrolls about 450 students in grades 6-12.

All available area law enforcement officers from multiple agencies — including those who were off duty — were asked to respond. Ambulance crews were placed on standby at the fire hall and nearby

businesses. Ladysmith firefighters blocked the two school entrances at Edgewood Avenue and E. 16th Street N.

More than a dozen officers were on scene.

With the school evacuated, officers from the Ladysmith and Rusk County Sheriff's departments entered the building to investigate.

"A decision was made to get kids out and do a protective sweep of the building," Julien said. "We made a proactive sweep of every room in the whole building, but there wasn't any indication of where an explosive might be."

If a suspicious device had been located, local law enforcement would have contracted to have a specialized bomb squad respond, according to Julien.

The bomb threat call was made to the business office line at the Ladysmith Police Department, and transferred to dispatchers.

"It was a bomb threat made toward Ladysmith High School," Julien said. "It was a foreign voice."

The incident was handled "pretty well" given the level of the threat and the large number of people that were evacuated, according to Julien.

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SCHOOL EVACUATED — Ladysmith firefighter Jan Martin helps direct traffic at the main entrance to Ladysmith Middle & High School as the building is evacuated after a bomb scare was phoned into the city police department. A sweep of the building turned up nothing suspicious.

— News photo by Luke Klink



DRIVER SAFE — A Ladysmith firefighter douses a vehicle that caught fire as the driver was entering the parking lot Sunday morning at St. Anthony de Padua Church in Tony. The driver reported she had turned onto Maple Street leading to the church and heard a loud "pop" sound. She continued into the church parking lot and was flagged down by other parishioners noting smoke coming from the vehicle before she could park. The Ladysmith Fire Department was called at 9:05 a.m., March 20. They were on scene for about 45 minutes. The Rusk County Sheriff's Department and Wisconsin State Patrol also responded. No injuries were reported.

— News photo by Luke Klink

City council plans street assessments

By Luke Klink

The Ladysmith Common Council voted 7-0, Monday, to approve a director's report on two upcoming street reconstruction projects.

The council also voted unanimously on March 14 to approve a preliminary resolution declaring an intent to exercise special assessments for two upcoming street reconstruction projects.

The city is proceeding this year with reconstructing the Summit Avenue cul-de-sac east of W. Fifth Street and E. 10th Street N between Menasha and Park avenues.

Special assessments for E. 10th Street N total \$124,899. This breaks down to \$54,478 for sanitary sewer, \$61,781 for water and \$8,539 for curb and gutter. There is no sidewalk work being done.

Special assessments for the Summit Avenue cul-de-sac total \$119,064. This breaks down to \$64,252 for

sanitary sewer and \$54,812 for water. There is no sidewalk or curb and gutter work being done.

Public hearings on the special assessments will be held on April 11 for Summit Avenue and April 25 for E. 10th Street N.

The council will act on levying the assessments after the hearing.

Last month, the council voted unanimously to award the reconstruction of E. 10th Street N from Menasha to Park avenues to Haas Sons with the low bid of \$362,960. A-1 Excavating bid \$400,511 and McCabe Construction bid \$399,399.

The council also voted unanimously last month to award a project for the Summit Avenue cul-de-sac to Haas Sons with the low base bid of \$356,847. A-1 Excavating bid \$444,345 and McCabe Construction bid \$433,367. Added costs not part of the base bid include directional boring

for storm sewer, sanitary sewer and water main.

The council also voted unanimously last month to table bids for Lindoo Avenue from E. Fourth to E. Sixth streets. Haas Sons bid \$589,637. A-1 Excavating bid \$653,053 and McCabe Construction bid \$696,970.

Last month's actions came a month after council members pledged to do whatever it takes this year to fund reconstruction of Flambeau Avenue between W. Ninth and E. Second streets, as part of a joint project between the city and town of Flambeau. City council meeting minutes from last Dec. 13 indicate a total projected cost of \$352,000 to improve Flambeau Avenue. Assuming 50 percent funding from grants applied for, projections show the city's share is about \$120,000 and the county's share is about \$50,000.

Compelling reasons to accept the

two project bids were E.10th Street N has not been repaved since its asphalt surface was pulverized in 2020. That resurfacing project stalled to allow underground utilities to be engineered as part of a complete reconstruction after multiple water main breaks.

The Summit Avenue bid came in at 18 percent below the estimated cost. The council was also alerted to rising prices of construction materials, making Summit Avenue work seem like an even bigger bargain.

Also last week, the council overlooked a sizable price increase unanimously approved financing construction of a new shelter over a boxcar and caboose display outside the Rusk County Visitors Center & Rail Display at the intersection of Wis. 27 and Fritz Avenue.

The project was bid last year at

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Ladysmith School Board OKs new curriculum

By Luke Klink

The Ladysmith School Board voted 5-0, Wednesday, March 16, to adopt a new science curriculum for the middle school. It will be used in grades 6-8.

The curriculum is developed by Amplify, a publisher of next-generation curriculum and assessment programs.

The total cost is \$33,258 for all three grades. This breaks down to \$9,869 for grade 6, \$10,220 for grade 7 and \$10,480 for grade 8. The remaining \$2,689 is for professional development, shipping and handling. This spending covers only the science portion of the entire middle school curriculum, hence the lower cost than the last curriculum purchase in 2019 of the new English/Language Arts for the elementary school.

"It comes highly recommended,"

It comes highly recommended.

— Ladysmith School District Administrator Laura Stunkel of the new middle school science curriculum

said School District Administrator Laura Stunkel about the middle school science curriculum.

Funding is through the district's ESSER III, the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund grant program authorized under American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act. These funds provide additional money for local educational agencies to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. ESSER III supplements ESSER I, created by the CARES Act in March

2020, and ESSER II, created by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act in December 2020.

Amplify Science is the leading phenomena-based curriculum for grades PreK-8. The program blends hands-on investigations, literacy-rich activities, and interactive digital tools to empower students to think, read, write, and argue like real scientists and engineers. Amplify Science was developed by the science education experts at UC

Berkeley's Lawrence Hall of Science and the digital learning team at Amplify. As the Lawrence's first curriculum designed to address three-dimensional science standards, Amplify Science reflects state-of-the-art practices in science teaching and learning. Each unit of Amplify Science engages students in a relevant, real-world problem where they investigate scientific phenomena, engage in collaboration and discussion, and develop models or explanations in order to arrive at solutions.

One positive about the curriculum cited to the board was that it scored the best out of all the middle science curricula on EdReports.org, an independent nonprofit that ensures all students have access to high-quality instructional materi-

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