

# Controversy over South Street trail continues

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Payment of a bill related to what has become a controversial trail extension project has been approved despite a request to halt payment.

Members of the Lake Geneva City Council's Finance, Licensing & Regulation Committee approved to pay city bills totaling about \$177,021, July 5, by a 4-1 vote with Alderwoman Mary Jo Fesenmaier voting "no."

Fesenmaier requested that a \$3,200 payment to Strand Associates, Inc., engineers for the proposed South Street trail extension project, be removed until city officials address residents' concerns related to the project.

City officials plan to extend the South Street bicycle trail, which runs near Badger High School and Lake Geneva Middle School, by about 1.5 miles.

The trail is set to lead to the future site of a new Geneva Lakes Family YMCA campus, located near the intersection of Highway H and Highway 120. The trail also is set to extend west along South Street and end at Lake Shore Drive, leading to Big Foot Beach State Park.

The City of Lake Geneva received an \$835,316 transportation alternatives program grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to help fund the project.

Several residents who live along South Street have expressed concerns related to the project including trees being removed, potential water runoff, possible traffic concerns and the width of the trail, which is set to be 10 feet.

City officials have said that the grant requires the trail to be 10-foot wide. However, the trail could be reduced to eight feet for short distances.



STEPHANIE JONES, REGIONAL NEWS

South Street is shown in this photo along the back of Big Foot Beach State Park. The City of Lake Geneva received a grant to expand the path along South Street, but the path has been controversial because of the required dimensions.

Fesenmaier requested that the payment to Strand Associates be withdrawn from the bills and that the city pauses the project until the residents' concerns are addressed.

"I would like to pull it out because we have a public that continues to email us with concerns about this project," Fesenmaier said. "I think we need to assure

them we are taking a pause to listen to their concerns and figure out what to do with those concerns and how we are going to proceed."

City Administrator Dave Nord said the bill to Strand Associates has been submitted, and the project cannot be paused because the city council has not approved to do so.

Nord said representatives from Vandewalle & Associates, the city's planning firm, have been trying to contact the state to determine what the ramifications would be for pausing the project.

"Strand is out there doing a multitude of things other than just worrying about sidewalk widths and things of that sort," Nord said. "They have other

things they are contract-bound to do, and that's what they're doing. The council, no committee, nobody has made a motion to stop the project."

Fesenmaier said the project was scheduled to be discussed during the June 27 public works committee meeting but it was not placed on the agenda, and a special meeting was supposed to be held to give residents an opportunity to express their concerns about the project, but the meeting was never scheduled.

"Those things haven't happened, so these bills need to stop until we are all on the same page," Fesenmaier said. "I don't think the project should go forward until we know what we are proceeding with."

Alderman John Halverson said the issue was not discussed during the public works committee meeting, because there was no updated information regarding the project.

"It was nothing nefarious," Halverson said.

Alderman Richard Hedlund said he would like to discuss the project further with the department of transportation, but the city still needs to pay its bill to Strand Associates.

"I agree we need to have someone from the state here, but that has nothing to do with paying for services rendered to the city when we haven't told them to stop," Hedlund said. "I like your discussion, but I don't think we cannot, not pay them."

After some discussion, Fesenmaier's motion to withdraw the payment to Strand Associates from the city bills failed by a 2-3 vote, with her and Halverson voting "yes."

Nord said the city could conduct a meeting regarding the South Street trail extension project in August.

## WALWORTH COUNTY'S WEEKLY CRIMINAL COMPLAINTS FROM JULY 13-18

Here are the Walworth County's weekly criminal complaints from July 13-July 18. The cases still need to make their way through the Walworth County Court System. All information is from criminal complaints filed in Walworth County Circuit Court. To follow the cases, go to [wcca.wicourts.gov](http://wcca.wicourts.gov).

### Failure to report to jail after theft

**Tyler J. Johnson**, 30, 23316 62nd St., Paddock Lake, has been charged with a felony failure to report to jail. The defendant was convicted of retail theft, a misdemeanor. As of May 12, the defendant had not reported for his jail sentence.

### OWI charge and failure to report to jail

**Melissa A. Jurgensen**, 38, S8831545 Wigwam Dr., Mukwonago, was charged with a felony of failing to report to jail in relation to her second conviction of operating a vehicle while intoxicated (OWI). She was scheduled to serve 60 days in jail and as of May 12, had not reported for jail sentence.

### Drugs found after foot chase

**Javon A. Charo**, 23, 312 Herman St., Delavan, has been charged with five offenses including possession with intent to deliver THC (Tetrahydrocannabinols), possession of drug paraphernalia and obstructing an officer. As a result of those charges,

he has also been charged with felony and misdemeanor bail jumping for failing to meet his bail requirements. City of Delavan police officers arrived at a liquor store on June 30 in Delavan where they saw Charo exit a vehicle and begin to flee on foot. An officer pursued Charo on foot and eventually caught him placing him under arrest. During the pursuit, Charo dropped a backpack approximately 758 feet from St. Andrew's Parish School that contained two boxes of 20 smaller boxes of Muha Meds THC Vape Cartridges. Each box contained 0.033 ounces of THC for a total of 170.09 grams. The bag also had a cell phone, a Chime card with the defendant's name on it, a digital scale with marijuana residue, \$22 in cash, and a letter from Generac with the defendant's name on it.

### Disorderly conduct

**Jacob A. Raglin**, 26, 25 First St., Darien, has been charged with felony bail jumping, criminal trespassing and disorderly conduct. On July 6, Delavan Police Officers were dispatched to a residence regarding an unwanted individual on the property. The caller stated that the defendant jumped the fence and was walking in the backyard. With the caller standing outside, Raglin proceeded to walk up the stairs and into the apartment without permission.

### Charges for THC possession

**Jacob A. Cherry**, 27, 820 Sherman Ave., Janesville, has been charged with three counts of manufacturing/delivering THC and felony bail jumping. The Walworth

County Drug Unit used a confidential informant to make controlled buys of marijuana from Cherry on or about September 24, 2019, October 4, 2019 and October 18, 2019. The controlled buy arrangements were set up through Snapchat and overseen by a deputy. He failed to meet his bail requirements when he was pulled over during a traffic stop on June 4, 2021 for alternating colored front facing lights. During the stop, an officer could smell weed coming from the car. Cherry admitted to having "some shake." Officers found 5.8 grams in the vehicle.

### Entertainer at Vegas Club arrested

**Katelyn V. Armstrong**, 22, of Janesville, has been charged with battery to a law enforcement officer, throwing or discharging bodily fluids at a public safety worker, resisting an officer and disorderly conduct. A deputy from the Walworth County Sheriff's Office responded to the Vegas Club in Darien on July 6 in regards to a disorderly entertainer. That entertainer, Armstrong, reportedly started a fight with another entertainer. The deputy placed her in handcuffs and the defendant began resisting by throwing herself on the ground. After coming to her feet, she was able to free herself from one handcuff and struck the deputy. The deputy then grabbed her arm while the defendant continued to try to pull away. Once on the ground, the defendant pulled the deputy's hair, spit in her face and attempted to bite her multiple times.

## New principal for Star Center Elementary named

LAKE GENEVA REGIONAL NEWS

Katherine Stanton has been named the new principal for Star Center Elementary School, which is located near Pell Lake.

Stanton was hired as the school's principal during the July 12 Lake Geneva Joint No. 1 School Board meeting. Stanton had worked at Badger High School since 2011, serving the past three years as an associate principal.

She fills the position vacated by the promotion of Chiper Tennessen to director of instruction.

"I am thrilled, grateful, and deeply honored to have the opportunity to serve as the next principal at Star Center Elementary School and look forward to building on the great work that has and is already being done," Stanton said in a press release. "I have heard amazing things about the teachers, students, and families at Star Center Elementary School. I cannot wait to meet everyone and begin our work together."

Prior to serving as an associate principal at Badger High School, Stanton worked as a science teacher and co-chairperson of the science department where she mentored new teachers and worked to revamp the science curriculum to meet new state standards. She also worked as Badger's summer school principal.

Before coming to Badger, she previously taught at Oak Creek High School after earning her degree from the University of Wisconsin. Stanton earned her master's in educational administration from Concordia University.

"Mrs. Stanton is an outstanding addition to the Star Center family," said Superintendent Peter Wilson. "She brings a wealth of knowledge and experiences to Star Center Elementary, and I look forward to watching our students flourish under her leadership."

Stanton and her husband, Nolan, have a 6-year-old daughter Nora and a 16-year-old son Brayden.

In her spare time, she enjoys being outdoors, boating, reading, and spending time with family and friends.

Stanton's first official day at Star Center Elementary School will be Aug. 1.



Stanton

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