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THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2022

Park Falls YMCA gets funding

BY PRICE COUNTY REVIEW

PARK FALLS — The city of Park Falls announced on March 3 that plans for the YMCA are now certain to go forward with approval of a \$5.6 million grant from the Wisconsin Department of Administration.

The \$5,675,000 grant to support the community effort to build a new YMCA was part of a nearly \$650 million investment allocated to the state for building and recovery efforts from the Neighborhood Investment Fund program, administered by the Department of Administration and funded through the American Rescue Plan Act, according to the letter. The Park Falls YMCA was one of 25 finalist projects approved by Gov. Tony Evers.

The project is the only Neighborhood Investment Fund program project approved in Price County. The nearest other projects approved was the \$3.13 million Vulnerable Populations programs of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians near Hayward, and the city of Rice Lake received a \$3.15 million grant for Main Street corridor improvements for safer routes and historic downtown revitalization.

SEE YMCA PAGE A7

MAILING LABEL ONLY

Worcester board works to avert crisis

BY TOM LAVENTURE
tlaventure@pricecountyreview.com

PHILLIPS (March 2, 2022) — More than 50 town of Worcester residents were on hand Wednesday to show support for three town board supervisors and a town clerk during a special meeting called to announce resignations.

By the end of the meeting town supervisors Jeremy Pesko and Paul Precour pledged to stay aboard until the next regular election. Town board chair Jim Heizler did not state he was resigning but the two supervisors said there would be resignations at the regular meeting, 7 p.m. March 15.

“We definitely are going to have one resignation, for sure,

and the others are pending,” Precour said.

Town clerk Scott Revak stated that he intended to resign. Despite degrees in business administration and accounting, he said learning the job was difficult when the experienced people he reached out to didn't want to get involved because of the town's legal issues.

“It's not worth it,” Revak said.

Revak is the third town clerk in just over a year, according to Precour. The new clerks didn't have the benefit of training with the previous clerks who left suddenly, he said.

SEE CRISIS PAGE A5



TOM LAVENTURE / PCR

Several town of Worcester residents attend a March 2 special meeting of the town board, prompting the venue to move from the town hall to the adjacent public works building, where residents praised and pleaded with three town board supervisors and a town clerk to remain after announcing resignations.

Ice show goes on during ice event



BY TOM LAVENTURE / PCR

The Price Ice Figure Skating club members conclude the program with all skaters on the ice to complete three weekend performances on Sunday in Park Falls.

BY PRICE COUNTY REVIEW

PARK FALLS — It was an ice show during a freezing rain ice event this past weekend but Price Ice Figure Skating held its annual show with good turnout despite the weather after having to cancel in 2021 due to the pandemic.

Hundreds of spectators attended each performance and helped the club raise thousands of dollars with silent auctions and raffles. But central to everything were the skaters from toddlers to high schoolers who performed a program called “Skating Through the Wonders of Nature.”

According to Michelle Smith, club president, the skaters started rehearsals in the fall in addition to the competitions. She credited the many teen and adult coaches, some of them skaters themselves, with getting the younger and more inexperienced skaters in sync with their various programs.



TOM LAVENTURE / PCR

The Price Ice Figure Skating Free Skate 3 and Free Skate 5 members perform “Walkin’ On Sunshine” to conclude three weekend performances on Sunday in Park Falls. The skaters include Mal Smith, Caitlin Pesko, Zoey Eimermann, Maren Fols-tad, Maia Oswald and Maya Szymik.

COUNTY BOARD DISTRICT 10 Q&A

BY PRICE COUNTY REVIEW

PHILLIPS — All 13 Price County Board of Supervisors seats will be on the Spring Election ballots on April 5, however, only three of the seats are contested in Districts 2, 10 and 11.

Below are the responses from the District 10 Supervisor candidates. The incumbent, Robert Kopisch, is being challenged by Lorelei Wakefield. Both candidates are Butternut residents, and the district also includes ward one of Eisenstein and ward two of the town of Lake.



Kopisch



Wakefield

SEE DISTRICT 10 PAGE A7

COUNTY BOARD DISTRICT 2 Q&A

BY PRICE COUNTY REVIEW

PHILLIPS — All 13 Price County Board of Supervisors seats will be on the Spring Election ballots on April 5, however, only three of the seats are contested in Districts 2, 10 and 11.

In District 2 the incumbent supervisor Ginny Strobl, of Kennan, is being challenged by James Adolph, also of Kennan. The district includes the towns of Catawba and Kennan, and the villages of Catawba, Georgetown and Kennan.

Strobl and Adolph agreed to participate in the candidate question and answer article to help readers understand who they are and why they are running.



Adolph

SEE DISTRICT 2 PAGE A7

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PARK FALLS AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BY TAMMY HASTINGS, PRESIDENT

Coming out of an icy March weekend it feels good to look forward to the Chamber of Commerce Eggs-traordinary Easter Event this April with fun for the entire family. Nearly 100 children participated in last year's event and all received baskets filled with goodies that were donated by local businesses and sponsors.

Attend the events with friends or family and enjoy a day sponsored by area businesses.

As part of Eggs-traordinary Easter, the Park Theater will offer two free screenings of the classic original 1971 film, "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory," at 6 p.m. Friday, April 15, and at 2 p.m. Satur-

day, April 16. Families planning to attend with children under age 10, should register with the chamber before March 23 to ensure the children will receive a basket.

The Easter Bunny will be present at both showings. Stop to take a picture with him after the show. There is also the option to order pizzas or hotdogs with your registration.

We would love to give chamber members the opportunity to participate in this family fun event. Sponsors are needed for the movie, popcorn and sodas. We also need lots of basket fillers. Items with your logo and/or business card, individually sealed treats, or novelty toys are all winners.

There will be approximately 200 baskets assembled

this year to hand out to kids age 10 and under. At the end of each movie, a family basket will also be awarded as well as a Golden Ticket basket for a lucky winner.

If you would like to provide a family basket in addition to other basket goodies, please let us know. If you are willing to help make these baskets extra special through your donations or time, we would greatly appreciate it.

The Park Falls Area Chamber of Commerce office is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or by calling 715-762-2703. To request a registration form by email, contact chamber@parkfalls.com.

Mark your calendars and come celebrate with us in downtown Park Falls!

THE BOOKWORM SEZ

'The Heights' is a proper whodunit

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

There are things that you'll always remember.

Your first kiss. The first car you bought yourself. A mentor who helped you, a recipe you can make without thinking, that one best dog, you'll never forget any of those things. A toy you loved as a child. The best day of your life. Or, as in the new novel, "The Heights," by Louise Candlish.

Michaela Ross thought she knew how the manuscript would end, the manuscript that Felix Penney had given her to help her understand the work he was doing at the Correctional Institute. She met the scripts' author, then she started reading, thinking they knew the story.

Ellen Saint wasn't happy that her son, Lucas, was chosen to be the school buddy for the new boy at

his private academy. Kids like 'that Kieran Watts' are trouble, but then again, who better than Lucas, Ellen's A-level-working Lucas, to show the boy around, right?

But did it have to extend to welcoming the boy into her home? Ellen was uneasy around Kieran; even her mother said that the boy was "cold," and the hateful looks he gave Ellen when Lucas wasn't looking, well, they were terrifying.

And then one thing led to another and another and soon Lucas was always hanging around with Kieran, staying out late, neglecting his studies, getting into mischief, doing drugs. Ellen and Lucas' father, Vic, tried to discourage their son from the friendship. Ellen's husband, Justin, tried, too, but nothing worked.

Ellen actively hated Kieran and the hate turned seething when he was involved in a car accident with Lucas. She was sure that Kieran was a monster, and monsters — especially

evil ones — shouldn't be allowed to walk free. So then why did Ellen spot Kieran in a building near a new client's apartment years after he'd been put in prison, two years after she'd paid Vic £15,000 to have someone kill him? Yet there he was, Kieran walking around, working, successful, wealthy. Taunting her. Teasing.

Ooooooh, you're going to like how "The Heights" unfolds. You're going to like that it has more twists than a four-inch screw, and that it'll make you wonder again and again if you've really got the right bad guy pegged here while you're reading.

You'll love how author Louise Candlish grabs you by both sides of your head and makes you dive with Ellen into the kind of madness that ruins families — even as you struggle because Ellen is so darn likable, with her unique nail-biting phobia and her willingness to stretch her imagination like a second-grader stretches gum.

» CRISIS

FROM PAGE A1

The lone action of the meeting was to approve the posting for a deputy clerk, clerk-treasurer and a call for town board members. The board saw this as the possible solution to fill vacancies without requiring a special election or disrupting town functions.

The goal is to fill the positions whether interim or permanent in order to carry out town business for the approximately 1,600 Worcester residents, Precour said. The board asked that residents spread the word to anyone interested in being considered for an appointment to contact the town office.

"We need someone from the public that would be willing to fill at least the one spot to begin with," Precour said. "So all of you that are here today, we really appreciate your support. This means a lot. But we do need one of you, or possibly two of you to be willing to step forward."

The three board members and the town clerk have voting powers and only three are needed to appoint an individual to fill a vacancy, according to town attorney Bryce Alan Schoenborn at the meeting. The appointment can be for the duration of the term, or until a special election is held, he said.

If the clerk and a board member resigns then Wisconsin statute does not allow the remaining two board members to appoint new members, he said. In this situation the Price County Clerk would be required to call a special election to fill those two vacancies, and a mandatory two weeks to publish the notice.

A lack of town gov-

ernment for three weeks or more would create problems with town services and with the Spring Election, Schoenborn said. Absentee ballots are due to be mailed out on March 15 and a clerk would need to be present to sign and record each incoming ballot.

Karen Smart, a resident and town election inspector, said she was pleased with the turnout and hoped that the show of support will give the town clerk and board members a change of heart by the next meeting to avoid all the work to replace them.

"I have a great deal of respect for our county board and town board members and our clerk," Smart said. "I'm glad that enough people came out for this and showed their support and maybe we can convince them to hang in there. It's a thankless job, and I so appreciate it."

Richard Heitkemper, a Phillips City Council member, said that resigning board members not only affect the Worcester town administration, it has a wider impact on the fire department, ambulance and other service boards that are shared among municipalities. These boards and committees have years of experience and expertise among them, he said.

"So it's not just you that's going to lose, it's the entire community," he said.

Heitkemper added that the Worcester board members were elected to serve and have an obligation to carry out their terms. He asked the board members to reconsider, saying that all meeting comments were in praise for their service and that no comments agreed to the rationale of

resigning.

Town residents spoke in support of the board and clerk and had harsh words for Anthony Sleck, a resident with a civil suit against the town, alleging violations of the Open Records Act. Many called him a "troublemaker" and believed he created an unnecessary problem by spreading "misinformation."

Sleck, who was present, defended his allegations saying the board members are civil servants who work for and represent the town residents. He said the board members need to "listen with intent to understand and not with an intent to respond."

"That's what I want from you guys, representation that is equal and fair for the whole community, and not just a few in the group," Sleck said.

Precour read a prepared statement at the start of the meeting, noting that any resignation of board members or the town clerk or treasurer "has nothing to do with the current pending lawsuit." He said rather that "actions from the town of Wooster residents have forced members to consider resignation."

Town board decisions were made in the best interests of the town and no special interest group or individual gained from decisions of the board, according to the statement. He said the members are frequently the target of undue slander and accusations.

"There comes a time when it's not worth the stress or worry when the next lawsuit will come because of a simple mistake," Precour said. "Working under the adage of guilty until proven

innocent is no way to try to run a township."

Price County Board Chair Robert Kopisch, county administrator Nick Trimner, and county clerk Jean Gottwald, were at the meeting to determine if the county would need to provide emergency services should the board and town employees resign.

"We have services we provide for the county, but what happens to the town?" Trimner said. "Can they get the roads plowed and stuff like that?"

Gottwald said that if the town can fill the deputy clerk position that would allow the election workers to carry out

their duties without any disruption to the spring election.

"Once the deputy is appointed, they've got that figurehead and they will get all the help they need," she said. "But you need someone in that position as either clerk or deputy."

Kopisch was satisfied that the town's actions to fill vacancies by March 15 did not present an immediate crisis and canceled a planned special meeting of the county executive committee on the topic or Worcester resignations.

"There's nothing for us to do," Kopisch said. "We'll have to wait and see what happens."

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