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Local senior goes from sprinter to Boston Marathon qualifier Page 40



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Green Bay School Board discusses potential referendum projects

BY JANELLE FISHER INTERN

GREEN BAY – All eyes were on the Green Bay School Board Monday, May 23, as it discussed potential projects under a proposed \$92.6 million November facilities referendum.

It's a plan that would upgrade aging district buildings, repair or replace playgrounds and make improvements to equipment.

The last time the district went to the voters for a facilities referendum was in 2017, a \$68.25 million facilities referendum that passed with a 70% to 30% majority.

During Monday's presentation to the board,



A proposed \$92.6 million facilities referendum includes upgrades to aging district buildings, elementary playgrounds and equipment. **Press Times File Photo**

Josh Patchak, the district chief operations officer, said of the \$96.6 million – district-wide maintenance projects would cost around \$43.4 million; improve-

ments at the high and middle schools would come in at an estimated \$48 million and playgrounds would *See REFERENDUM page 7*



The American Legion Post 512 will host a Memorial Day service at 10:30 a.m. at the Shiocton Area Veterans Memorial, located by Bamboo Bend just off Highway 54. **Submitted Photo**

Commemorate Memorial Day with these area events

BY KAT HALFMAN STAFF INTERN

BROWN COUNTY – Communities across the area are holding events this Memorial Day to honor

those members of the military who paid the ultimate sacrifice while serving the country.

The roots of Memorial Day date back to Decoration Day, which started in

the years after the Civil War when soldiers would place flowers on the graves of soldiers who died in the conflict.

See MEMORIAL DAY page 11



A soggy kickoff

Vendors didn't let a little thing like consistent rain keep them from setting up for the first Farmers' Market on Broadway of the year. The market will run from 3-8 p.m. every Wednesday through Sept. 28 (3-7 p.m. in September). The Saturday Farmers' Market also started this week, which is held from 7 a.m. to noon on Washington Street. **Heather Graves Photo**

Local family looks to community for support for child battling cancer

BY HEATHER GRAVES EDITOR

GREEN BAY – Family members describe 4-year-old Khloe "Peaches" Abdelbaqi-Graves as

compassionate, strong and caring with a "smile that will melt anyone's heart."

Grandma Janel LaRock said like most little girls her

age, Peaches loves princesses, unicorns, mermaids, glitter and loves to color and paint.

"She loves helping take care of her new baby sister, Amani, and helping mom and grandma cook," she said. "She also loves cuddling with her papa."

However, the villain in this pint-sized preschooler fairytale is stage 4 Neuroblastoma cancer.

"She reassures us that she is brave and strong and asks to get better every day," LaRock said.

After being told at multiple doctor appointments that the limping Peaches was experiencing for about six months was due to growing pains, mom, Hayley DeGrave, said she knew something wasn't right.

"Hayley told the doctor



Four-year-old Khloe "Peaches" Abdelbaqi-Graves was diagnosed with stage 4 Neuroblastoma cancer just before Christmas last year. **Submitted Photo**

See PEACHES page 17

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REFERENDUM
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cost about \$1.2 million.
If approved by the board, the ask would be on the November ballot.
No specifics were given on how it would affect the tax levy, however, wording of the district-wide survey indicated a potential facilities referendum would not result in a tax rate increase for property owners.

District-wide projects

The projects proposed under the referendum are focused largely on repairing or replacing existing structures and systems across the district – such as updates to emergency generators and furniture, ceiling and floor tile replacement as needed and roof replacements at East, Southwest, Franklin, Washington and West.
Several projects are also aimed at improving the district's energy efficiency and conservation efforts – a continued transition to LED lighting, window replacements at Edison and Sul-



Stadium asphalt damage at West High School.

livan, upgraded HVAC systems at Sullivan and Howe and the installation of a solar array to provide power at Lombardi and King.
Patchak said the proposed projects have been on the list to get done for a while now, but cannot be done without the referendum, because they exceed or would take a significant chunk out of the district's yearly operational budget.
"We have about a \$3.5 million operational budget for maintaining our facilities every year and there are some projects that just exceed that amount," he

said. "The Edison windows, for example. That's a project that's been on the list for some time and that project on its own is a couple million dollars. So that would (just about) eat up our entire operational budget."
Also on the list is the implementation of additional signage to improve the safety of bikers and walkers.

Secondary school projects

Under the proposed plan, East would see a number of upgrades – including improvements to the physical education/athletic area, improved stormwater management, auditorium upgrades and a new fire alarm system.

Proposed projects at Preble include auditorium upgrades, a commons expansion, improvements to the physical education/athletic area and new asphalt in the main parking lot.

Southwest projects include a new auditorium sound system and improvements to the physical education/athletic area.

Auditorium upgrades, as well as improvements to the physical education/athletic area are proposed for West High.

Edison is slated for audi-



Broken bleacher seat at Preble High School.

torium upgrades and a repaired track and long jump area, while Franklin would see upgrades to both the auditorium and gym.

Lombardi projects include Family and Consumer Education (FACE) lab cabinetry and appliances improvements, as well as improvements to the physical education/athletic area.

The orchestra room at Washington would also see upgrades.

Patchak said the proposed projects, especially the improvements to various school's physical education/athletic areas, would extend the amount of time those facilities can be used, as well as improve both students' and community members' experiences.

"Particularly at West and Preble, where the athletic fields there are such that weather affects them very

badly," he said. "So you kind of have a shortened season of when they can be used. Whereas, if you go with some kind of synthetic surface, you're able to manage that drainage a lot easier and kind of extend that window of time, which could be used by both the community and the physical education classes."

He said the proposed projects also have the potential to generate additional revenue for the district once completed.

"At Southwest we're looking at a synthetic surface for the baseball field," he said. "That's the only baseball field in the district that the district actually owns. So, that's another facility there where we can get a lot more out of it. And the maintenance on it is significantly easier and cheaper once (the synthetic

surface) is installed. Pre-COVID, we would bring in about \$140,000 annually for rental fees, and upon completion of these projects, I would think that revenue would go up."

Playground replacements

The proposal also includes new playgrounds at Aldo Leopold, Baird, Jackson and Kennedy, new pavement at Red Smith and new ADA playground equipment at Danz and Sullivan.

Board President Laura McCoy spoke in support of the proposed projects and reiterated that the referendum is needed because the projects are too large for the regular budget.

"When we maintain our buildings properly, we're honoring the investment that generations of taxpayers have made in these schools for many, many years and maintaining them properly is just what we have to do," she said. "Also, obviously it contributes to the education of our children as well. But, these are things that cannot be paid out of our regular budget because they're so huge."

No action was taken at Monday's meeting.



Damage in East High School basement from flooding.



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