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NEWS GRAPHIC

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MTSD annual budget hearing is Monday District to address budget deficit

By Charley Hanney
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MEQUON — The Mequon-Thiensville School District proposed 2023-24 budget has been drafted and several factors, not unique to most districts, has the district staring down at a \$1.4 million deficit and potentially tapping into its fund balance.

Following months of discussions and deliberations, the proposed budget will be presented Monday during the district's annual budget hearing and annual meeting at 7 p.m. in the Range Line Conference Room, 11040 N.

Range Line Road. As always, the district aimed to create a budget that is student-focused, supports organizational improvement and is aligned with its guiding principles, according to MTSD Executive Director of Business Services Sarah Viera.

"This ensures that all stakeholders are able to recognize the integrity of the budget and its ability to support organizational improvement," Viera said. "Even in an awful budget year, we still have to do things to move forward and continually improve to meet the evolving needs of all of our students." Since the budget cannot be final-

"That's not a good situation and I'm not going to pretend like it is."

—Sarah Viera
 MTSD Executive Director
 of Business Services

ized until crucial figures for final resident enrollment, final equalized values and final state aid allocation are available in September and October, the budget currently assumes:

- An increase in equalized values of 2.5%
- Decrease of 51 resident students

■ \$325 per pupil increase on the revenue limit

As proposed, the budget calls for a general fund operating budget of \$48.7 million, which is an increase of \$611,398, or 1.27% from the previous year. The total budget of all funds (excluding Fund 73) is roughly \$66 million and net total expenditures are \$60.7. This is a decrease of \$4.6 million, or 7.13%.

The proposed total tax levy — the portion that comes from taxes — is \$44 million, a \$140,518 increase from last year. The 2023-24 preliminary tax rate, which is \$6.93 per \$1,000 of equalized value assuming a 2.5% increase in equalized valuation, is projected to drop

15 cents. For the owner of a home valued at \$300,000, there would be a \$45 drop in the school portion of their taxes.

The budget assumes the use of \$560,000 of the district's Fund 46 Trust Fund, a fund that allows districts to set aside dollars for capital projects.

The district also expects to use approximately \$903,526 of its ESSER funds, which the federal government provided to districts to help relieve the financial impacts caused by COVID-19.

"These funds are being used to

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Amazing Grace: Mequon woman turns 105

By Kay Dahlke
 Special to the News Graphic

MEQUON — A child of the Depression, a pandemic survivor, patriot, elementary teacher and artist, Grace Sansoucy celebrated her turning 105 with her family July 13.

Sansoucy, a resident of Newcastle Place in Mequon, is unable to converse due to a condition in her throat. She allowed her family to share some of her life stories.

Sansoucy taught fourth grade for 40 years at Browning Elementary School in Milwaukee. She has outlived two husbands, Roy Lunn and William Sansoucy, and a daughter, Nancy. She has seven grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren, many of whom were present for her birthday celebration.

While her husband was serving in the armed forces, patriot Sansoucy signed her kids up for the draft.

"She got a citation for doing so," said her grandson, Chris Ernest. Thankfully, everybody came home safely.

She met her second husband square dancing, something the couple mutually enjoyed. The couple built their Mequon home together, said her grandson, with the help of a neighbor who reminded them to adhere to building codes. The family liked spending time together,



Photo by Art Dahlke/Special to the News Graphic

Grace Sansoucy and her family celebrate her birthday at Newcastle Place in Mequon. Back row, granddaughter Samantha Ernest, great-grandson Oliver Henderson, grandson Chris Ernest, granddaughter Jessica Lunn and granddaughter Darcy Borelli, and front row, great-grandson Caden Henderson, Grace and great-granddaughter Maddy Borelli.

er, especially in the fall at miles west of Marquette. In the 1990s, Sansoucy took up watercolor painting. According to family, she would paint whatever

See **GRACE**, PAGE 6A

Melotik defeats Tatterson in District 24 special election

GRAFTON — Republicans will hold onto the District 24 Assembly seat after Paul Melotik defeated Democrat Bob Tatterson in a special election Tuesday.

Melotik is a small businessman, Ozaukee County Board member and Grafton Town Board member. He will replace Dan Knodl, who vacated the seat earlier this year after being elected to replace Alberta Darling in State Sen. District 8.

Assembly District 24 covers parts of Grafton and Mequon in Ozaukee County, Germantown and Richfield in Washington County and Menomonee Falls in Waukesha County. Melotik won Ozaukee and Washington counties by about 6% points each. Tatterson won by nine votes in Waukesha County, which is made up of nine wards in Menomonee Falls.

Melotik won in Ozaukee County was by 233 votes thanks to the town of Grafton, which he took 713 votes to 411. In addition to Menomonee Falls, Tatterson won the city of Mequon, the village of Grafton and the town of Germantown.

Voter turnout was 33.9% in Ozaukee County, the highest among the three counties. Washington County reported 28% and Waukesha 25.6%.

Melotik said during the campaign that the district remains a conservative one, and that he was the best choice for the seat because, as a conservative Republican, he has "a proven record of advocating for smaller, more efficient government."

He was not available for comment Wednesday but Knodl issued a statement the day after the election.

"I would like to congratulate my friend and new colleague Paul Melotik on his victory in the 24th Assembly District. It just goes to show what hard work and dedication can accomplish. I am positive Paul will do a great job representing my former district and I look forward to working with him to improve our communities." Knodl said.

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Fun Things To Do This Weekend

Movie Matinee: "Operation Fortune: Ruse de Guerre," 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Frank L. Weyenberg Library, 11345 N. Cedarburg Road, Mequon.

Belgium Summer Nights Live, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Friday, Community Park, 106 Beech St., Belgium. Enjoy food from area restaurants, music from Random Maxx, night market, beer and wine garden and fun

games.

Summer Sounds: V05 with Sugo, 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Friday, Cedar Creek Park, N52W5882 Portland Road, Cedarburg.

Flick N Float: "DC League of Super Pets," 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Friday, Grafton Family Aquatic Center, 649 N. Green Bay Road, Grafton. Bring an

inflatable raft to float on or watch from the pool deck. Concessions available for purchase. No carries please. Admission is \$5 or free with a Family Aquatic Center season pass.

Window to the Universe, 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Harrington Beach State Park, 531 Highway D, Belgium. Explore the beauty and depth of the night sky with the Northern

Cross Science Foundation. Bring your bug spray. Park admission required.

Summer Kids Movies Series: "DC League of Super Pets," 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Rivoli Theatre, W62N563 Washington Ave., Cedarburg. Free tickets are available at the Cedarburg, Grafton, Mequon and Thiensville branches of Port Washington State Bank.

Have a news tip?

Contact Lisa Curtis.
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Suburban Harley anniversary attendance exceeds expectations



Photos by Mark Justesen/
News Graphic staff

THIENSVILLE — Anyone who thought Suburban Motors Harley-Davidson officials were exaggerating when they projected 30,000 visiting riders during the anniversary party last week can make their apologies now. The Thiensville dealership, one of the largest by volume in the state, easily surpassed that, seeing riders from as far away as Italy, France, Mexico and South America over the nearly week-long event, said General Manager Todd Berlin. “We sold a motorcycle to someone from Japan.” Food vendors ran out of food so quickly, they were taking products from their next day’s supply. One Thiensville restaurant closed early because they ran out of food. Thelan said they sold a lot of bikes and a lot of products inside the retail store. “And a lot of clothes. A lot of Harley clothes were sold,” Thelan said. **Top**, bikers head out of the Suburban Harley dealership to check out some other spots in southeastern Wisconsin. **Above**, many riders brought their custom bikes to display.



POLICE BLOTTER

Mequon Police Department

K-9 deployment: A K-9 unit was requested for a vehicle sniff near the 1500 block of Wisconsin Avenue in Grafton around 10:15 p.m. July 9 after a Grafton sergeant had stopped a truck for a traffic violation. The K-9 was deployed and aggressively indicated something on the driver-side front door, as his breathing changed, he squared up to the door and

began jumping and licking. Officers searched the vehicle and located two dime bags of suspected marijuana, as well as other baggies containing unknown white powder residue. The driver was arrested for a driving offense and possession of narcotics.

Theft: An officer was dispatched to a business on West Executive Drive around 11:30 a.m. July 10 for a report of a theft of scrap metal parts and industrial

metal racks. The officer spoke with the reporting person, who stated that on three separate occasions (June 17, 24, and July 8), a man drove into the parking lot and in all three separate incidents, he was driving different vehicles with no license plates to collect metal parts. The reporting person said that no one should be driving on the property to take anything. A copy of video footage will be placed at the property.

Theft: An officer responded to a report of a theft at a park on July 11. A woman said that someone broke her rear passenger side window sometime between 10:45 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. while she was near a playground and took her purse, which was located on the floor in the vehicle. The woman said her credit card was used at a retail store in Milwaukee around noon, but the transactions were declined.

Budget

From Page 1A

supplant expenditures in the 2023-24 proposed budget,” according to Viera, who added that the district will likely use them to offset its contracted services for the upcoming school year.

But similar to the district’s prior budgets, particularly ones in recent years that relied on federal government aid to help deal with pandemic-related costs, the proposed budget presents several challenges.

Much of it was shaped by major changes to the state budget, as parental choice reimbursement rates, the special education reimbursement rate and the per-pupil amount on the revenue limit all increased.

As a result, the district’s proposed budget increased by over \$1.1 million, creating a \$1.4 million deficit that appears to be the start of a negative trend that may also force the district to use \$1,430,891 in fund balance. Its projected deficits for 2024-25 and 2025-26 are \$2.1 and \$3.2, respectively, Viera said.

“From the use of over \$1.4 million in fund balance, again, not sugarcoating it, that’s awful. That’s not a good situation and I’m not going to pretend like it is,” Viera said. “We can consider using fund balance in ‘23-’24, but we have to figure out another strategy as we move into ‘24-’25 and beyond.”

Other districts facing similar challenges

MTSD, however, is not alone in this.

Other districts in the county are facing similar challenges, as the Grafton School District — assuming wages are increased 4.3% overall — has a current deficit of \$500,000 to \$600,000 with the \$325 increase, according to Director of Business Services Topher Adams.

Ben Irwin, Cedarburg’s director of business services, believes one of the biggest factors impacting public schools’ financial situations relates to state funding increases not keeping up with inflation.

“In prior years (1998-99 to 2008-09), per pupil increases were indexed for inflation,” Irwin told the News Graphic. “However, starting in the 2009-10 fiscal year, that has not been the case as each funding increase has been below what the per pupil amount would have been if it was indexed for inflation.”

In addition, most districts with declining enrollment are seeing very little new revenue help cover inflationary increases.

To overcome these obstacles, Viera encourages administration, school board members and community stakeholders to continue advocating for funding for public education.

“The state of Wisconsin continues to provide school districts with inadequate sustainable funding year over year and our district is forced to do more with less as we work hard to provide the programming and resources our students deserve and provide the excellent educational experience that our community expects,” she said, noting that the board of education will determine in the coming months if an operating referendum to support the district is warranted.

To view MTSD’s entire 2023-24 proposed budget book, go to

<https://bit.ly/3O0ihLy>. The budget hearing will take place in person with a view-only livestream available via Zoom. Virtual meeting participants can join the meeting the same way as other board meetings by clicking the Zoom link. No passcode is needed. Community members wishing to participate in discussion and vote on the proposed levy must attend in person.

Grace

From Page 1A

took her fancy — gazebos, snowmen, flowers. Sansoucy was proud of the \$2 prize she received for an entry in the county fair. Sansoucy’s great-granddaughter, Maddy, said that one Christmas, everybody in the family received a painting. Many of her paintings can be viewed in the halls of Newcastle.

Growing up during the Depression, a lot got saved, said her family. Sansoucy’s advice to her family is “hold on” to what you have, a true sentiment of a survivor.

Election

From Page 1A

Tatterson is an engineer, investor and adviser in innovative business startups and former volunteer firefighter. He challenged Knodl for the District 24 seat last November, but also

came up short. He touted his community involvement and vowed to work across party lines.

Tatterson thanked the voters donors in a statement Tuesday night for helping to make it “an incredible campaign that well exceeded everyone’s expectations.”

“Although I do not believe the results are in the best interests of this district, I completely respect the democratic process and the will of the voters. Our state and country needs unity, that is why I am rooting for Rep.-elect Melotik’s success even though we may disagree on how to address some issues facing our district and state,” Tatterson said. “Our loss in this election does not mean that I will be leaving the fight for the values I believe in. I still believe the best days of our state are ahead of us. I will do everything in my power to continue to work towards that future. Let’s keep moving our state forward, together.”

Wiesler’s hosting World Cup watch party

CEDARBURG — C. Wiesler’s Saloon & Eatery is calling all soccer fans and patriots to come root for the U.S. Women’s National Soccer Team during Friday’s World Cup match.

Kicking off at 8 p.m., the team is seeking its third consecutive World Cup championship, beginning with the match against Vietnam.

The roster features incredible talent, including former

UW Badger Rose Lavelle, Alex Morgan, Julie Ertz and Trinity Rodman, daughter of former NBA star Dennis Rodman. General Manager Kate Markgraf even has ties with Cedarburg, as she’s married to former Cedarburg Bulldog Chris Markgraf.

The next match is scheduled for 8 p.m. Wednesday. Located at W61N493 Washington Ave, Wiesler’s has hosted numerous events, including last year’s men’s World Cup.

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