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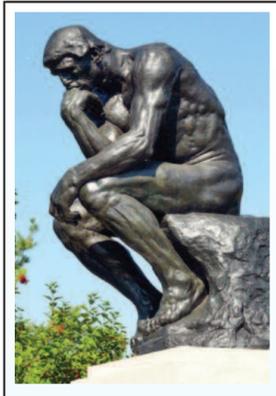
# The Review

Hamtramck

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## Quick Hits

Hamtramck, this is your special weekend (Aug. 10 and 11) at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

As part of the DIA Inside/Out program — which Hamtramck is a part of — residents can enjoy free admission and discounts at the museum's gift shop.

As an added treat, local bands The Creepos and Pewter Cub will perform at the DIA Community Living Room at noon and 2 p.m. respectively.

And did we say that all of this is free to residents?

Better hurry up and enjoy what the museum has to offer before Detroit's emergency manager auctions off its collection. That last part is a joke — sort of.



## Quote of the week ...

**Who said this, and what is it about?** You can find the quote and the story it belongs to somewhere in the pages of this issue.

**"We've worked and we've played; we've struggled and we've celebrated; we've argued with each other, and we've broken bread together."**

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# Majewski survives tough re-election challenge

By Charles Sercombe

It looks like it's a replay of four years ago for Karen Mayor and mayoral wannabe Abdul Algazali.

The two will once again square off in the November General Election.

Algazali, who is a city councilmember and mayoral pro tem, finished first in Tuesday's Primary Election, garnering 731 votes and beating Majewski by 61 votes.

Four years ago, Majewski beat Algazali in the November election by 124 votes, which was considered a slim margin at that time.

Majewski faced two other challengers on Tuesday, Councilmember Cathie Gordon and Review newspaper owner John Ulaj.

Gordon came in fourth with 251 votes while Ulaj finished a distant third with 363 votes.

It was predicted by a number of longtime political observers that Ulaj stood a good chance of finishing in first or second place.

Majewski said she never doubted she would survive the primary.

"I wouldn't be in this race to begin with if I didn't think I'd win," she said.

Gordon, who gave up her seat on city council to challenge Majewski, said she felt "hurt and unappreciated" in her loss.

She is also asking for a recount of the election results, but not because she thinks she might win the election.

There had been widespread rumors of election fraud and illegitimate ballots cast.

"I just want to make sure everything is on the up and up," Gordon said.

She also added that people approached her and offered to have absentee ballots marked with her name, but for a price.

Deputy City Clerk August Gitschlag said there are 46 absentee ballots that have been tagged as "challenged" because they were submitted by people not authorized to

Continued on page 2



Above: Campaign workers and voters collide outside the Hamtramck High School Community Center. Below: Precinct workers go over paperwork after the polls closed Tuesday night.



# In Hamtramck, a year of challenges and ongoing development



Mayor Karen Majewski gives her eighth State of the City Address.

By Charles Sercombe

In her eighth State of the City Address, Mayor Karen Majewski once again had a little something of everything to report on.

Unlike other years, Sunday's Address, scheduled just two days before the Primary Election, drew few attendees. A number of elected officials, department heads and dignitaries were noticeably absent.

Cathie Gordon was the only city councilmember to attend.

In Majewski's almost hour-long speech, she acknowledged the city's financial woes

and the appointment of an emergency manager to take over the city.

Majewski, who is seeking her third term, blamed the city's financial crisis on the loss of property taxes, and the state's "systematic and purposeful erosion" of state funding.

That's been increasingly a rally cry among Democratic elected officials who blame Gov. Rick Snyder's government for causing many communities to crash financially.

Leading Democrats, such as

Continued on page 4

## After years of tough talk city acts

By Charles Sercombe

Remember how for years you've heard the city is going to crack down on those pesky overdue water bills?

On Tuesday, the city finally came out in force, shutting off water to about 50 dwellings and businesses.

Acting City Manager Kyle Tertzag said Emergency Manager Cathy Square has made it a priority to collect over \$600,000 owed to the city.

"It's money that's sitting out there that crippled the city's ability to maintain its infrastructure — which has resulted in basement floodings," Tertzag said.

It's been past practice, Tertzag said, to allow delinquencies to go without attempting to collect or even put on the tax rolls "for whatever reason."

Tertzag has been acting city manager for about one year. Tuesday's water shutoffs resulted in an immediate rush of property owners coming into city hall to pay their bills, or at least start a payment plan.

Tertzag said Tuesday's shutoffs prompted a number of people who knew they were delinquent but didn't want to face a water shutoff to make good on their bills.

"People came in droves to pay their bill," he said.

Some of the bills totaled \$3,000, \$5,000 and even \$8,000, Tertzag said.

"That's years in the making," he said. "We're talking about long-term delinquencies."

Those who did pay their bills on Tuesday got their water turned back on that day or the next day at the latest.

Tuesday's shutoffs also caught the attention of WXYZ Channel 7 news. That's because Sharian Lloyd called to complain about the alleged treatment some received in city hall.

Lloyd, who owns a rental dwelling in Hamtramck, came to pay her bill but witnessed a water department clerk treat a non-English speaking resident rudely.

"My beef is this: It was chaos. The lady was yelling," Lloyd said.

Tertzag scoffed at the notion of anything resembling "chaos" in city hall. He said that those paying stood quietly in line and that there were enough clerks to handle the rush.

He added that the city has been shutting off water service to about 10 households and businesses a day for the past

Continued on page 2

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*I want to thank you all for your support out there! Economic Development is greatly needed in this city. I think as Mayor, it's important to have a common understanding when it comes to Commercial Development. This is the primary reason why I ran for office. Thank you all once again and may God richly bless you and yours!*

—John Ulaj

Paid for by The Committee to Elect John Ulaj,  
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# Majewski survives tough re-election challenge

Continued from front page

do so.

State election law says that the person who votes absentee can mail the ballot back, return it themselves or have an immediate family member do so. There were three people who did not meet those qualifications who submitted absentee ballots.

Gitschlag would not release the identity of those people. The matter has been turned over to the Police Department for further investigation. Police Chief Max Garbarino said the matter is still under investigation and could not comment on it.

Councilmember Algazali has refused to comment about his campaign when

questioned by The Review and could not be reached for possible comment after the election.

He also did not appear at a mayoral candidate forum a few weeks ago.

In the two council races a familiar name in Hamtramck politics emerged as the top vote-getter in all of the election. Andrea Karpinski, whose father Joe Karpinski is a former councilmember, topped all the candidates with 837 votes.

Councilmember Mohammed Hassan was the only incumbent seeking re-election, which he did easily and looks set to coast into a second term.

Here's how the two council

races broke down:

In the election for the three seats that are four-year terms, the top six candidates will face-off in the November General Election. They are:

Andrea Karpinski: 837 (17.92 percent of the vote)

Mohammed Hassan: 764 (16.35 percent of the vote)

Titus Walters: 542 (11.60 percent of the vote)

Susan Dunn: 517 (11.07 percent of the vote)

Rashad Almasmari: 407 (8.71 percent of the vote)

Showkat Chowdhury: 404 (8.65 percent of the vote)

The results for the remaining candidates for the four-year term are:

Jewel Mohammed: 354 (7.58 percent of the vote)

Anthony Liggett: 340 (7.28

percent of the vote)

Armani Asad: 307 (6.57 percent of the vote)

Richard Fabiszak: 195 (4.17 percent of the vote)

Over votes: 18

Under votes: 1,643

Write-in: 5

In the race for the one seat with a two-year term, the two top vote-getters who will face-off in the General Election are:

Abu Musa: 738 (42.20 percent of the vote)

Ian Perrotta: 363 (20.70 percent of the vote)

The remaining candidates finished in this order:

Darla Swint: 336 (19.21 percent of the vote)

Darren Grow: 159 (9.09 percent of the vote)

Beverly Tran: 150 (8.58 per-

cent of the vote)

Over votes: 5

Here's how the mayoral election results breakdown:

Algazali: 731 (36.19 percent of the vote)

Majewski: 670 (33.17 percent of the vote)

Ulaj: 363 (17.97 percent of the vote)

Gordon: 251 (12.43 percent of the vote)

Under votes: 89

Over votes: 2

Write-in: 5

There were a total of 2,111 votes cast, which is about 500 more than usual for primary elections with just local races involved. Nearly 800 absentee ballots were cast.

Election results had not yet been certified by the time The Review went to press on Thursday.

## After years of tough talk city acts

Continued from front page

several weeks. The reason 50 were turned off on Tuesday was that it did not require digging up part of the street and that the weather cooperated.

Water funds can only be used

to pay for the water and sewer service provided by Detroit and to reinvest into repairs and maintenance. In other words, the city cannot dip into the fund to pay for other city services.

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## The mayor in her words on the State of the City

Last Sunday Mayor Karen Majewski gave her annual State of the City Address.

Here is an excerpted version of her speech:

This is the eighth time I've addressed you like this, to review what we've been through together in the past year, and to give you an idea of what's ahead for us as a city, as a community. And goodness knows we've been through a lot together.

We've worked and we've played; we've struggled and we've celebrated; we've argued with each other, and we've broken bread together.



Mayor Karen Majewski

That is what makes Hamtramck more than a collection of houses, or a grid of streets, or, as the lingo goes these days, "a provider of services." That is what connects those

tightly-packed houses into a community, that joins those narrow streets into neighborhoods, that makes us want to connect with each other and serve our neighbor.

That is what makes this place our home. A home we share, for richer, for poorer, for better and for worse. We are joined to this place, and to each other. And we've all certainly had our worries about this place in the last year. The story of our financial troubles dominated the public narrative about Hamtramck—it was a story told over and over again, mostly superficially or sensationally.

Like many Michigan cities, especially those built on a proud manufacturing history like ours, Hamtramck struggled to balance its budget in the face of a diminished tax base, ever-rising costs, escalating infrastructure needs, and the systematic and purposeful erosion of state funding to local governments.

This perfect storm for cities has been discussed and theorized from many perspectives. And "storm" might be a mis-

nomer, because rather than a natural occurrence, this is not unlike the volatile weather caused by global warming—man-made, predictable, and reversible by responsible public policy aggressively enacted at the highest levels.

This has not happened, despite fine words from our state leaders. And so we are likely to see more local governments sinking, clinging to the slippery lifeline of emergency management, which can choke as readily as it rescues. We should know this better than most. On July 1, Cathy Square was appointed Hamtramck's

Emergency Manager. Her 45-day report is due later this month.

What the report will say or what it will propose for Hamtramck going forward I cannot say. But I do know another narrative about Hamtramck.

It's a story told in the hard work of our employees under most difficult circumstances.

It's a story told in the careful consideration of issues and the organization of projects by our city commissions, committees, and volunteers.

It's a story told by the long hours put in by our business

Continued on page 3

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## This week at the library...

**ESL Basic Class** - Monday, August 12 at noon. Ms. Latisha conducts this 3-hour basic ESL class, free for Hamtramck residents.

**Toddler Time at the Library** - Monday, August 12 at 11:00 a.m. & 3:30 p.m. Join us for story time, arts & crafts, and games. This week's theme is "Beach & Water Day." (Children must be accompanied by an adult.)

**Movie Night** - Tuesday, August 13 at 4 p.m. All children are invited to see a movie shown on high definition screen and get a serving of popcorn. This week's feature is "A Turtle's Tale."

**ESL Conversation Class** - Tuesday, August 13 at noon. Ms. Latisha conducts English Conversation classes each Tuesday night. Free of charge to Hamtramck residents.

**Summer Reading Program Final Registration** - Wednesday, August 14 at 1 p.m. The regular session of the Summer Reading Program will start with Judy Zachary's Puppet Workshop. Games, contests and reading journal entries will follow. All children are invited.

**Basic Computer Class** - Thursday, August 15 at 11:30 a.m. This

week's class is on basic computer usage, Internet searches, e-mail and word processing. Registration is required, and new students are welcome.

**Reading and Writing ESL Class** - Thursday, August 15 at noon. The reading and writing ESL class conducted by Ms. Latisha is free to the public (registration required).

**Citizenship and Naturalization Classes** - Thursday, August 15 at 5:30 p.m. This program, conducted by the International Institute, is free of charge to Hamtramck residents. It provides help with preparation of documents and legal assistance, if necessary.

**Friends of the Library Meeting** - Thursday, August 15 at 6 p.m. FHL President Kathy Kristy and Treasurer George Gorday invite all members and volunteers to participate in the regular monthly meeting.

**Teen Club Meeting** - Friday, August 16, at 2 p.m. Teens are invited to join us for the summer meeting of the Teen Club. This week we will learn the art of weaving with Ann Schumacher

**ESL Class "News for You!"** - Friday, August 16 at 3:30 p.m. This in-

termediate ESL class, conducted by Latisha, consists of reading news articles from a publication prepared for ESL, "News for You." Free to Hamtramck residents.

**Library Gardening Club** - Friday, August 16 at 4 p.m. Everyone is invited to join the library gardening club, with activities in the library community garden. Each week we will do a project in the garden and provide each member with a chance to get their own gardening plot, and grow vegetables, herbs or flowers to their liking. For more information see Ania or Kate.

**Family Story Time for Children** - Thursday, August 22, at 6 a.m. Join your friends at the library for a reading of a storybook for children. This week's topic is "A Good Day."

**Pecha Kucha Night** - Wednesday, August 21 at 8 p.m. A touch of creativity in architecture, photography, fashion, interior design, painting and dance are some of the topics presented. Everyone is invited.

**Meeting of the Library Board** - Thursday, September 12 at 6 p.m. Regular meeting of the Library Board will be held in the auditorium. Open to the public.

For more information about events at the library call (313) 365-7050, or visit our website at <http://hamtramck.lib.mi.us> where you can also access our online catalog.

# Second Front Page

## Two suspects in attempted armed robbery face life in prison

By Charles Sercombe

The three Detroit men who attempted to rob Mike's Jewelry & Pawn Shop on Jos. Campau last Thursday afternoon had a "game plan," said Hamtramck Detective Robert George.

But that plan failed fatally when 50-year-old Frank Jackson pulled a gun and held it to the head of a security guard.

The guard grabbed the gun and fired at Jackson, killing him. Detective George could not go into details of the incident, but said there was an exchange of gunfire. The security guard was wounded but it is not clear if it was the result of gunfire.

The two other suspects, Darnell Redmond, 17, and Jawanta Covington 20, went to leave the store but the security guard ordered them to halt and hit the ground. The suspects, both armed, complied and police arrived within 30 seconds.

The suspects were arraigned on Sunday on a variety of felony charges, which include armed robbery, assault with intent to murder and conspiracy to commit armed robbery.

All together, the two face a maximum penalty of life in prison. They are scheduled to have a preliminary examination next Thursday, Aug. 15, in Hamtramck 31st District Court.

All three men have an extensive criminal record.

The Wayne County Prosecutor's Office determined that the security guard fired in self-defense and won't face criminal charges, George said.

There had been talk of a getaway car being involved, but George said that is still being investigated.

So far, it's not known if the trio are linked to any other robberies in the metro area.

## The mayor in her words on the State of the City

Continued from page 2

owners who make our city a fun place to shop, enjoy a meal or a drink, and get things done.

It's a story told by the daily efforts of our residents and neighbors to make our city more beautiful, more welcoming, more viable, and more alive. This is the story that WE write about our city and our lives here.

We are the characters (and sometimes I DO mean characters!), and we are the creators. So let me tell the story here of some of the work that's been going on in Hamtramck city hall, beginning with our Police Department.

The significance of this department to Hamtramck's security is understood by everyone in our city. Although high-profile crimes occasionally make the news, like last week's attempted robbery at a Jos. Campau jewelry shop, statistics show that our crime rate has gone down, even in these trying times. The department is becoming more streamlined and efficient, as evidenced by the long-overdue reorganization of the property and evidence room.

Partnerships have been cultivated with the Drug Enforcement Administration, the FBI, and the U.S. Marshals Service on task forces that pay substantial dividends in fighting crime. The priority given to community policing has meant increased community patrols, new and revitalized block clubs, and a doubling of our Police Reserve Core.

The department has looked for proactive ways to address specific problem areas in an effort to defuse likely hot spots.

Equally close to Hamtramck's heart is its Fire Department. In October 2012 the City of Hamtramck's application for a SAFER Grant – "Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response" – through the Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency was successful.

The grant reimburses the total cost of 12 firefighters through October 2014. Additionally, the department is continuing to enhance its professional status with advanced training through the Michigan Fire Fighters Training Council.

In February of this year, with the department's two ambulances unreliable and in need of repair, a private ambulance was contracted to handle EMS service at no charge to the city. The city and the fire department share a common commitment to the safety of our residents, and a deep sense of community involvement, as further evidenced by the many projects the department takes part in every year, including fundraising for the Goodfellows, cleaning up Veterans Memorial Park, and watering the plants on Jos. Campau.

In addition, the department takes seriously its obligation to the next generation, giving

Continued on page 4



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**I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of this earth.**

THANK YOU TO THE HAMTRAMCK VOTERS FOR THE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT IN THE PRIMARY ELECTION!

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU ALL IN THE UPCOMING MONTHS TO SHOW THAT I AM DEDICATED TO THE CITY OF HAMTRAMCK AND THE RESIDENTS!

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## The mayor in her words on the State of the City

Continued from page 3

many school tours of the fire station, presenting at career day at local schools, and allowing high school students to shadow firefighters as part of their Senior Year Project. Our police and firefighters not only keep us safe, but they are strong threads binding and stabilizing our community.

There have been many changes in the City Clerk's Department over the last month. To increase efficiency and opportunities for cross-training, the clerk's office recently moved and now shares office space with the Treasury Department.

Since the clerk's retirement, August Gritschlag has joined us as Deputy City Clerk. Augie brings with him extensive election administration experience, so the August 6th primary election is on track and the department is moving forward rapidly. ...

The Department of Public Services under Director Steve Shaya has had a busy year increasing efficiency and revenues through shifts in personnel, revised procedures, and rewritten ordinances. The department has begun to implement its Capital Improvement Plan, including the installation of non-motorized routes and the replacement of hazardous sidewalks, which have resulted in many trip and fall lawsuits against the city over the years.

After the initial roll out of the sidewalk program resulted in serious questions about tree removal, the city stepped back to revise and refine the program, as well as to ensure that removed trees will be replaced with species that are appropriate and safe for a close urban environment. In another piece of the Capital Improvement Plan, DPS is in the process of conducting Pavement Surface and Evaluation Ratings (PASER) on our streets. This will determine which four streets are prioritized for the next round of resurfacing.

Of particular concern for many years has been Conant Avenue, a county road, and we are renewing efforts to move this road from number 40-something to the top of the county's list.

Along with the immediate issue of repairing our streets, we face the decades old problem of our outdated sewer system and the resulting basement flooding that has plagued this city since at least the 1950s.

Just a couple of years ago this ongoing problem cost each one of you hundreds of dollars in a class action lawsuit brought against the city by a group of your neighbors.

It's imperative that the city address this costly problem at long last. Toward that end, the City of Hamtramck and Hennessey Engineers was awarded a one million dollar grant to perform a sewer study that will help us strategize for and seek funding to implement a phased solution.

You may also have noticed that DTE and MichCon are completing the final phase of gas main and service line replacement. This process has been disruptive for many of you, so I know we're all happy to see those holes in the ground filled in and the sidewalks and streets repaired properly and professionally.

Now there's one more DPS issue I want to touch on. If you're like me, you've been watching the weeds grow over your own head on city owned lots and some foreclosure properties. There is currently no money authorized by the Emergency Manager to be spent on cutting city lots. I hope that situation will change. The Acting City Manager, DPS Director and staff, and Assistant to the Emergency Manager are currently working together to try to come up with the best strategy to make sure that the abandoned or foreclosure properties are maintained.

That could mean cutting the weeds ourselves (which expenditure only the EM can approve) and charging back the owner, whether it be an individual, a bank, or Wayne County.

However, it's only very rarely that we would realize a reimbursement of that expense, especially as liens are removed in the second round of tax foreclosure auctions. Tickets could be issued after a fair warning period, but as owners

walk away from the property, they walk away from their financial obligations as well, and that doesn't get the weeds cut. Look for the outcome of these discussions from the Department of Public Services and the City Manager's office. The sooner the better. ...

The DDA continues to administer the Hamtramck Façade Grant Program, funded through Community Development Block Grant dollars allocated by the Community and Economic Development Department and approved by council. In the last year local business and property owners received \$70,500 for architectural design services, and \$45,000 has been set aside for construction services to restore their façades to their original condition.

Flavor Restaurant, Bromberg Translations, and the building at 2321 Caniff were the recipients of the grants over the past year. Another \$52,500 has been earmarked for design and construction of new façades at Jomir Grocery, Café 1923, and Deganah Investment, LLC. ...

For the last several years the DDA has participated in the Michigan Main Street program at the associate level and will apply this year for acceptance into the Main Street Select Level. The Main Street program was developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a four point approach to revitalize historic downtowns through historic preservation and grass root economic development.

As a member of the Main Street Select level Downtown Hamtramck will be entitled to thousands of dollars in training, consultation, and design services provided by MSHDA, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. These services will be provided at no cost to the city, our tax payers, or the DDA. ...

Among all the other work the CED Department is responsible for, it has played a historic role in bringing to a close the nation's longest-running housing discrimination lawsuit, Sarah Garret vs. the City of Hamtramck, known to most of us as R-31. We are seeing the last days of this over 40-year-old case. The CED Department is wrapping up the administration of the city's approximately \$18 million Neighborhood Stabilization Grant (NSP 2), the largest grant the city has ever received.

These funds have helped us meet many of the settlement requirements, allowing us to build or rehabilitate 52 homes, in addition to those completed in the last few years.

In addition, this grant has allowed us to remove over 100 dangerous blighted structures. Sixteen of the remaining 19 homes (out of an original 200) that are to be built and offered to plaintiffs are now either under construction or under contract, thanks to a \$3.2 mil-

Continued on page 5

## In Hamtramck, a year of challenges and ongoing development

Con. from front page

Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano, say the state's Headlee Act and Proposition 2 are outdated and keep communities financially strapped.

This "perfect storm" of events, said Majewski, was anything but a "natural" occurrence, calling it "manmade, preventable and reversible by public policy."

Without reform, she warned, "we're likely to see more local governments sinking, clinging to the slippery lifeline of emergency management, which can choke as easily as it rescues."

The mayor continued in her Address by going department by department, talking about what has happened in the last year or so. The Police Department, she said has been "streamlined," continues to partner with other investigative agencies and continued its community policing.

For the Fire Department, she credited it with getting a federal SAFER grant which reimburses the salaries for 12 firefighters through the year 2014.

City Hall also saw changes, she noted. The Clerk's Office was moved into the Treasurer's Office to begin cross-training among employees. A backlog of business licenses waiting to be processed has been tackled, and a new program to keep better track of city records — some of which have been scattered throughout the building — is beginning.

You may have noticed a city-wide sidewalk repair program that's been going on for the last year, thanks to infrastructure repair by DTE/MichCon, and the city's own program

through the Public Services Department, Majewski said.

Majewski said she hopes the emergency manager will restore funding to cut down weeds in city lots and at foreclosed properties.

The resurfacing of Conant had been a point of contention in city government, and Majewski said there are ongoing discussions with Wayne County officials to speed up that needed repair.

"It's taken a lot of pressure," she said.

Wayne County is responsible for the maintenance of Conant and Jos. Campau.

Basement flooding is a constant worry for many residents, and Majewski reminded the public that there is an engineering study underway to come up with a plan to make lasting repairs to avoid further backups.

Majewski pointed out that she herself has been a victim of basement flooding.

Development-wise, the city is going through the very last stage of building houses to comply with a housing discrimination lawsuit filed over 40 years ago.

With that lawsuit nearly settled, it has allowed the city to start selling 400 city-owned lots that it had been holding to satisfy the need for housing sites.

Majewski said city officials are drawing up a plan to dispose of the lots in a fair manner. Those lots, she added, represent \$3,000 each in potential property taxes that can be collected once the lots are purchased.

On the horizon is a new recy-

cling plant that will bring in 15 new jobs, and GM is expanding its production work at the Detroit-Hamtramck Poletown plant, which helps ensure future tax dollars coming to the city.

There is also a boon in the growth of small businesses, Majewski said.

"The atmosphere for small businesses in Hamtramck is strong and it's growing stronger," she said.

Although Majewski didn't mention it, she has joined that growth by recently purchasing and renovating the former Cody Hats building on Jos. Campau.

(Want to find out more about development in the city? Go online at [www.develophamtramck.com](http://www.develophamtramck.com).)

As for Hamtramck's newly appointed emergency manager, Majewski said, "We don't know what decisions the emergency manager will make and how they will change the city."

However, she seemingly cautioned that like it or not, "nothing lives without change."

Whatever changes come from the top, Majewski said it's the people who live here who can make the biggest difference.

"It's how we choose to act, how we choose to move forward together that determines the future of this dear city. ... We need to move bravely through the year ahead. We need to stick together," she said in closing.

Despite only 20 or so in attendance, Majewski received a rousing applause, leaving her beaming as she mingled with the crowd.

## Former Hamtramck EFM is heading off to retirement

By Kristin Rose  
Special to The Review

Former Hamtramck Emergency Financial Manager, Lou "Bud" Schimmel, held his retirement party last week at the Lafayette Market, in Pontiac. During his parting speech, Schimmel remarked that "Pontiac should be in fine shape for years to come."



Former Hamtramck Emergency Financial Manager Lou Schimmel.

Schimmel's career exit comes at the end of a two-year tenure as EFM of Pontiac, where he made some of the most bold moves in his 25-year career of reducing municipalities' operating costs.

A blitzkrieg of privatization, drastic slashes resulting in the reduction of Pontiac's annual budget from \$43 million to \$30 million, and effectively steering the city away from bankruptcy by erasing almost all of the city's long-term debt to bondholders, was all accomplished by Schimmel in just under 24 months.

These moves also landed Schimmel in court more times than in his previous EFM stints in Ecorse and Hamtramck.

One of Schimmel's most controversial cuts was eliminating the city of Pontiac retiree's

health benefits.

Despite pressure to join MERS, Pontiac's General Employees Retirement System

board refused to join the statewide public non-profit.

After a tense standoff, Schimmel made the decision to eliminate retiree's health care entirely. A lawsuit filed by retired Pontiac police and firefighters was

dismissed. Now, they too will have their health care cancelled.

By eliminating the retirees' health care, Schimmel saved the city \$6 million a year. Schimmel didn't leave the city's approximately 1,200 retirees high and dry, however. He sold off a large parking lot in Pontiac — as well as a city-owned golf course — in order to pay for the retirees' health benefits through mid-August. After that, Schimmel has signed off on a \$400 per month pension increase to each retiree, which could be used by the pensioners towards either a Medicare premium or a group-rate Blue Cross health care insurance premium.

Critics continue to allege that Schimmel is operating outside

the law, but as a recent New York Times article pointed out, Pontiac has been run under EFM status since 2009, with little or no effectiveness, until Schimmel was appointed.

Schimmel is leaving Pontiac with a flourish, and is in the midst of one of his biggest showdowns yet: He has ordered the demolition of the Phoenix Plaza Amphitheater and parking structure, and is facing litigation which would prevent the demolition.

Pontiac's current mayor, Leon Jukowski, has been given authority to follow through on the demolition after Schimmel's departure.

A few of these issues — selling off city property and the struggle to pay for city retiree benefits — strike an all-too-familiar tone to residents of Hamtramck.

Retiree benefits are on the negotiation table here in Hamtramck, and when Schimmel was in charge of Hamtramck he sold off the former DPW building and the department's equipment.

Schimmel, now 76 and living in Waterford, plans to spend some long-awaited quality time with his wife, who is recovering from her second heart transplant.

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# Review: Opinion Page

## Recount of ballots is needed to clear a few matters up

Mayoral candidate, and current city councilmember, Cathie Gordon said she's calling for a recount of Tuesday's election.

That's a good thing.

We heard numerous rumors of illegitimate — heck, even fraudulent — ballots being cast. Deputy City Clerk August Gitschlag says there are 46 absentee ballots that are marked as challenged because three people who submitted them were not author-

ized to do so.

Under Michigan law, a person who casts an absentee ballot must either mail it back, or return it themselves or have an immediate family do so. In the three instances cited, people who were not related to the voters returned the ballots.

That's a violation of the law.

Gordon is doing the community a favor by asking for a recount. This way, we can

all see whether there is a case to be made over whether there were illegitimate ballots cast.

There is no doubt that some of this mistrust springs from the amount of emotion invested in this election.

Thankfully, there is a mechanism to double-check this year's election process.

## American Axle founder leaves a mixed legacy

By Charles Sercombe

One thing is for sure, mention the name of Richard Dauch, the co-founder of American Axle & Manufacturing, and you'll get some heated opinions.

It was announced last Friday that Dauch, 71, died of an undisclosed ailment.

In 1993 Dauch was hailed as a hero for purchasing the failing Chevy Gear & Axle plant, which GM had planned to close down.

Dauch promised his union workers that he would honor their contracts, and persuaded many to stick with him and not transfer to another GM plant. Union workers largely supported Dauch.

Dauch and his investors went on to turn the plant around and make it profitable. He also won the praise of local officials for

tearing down dozens of blighted houses and closed businesses surrounding the plant complex.

Dauch's aim was to make the complex more like a campus. The company built its world headquarters at the site of Holbrook and the I-75 service Drive, another sign that he was committed to Detroit.

Hamtramck benefitted greatly from the plant since part of it was located in the city. That produced millions of dollars over the years in property taxes.

But things took a sharp turn in 2008 when UAW workers went on strike. After six months of a bitter standoff, the workers agreed to a 50 percent pay cut. Dauch was rewarded with a several million dollar bonus.

Shortly after settling, the company unexpectedly

closed down the plant and transferred work to its Mexico plant.

There was a hint of things to come before the strike. In a meeting with the Hamtramck Downtown Development Authority, Dauch spoke and complained about the "entitlement mentality" of workers.

Since the strike, local city officials have a decidedly different opinion of Dauch.

Mayor Karen Majewski said that although she had been critical of Dauch, she would prefer to think of the good work he did at the beginning.

"He's a dynamic person, and took the company and made something great out of it," she said. "It's unfortunate what happened to the company and the workers."

## Other Voices: Guest Editorial

### In solidarity, the community can come together and prosper

By Father Lawrence Ventline

Run the race, keep your eyes on the prize, fight the good fight and keep the faith.

The Good Book notes, as does most of the world religions, we should follow the Golden Rule to treat others as you want them to treat you.

To grow not weary and to even fly like an eagle.

In Hamtramck, I've witnessed such firm faith in people, in the police chief, in the neighborhoods, in the variety and diversity of what seems

like an international community.

In solidarity we stand together, then, as when Polish immigrants flooded this town in the 1950s.

We know that Jewish people have deep roots in Iraq. Abraham, the father of the faiths was born in the ancient city of Ur.

Abraham fathered Isaac, who fathered Jacob, who was renamed Israel by God and promised a nation. Jesus emerged from that line. Ishmael was Abraham's other

son who also was promised a nation. Islam's central figure, Mohammed, descended from this branch.

Together we can build and be better beyond being bitter.

We can stop crime by loving, savoring and respecting residents with deep compassion and caring for the old, young and poor.

We can work together in hope to heal a broken and divided nation beginning with me, Hamtramck's wealth in human dignity and diversity.

## Odds & Ends

**Festival ...** To answer a frequent question we've been getting recently, yes, there will be a Hamtramck Labor Day Festival this year.

The festival begins Saturday, Aug. 31 and goes through Monday, Sept. 2. As far as we know, the annual Polish Day Parade will also continue on Labor Day.

We recently asked the festival public relations contact, Ana Cukovic for an update, and here's what she had to say:

"I have received news on the bands that will be gracing our stages this year: Festival favorites will return this year including Kresge Fellow Mike Hurtt's Haunted Hearts, hailing from New Orleans, and The Polish Muslims. As well as a solo performance by Joe Mazzola (of the Detroit Cobras and the Sugarcoats), and appearances by new groups to the festival like Radio Burns,

a high school-aged ILL Itches, Jeecy and the Jungle and other promising young acts.

"We will also have craft beer from the following breweries: Motor City Brewing Works, Griffin Claw Brewing Company (GCBC), Saugatuck Brewing Company, Cheboygan Brewing Company

"Hatch is helping with the festival and they will have a tent for arts and exhibits.

"Once again, the fundraiser for the Golab-K 5k is this Friday, August 9 at 6pm at the Hamtramck Moose Lodge. Food and catering provided by Polish Village, \$7 suggested donation for dinner and \$10 to sign up for the race.

"Boat Races are on Labor Day around noon. If any bars want to participate and build a canoe, they can contact me and I will direct them to the appropriate person.

"We also still have available spaces for vendors and we also need volunteers.

"Please "like" us on Facebook and check it out for any updates on the events, as we are still developing the program.

"We have Hamtramck Labor Day T-shirts available for \$15 at the following bars: Polish Sea League, Whiskey in the Jar, Kelly's, The New Dodge Lounge, Tight Fittin' Jean's Bar. More locations to be announced."

Anyone who wants to volunteer or become a vendor, contact Cukovic via email at: [cukovic.a@gmail.com](mailto:cukovic.a@gmail.com).

**Meeting ...** On Aug. 22 Hamtramck Emergency Manager Cathy Square will present her financial plan for the city. The public is invited to the talk, which will be held in the Council Chamber in City Hall at 10 a.m.

## The mayor in her words on the State of the City

Continued from page 4

lion US Department of Housing & Urban Development HOME fund award through Wayne County. The remaining three homes will be developed by the city in cooperation with Rev. Jordan and the Corinthian Community Development Corporation utilizing funds from the city's Housing Development Fund (HDF).

They should be completed this year. These homes have brought new homeowners to our city, helped transform our neighborhoods, and most importantly helped right a historic wrong. The Honorable Damon Keith, who has presided over this case from its beginning, has been so encouraged by the city's progress that he has signed an order allowing the city to sell city owned residential property.

Since the early lifting of this long-standing prohibition the CED Department has been working with Zachary & Associates, a midtown Detroit real estate development expert, to create a strategy for redeveloping these properties. This comprehensive plan will include provisions for setting aside property for neighborhood green space, pocket parks, urban gardens, and farms, as well as for selling and developing lots with new housing.

The city owns approximately 400 total residential parcels, and each lot has the opportunity to generate up to \$3,000 a year in taxes for the city's general fund.

The CED Department is also working hard to eliminate blight in city neighborhoods. \$300,000 in Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP 3) funds through Wayne County are being used to deconstruct six dangerous blighted structures.

In the deconstruction process, original construction and decorative materials like wood floors and fixtures are salvaged for reuse. Two of the deconstruction projects will result in the creation of a green space/park along Carpenter Street, across from Frontier Academy (the Former Greater Detroit Hospital). The CED Department just wrapped up the administration of two USEPA Brownfield Assessment Grants totaling \$400,000. Funds were used to position, and market Hamtramck properties for redevelopment. Over 40 Phase I, Phase II site assessments, as well as Baseline Environmental Assessments, Due Care Plans, and lead and asbestos surveys we completed promoting residential, commercial, and industrial

property throughout the city.

The CED Department also applied for and received a \$1M Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) grant, as seed money to create a fund to assess and clean up any environmental issues that could provide challenges to redevelopment throughout the city. The city received \$300,000 from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority to renovate space and attract more residents to the city's commercial areas. CDBG - The CED Department is administering several CDBG projects including facade improvements, housing rehabilitation, park improvements, code enforcement, as well as creation of a new business startup and expansion grant program that already has a waiting list of applicants. In addition, this year the city will make its final HUD Section 108 Loan payment for the Joseph Campau streetscape project, freeing up \$80,000 to be spent on other projects benefiting the city moving forward.

The CED Department and City Manager's Office are working together to make dramatic improvements to Veterans Park throughout the summer. General Motors and Ham-

Continued on page 6

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## The mayor in her words on the State of the City Cont. from page 4

tramck High School interns are repairing tennis courts, removing graffiti and painting buildings throughout the park, weeding and removing brush, and relocating and refurbishing the neglected playground equipment to create a playscape that is much more visible and accessible to families. ...

For many years now the city has been working to enhance its bike-ability and connect Hamtramck with the growing network of bike paths in the region. The CED Department contracted with Living Lab Detroit, one of the county's most respected non-motorized transit consultants, to develop a comprehensive bike lane network for the city.

The Department expects to receive funding to install the entire network in spring 2014. This effort goes hand in hand with the proliferation of community gardens that have sprouted all over our city, with our Hamtramck Farmer's Market held every Monday in Pope Park which features hyper-local produce (that is, harvested that very afternoon), crafts, and cottage foods. It has also opened the door for entrepreneurs like the founders of Hammer & Cycle, which reconditions and sells used bikes. ...

Hamtramck's business climate is also a priority for the Community and Economic Development Department. General Motors met with the city to discuss a \$20 million investment/expansion project. In addition to the innovative Chevy Volt, GM has announced that the new electric-hybrid Cadillac will also be built at the Hamtramck/Detroit Assembly Plant.

Hamtramck Recycling LLC completed the demolition of a dangerous, blighted, and contaminated steel plant, to build Hamtramck's first LEED Certified, environmentally efficient commercial recycling plant. The approximately \$8M investment has resulted in 50 new jobs for the city.

The fire-damaged Hamtramck Creamery has seen \$650,000 in redevelopment as the new home for the Hamtramck PharMor Pharmacy and Medical Center has resulted in 20 new jobs.

The CED Department worked with two doctors to redevelop the 43-unit Phoenix apartment building located on Caniff just west of Conant. Many thought the 30k square foot building would need to be demolished after sitting vacant with fire damage and major roof leaks for almost 4 years, but the finished product is a beautiful example of both preservation

Continued on page 7

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## By Charles Sercombe

This week Crime Log covers July 30 through Aug. 5.

### Tuesday, July 30

- A man reported that a group of teens tried to steal his cell phone while he was at Jos. Campau and Faber.

- A man reported that another man claimed he was an IRS agent and demanded payment of \$100,000 or face being arrested.

- Officers were called to a house on Klinger St. where people were refusing to leave a vacant dwelling. One person was arrested for resisting and obstructing police.

- A woman reported having an ongoing problem with a neighbor in the Col. Hamtramck apartments.

- A Yemens St. woman reported someone broke into her garage and stole a Moped.

- At 3:18 p.m., a man was observed snatching a neck chain from a Norwalk St. woman, then running to a red Chevy Astro van where a female driver was waiting. The van fled west on Holbrook.

- At 3:46 p.m., a woman was robbed of her purse by a man who fled the scene in a gray Dodge Magnum.

- A man turned his father's handgun over to the Police Department for safe keeping.

- A Detroit woman reported her purse was stolen from the Hamtramck Public Library. The woman reported finding her purse in the area shortly after but items were missing.

### Wednesday, July 31

- Several car tires were slashed in the 2100 block of Belmont St.

- A woman reported that someone opened an AT&T account in her name without her permission.

- A woman reported that her brother was missing from his Zinow St. home.

- A man reported his car stolen from his home on Lehman St.

### Thursday, Aug. 1

- A woman living in the 11300 block of Nagel St. reported someone stole her central air unit.

- A woman reported that while riding her bike on Gallagher, a woman knocked her off her bike, causing injuries.

- A man reported that someone broke out a window at a Jos. Campau business.

- At 1:39 p.m., a woman reported that an unknown male snatched her necklace in the area of Conant and Casmere.

- A woman reported her catalytic converter was stolen from her vehicle on Charest St.

### Friday, Aug. 2

- A woman living in the 2200 block of Wyandotte reported being assaulted by her boyfriend. The suspect left before police arrived.

- A business on Hamtramck Dr. reported that someone cut a hole in a fence.

The City Clerk reported that fraudulent election ballots were turned in.

- A woman reported being threatened by her neighbor.

### Saturday, Aug. 3

- At about 10 p.m. a man was arrested for domestic violence after assaulting his wife.

- Also at about 10 p.m. a person reported that a man snatched the person's Bridge card.

- Two suspects were arrested after they broke into an unoccupied house in the 11300 block of Nagel St.

- A woman reported that a man grabbed a gold chain from her neck while she was in the

11300 block of Moran St.

- At 2:45 p.m., officers arrested two Hamtramck men after they broke into a garage.

- At 9:45 p.m., a Grosse Pointe man reported his phone was stolen from his delivery truck on St. Aubin near Caniff.

### Sunday, Aug. 4

- At about 1:30 a.m., a person was arrested for disorderly conduct following a disturbance at Grand Haven St.

- At about 2 a.m. someone attempted to kick in the front door of a residence in the 1900 block of Trowbridge St.

- A Hewitt St. resident turned a handgun over to officers.

- At about 8 a.m. a female resident reported being sexually assaulted while she was walking home on Hewitt St. The suspect was described as a man in his 30s, wearing a black and blue striped shirt and driving a blue four-door vehicle (possibly a Lumina).

- Officers responded to a report of an open door in the 2600 block of Holmes St. The house was found to be abandoned, and officers did not observe any signs of forced entry.

### Monday, Aug. 5

- A man was arrested for stalking and being highly intoxicated.

- A Warren man reported his 2010 Nissan was stolen while it was parked in front of a house in the 3100 block of Lehman St.

- A Detroit teen was arrested for shoplifting at Rite Aid after attempting to conceal items and leave the store.

- The Hamtramck City Clerk's Office reported a violation of Michigan election laws.

- A Belmont St. resident reported his house was broken into and several items were stolen.

## The mayor in her words on the State of the City

Continued from page 6

of a historic asset, as well as providing modern, efficient units at an affordable price. Several businesses are filling storefronts, or will be soon, throughout the city: Perkin s Pickles, Maria's Salsa's new production facility on Caniff, Mocha Cafe, the Conant Grocery Store (at Edwin), Green House Market, Kabob House, Hamtramck Caniff Coney Island, El George's, Rock City Café, Cup Cak n, Flavor Restaurant, Beignets and More, Hammer & Cycle, and more.

Despite some lingering empty storefronts, the atmosphere and appetite for small business in Hamtramck is strong, and growing stronger. ...

And now for some fantastic news on a project we've been working on since 2006. The Friends of Historical Hamtramck have finalized the acquisition of the building located at 9525 Joseph Campau, which was donated to the group for use as the new Hamtramck Historical Museum.

The group is planning a soft opening in time for the 2013 Hamtramck Labor Day Festival, as renovations continue. I can't praise highly enough the hard work of the Historical Commission and Friends of Historical Hamtramck as they've overcome every setback to put the myriad pieces in place that have made this possible.

The museum will soon become a new Hamtramck landmark: a home for the many thousands of documents and artifacts the Commission has collected over the years and a research center for the scholars and laypeople who will use

them, a meeting place for the entire community to learn about and teach each other, a home base where individual visitors, student groups, and our many tour groups will get a deeper perspective on the Hamtramck story past and present.

It will be a point of pride for Hamtramckans wherever their lives may have taken them. And it is not just a depository for the remnants of Hamtramck's past. It is a physical symbol of the faith we all have in Hamtramck's future...

Today you've heard only a part of all the good things that are going on in Hamtramck. There is so much we haven't been able to touch on in this short time. And there is so much that we don't know going forward.

Most importantly, we don't know what decisions the Emergency Manager will make and how they will change our city. Nothing lives without change. But what is left to us is to be, within our powers, the crafters of that change. We change our world every day through our smallest actions and inactions. And that personal power to transform our community remains within us, in our homes and on our streets, in our families and in our neighborhoods.

It is what we are called upon to do, as lovers and stewards of this little plot of earth we share. Because, when the Emergency Manager is long gone, we will still be here, in this improbable little place we've all chosen to call home. This place that has called to us all.

It is how we choose to act, how and how we choose to

Continued on page 8

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## The mayor in her words on the State of the City

Continued from page 7

move forward together, that determines the future of this odd and dear city. Nothing live without without change, everything living grows and evolves. And Hamtramck needs all of us to guide that change, to move the city through difficult times toward the future we all want here for ourselves and those who come after us.

Pope John Paul II, soon to be Saint Karol Wojtyla, admonished us all, "be not afraid." And we need to move bravely through the year ahead, as Hamtramckans have always done, bolstered by our shared commitment to our city and each other.

It is, after all, why we all choose to be here. We are not afraid of the hard

work ahead of us, because we are, after all, Hamtramck. We've all seen hard times, and woken up each morning to face the next day.

At our best, we've sustained our neighbors with human kindness.

We've carried each other. ... Elected officials, department heads, union members, organizational leaders, community volunteers, young, old, newcomer, longtime resident...The city is you. And the city needs you, and your neighbors.

It needs your hard work, your patience, your imagination, and your good will. And it is those qualities, far more than a budget surplus, that create and sustain community. ...

**Hamtramck Football Is Back!!!**

The Hamtramck High School Football team will be holding practice for all HPS students interested in playing football for either Hamtramck High School or Kosciuszko Middle School/Holbrook School this fall.

**Date:** Monday, August 12th through Friday, August 16th  
**Where:** Keyworth Stadium  
3201 Roosevelt  
**Time:** 5pm

Please make sure that if attending, to have you physical in hand to participate. There will be physical forms on site if needed.

**If you have any questions, please call the athletic office at 313-892-2643.**  
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Thin Crust	\$9.00	\$12.00	\$14.00
Square Deep Dish	\$9.00	\$12.00	\$14.00
<b>NAGA PIZZA:</b>			
Round	\$7.00	\$11.00	\$13.00
Thin Crust	\$7.00	\$11.00	\$13.00
Square Deep Dish	\$7.00	\$11.00	\$13.00

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