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Volume 17 No. 32

August 8, 2025

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The Review

Hamtramck

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Quick Hits

Festival month begins this weekend

**By Charles Sercombe**

August is going to be a huge party month on Jos. Campau.

The activities for this weekend alone include a Bengali festival that will feature performers and food vendors.

Jos. Campau will be closed from Caniff up to Commor starting Friday, August 8 and running through Sunday night.

The official festival dates are those of Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 9-10, starting about noon each day and going until 11 p.m.

A festival organizer could not be reached for comment, and few details were known about who is performing.

But, in the past, similar festivals have drawn thousands of Bengali-Americans from all around the metro area, including Hamtramck.

City Councilmember Muhith Mahmood said the organizers of this festival had previously been holding the event in Detroit at Jayne Field.

“I encouraged them to come to Hamtramck, to promote the city,” Mahmood said.

Bookending the month is the annual Hamtramck Labor Day Festival, Aug. 30-Sept.1.

— HAMTRAMCK’S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

Election results: Some new faces are poised to take over city hall

**By Charles Sercombe**

As expected, mayoral candidate Adam Alharbi came out on top in the primary election.

He finished with 1,931 votes.

The runner-up in the mayoral election is Muhith Mahmood, with 1,039 votes. He will go on to face-off with Alharbi in the November General Election.

Mahmood is currently serving on city council, and instead of seeking another term on council opted to run for the position of mayor.

Mahmood is currently under investigation, along with Councilmember Abu Musa, for not actually living here. Both deny the allegation.

According to an investigator hired by the city, Mahmood lives in Troy where his wife and children live.

And according to the investigator, Musa lives in Warren with his wife and children.

Mahmood told the Detroit News that the election results are “proof I was not a liar” about his residency status.

Mayoral candidate Adam Alharbi was endorsed by Mayor Amer Ghalib, who did not seek re-election as he waits to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate as ambassador to Kuwait.

In the city council race, City Councilmember Abu Musa cruised to the top spot with 1,129 votes, with former councilmember Nayeem Choudhury trailing not far behind with 1,053 votes.

Joining them in the November final election will be: Yousuf Saed (909 votes); Motahar Fadhel (900 votes); Abdulmalik Kassim (814 votes); and Luqman Saleh (812 votes).

No matter who wins in November, this election ensures that the city council remains all male and all Muslim. Diane

Elizabeth Frkan was the only female seeking a seat on the council, but she did not make the final cut.

Tuesday’s primary election brought out 3,829 voters, or 26.52 percent of the city’s 14,437 registered voters, which is typically low.

The election results are unofficial, but due to be certified on Friday. Election results came in shortly before 10 p.m. Polls closed at 8 p.m.

The majority of voters, 2,497, skipped going to the polls and voted via absentee ballot.

Councilmember Abu Musa was the only incumbent seeking re-election.

Councilmember Khalil Refai decided not to seek another term.

Here are the results of the mayoral election:

- Adam Alharbi, 1,931
- Muhith Mahmood, 1,039
- Khandaker Showkat Hossain, 470
- Mister Bangladesh, 102

And, the results for the city council:

- Abu Musa, 1,129
- Nayeem Choudhury, 1,053
- Yousuf Saed, 909
- Motahar Fadhel, 900
- Abdulmalik Kassim, 814
- Luqman Saleh, 812
- Diane Elizabeth Frkan, 751
- Joseph A. Strzalka, 723
- Rezaul Chowdhury, 654
- Russ Gordon, 635
- Khalid Al Qsaimi, 407
- Mahfuzur Rahman, 223

In the mayoral race, the two top-vote getters will go on to battle it out in the November General Election.

In the council primary, the top six finishers ad-

**Continued on page 2**

The Review starts a new chapter

**By Charles Sercombe**

For the second time in The Review’s 16 years of publishing, a new owner has taken over operations.

Michigan Independent Media Group, based in Grand Rapids, took ownership of the paper last Friday.

In a press release, the Media Group said:

“The Hamtramck Review has been acquired by the Michigan Independent Media Group (MIMG) as part of its growing effort to preserve and revitalize community-focused journalism across the state. The publication will be operated by Buried Lede Media.

“Founded in 1999, the Hamtramck Review has long served as a trusted local voice, covering city hall, public schools, neighborhood events, and the diverse stories that define Hamtramck. With this transition, MIMG is committed to securing the Review’s long-term sustainability while honoring and preserving its deep local roots.”

The new publisher of The Review is Lonnie Scott, CEO of Buried Lede Media.

“The Hamtramck Review is a vital thread in the fabric of this community,” Scott said.

“We’re honored to help carry its mission forward. Our goal is to maintain the Review’s trusted local voice while providing the support it needs to thrive well into the future.”

Scott has long-time experience in nonprofit management and civic leadership.

Sarah Leach, a Pulitzer Prize-nominated journalist and veteran editor who has led multiple Michigan newsrooms, including The Holland Sentinel and the Ottawa News Network, serves as Chief Operating Officer, overseeing media operations. She is also now Editor-in-Chief of The Review.


This acquisition is part of MIMG’s broader effort to sustain local news outlets through community partnerships, philanthropic capital, and modern operational support.

“We believe every community deserves strong, independent local journalism,” said Jason Franklin, PhD, General Partner of MIMG.

“Hamtramck has a rich cultural and civic life, and The Review has been there to tell its story. We’re excited to invest in its future.”

**Continued on page 2**

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# The Review starts a new chapter

Continued from front page

re and ensure it continues to serve as a platform for information, accountability, and connection.”

In addition to the Hamtramck Review, MIMG also owns the Yale Expositor (Yale, MI) and City Pulse in Lansing. All three publications are operated by Buried Lede Media, which is working to modernize operations, grow digital access, and support sustainable local reporting statewide.

Charles Sercombe will continue to serve as editor, and also remaining with the newspaper are Sales Manager Dave Sweet, Office Manager Jean Ingenthron and Copy Editor Alan Madlane.

The newspaper will continue to be located at 3020 Caniff.

Out-going Publisher John Ulaj has been the owner and publisher for much of the paper's 16-year history.

Prior to John Ulaj taking ownership of the paper, it was founded by former Hamtramck Citizen Publisher Mike Wilcox.

Ulaj, a Hamtramck native and graduate of Ham-

tramck High School, is leaving to pursue other opportunities, including expanding his real estate company, Villa Real Estate, and will also continue to own Polonia Restaurant.

He said, about the sale: “After 16 years, I made the difficult decision to sell the newspaper. The new ownership group is Michigan Independent Media Group. They are a well-financed organization with a mission to sustain and grow small-market newspapers and radio stations.

“I know that they will be excellent stewards of this paper that I love so well.

“It has been my absolute honor to have been the owner and publisher of The Hamtramck Review for most of its lifespan to this point.

“I need to thank my staff – Jean, Charles, Dave, Alan and Kim – as well as those others who have helped the paper to be put together every single week, and then put into your hands, the readership.

“I also thank my loyal

advertisers, too numerous to list here, for keeping the paper going. Also, to those smaller advertisers in our Want Ads and Service Directory, thank you.

“Lastly, to you, the readership of the paper – needless to say, it doesn't exist without you.

“The old saying goes, ‘When God closes a door, He opens a window of opportunity.’ I believe this is true. I look forward, personally, to exploring those new opportunities He presents me with.

“I will especially miss

writing my annual Christmas and Easter columns, which always gave me a chance to share my gratitude with you.

“Best of luck to the new ownership, the continuing staff, and the business community large and small.

“Again, it has been one of the honors of my life to serve you.”

(You can contact The Review via email at: [news@thehamtramckreview.com](mailto:news@thehamtramckreview.com), or by calling, (313) 874-2100.)



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বেড়ে উঠুক হামট্রামক

Grow Hamtramck is a grant initiative to plant 1,000 trees in the City over the next 4 years!

### Resident Tree Planting Request Form



SCAN HERE

OR EMAIL [treerequests@hamtramckcity.gov](mailto:treerequests@hamtramckcity.gov)



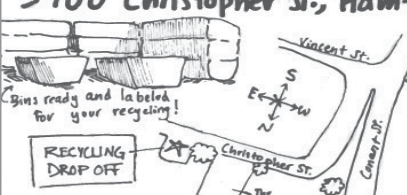
Tree requests will be reviewed by the City's contracted arborist for the Grow Hamtramck initiative, and you will receive a response within 3 business days. The City's goal is to plant the 1,000 trees funded by Grow Hamtramck in as many viable requested locations as possible over the next four years.



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## Election results: Some new faces are poised to take over city hall

Continued from front page

vance to the General Election, where the final three candidates will be selected to serve on council.

As for election day, the weather was hot – mid-80s, with the air sticky with humidity.

City Clerk Rana Faraj had some run-ins and skirmishes with candidates and campaign workers illegally approaching voters beyond the boundary set by law – 100 feet from polling entrances.

## This week at the Library . . .

August 8, 2025

**Library Ice Cream:** Friends of the Hamtramck Public Library are providing free ice cream for the Summer Reading Programs. All participants will be treated to free ice cream immediately after the conclusion of the program. Bring your friends for the summer reading and enjoy a treat afterwards.

**Alex Haley:** This author of “Roots” was born on August 8, 1921 in Ithaca, New York. His Pulitzer Prize winning novel, published in 1976, explored seven generations of his family from its origins in Africa through slavery in America and eventual hard fought freedom. “Roots” was translated into 37 languages and also became an eight part TV miniseries in 1977 which attracted a record American audience and raised awareness concerning the legacy of slavery.

**Jazz Youth Masterclasses:** Library is holding preservation of jazz youth masterclasses every Thursday in July, August and September from 3 pm to 5 pm. Classes are conducted by Jazz vocalist, Sky Covington and are free to Hamtramck residents. To register for classes sign up at the library or call 248-383-3385 to speak with the instructor. The final meeting will consist of a performance on September 25th at 3 pm.

**Dog Man Movie:** On Wednesday, August 13, at 2 pm, all children are invited to the showing of “Dog Man Movie”, presented in a theatre setting with a serving of refreshments.

Library is located at 2360 Caniff Avenue, Phone (313) 733-6822  
Or visit its website at <http://hamtramck.lib.mi.us> for on line catalog  
Attachments for printing, faxing or scanning send to [hamtramcklibrary@gmail.com](mailto:hamtramcklibrary@gmail.com)

### Summer Reading Party and Prizes:

On August 20th at 2 pm, the last program of the summer will feature and party and award of prizes for reading books. The library staff is putting together some great items that will be raffled off to the young readers.

**Social Security:** On August 14, 1935 President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act establishing he system which guarantees pensions to those who retire at age 65. The Social Security System also aids states in providing financial aid to dependent children, the blind and others, as well as administering a system of unemployment insurance.

**Woodstock:** This event began on August 15, 1969 in a field near Yasgur's Farm at Bethel, New York. The three day concert featured 24 rock bands and drew a crowd of more than 300,000 young people. The event came to symbolize the counter culture movement of the 1960's

**Gold:** On August 16, 1896 gold was discovered in Rabbit Creek, a tributary of the Klondike River in Alaska, resulting in the Great Klondike Gold Rush.

**19th Amendment:** Women's right to vote was ratified on August 18, 1924.

**Game Night:** We are moving to Wednesdays. Join us for Game Night at the library. We are serving up something fun each Wednesday at 4 pm. Stop by and let us know that you have come to play. Everyone invited.



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# Review: Opinion Page

## In Our Opinion

### Looking forward to new faces on council

It took a sub-committee of city councilmembers months to decide not to renew the city's contract with a company that operated Hamtramck's parking meter system.

Months, just think about that.

While that was a popular decision, what wasn't yet taken into consideration during all those months is how the city will replace the \$200,000 a year the meters produced in revenue.

Since the council made this decision several weeks ago, there has been some talk about enforcing how long vehicles can park on Jos. Campau in the business district, but that discussion has largely gone nowhere.

This is not responsible governing, folks.

Not only were these major issues left untended, the decision was made without input from the city manager, who the council has, bizarrely, placed on paid administrative leave.

Simply put, city councilmembers, who have no experience in running a city, are acting recklessly with no forethought as to the ramifications of their decisions.

Hopefully, this election year will bring a change, and point to a fresh direction for the city.

At least, we remain cautiously hopeful at this point.

## Other Voices:

### Guest Editorial

### Federal budget cuts will mean reducing out services

**By Khurshida Hossain**  
*Executive Director at Detroit Friendship House*

Detroit Friendship House has served our neighborhood since 1929, updating our programs to meet evolving community needs while navigating challenges like recessions and pandemics. This summer, we are being forced, unnecessarily, to adjust our programs due to federal policy.

In addition to our food distributions, we facilitate several programs to help guests make healthier choices and improve their personal well-being.

This includes nutrition education initiatives – our Cooking Matters series, the National Pantry Program, and Serving Wellness at Pantries (SWAP) – which are hosted by our amazing community partners.

For a guest in our pantry, these workshops and informational sessions provide opportunities to learn what nutrition indicators to look for when grocery shopping and ways to prepare nutritious meals while on a tight budget.

We added these educational programs to support positive health outcomes among our guests as 59% report chronic health conditions like diabetes and hypertension, conditions that rely on healthy diets to manage.

On July 4, President Trump signed his landmark bill, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), into law. As previously shared, the bill makes drastic changes to the social safety net by slashing funding for healthcare, food stamps, and more.

The bill also requires that the US Dept of Agriculture completely cut all funding for SNAP-Ed, the federal program that funds nutrition education for low-income individuals, including the programs listed above.

These changes in funding are short-sighted and inconsiderate of what our pantry guests need; there is no care for everyday people in this legislation, an apparent trend in the Trump Administration.

The USDA already froze dairy funding earlier this year, and in March eliminated two food assistance programs that helped schools and community groups purchase products directly from farmers (the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement helped food banks buy directly from farmers to supply food to their communities).

Food security is a right. We are disheartened that we are forced to cease elements of our programming until further notice. We're analyzing if we can continue some programs with our current capacity and expand partnerships to meet the need; we hope to continue sharing nutrition information via SWAP but will not have the means to facilitate in-person programming like Cooking Matters on our own.

We do this work because we believe that connection and community make us strong, and we know that we can rely on our community as we navigate this challenge.

*(To learn more about DFH, visit [www.detroitfriendshiphouse.org](http://www.detroitfriendshiphouse.org))*



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## Odds & Ends

**Free trees...** The deadline to get a tree planted on your block is coming up fast – next Friday, Aug. 15.

The city's program is called "Grow Hamtramck," and so far there have been 200 requests for trees.

The goal is that by the end of 2028, there will be 1,000 trees planted throughout the city.

"Hamtramck residents are stepping up and showing that they want more trees on their blocks," said Max Gilginas, Community Involvement Coordinator for the City of Hamtramck, "and we're working hard to make that happen."

This fall will mark the first phase of the planting initiative, with 200-300 trees going in the ground, and another 300 planned for spring of 2026.

If you live in Hamtramck and would like a tree planted in the right of way in front of your house, you can request one through the city's dedicated website, [www.hamtramckcity.gov/grow-hamtramck](http://www.hamtramckcity.gov/grow-hamtramck).

Still undecided about where you'd like to see a new tree planted? No worries! Requests will remain open for future planting seasons through 2028, when the Grow Hamtramck grant-funded program ends.

For more information, contact: Community & Economic Development Department, City of Hamtramck at (313) 800-5233, extension 818, or email [treerequests@hamtramckcity.gov](mailto:treerequests@hamtramckcity.gov).

**Stadium updates...** The good folks helping to maintain and secure funding for Hamtramck's historical baseball stadium in Veterans Park have some exciting news.

Let's start with what the Hamtramck Parks Conservancy had to say: "The Hamtramck Parks Conservancy has invested in the first major refresh of Turkey Stearnes Field's infield since it was restored in 2020. The infield clay and sand have been replaced, the mound rebuilt and leveled, and a new warning track installed!"

"Baseball action on our beautiful field continues this weekend with a Shoreline (collegiate summer) League doubleheader beginning at noon on Sunday."

And, also, the all-volunteer organization, the Hamtramck Stadium Grounds Crew has this news:

"We have four more days of baseball on the schedule this season before more field renovation work begins."

"The Men's Senior Baseball League will play doubleheaders on Friday, Aug. 8 at 10 a.m.; Saturday, Aug. 9 at 10 a.m.; and on Sunday, Aug. 10 at 10 a.m."

"The Hamtramck Husars Vintage Base Ball Club will close out our season on Sunday, Aug. 10 at around 3:30 p.m."

"The new improvements starting soon will include leveling off the

**Continued on page 4**

## Comments on the election results? There are plenty of them

**By Charles Sercombe**

The results of Tuesday's primary election have folks talking on Hamtramck social media.

And as you can guess, Hamtramckans have opinions.

Here's just a sample of some of them – the ones that can be printed in a family newspaper, anyway.

Right off the bat, conspiracy talk is increasing over whether there was ballot stuffing – something that is currently being investigated about some councilmembers in the 2023 election.

"I am calling the city clerk to take a look at these absentee ballots. Something is not adding up," said one commenter, whose name was written in Arabic.

Out of the 3,829 voters who participated in the election, 2,497 voted via absentee ballot. These days, that's not unusual since candidates have been urging people to vote "early" by absentee ballot.

But that practice has led to suspicions of ballot "harvesting" by candidates, which entails candidates going to houses and telling voters how to fill out ballots, which they then hand deliver to city hall, or more often, to a drop box outside of city hall.

The victory of many Yemeni-American candidates had the same commenter exclaim: "We won big. What a landslide."

Former city councilmember Andrea Karpinski took issue with the word "we."

"Who is we?" Karpinski asked. "Seems like the city lost as a whole. Hopefully we will be taken over by Detroit soon."

Pedro Torres took issue with that comment, saying: "Since you wanna be part of Detroit, why don't you go live there? We don't want to lose our Hamtramck Police Department or fire department because you can't accept the fact that people here don't want your woke agenda!"

"Why put the majority of the population in misery because of you, Andrea? Don't you feel selfish? Are you against democracy?"

Karl Marty also jumped in on that discussion.

"City government chose to fight against what you call 'the woke agenda' instead of fighting to make Hamtramck a better place to live. And all they got were vacant storefronts and an international reputation for small-mindedness and bigotry," Marty said.

Marty continued: "This place is stagnating, and it's because mediocre men (some of whom don't even live here!) want to hold onto the fantasy that they're political power players."

Moving on, a question was posed by one person, asking: "How are you feeling about yesterday's election results?"

Maybe it was better not to ask that question.

One of the more printable responses was from John Rush, who was short and to the point with his comment: "More of the same CRAP!!"

Well, we will leave it at that, because many of the other comments pushed the boundaries of good taste!

## The Hamtramck Review

Published every Friday

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August 8, 2025

Hamtramck Public TV-19

Broadcasting on Comcast Channel 19 in Hamtramck area  
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What’s on this coming week?

Special Meeting of the City Council

City Wide programs

Interviews and Announcements

Meetings of the City Council

Common Word Alliance Health & Food Fair 2025

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and more

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Hamtramck Public Library

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CRIME LOG

By Charles Sercombe

This week’s Crime Log  
covers July 29-Aug. 4.

Tuesday, July 29

• At about 2:30 a.m.,  
a vehicle was reported  
stolen at Mitchell and Eva-  
line.

• A hit-and-run accident  
happened on Hanley.

• A complaint was made  
about a juvenile in the  
3500 block of Caniff.

• A disorderly male was  
arrested for possessing  
drugs.

• A domestic dispute  
was reported in the 2900  
block of Dan.

• A complaint was made  
about suspicious juveni-  
les looking into vehicles  
in the area of Evaline and  
Buffalo.

Wednesday, July 30

• A dispute between a  
landlord and tenant was  
reported in the 11600  
block of Moran.

• An incident of fraud  
was reported in the 2400  
block of Carpenter.

• A break-in was repor-  
ted in the 12000 block of  
Charest.

• A domestic fight was  
reported in the 2100  
block of Belmont.

Thursday, July 31

• A hit-and-run accident  
was reported in the 2400  
block of Holbrook.

• An incident of fraud  
was reported in the 3000  
block of Hanley.

• An assault was repor-  
ted in the 2900 block of  
Jacob.

Trouble between neigh-  
bors was reported in the  
2400 block of Andrus.

• A pedestrian was in-  
jured in a hit-and-run acci-  
dent at Jos. Campau and  
Evaline.

• A reckless driver was  
reported at Conant and  
Evaline.

Saturday, Aug. 2

• Following a traffic stop,  
the driver was arrested for  
driving without a license,  
and for obstruction.

• Complaints about noi-  
se were made in the 8600  
block of Jos. Campau, and  
also in the area of Poland  
and Latham.

• A missing person  
was reported in the 3400  
block of Caniff.

• An incident of fraud  
was reported in the  
11700 block of Charest.

• A complaint was made  
about an animal in the  
3400 block of Evaline.

Sunday, Aug. 3

• A complaint was made  
about a disorderly person  
in the 9400 block of Jos.  
Campau.

• At 5 a.m., a break-in  
was reported in the 1900  
block of Trowbridge.

• A trespassing comp-  
laint was made in the  
9100 block of Jos. Cam-  
pau.

• A neighbor dispute  
was reported on Whalen.

• An incident of fraud  
was reported in the 3900  
block of Yemans.

• A theft was reported  
in the 2200 block of Dan-  
forth.

Friday, Aug. 1

• Family trouble was re-  
ported in the 12000 block  
of Dequindre.

• An assault was repor-  
ted in the 9400 block of  
Conant.

• An attempted vehicle  
theft was reported in the  
2000 block of Edwin.

• Officers, recovering a  
stolen vehicle in the 2600  
block of Caniff, arrested  
two suspects.

• A missing person was  
reported in the 10000  
block of Jos. Campau.

• A theft was repor-  
ted in the 9000 block of  
Jos. Campau, and also  
another in the 2000 block  
of Caniff.

Monday, Aug. 4

• A complaint was  
made about a juvenile in  
the area of Selfridge and  
Commor.

• A stolen vehicle was  
recovered at Dyar and  
Woodland.

• A business on Jos.  
Campau complained  
about a disorderly custo-  
mer.

• A vehicle was reported  
stolen in the 9100 block  
of Brombach.

• An assault was repor-  
ted in the 3400 block of  
Evaline.

• A personal protection  
order was violated in the  
2000 block of Caniff.

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Odds & Ends

Continued from page 3

outfield, installing a new  
sprinkler system, new  
sod in the outfield, a  
warning track, a batter’s  
eye in centerfield, a sco-  
reboard, and a lighting  
system.

“Yes, we’ll have night  
baseball in 2026.And the  
work to install restrooms,  
concessions, locker  
rooms, and a museum  
should be wrapping up in  
the next couple months.  
“Our parking lots will  
also be repaired. Great  
things are happening in  
Hamtramck. We hope to  
see you at the ballpark!”

Homicide arrests...

On July 8, a Hamtramck  
man, Michael Davis, 23,

was shot multiple times  
and killed while in front  
of an apartment building  
in Detroit on Outer Dr.

Recently, Detroit police  
arrested Javon Timarious  
Hawk, 21, of Detroit, and  
Joseph Lavar Houston,  
23, of Sterling Heights,  
and are charged with the  
first-degree murder of Da-  
vis.

Houston has an addi-  
tional charge of being a  
felon in possession of  
a gun. If convicted, both  
suspects face life in pri-  
son.

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City Hall Insider ...

What is our City Council up to these days?  
We have the highlights of the latest council meeting.

By Charles Sercombe

A city council meeting was scheduled for July 22, but not enough council members showed up for a quorum to allow a meeting to be held. Among those absent were Mayor Amer Ghalib, and Councilmembers Mohammed Hassan, Abu Musa, and Muhtasin Sadman.

Mayor Pro Tem Khalil Refai said that there had been one member of council present before the meeting started, but that member left.

“We had a quorum for a couple of minutes, and then a member left, so my apologies,” Refai said.

He did not identify the councilmember, but it was Councilmember Musa who had left.

Mayor Pro Tem Refai and Councilmembers Mohammed Alsomiri and Muhith Mahmood held an informal meeting to allow the public to speak, and for the Director of the Public Works Department, John DeAngelis, to give an update on the city’s street sweeping program.

DeAngelis said the new policy is to allow people to park their cars until 8 a.m. on the day their street is scheduled to be swept. After 8 a.m., he said, cars will be towed.

He said the city does more than just sweep and clean the streets. At the same time as the street cleanings, the city is also cleaning out sewers and catch basins, trimming trees, filling potholes and painting curbs where needed.

Residents can park on their street after the street sweeping signs are removed. Some streets, DeAngelis said, take longer to maintain because there are more trees.

Councilmember Alsomiri said the city should not tow vehicles, but instead raise ticket fees. DeAngelis said that having one car parking on the street will mean two other areas of the street will not be cleaned because the street sweeping truck cannot operate close to a vehicle.

Leaving cars on the street, he said, is unfair to the “90 percent” who obeyed the signs and moved their vehicles.

During public comment, Bill Meyer took note of the missing councilmembers, saying, “We’re missing two people who don’t do anything anyway.”

As for the recent court ruling in favor of the city’s ban on displaying a pride flag on public property, Meyer said this was an “important” victory for the city.

“That lawsuit, in the first place, was really ridiculous and frivolous,” he said.

The lawsuit was filed by two former members of the city’s Human Relations Commission, Russ Gordon and Catrina Stackpoole, who were removed from the commission by the mayor after they challenged the city’s policy banning the pride flag by raising a pride flag on a Jos. Campau flagpole in defiance.

They filed a lawsuit against the city over the ban, and also for being removed from the commission.

Meyer commended Mayor Ghalib “for making the right decision to find a solution to work with everybody. It’s very hard when you have people who don’t agree with you.”

Ghalib and the city council, who are all male and all Muslim, banned the flag as a way for the city to remain neutral on the debate over the flag in the community, which some conservative members of the city opposed because it offended them.

Meyer also said that

Mayor Ghalib was right about “laying off our city manager, because it was only fair and just to keep the person that was very involved in the charges also (is) off. So what he did was totally fair and just.”

(Editor’s note: City Manager Max Garbarino was not laid off. He was placed on paid administrative leave by the council at the urging of the mayor. Garbarino was suspended after he put the police chief on paid administrative leave because of alleged wrongdoing.)

Meyer continued on the decision to suspend Garbarino, saying: “I think it’s going to prove also correct in that area because we’re dealing with fairness in the law and justice here.”

Garbarino has subsequently filed a lawsuit against the city over his paid suspension. Meyer said that “people want to file lawsuits and make some money.”

Meyer also talked about the potential fate of the Yemeni mural at Jos. Campau and Goodson, which he said may

Continued on page 6

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## City Hall Insider ...

Continued from page 5

be blocked from view if a plan goes ahead to construct a building next to it.

Meyer said an effort was made for the past five years to make sure the mural would not be blocked, and there was a thought that “we had a good deal going” with the developer of a lot next to the mural.

Meyer said he hopes someone in the Yemeni community finds “a solution.” Meyer added the mural is “world class.”

“It’s easily the best mural in Hamtramck by far,” Meyer said. “To lose it would be a tragedy.”

Meyer went on to say that there is “one politician” in town “who’s an opportunist who believes that you get votes any way you can get them.”

Meyer did not name the person in question.

He continued to say about this person that they are “someone who changes their mind to benefit themselves all the time. ... All candidates should be working for the people, to be consistent, and not change their positions because they want a special vote or something.”

A woman gave her “heartfelt gratitude” to councilmembers for their “dedicated service to the community.”

Bill Meyer spoke again, saying that he has attended 1,000 council meetings “at least,” and said qualifications of candidates for office should include the following:

“Know the job you’re running for and what it involves and that you’re going to attend meetings, that you’re going to stay awake at the meetings, that you are going to be active at the meetings and actually contribute and talk and be part of the conversation.”

(Editor’s note: Councilmember Musa has been accused of sleeping during council meetings, which he has denied.)

Meyer said Mayor Ghalib is “best we ever had as far as unifying people together.”



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