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The

Review

Hamtramck

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Quick Hits

Mayoral election not over yet

**By Charles Sercombe**

The judge has spoken. Thirty-seven absentee voters from November's election here in Hamtramck are out of luck getting their ballots counted, through no fault of their own.

Wayne County Circuit Court Chief Judge Patricia Perez Fresard ruled, last week, against counting their votes.

Mayoral hopeful Muhith Mahmood had sought to get the ballots counted.

And he hasn't given up yet. He is appealing the judge's decision.

The 37 absentee ballots were discovered in the city clerk's office after the election was over. City Clerk Rana Faraj said she handed them to Wayne County election officials after the election, but the Wayne County Board of Canvassers deadlocked 2-2 on a vote to have the ballots counted.

The tie vote automatically meant that the ballots could not be counted.

Mayor-elect Adam Alharbi argued against counting the ballots because they were left unsecured and could have been tampered with.

Mahmood's attorney, Mark Brewer, the former longtime chairman of the Michigan Democratic Party, argues that not counting the ballots disenfranchises those voters, and that it is "unconstitutional."

He argued for three options: count the ballots; have the voters verify their ballots and who they voted for; or have those voters recast their votes.

At the hearing last week, Judge Fresard said that it's not always possible to protect the rights of "every single voter."

Mahmood, who opted to not seek another term on city council, but instead seek the job as mayor, lost the election by a razor-thin 11 votes.

The ballots in question all came from Precinct 2, which is predominantly made up of Bengali voters. Mahmood is a Bengali-American, and there is a good chance of overturning the mayoral election result if the ballots are counted.

**Continued on page 6**



Year in review: Take a look back at the first half of 2025

**By Charles Sercombe**

The year 2025 seemed like an ongoing roller-coaster of news.

Now, for Hamtramck, that's pretty typical. As we say each year, this little town – all 2.2 square miles of it – packs in a lot to talk about.

As usual, Hamtramck also caught the attention of both local and national news outlets.

This week, we start our annual look back, with the first six months of the year. So grab a mug of something warm, find a comfortable chair, and enjoy the ride.

**JANUARY**

Our call on this one didn't age well.

Our "Newsmaker of the Year" was Hamtramck's first Yemeni-American po-



**Former Hamtramck Police Chief Jamiel Altaheri made a splash when he first came to town, but later in the year he faced allegations of wrongdoing and eventually he was allowed to resign from his job.**

lice chief, Jamiel Altaheri, who we described as a "game-changer."

That hiring by the city didn't age well, either.

It was just a matter of a few months later that Altaheri went from being hailed as a breath of fresh air to exiting in disgrace.

Eventually, the city council couldn't take anymore with Altaheri, after numerous allegations of wrongdoing were discovered – some of which warranted the city having to ask the FBI to investigate.

The council ultimately signed off on a separation with the chief, who is reportedly back in New York City – or maybe not – for a possible job with the city's newly-elected mayor, Zohran Mamdani.

We'll have more details about his undoing later in

this review.

For the past few years, residents and visitors have had to put up with some portion or other of Caniff being closed, in order to rebuild the road.

The last leg of the Caniff repaving, from Jos. Campau to Conant, was cut short with the sudden return of cold weather, which prevented cement from being poured.

But, good news for travelers, the street was reopened during the winter. Once warm weather returned, the very last part of the project, from Gallagher to Conant, was resumed.

Now that it is all completed, after decades of patching, Caniff is repaved from the I-75 service drive all the way across



town to Buffalo – a project that took about four years to complete, at a cost of about \$6 million.

During the city's 2023 city council campaign, there was plenty of talk about possible election



**City Councilmember Mohammed Hassan was charged with election fraud. His case is still pending.**

cheating.

There was confirmation of this by some residents, who said they were inter-

viewed by agents with the state Attorney General's Office who were investigating election law violations.

Little did anyone



**State Rep. Abraham Aiyash (D-Hamtramck) announced he would not seek another term in office.**

know, the AG's Office had requested warrants on various election violations against three people, including two councilmembers, back in October of 2024 – a month before the November presidential election.

But those arrest warrants were apparently never acted on.

Why?

That is still a mystery, but ultimately the AG's office handed over the cases to the Monroe County Prosecutor's Office to further pursue the matter.

If it sounds mysterious and confounding, well, it is.

So far, Councilmember Mohammed Hassan faces felony election fraud charges; charges against Councilmember Muhtasin Sadman were dropped, after two witnesses failed to show up for their court

dates to testify.

There has been no further action against Sadman, but charges could

resurface again. All we can say is: it's complicated, and there have been serious concerns raised about the leadership of Attorney General Dana



Nessel (who is being termed out).

On the Hamtramck School Board, two new faces took seats at the table: Mohamed Algehair and Linda Wolyniec.

At the board's first

meeting of the year, the following officers were appointed:

Boardmember Abdulmalik Algahaim will now be running the board meetings as president.

Boardmember Moortadha Obaid is the vice president. Regan Watson returned from a long absence, and once again took the role of treasurer.

Daz'Shavon Hall resumed her role as secretary, and boardmember Victor Farris resumed his role as board trustee.

Noticeably not returning to the board were former president Jihan Aiyash and boardmember Salah Hadwan.

The new year meant that Hamtramck lost one

of its own to represent the city in Lansing.

State Rep. Abraham Aiyash, brother of former HPS School Board President Jihan Aiyash, decided not to seek re-election, for reasons he has never explained. Word is, though, he still has political ambitions.

Hamtramck had not had a representative elected from the city since the 1990s until Aiyash.

During his four years in Lansing, he rose up to be appointed as the majority floor leader, which is pretty impressive.

In his two terms, Aiyash, a Democrat, was able to direct millions of dollars to Hamtramck for various projects. He also distinguished himself as a champion of LGBTQ rights, much to the displeasure of many of his socially conservative fellow Yemeni-Americans in

this community.

With the return to office of President Trump, there was also renewed concern over his threats to deport immigrants.

During his first term, there was local anger over Trump's travel ban on countries with majority Muslim populations – including Yemen, where the mayor and some city councilmembers emigrated from.

But in Trump 2.0, among the mayor and all members of Hamtramck's city council, who are all male, all Muslim, and all immigrants, there was not a spoken word about Trump's deportation plan.

**Continued on page 2**



**Mayor Amer Ghalib's support of President Trump paid off. Trump nominated him to be the ambassador to Kuwait.**





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We are a Multicultural Parish Family  
Sunday English Mass 9 a.m.  
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**Sunday, January 4,  
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Solemnity of the  
Holy Family**

**Jan 1 – Solemnity of Circumci-  
sion of our Lord Holy Mass 10 am**

**Jan 2 – Solemnity of Holy Name  
of Jesus Holy Mass 7 pm**

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# This week at the Library . . .

January 2, 2026

**Happy New Year:** The Library Board, Library Director (E. Tamara Sochacka), and the entire staff want to wish all our patrons and residents of Hamtramck all the best for year of 2026..

**Inauguration of the City Govern-  
ment:** On January 4th, 2026 at 6 pm the newly elected officials for the city of Hamtramck will be taking oath of office in the library. Door will be open at 5 pm with serving of food and refreshments. The official program will start at 6 pm, followed by a recep- tion and photo opportunity. All Hamtramck residents are invited. Seating space available on first come first serve basis.

**Grand Union Flag:** On January 1, 1776 during the American Revolution, George Washington unveiled the Grand Union Flag, the first national flag in America.

**Ellis Island:** In January 1, 1892 this island in New York Harbor opened. Over 20 million new arrivals to Amer- ica were processed until its closing in 1954.

**Story Time:** These programs con- ducted by the library staff are sched- uled for Wednesdays afternoon at 4:00 pm. All children are invited.

**Alaska:** On January 3, 1959 it was admitted as the 49th U.S. state with a land mass almost one-fifth of size of the lower 48 states together.

**START II:** On January 3, 1993, President George Bush and Russian

President Boris Yeltsin signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks Trea- ty, eliminating about two-thirds of each country’s long range nuclear weapons.

**Exercise at the Library:** The RIM Foundation was begun exercise clas- ses again this fall. On Tuesdays, its back to Yoga at 2:30 pm. and on Fri- days, it is Tai Chi at 10:00 am. To register for the program, stop by the library circulation desk.

**State of the Union:** On January 4, 1790, President George Washington delivered the first State of the Union Address to the joint session of Senate and Congress.

**Preservation of Jazz:** Continuing into the autumn and winter season, the Jazz Masterclass program will take place on Thursday evenings from 5 to 7 pm. Participants will cultivate a deeper understanding of this elegant artform through guided discussions, curated listening experiences, docu- mentary screenings, and more. Head- ing this class will be Sky Covington, founder of The Preservation of Jazz. For more information about the pro- gram, please call Sky Covington (248) 383-3385..

**Space Shuttle:** On January 5, 1972, President Richard Nixon signed a bill approving \$5.5 billion over six years to build the NASA space shuttle.

**ESL Classes:** These classes are held Monday to Thursday at 9 am and 12 noon. To participate, you must regis- ter with the Horizon School.

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)

# Year in review: Take a look back at the first half of 2025

Continued from front page

In fact, many of Hamtramck’s Muslim immigrants embraced Trump, and supported him for presi- dent.

To this day, the Trump administration, through the police agency ICE, has come under heavy criticism for the indiscri- minate methods and, at times, outright brutality used in rounding up sus- pected illegal immigrants – some of whom were since proven to be U.S. citizens.

Still, there has nary even been a peep of concern from the city’s elected leaders – a far cry from when President Biden was in office.

## FEBRUARY

Two years ago, over

1,000 people took to Hamtramck’s streets to protest then-President Bi- den’s ongoing support of Israel’s revenge military attack in Gaza.

At the time, they deman- ded a ceasefire, and for

Jan. 20.

Mayor Amer Ghalib and City Councilmembers Khalil Refai, Abu Musa and Muhtasin Sadman were part of the festivi- ties.

So who paid for their



**School Boardmember Regan Watson was the sub- ject of a recall effort. However, the proposed ballot question was thrown out by the city clerk for not using the exact ballot language that was OK’d by Wayne County election officials.**

Biden to stop supplying military arms to Israel. During the rally in Hamtra- mck, there were frequent chants deriding Biden, for example “Genocide Joe has got to go.”

Flash forward to today, and there is a ceasefire – although a fragile one – and President Trump is in charge. He conti- nues to support Israel in its war in Gaza, however, and recently lifted the Biden administration’s ban on supplying Israel with 2,000-pound bombs, which cause widespread damage that can include unintended targets.

The Trump administ- ration is also calling for the remaining Palestinian refugees to be reloca- ted to neighboring Arab countries, such as Egypt and Jordan.

The Review reached out to Ghalib and Council- members Abu Musa and Khalil Refai – who were all quite vocal in their criticism of Biden, and who supported Trump for president – for comment at that time, but none of them responded.

Ghalib, who galvanized widespread support for Trump among the Muslim population in metro Det- roit, may be in line for a position in the Trump ad- ministration.

Hamtramck was rep- resented at President Trump’s inauguration on

trip, lodging, food, and ground travel?

Hamtramck taxpayers, of course.

However, it wasn’t much of an expense, costing a total of just over \$7,000, according to public records The Review recei- ved through a Freedom of Information Act request.

And, for those wonde- ring, they all flew eco-



**Two years ago over a thousand people took to the city’s streets to protest the Biden administration’s policy of supporting Israel in its war on Gaza. Flash forward to today, and no one is protesting President Trump for his continued support of Israel.**

nomys/coach – not first class.

Each was given a total of a \$300 per diem for spending money.

The effort to recall Ham- tramck School Board- member Regan Watson came to a sudden halt.

The Wayne County Clerk’s Office rejected the circulation petitions that were submitted to get the go-ahead for a recall elec- tion.

In a letter to Hemyar Al-Jamali, who was behind the recount, the clerk’s of-

fice deemed the petitions “insufficient” because of the “recall language not being identical to what was approved by the Way- ne County Election Com- mission.”

The county also said that “there are several recall petition signatu- res that are called into question for their genui- neness, and the validity of the signature of the signer.”

This initial rejection doesn’t mean the recall effort won’t eventually go forward. Al-Jamali was reminded that he has 180 days from the day the recall language was approved to submit new circulation petitions.

Watson was being tar- geted for the following reasons:

- Failing to attend board meetings since May of 2023

- Failing to respond to emails, certified mail and phone calls from board- members

- Being censured in February 2024 for failing to attend meetings and for deliberate dereliction

of duties

The Review reached out to Al-Jamali and Watson for comment, but neither responded. There was no further attempt to have a recall election brought against Watson.

The verdict is in about the city’s controversial parking meters.

They have to go – or be swapped out for different meters – or else the city must extend the current policy for free parking.

That was the hodgepod-

**Continued on page 3**

# New Palace Bakery



**NORMAL HOURS:** Closed Monday, Dec. 1 OPEN starting Tuesday, Dec. 2 8am-5pm, Wednesday, Dec. 3 8am-5pm, Thursday, Dec. 4 8am-5pm, Friday, Dec. 5 8am-5pm, Saturday, Dec. 6 8am-4pm, Sunday, Dec. 7 Closed, Monday, Dec. 8 Closed, Open Tuesday, Dec. 9 8am-5pm, Wednesday, Dec. 10 8am-5pm, Thursday, Dec. 11 8am-5pm, Friday, Dec. 12 8am-5pm, Saturday, Dec. 13 8am-4pm. **HOLIDAY HOURS:** Open Starting Sunday, Dec. 14 10am-4pm, Monday, Dec. 15 8am-5pm, Tuesday, Dec. 16 8am-5pm, Wednesday, Dec. 17 8am-5pm, Thursday, Dec. 18 8am-5pm, Friday, Dec. 19 8am-5pm, Saturday Dec. 20 8am-4pm, Sunday, Dec. 21 10am-4pm, Monday, Dec. 22 8am-5pm, Tuesday, Dec. 23 8am-5pm, Christmas Eve 8am-1pm, Closed Christmas Day, Friday, Dec. 26 Closed, Saturday, Dec. 27 Closed, Sunday, Dec. 28 Closed, Monday, Dec. 29 Closed, Open Tuesday, Dec. 30 8am-5pm, Wednesday, Dec. 31 8am-1pm, Jan. 1 Closed, Jan. 2, 3 Reopen Normal Hours

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**Email your request to: [MDHHS-FH-Wayne@michigan.gov](mailto:MDHHS-FH-Wayne@michigan.gov).**  
Include:

- Include your name
- Phone number
- Preferred appointment time

**Important Information**

- Appointments are limited!
- They are scheduled on a **first-come, first-served** basis.
- You will receive confirmation once your appointment is scheduled.





# Year in review: Take a look back at the first half of 2025

Continued from page 2

ge of opinions about the city's parking meters on Jos. Campau, which, from the moment they were installed and working, have had people complaining about them.

In other words, welcome to Hamtramck.

But, Hamtramck is not alone in its beef with these high-tech meters, installed by Municipal Parking Services.

The City of Royal Oak had also contracted with that company, and then ended up yanking their meters out after numerous complaints about

prestigious future positions."

But guess what?

As it turned out, Ghalib did not seek re-election, and instead opted to wait for a job with the Trump administration.

That job was initially to have been an ambassadorship to Kuwait, but a bipartisan committee had serious issues with the mayor, involving anti-Israeli social media posts (or "likes" on others' posts) and more.

School districts across the country had until Fri-

open to interpretation.

"I know that the high school has offered (not sure about this year) a women's studies class, and an African-American literature class. Is that DEI, though?" Coral asked The Review.

She continued: "As I've watched this DEI hysteria unfold since the inauguration, it looks like the goal is to erase (the history, contributions, the representation) of anyone who isn't a straight white male. That sounds like re-segregation to me."

## MARCH

Paczki Day, Hamtramck's equivalent of Mardi Gras, came a little later this year, but that didn't dampen the spirits of most revelers.

A drenching rain in the early morning sure did, though. However, the rain eventually passed, and paczki lovers finally hit the city streets, to once again ramble from one party to another.

As usual, PLAV Post 10 hall hosted a paczki-eating contest at noon. It may just be the longest 15 minutes ever known to mankind.

The next Paczki Day will be this coming Feb. 17. Make sure to bundle up.

Although Hamtramck Public Schools Superintendent Jaleelah Ahmed hasn't performed work for the district in over a year, the school board was still

The district has refused to explain why she is being paid for not working.

Later, a spoof flyer made the rounds in town, offering a \$250,000 "reward" for locating Ahmed. It was unknown who printed and distributed the flyer.

Mayor Amer Ghalib got the reward he worked for.

President Donald Trump nominated Ghalib to be ambassador to Kuwait, one of the most affluent countries in the Middle East.

In announcing Ghalib's appointment on social media, Trump said:

"As mayor of the City of Hamtramck, Michigan, Amer worked hard to help us secure a Historic Victory in Michigan."

Unfortunately for Ghalib, it looks like he has no chance to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate. He faced tough grilling by Democratic and Republican senators over comments and social media activity they deemed to be antisemitic.

Although, in the end, Ghalib didn't persuade enough Hamtramck voters to get behind Trump to fully swing the city Republican, he did help galvanize the Muslim and Arab vote in the metro region who had turned against the Harris and Biden administration for their continued support of Israel in that country's war in Gaza.

Ghalib later said his alignment with Trump has more to do with "family values," and has said that, while he disagrees with Trump's support of Israel, he has more in common with the Republican Party and its anti-LGBTQ positions.

It also didn't help that a couple of prominent Jewish groups have come out opposing his appointment, calling him antisemitic for his past comments on social media.

"Ghalib routinely traffics in antisemitism, actively supports the antisemitic BDS movement, attempted to justify the 10/7 massacre, and refused to take disciplinary action against an appointee who attempted to justify the Holocaust," said the Anti-Defamation League on a social media post.

BDS refers to a pro-Palestinian movement, formed in 2005, that calls for "Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions" of, from and against Israel in response to their treatment of Palestinians.

Under the direction of

the city's all-male and all-Muslim city council, with the support of Mayor Ghalib, Hamtramck was the first Michigan city to withdraw any financial investment involving Israel.

pre-approved improvement projects.

The districts had previously been given a one-year extension to seek the reimbursement.

According to the MDE, Hamtramck Schools will



Hamtramck Public Schools Superintendent Jaleelah Ahmed continued to enjoy collecting her salary while being on paid suspension.

Hamtramck City Clerk Rana Faraj sent a letter to Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel about a lingering election matter that had a number of residents wondering.

Namely, what happened to the investigation into the alleged illegal handling of election ballots by a candidate and councilmember in the last city council election?

Faraj questioned why the investigation hasn't moved forward.

That matter did eventually move forward, with Councilmembers Mohammed Hassan and Muhtasin Sadman each being charged with election fraud.

Charges against Sadman were eventually dropped when two witnesses failed to appear in court to testify. They could be reinstated at a future date.



For a moment, some in the city considered incorporating a three-dimensional pedestrian crosswalk that a number of cities in Europe use.

Hassan's case is still moving forward.

## APRIL

Hamtramck Public Schools were dealt a huge financial setback by the Trump administration.

It was announced by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) that President Trump's administration pulled back \$42 million promised to over two dozen Michigan school districts – Hamtramck included – for

Joan Bittner of the Hamtramck Downtown Development Authority posted on social media a novel way to make it safer for pedestrians to cross a street.

In Europe, some communities are installing 3-D images of floating crosswalk stripes to fool drivers into slowing down. Bittner posted an illustration of the concept on a Hamtramck Facebook page, saying: "Idea!!!"

Continued on page 4



The city council decided to get rid of the parking meters on Jos. Campau after numerous complaints were made by residents and merchants.

how the meters chased business customers away because they were hard to use, or that the app didn't work, or that they were not providing enough time for people to get out of their vehicles and actively feed the meter.

There were also many complaints from people who received tickets despite paying to park.

As it turned out, Hamtramck did not renew its contract with the parking meter company either, and all the meters and pay stations were eventually removed.

So, for now, parking remains free in the city's commercial district – including municipal lots.

One more term? Mayor Amer Ghalib announced he will seek re-election for another term.

That ended weeks-long speculation about whether he would. On top of that, he no longer had City Councilmember Mohammed Hassan as a potential challenger. Hassan bowed out of the race.

Here's what Ghalib had to say on Facebook about his decision:

"Without hesitation or fear, I proudly announce my candidacy for Mayor of Hamtramck for a second term, and to continue to serve our community with honesty, dedication and sincerity, through this position, and through other

day, Feb. 28 to get rid of their DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) programs, or else face having federal funding cut off.

That demand came from President Trump through an executive order. Trump's administration has been rooting out DEI programs in the federal government, in the belief that DEI promotes less qualified people to



Paczki Day was once again celebrated in the city's bakeries and bars.

job positions.

Critics have blasted those opposing DEI, saying they are racist, sexist or homophobic.

So, where did the Hamtramck Public School District, which receives millions of dollars in various forms of federal funding, stand on this issue? HPS Interim Superintendent James Larson-Shidler said he is not "aware" of any official DEI program in the district.

However, Toni Coral, the president of the Hamtramck teachers' union, said that defining what DEI programming involves is

obligated to give her a job performance rating.

And, since there was no work that she had performed, that review was limited to the rating the board gave her over a year ago: "minimally effective."

That rating is one step above the lowest possible rating of "ineffective."

Ahmed has been on paid suspension for most of 2024 and continuing through into 2025, but it appears she will keep getting paychecks for doing no district work, until February 2027.

She receives a yearly salary of over \$200,000.

## The Hamtramck Review

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Detroit, Mound & Davison, large 2 BR, quiet street, no pets, prefer single person, contract workers, computer workers, college students, or possible handyman to work for rent, \$700 for monthly rental or Airbnb, call Mike, 313-516-5178. <sup>12/26</sup>

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Call (313) 874-2100

January 2, 2026

Hamtramck Public TV-19

Broadcasting on Comcast Channel 19 in Hamtramck area and YouTube Live world wide (Hamtramck Library Channel)

What's on this coming week?

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR VIEWERS

Final City Council meeting of the year 2025,

Holiday music on Fridays in December at the library

Interview with Mayor about past 4 years and the future

Detroit Hamtramck Coalition Press Conference

Veteran's Day Ceremonies at Hamtramck VFW Post 6 and more

**BECOME A LOCAL REPORTER:** If you know how to take photos or make film clips on your phone, you can download them to Hamtramck TV along with a news story, to be aired the same day. Send in event announcements, comments to city officials, facts you want to share with the community, etc.

Hamtramck Public TV is broadcasting from Hamtramck Public Library

On Comcast Channel 19 and streaming on YouTube Live (24/7) Google "Hamtramck Public TV", and click on link "Hamtramck Public TV"

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Announcements submitted by 10 am

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# Year in review: Take a look back at the first half of 2025

**Continued from page 3**

While it was a new idea for some in the community, former Review writer Walter Wasacz also floated the concept back in 2019, in his “City Life” column.

Mayor Amer Ghalib got a special shoutout from President Trump at a recent iftar dinner at the White House.

Trump, who spoke for 10 minutes, heaped praise on Ghalib, who had endorsed Trump in the presidential election.

About Ghalib, Trump



**Passenger Recovery began digital radio programming.**

said: “He’s done a great job as mayor, and he’s doing a great job with his support of us. Mr. Ghalib, thank you very much, was such a tremendous endorsement right at the right time. Your timing was excellent, and you’ll be the next ambassador to Kuwait.”

Unfortunately for Ghalib, it appears unlikely that the U.S. Senate will confirm his appointment.

Residents braced for another summer of headaches – at least for those who drive.

The last leg of the Caniff repaving project – from Gallagher to Conant – started on April 11.

Businesses and households were warned not to park on the street, or else face having their vehicles towed.

City officials said that the work would be completed by the end of July.

Until then, that portion of the street was entirely closed off as the work progressed.

When it came to criticizing the media, Mayor Amer Ghalib sounded just like his would-be boss, President Trump.

Trump nominated Ghalib to be the newest U.S. ambassador to Kuwait,

but Ghalib had yet to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Ghalib was the focus of several potentially troublesome media reports, which included an accusation by the Anti-Defamation League that he is antisemitic.

Ghalib responded, saying that the media reports were “very, very biased articles. You can tell when you read them. ... The only thing left out is cussing me out... but I want to send a message to the people – you know,

the radical media.”

Trump often calls the media “fake news” and labels his media detractors as being among “the radical left.”

Ghalib was also called out for being anti-LGBTQ, for being against displaying pride flags on public property.

Ghalib responded with a vague warning to those who were critical of his conservative cultural views: “The future will hide a lot of surprises for you, and you are going to keep paying the prices.”

Hamtramck was on the airwaves – or, make that the internet.

Founders of the Hamtramck-based non-profit Passenger Recovery Center have launched a digital radio station, Passenger Radio WCHK, to enhance support services for people in recovery from Substance Use Disorder.

Co-founder Tim Price said: “The station serves both the recovery community and the (local) greater public. Listeners access programming online 24 hours a day. The station’s roster of 16 DJs broadcast live from noon to 8 p.m. weekdays, sharing a diverse mix of musical genres.”

**Continued on page 5**

AUCTION

Car Rescue will be holding an auction on January 5, 2026 at 11am at 10230 Livernois Ave in Detroit, MI.

The following cars will be available:

2019 Kia Soul

vin: KNDJN2A24K7677662

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vin: JTMBK31V59D003691

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[www.TheHamtramckReview.com](http://www.TheHamtramckReview.com)



# Year in review: Take a look back at the first half of 2025

Continued from page 4

## MAY

The city's stepped-up enforcement of candidate requirements snared three would-be candidates.

This year, the city hired a private investigator to perform background checks on candidates who filed to run for mayor or city council in the upcoming August primary election.

According to the city charter, candidates are disqualified for things such as: not being a resident; not being a registered voter; owing the city or any other government agency money; or being in violation of city requirements, such as having a business license to operate a business here.

The city disqualified two mayoral candidates and one city council candidate because they owed the city money.

About a week later, two more candidates were disqualified. One candidate who was disqualified, Arif Arman Jisan, was rejected because he was not even a registered voter.

Councilmembers Abu Musa and Muhith Mahmood, who were suspected of not actually being residents, were allowed to keep their seats on the council, and remain as candidates in the August Primary Election.

But their political futures were up in the air – and they could still face criminal charges.

The Michigan State police have agreed to take over an investigation on whether or not Musa and Mahmood are truly residents of the city, and whether they will face charges of fraud and/or perjury.

The investigation is still ongoing.

The report card came in for the Hamtramck Public School District's elementary schools and the middle school, and it was not something any parent



**Former mayor Karen Majewski flew an American flag upside down at her home in protest of the Trump administration.**

would want their student to bring home.

All four of the district's elementary schools and its only middle school were given barely passing to failing grades, with Holbrook Elementary School earning a full-on “F” – F, as in, Fail.

That ranking was done by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, a conservative think tank, in its

In an emotionally charged city council meeting, City Manager Max Garbarino didn't stand a chance.

After an angry exchange

between Garbarino and Mayor Amer Ghalib, Garbarino was placed on administrative leave with pay.

And Garbarino wasted no time in getting a lawyer the next day to prepare a lawsuit.

His attorney, Jonathan Marko, told Fox 2 News that Garbarino's lawsuit will be “big.”

“When you let it be



**Former City Manager Max Garbarino had a falling out with the mayor and city council. He was first placed on paid leave and then he was eventually fired.**

2025 Michigan Context and Performance Report Card.

The Review reached out to Hamtramck School District Interim Superintendent James Larson-Shidler for comment on the district's rankings, but he did not respond.

known about illegalities like Max did, he's a whistleblower,” said Marko.

The reasons for his suspension were based on anonymous accusations of wrongdoings that were posted on social media, and separate accusations by Police Chief Ja-

miel Altaheri.

Garbarino was suspended a week after he suspended Police Chief Altaheri and a department investigator.

City hall has turned out to be a tangled web of personal clashes, not only between the city manager and police chief, but also the city council and mayor.

In other words, it's a mess.

Garbarino was eventually fired, and has since taken a new job as city manager in Lexington, Michigan, about an hour's drive northeast of Hamtramck.

## JUNE

In a possible violation of the state's Open Meetings Act, Mayor Amer Ghalib demanded that City Manager Max Garbarino, who is on paid suspension, be kicked out of a city council meeting.

Ghalib reasoned that “it is improper for Max to be here today because if the police chief wants to come now, there would be an issue. ... You are on paid administrative leave. You are not supposed to be here.”

The mayor asked for Deputy City Police Chief Andy Mileski to escort Garbarino out of the council chambers. Garbarino was sitting where the public is seated, not at his desk where, as city manager, he would normally be seated.

Before Garbarino exited, he asked to respond, but the mayor said, “No.”

On his way out, Garbarino then let fly with a single word: “Lawsuits.”

Garbarino had been placed on paid administrative leave by the city council two weeks before, pending an investigation into allegations leveled by Police Chief Jamiel Altaheri.

Former mayor Karen Majewski caused a bit of a local stir by flying an American flag upside-down from the second-floor balcony of her home.

The action has a long history. According to the U.S. Flag Code, it is generally perceived as being “disrespectful,” however it is also “a sign of danger or distress,” and, when righted again, demonstrates “safety.”

It's a protest that has been made by citizens of all political persuasions for generations.

Majewski said she was flying the flag upside down to protest the Trump administration.

“I am outraged at the Trump administration's rapid, deliberate, and systematic dismantling of our Constitutional guarantees, of the flaunting of the principle of separation of powers, of the sabotage of our economic well-being, of the hostility toward our educational infrastructure, of the undermining of our place as a worldwide symbol of democracy, of the betrayal of our allies, and much more,” Majewski told The Review.

Political intrigue continued in city hall.

The Monroe County Prosecutor's Office agreed to review allegations that four city councilmembers, a former councilmember and a resident all violated state election law in 2023.

And, word had trickled down that the prosecutor, Jeffery Yorkey, a Republican, was about to make an announcement on whether his office would file charges.

Yorkey had agreed to

take on the matter after the Attorney General's Office requested a special prosecutor take it over. Dana Nessel, the Attorney General, bowed out because of a possible appearance of bias on her part.

President Trump ran as a “peace” candidate in 2024, and many Arab-Americans in Hamtramck believed that.

Trump campaigned to bring an end to the war between Ukraine and Russia, as well as to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip.

On “Day One,” he promised.

Both of those wars are still raging on, and Trump seemed ready to expand the war in the Middle East by ordering the bombing of three nuclear facilities in Iran.

That's on top of the Trump administration's bombing of Houthi militants in Yemen.

But, back in 2024, under the influence of Hamtramck Mayor Amer Ghalib, many Arab Americans switched from previously voting Democratic to supporting Trump and other Republicans, believing they would usher in an era of peace.

The Review reached out to Mayor Amer Ghalib for comment, who did not respond. After Trump became president, he then nominated Ghalib to be the next ambassador to Kuwait.



## SUPPORT OUR FOOD PANTRY

Our Pantry Program is a testament to our community's strength and resilience. Together, we can help our community members in finding their path towards stability and self-sufficiency.

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## HUNGRY FOR HISTORY

# John Bukowczyk

Professor Emeritus of History, WSU

*Love, Romance, Status, and Domestic Power: Polish Women-the Countryside to the City*

Polish Dinner and Talk – \$25 (must preregister), Talk – \$5

**Thurs., January 8th: 6 p.m. Dinner, 7 p.m. Talk**

Hamtramck Historical Museum, 9525 Jos. Campau  
Tickets here: [facebook.com/hamtramckhistoricalcommission/](https://facebook.com/hamtramckhistoricalcommission/)





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Smoked Bacon/Boczek	Crepes/Nalesniki	Biala Kielbasa

**WE SHIP NATIONWIDE!**

# Quick Hits

Cont. from front page

If the court decision had gone in Mahmood's favor, it was likely that Alharbi would have appealed the judge's decision.

As of now, Alharbi is set to take office on Jan. 1.

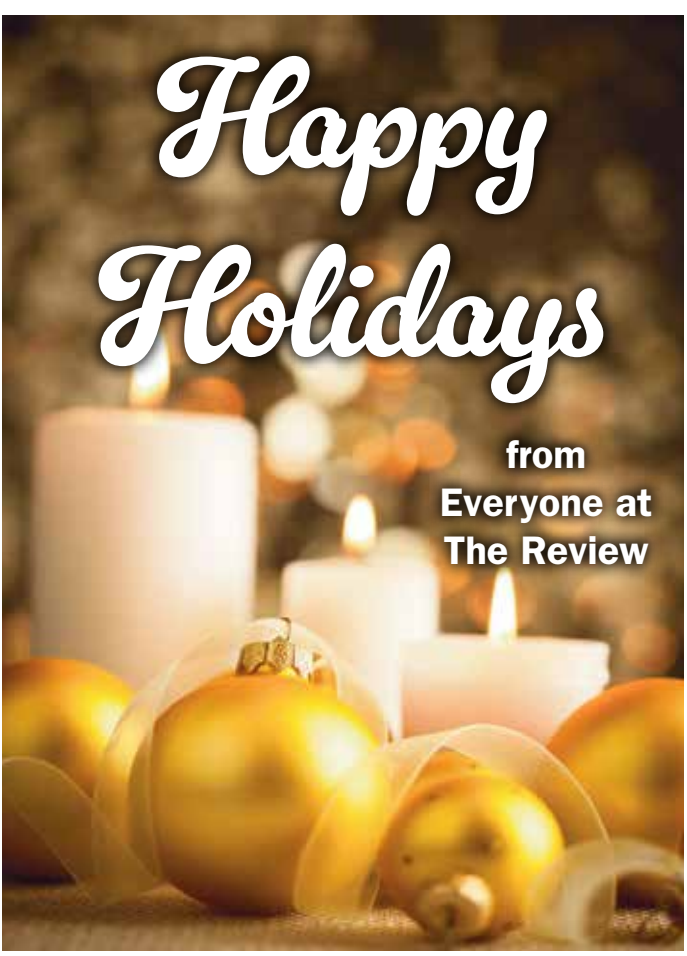
Mayor Amer Ghalib did not seek re-election, in the hopes of being confirmed by the U.S. Senate to be ambassador to Kuwait.

Those hopes appear to be dashed now, as he faced tough grilling from both Democratic and Republican senators who deemed some of his past statements and social media activities antisemitic.

Ghalib says he is still in line to get another job with the Trump administration.

# Happy Holidays

from  
Everyone at  
The Review



As the church bells ring proclaiming the birth of Christ we at

## Our Lady Queen of Apostles Parish

wish you a Merry Christmas and for the coming New Year - health, happiness and prosperity.

**Christmas Season 2025**

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**Wednesday, December 24 ..... Christmas Eve Vigil**

Family Mass..... 4pm (English)

Solemn Midnight Mass.....12:00 am

Celebrated in English and Polish

Preceded by the singing of Christmas Carols at 11:30 pm

**Thursday, December 25.....Christmas Day**

Mass in Polish and English..... 9:30am

**Friday, December 26**

**Poland 2nd Day of Christmas, St. Stephen's Day**

Mass in English and Polish.....10:00am

**Wednesday, December 31 .....New Year's Eve**

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament ..... 3:30pm

Holy Mass in English and Polish ..... 4:30pm

**Thursday, January 1 ..... New Year's Day**

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.....9:30am (English and Polish)



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**Very Rev. Jaroslaw A. Nowak, Pastor**

**Wednesday, Dec. 24th**

**Thursday, Dec. 25th**

**Friday, Dec. 26th**

**Saturday, Dec. 27th**

**Sunday, Dec. 28th**

**Thursday, Jan. 1**

**Christmas Eve – Vigil of the Nativity of Our Lord**

9:00 am Holy Mass

**Christmas Day - Solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord**

11:45 Group Carol Singing

12 Midnight Shepherds' Mass (Pasterka)

9:00 am Holy Mass

**Feast of St. Stephen, Proto-Martyr (Msza Św. w j. polskim)**

7:00 pm Holy Mass

**Solemnity of Saint John, Apostle & Evangelist**

10:00 am Holy Mass (Blessing of Wine)

**Solemnity of Humble Shepherds**

9:00 am Holy Mass


**Solemnity of Circumsion of Our Lord**

10:00 am Holy Mass



## From the Office of Wayne County Treasurer

# Eric R. Sabree



# PROBATE ASSISTANCE

If you are facing foreclosure and need assistance in starting a Wayne County Probate Court Case because a property is in the name of a deceased family member, please contact one of the following community partners for assistance:

**Michigan Legal Services: 313-774-1527 | 313-725-4890**

**United Community Housing Coalition: 313-405-7726**

**Legal Aid & Defender: 313-967-5800**

**Contact the Wayne County Probate Court by calling:**

**313-224-5706**

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## Season's greetings

Wishing our community peace and joy into the next year

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