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The Review

Hamtramck

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WING FELLAS

11401 JOS CAMPAU See ad, page 8
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Quick Hits

Heads up baseball fans

By Charles Sercombe

It's not baseball season yet, but the folks over at the Hamtramck Historical Museum have their mind on the old ball game.

The museum is looking to curate an exhibit about what we used to call America's Pastime. Apparently, football is now the game more Americans enjoy.

Nevertheless, the museum is specifically looking for baseball history and artifacts from Hamtramck, especially about local "sandlot" baseball.

We'll let the museum explain:

"We would love to include items from past and current residents in this portion of the exhibit. Items such as stories, photos, or older personal baseball equipment would be great.

"If you have any items you would like to donate, please contact the museum via DM, or email, or you may simply drop the item(s) off during our regular hours. Thanks in advance for anything that is provided!"

The email for the museum is hamtramckhistory@gmail.com, and you can also drop off items at 9525 Jos. Campau during the weekend.

If those options don't work for you, call the museum at (313) 262-6571.

— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

Spreading the message of Dr. King at the HPS Community Center

By Charles Sercombe

For the first time in three years, the annual Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Prayer Breakfast returned in-person on Monday, the national holiday celebrating MLK's birthday.

And for the 25th year, the Concerned Women of Hamtramck sponsored the event at the Hamtramck High School Community Center.

As usual, there was a talent show performed by Hamtramck Public School students, although the number of students who participated this year was down from previous years.

Nevertheless, the various speakers spoke passionately about the spirit of MLK and what his message means.

The civil rights pioneer would have been 94 on his birthday, which is actually Jan. 15. He was assassinated in 1968 – a year that also saw Robert F. Kennedy gunned down, and violence erupt at the Democratic convention in Chicago.

One of the speakers at the breakfast was former HPS Superintendent Tom Niczay, who talked about the various members of the Concerned Womens group and its founders who have all passed on.

Over the years, the group has done a lot of work with students, and sponsored student grants.

The Concerned Women's philosophy, Niczay said, is that "every student is a winner."

Many of the women were pioneers in their own right.

Co-Founder Yvonne Myrick was the first African-American to be elected to the Hamtramck Public School District School Board. She was president of the HPS board for many years.

Myrick was also a department head in Hamtramck city hall.

Niczay touched on the theme for this year's breakfast, which was "Reach Out and Touch Somebody's Hand."

The theme is a title of a song written by Nickolas Ashford and Valerie Simpson, and recorded by both Diana Ross and Aretha Franklin.

Niczay said the message of the song is to help those who are struggling.

"Be kind, show empathy, love," Niczay said. "When we encourage others, we encourage ourselves."

Madelyn Porter, who emceed the program, also

Continued on page 6

Scenes from last Monday's Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Prayer Breakfast sponsored by the Concerned Women of Hamtramck. The event featured speakers and a talent show by Hamtramck Public School students.



Get a piece of Hamtramck

By Charles Sercombe

Hamtramck has another round of property sales up for auction.

This sale includes residential lots and structures, as well as two industrial sites.

There are some requirements for purchasing the sites.

For the residential properties, buyers must do the following, according to the city's website:

1) Buyers must repair and bring the property up to code or construct a new unit within two years of purchase.

2) Buyers must confirm that the planned development will be owner-occupied.

3) Buyers must have the ability to close the sale within 48 hours of the auction ending date. The city will award sales to the highest qualifying bids.

This is a silent auction, and bids started on Jan. 11. The deadline to submit a bid is Jan. 30 at 10 a.m.

Bids will be opened and reviewed on Jan. 30, at 10 a.m., in city hall. It's open to the public to view.

The following sites are being offered, along with their minimum bids:

- 9836 Dequindre – House \$5,270.01
- 3891 Doremus – Garage \$3,403.39
- 9327 Gallagher – House \$9,016.70
- 1983 Yemans – House \$3,585.31
- 3415 Yemans – House \$12,381.39
- 3971 Yemans – Vacant Lot \$1,143.29
- 5008 Yemans – House \$15,590.01

The requirements for purchasers of the industrial sites include, according to the city:

1: The buyer must purchase both parcels as a

Continued on page 2

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Get a piece of Hamtramck

Continued from front page

set.

2: The buyer must agree to remove contaminated soils on the site.

3: The buyer must agree to update the screening and fencing around the parcel.

4: The buyer must agree to cooperate with the city to revitalize the corner of Joseph Campau as it is the entrance to the city and adjacent to the Joe Louis Greenway.

5: The buyer must close on the sale within 14 days of the ending date of the auction using certified funds (e.g., cashier's check, money order, or certified check).

The industrial sites up for auction are:



Several pieces of city-owned properties, including two industrial lots on Jos. Campau and Denton, are up for auction.

• 2930 Denton and 7901 Joseph Campau, \$52,669

More information and applications are available on the city's website: <https://hamtramck.us>

On the website, go to In-

formation Center tab and click on Property for Sale.

You can also go to city hall for an application. Applications for the industrial sites are also due Jan. 30 at 10 a.m.

Covid update: When will we know when the threat of covid is over?

By Charles Sercombe

Now that we're in the third year of the covid pandemic, health officials have been discussing when it might pass.

According to the World Health Organization, it could phase out by the end of this year.

And then there are those who wonder, could it be downgraded to an epidemic?

Would that be a scientific decision or a political one?

And it could be that covid mutates into a seasonal virus like the flu or a respiratory one.

In the meantime, a subvariant of covid, XBB, is still spreading – especially in China, where the government lifted its

“zero covid” restrictions.

Some 60,000 Chinese have died of covid in a short amount of time.

Also worrisome to health experts is that China has lifted its travel restrictions – meaning the covid variant could further spread and mutate throughout the world.

In some ways, covid, health experts say, is telling us it's far from over.

There is no doubt that covid is deadly. It has killed over 1 million Americans in two years, and the number of deaths worldwide is believed to be almost 7 million.

Here in Hamtramck, the number of new covid cases for the past week is 27. That brings the total for the past three years up to 5,838.

The number of deaths here remains at 81.



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Hamtramck Housing Commission (HHC) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap or familial status

This week at the Library . . .

January 20, 2023

Group Exercise: Yoga and Tai Chi sessions at the library have returned. Get your Yoga fix on Tuesdays at 2:30 pm. Tai Chi makes a comeback on Fridays starting at 10 am. The program is provided by the RIM Foundation. These meet ups are senior friendly.

Book Chat: Check out a copy of the novel by author Olive Higgins Prouty “Now, Voyager”, and consider attending our book chat about it on Friday, February 24th at 11:30 am.

GetSetUp: Are you, or is someone you know, a senior and a Michigan resident? Please note that there is a fantastic resource for older adults which is free to use. GetSetUp is an interactive online learning community which offers classes and virtual meet-ups 24 hours a day, helping folks stay connected when it becomes harder to do so in person. Courses being offered include managing one’s health and wellness, navigating various tech devices, travel planning, and more. Through its renewed partnership with the Michigan Dept. of Health and Human Services, GetSetUp is waiving course fees for Michigan seniors. To take advantage of this offer, please visit www.getsetup.io/partner/michigan and use promo code MICHIGANHEALTH.

MiLibrary Quest: Take a look at the upcoming MiLibraryQuest with its Dungeons & Dragons theme. Libraries from around the state have synchronized their talents to craft an interactive, Riddle-filled adventure.

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

Action takes place online and there will be prizes to win. The start date is February 1st. Please visit www.MiLibraryQuest.wixsite.com/quest1 to see what it is all about.

African American History: The Library of Michigan will be showcasing its extensive resources for investigating African American history within our state and at the national level. This Zoom presentation will take place Thursday, February 2nd at 6:30 pm. Please visit www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan/public/programs-for-the-public to register and see a list of other upcoming public events from the LOM.

Story Time: Get you kids together and drop in on our Monday afternoon Story Time at 4 pm. It will put a smile on everyone’s face, including yours.

Game Night: Join us for Game Night at the library. We are serving up something fun each Friday’s at 4 pm. Stop by and let us know that you have come to play.

Edgar Allen Poe: This poet and writer of mystery and suspense tales was born on January 19, 1809, in Boston Massachusetts. “The Raven” is his most famous poem.

ESL Classes in the Library: The ESL classes organized by Horizon School are held in the library four days a week (Monday to Thursday). There are two sessions with the first staring at 9 am and the second at 11:30 am.

Second Front Page

‘Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow’ shovel

By Alan Madlane
Hamtramck has always been a caring town. Even if the old city council meetings of yesteryear seemed more like Big Time Wrestling was about to break out. A group of folks hereabouts add to that caring saga from across the years. They go by “Hamtramck Mutual Aid,” and we talked to them. Here’s how it sounded.

The Review: How many years has Hamtramck Mutual Aid been helping out folks with shoveling their walks in winter?
Hamtramck Mutual Aid: We started in the winter of 2020-2021, so this will be our third winter. Another Hamtramckan,

Susan Dunn-Rahdar, organized a similar program for many years before this.

The Review: Your call out to partner with other organizations – have you done this before, or is this a new approach to try to get some more help than you’ve had in the past?
HMA: This is a new approach to boost volunteers, as the demand for shoveling is great (2021-22 winter had approximately a 2:1 house-to-volunteer ratio, and we expect it to be even higher this year). (Well, the winter is proving to be snow-free, so far – editor). We need some more community members to

lean in to help! Shout outs to APIA MI, Midtown 3C7 Block Club, Grace Baptist Church, and Hamtramck Area Disaster Recovery Group for partnering with us.

The Review: Does Hamtramck Mutual Aid do anything other than helping get folks’ snow shoveled?
HMA: Yes. We have a timebank, with the goal of neighbors exchanging services for free, sharing their time and talent to build stronger communities. This summer, our yard match-up program paired volunteers with senior neighbors, or neighbors with disabilities, to clean up yards and alleys so they would avoid costly tickets. We are also trying to pilot free food delivery, in partnership with other mutual aid groups. We meet the second Wednesdays of the month, at 6 pm, usually at Book Suey (10345 Jos. Campau) – all are welcome!

The Review: Sounds like a great way to make some new friends with some great people! Do you do driveways as well as sidewalks – even if they are extra-long or

-wide driveways?
HMA: We’ll even do a corner house, if it’s needed and we have the volunteer capacity to do it. Even if people can only commit to one extra house, it helps us meet that need. We definitely need more helping hands!

The Review: About how many people do you have working with you on this so far?
HMA: Last year, we had about 30 volunteers total, and we are still waiting to hear back from a few of them who had expressed interest in doing it again this year, but we are always looking for more hands (we can’t repeat that enough)! We do make our best effort to pair you as close to home as possible, optimally on the same block. Volunteers – as well as neighbors who are seniors or have a disability, who could benefit from our services – are encouraged to sign up at bit.ly/HMASnow2022. Thanks!

The Review: Thank you, for what you do! I’m sure it’s much appreciated!



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School Bell

HPS supporting diversity

This past Tuesday was National Day of Racial Healing. This is a day that offers an opportunity to reflect on our shared values and take collective action toward a more just and equitable world.

At Hamtramck Public Schools we are proud of our diverse community and will always renounce any form of racism, bigotry or discrimination. We are stronger together!

School Board

January is School Board Recognition Month.

We are grateful for the efforts of our Board of Education who give so much of their time in dedication to the community and its children.

Thank you for dedicating time both in and outside of board meetings, attending school functions and supporting the district for the betterment of our community. We appreciate you!

MLK Day

We honor the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. As our students study his life filled with sacrifice, courage and the pursuit of justice, we're reminded why he was and continues to serve as an inspiration.

Covid forum


Join Hamtramck Public Schools and Eastern Michigan University for an open forum to express thoughts and opinions about COVID-19 and the flu from 3 to 4:30 p.m. this Friday, Jan. 20 at the Hamtramck High School Auditorium.

Cosmos basketball schedule

1/20 – University Prep, 7 p.m., Home
1/24 – Dearborn ATA, 7 p.m., Away
1/27 – River Rouge, 7 p.m., Away
1/29 – TBA (Classic), Away
1/31 - Stoney Creel, 7 p.m., Away
2/3 – Ecorse, 7 p.m., Home
2/7 – Notre Dame Prep, 7 p.m., Home
2/10 – University Prep, 7 p.m., Away
2/11 – W.C. Showcase, 6 p.m., Away (Benton Harbor) Kalamazoo Central
2/17 – River Rouge, 7 p.m., Home

Obituaries

RENKIEWICZ



Richard W. Renkiewicz, 89, died January 16, 2023.

Richard was the beloved husband of Mary (Tierno) for 64 years. Loving father to Teresa (John) Guarascio, Ann (Mark) Kay, Joseph (Kathy) Renkiewicz, Nannette Renkiewicz, & David (Cindy) Renkiewicz. Cherished grandfather to Christie (late Edward) Fabinski, Philip Garbacz, Stanley (Denise) Garbacz, Lori (Shane) Davison, Stephanie Kay, Joseph (Sarah) Renkiewicz Jr., Kimberly Renkiewicz, Gabriel (Jenifer) Kay & Richard Renkiewicz and great-grandfather to Justin, Payton, Nolan, Ethan, Evelyn, Benjamin, Jocelyn, Abigail, Jaxson, & Zachary.

Richard, born and raised in Hamtramck, served in the United States Air Force from 1955-1958. Richard was often seen at the Hamtramck Little League fields, as a coach and groundskeeper.

A long-time employee of the Hamtramck Public Schools, Richard worked

as a maintenance employee, custodian, and as a bus driver before retiring in 1986 due to multiple health issues.

In retirement, Richard would get a great suntan as he sat on his porch across from Pulaski Park, watching and playfully scolding the kids as they played.

Richard was predeceased by his parents, Victoria (Gnatek) & Chester Renkiewicz, sisters Ann Kelly and Regina “Jane” Spork and brother, Joseph Renkiewicz.

Memorial visitation is Friday, January 27, 2023, 3-8 p.m. at the Wasik Funeral Home, Inc., 11470 Thirteen Mile Road (West of Hoover) Warren. Family and friends will gather at the funeral home Saturday, January 28, 2023, from 10 a.m. until an 11 a.m. memorial service.

Due to health reasons, NO FLOWERS PLEASE. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to Children's Hospital of Michigan Foundation at <http://www.yourchildrensfoundation.org/>




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Dickinson West Elementary 2333 Burger (313) 591-7407 K – 6th Grades	Tau Beta School 3056 Hanley (313) 591-7409 K – 8th Grades	Hamtramck High School 11410 Charest (313) 591-7401 9th – 12th Grades
Early Childhood Elementary 11680 McDougall (313) 591-7410 Pre K – 2nd Grades		Horizon School 3225 Caniff (313) 591-7404 9th - 12th Grades



~ In Memoriam ~

Anna Wojcinski,
age 91

August 21, 1930 –
January 22, 2022

Dear mom, Grammy,
Great gram x 2.
One year since you were
called to heaven.

We all miss you so much.

Review: Opinion Page

In Our Opinion

Home animal slaughtering is still wrong for an urban city

There was an admonishment we heard all too much when growing up, and it went something like this: “Just because you can do it, doesn’t make it right.” We mention this in light of the recent decision to allow home animal sacrifices for religious reasons. The city council and mayor said they are allowing the practice on the advice of the city attorney. He is basing his advice on a 1993 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that the practice is protected under the First Amendment. But there are some who say the Supreme Court decision does not rule out the right of a community to set regulations on the practice, such as, for example, not allowing animal slaughtering in homes or backyards. We’re not even sure why this issue came up, and then continued to drag on and on for several months. It’s an issue that has divided the community, and has made headlines nationally. We understand that some of the Muslim faith wish to practice this religious observance, and do so just once a year. But the court ruling, as so interpreted, also allows anyone with any particular religious belief – no matter how off the wall it may seem to some – to slaughter animals as much as they like. You’d think those seeking to do this would have enough common sense to realize what a huge sanitary concern this practice raises. As we all know, Hamtramck is a densely-packed community, with houses typically just a few feet apart and with mostly small yards. You’d think not only would people have enough sense to know there will be real issues of the disposal of animal waste, but also concern that neighbors and kids will witness the cutting of a goat’s throat or dismemberment of its carcass. You’d think common sense would dictate that, just because you have a right to do something, there is a time and place for everything, and performing backyard and home slaughtering in a small urban community is not the time or place. A PETA spokesperson was recently asked by a media outlet about this practice, and her point should be considered: Is there really a need, in modern times, to do this? And think of this: animal slaughter by amateurs will certainly result in animal cruelty. Again, why exactly did this issue come up?

Odds & Ends

Crime watch... For those who follow the daily police incident reports you have probably noticed an uptick in vehicle thefts. They are happening all over the city. Hamtramck is not alone, said Hamtramck Police Chief Anne Moise. “We are experiencing a rise in car thefts, which seems to be the case all around our area, and even nationally,” Moise said. “No particular car is safe from theft but we are seeing an increase in thefts of Kia’s and Hyundai vehicles.” Unfortunately, Hamtramck provides easy pickings for thieves. You’d be surprised how quickly they can work. There are common-sense ways to help prevent a theft:

- Lock your doors.
- Remove your keys from the vehicle.
- Do not leave a spare key near your vehicle.
- Close the windows.
- Park in well-lit areas.
- Install an audible alarm system and anti-theft device.
- Install a vehicle immobilizer system.
- Install a tracking system.

Despite taking such precautions, thieves always seem to be one step ahead in ways to take off with your car. For new models that have keys embedded with codes, thieves have ways to get around that code or mimic it. Some thieves are going hi-tech in other words. It’s eye-opening what you can learn online. For older models, it’s simply a matter of breaking into the car and jamming a screw driver in the ignition or hot-wiring it. For some thieves, they can steal a car in under a minute. For others, maybe a few minutes.

Lawsuit update... Government watchdog Charles Blackwell has once again struck out in trying to collect damages (in other words, \$\$\$) from former Hamtramck City Attorney James Allen. Blackwell’s federal lawsuit alleged a number of allegations, including violations of his First Amendment right and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), among other things. He claimed in his lawsuit that Allen’s emails to him mocked his disability, which Blackwell thought were sue-worthy. Blackwell was no angel in the matter either, and he posted some offensive memes about Allen online, and used various aliases to hide behind in his communications. If it all sounds juvenile on both sides, you would right to think so. Anyway, a lower federal court had previously dismissed the lawsuit, and now, the federal court of appeals has kicked it to the curb. Allen is now in private practice, and has an office in Royal Oak.

Now you know... Vinyl record fans, take heart. The popularity of vinyl sales continues to increase, according to Billboard Magazine. The publication says there has been a steady 17 years’ worth of sales increase in the U.S., and last year was a record year, so to speak. Some 43.46 million discs were sold in 2022, up 4.2 percent from the previous year. If you’re like us, we like things that spin, not stream.

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The Hamtramck Review

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What's on this coming week?

Animal Slaughter Ordinance Comments,
Board of Education meetings,
New Kamal Rahman Show "In My Opinion",
Daily ESL classes at 4 pm, Local events,
Library programs, Interviews, Council meeting highlights,
Event announcements, Evenings with authors, Citizen's Comments,
Children's programs, Motivate Me 313 programs,
Foreign Language Programs,
and more.....

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CITY OF HAMTRAMCK

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING RESULTS

The City of Hamtramck held a Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 10 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Council Chambers of Hamtramck City Hall (3401 Evaline Street, Hamtramck, MI 48212) to receive comments from the public on the following topic:

- Amendment to the Animal Ordinance

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HAMTRAMCK, WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN THIS 10 DAY OF JANUARY 2023

Full and complete text of the changes is available on the City of Hamtramck's website through Boarddocs (Resolution 2022-129, Resolution 2022-130 and Resolution 2022-78). The public is invited to view and comment on the amendments during the Public Hearing or to make written comments on or before November 22, 2022 to the City Clerk at RFaraj@hamtramckcity.com.

Rana Faraj
Hamtramck City Clerk

Spreading the message of Dr. King at the HPS Community Center

Continued from front page

spoke of her experiences with working with other people of different races and religious beliefs.

"The differences are what makes the world so beautiful," Porter said.

The keynote speaker was Rev. Wallace R. Mills, Jr., who is pastor at New Ebenezer Baptist Church.

He gave an impassioned and fiery talk about the meaning of MLK.

King, he said, understood the injustices African-Americans have suffered through.

"He understood what his people were going through, that we were rejected, not worth anything," Mills said. "He reminded us that God made us all equal."

While there have been huge strides in civil rights, Mills said the fight is far from over.

"Racial injustice is still alive," he said.

He said this divisiveness is also being played out in Hamtramck politics. But there is a way forward, Mills said.

"We got to sit at the table where the decisions are being made," he said.

Scenes from last Monday's Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Prayer Breakfast sponsored by the Concerned Women of Hamtramck and held at the HPS Community Center.



School board makes some changes for the new year

By Charles Sercombe

The Hamtramck Public School Board has once again shuffled some of their duties among its members.

At this month's board meeting, Jihan Aiyash was voted to become president of the board, a position that she held a couple of years ago. She replaces Sal Hadwan, who had sought to remain in that position.

The vote on Aiyash came up first, and she was able to garner a majority of support from the board, thus canceling a vote on Hadwan.

Aiyash has been absent from the majority of regular board meetings for the past year, for reasons never stated. The Review reached out for comment by Aiyash about her absences, but she did not respond to an email.

Also elected to various board positions were: Salah Hadwan, vice-president; Regan Watson, treasurer; and Daz'Sharon Hall, secretary.

The board also welcomed two new members: Victor Farris and Abdulmalik Algahaim. They, along with Moortadha Obaid, are trustees.

After a lengthy discussion, the board also changed up its meeting dates. The regular monthly meetings will now be held on the second Monday of each month, instead of on Wednesdays.

Those meetings will also start at 6 p.m., instead of 6:30 p.m.

The board's committee of the whole meetings also have been changed to the fourth Monday of each month, and those meetings also start at 6 p.m.

In an unexpected move, and one not on the board's meeting agenda, motions were heard to hire one of two candidates, listed only by #1 and #2, to take over duties of superintendent.

Both motions failed to gain enough support by the board.

According to sources, one of the candidates was HPS Superintendent Jaleelah Ahmed, who is currently under suspension, and has been for the past year.

No reason has been given for the suspension, other than there is an investigation.

In the meantime, Ahmed has sued the district and board (except for Boardmembers Aiyash and Hall) over the suspension. She has been receiving her salary during this suspension period.

The interim superintendent continues to be Nabil Nagi.

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Continued from page 7

- A noise complaint was made in the 1900 block of Edwin.
- An animal complaint was made in the 1900 block of Edwin.
- An assault occurred in the 12100 block of Klinger.
- A hit-and-run accident occurred on Holmes.

Monday, Jan. 16

- A report was made about two people at Conant and Trowbridge having an argument.
- Officers were advised to be on the lookout for a vehicle that had been carjacked.
- A vehicle was reported stolen on Norwalk. Also, a vehicle was stolen on Whalen.

- A hit-and-run accident was reported at Dequindre and Evaline.
- Officers responded to a residence on Jos. Campau, where there was a landlord-tenant dispute.
- A neighbor dispute was reported on Holbrook.
- A vehicle stolen in Hamtramck was recovered by Detroit police.
- Officers responded to a report of a large fight on Andrus. Those involved were gone when officers arrived.



City Hall Insider ...

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

By Charles Sercombe

The city council met on Jan. 10, and all councilmembers, except Khalil Refai, were present. Much of the three-and-a-half hour meeting was spent on discussing a proposed change in the city's animal ordinance to allow for at-home animal slaughtering for religious purposes.

During public discussion, a majority of speakers were opposed to allowing the practice. Those who spoke in favor said it's their religious right to do so.

City Attorney Odey Meroueh advised the council that they can't prohibit the practice because of a 1993 U.S. Supreme Court decision that allowed it.

The council, including Mayor Amer Ghalib, voted in favor of allowing the practice. Those opposed included Councilmembers Mohammed Alsomiri and Muhith Mahmood.

The issue gained the attention of multiple local and national media outlets.

You can read more about the matter in The Review's Jan. 13 issue that can be found online at hamtramckreview.com.

In other matters, the council approved this year's poverty exemption guideline on property taxes.

Section 211.7u(1) of the Michigan General Property Tax Act says that "the principal residence of persons who, in the judgment of the supervisor and board of review, by

reason of poverty, are unable to contribute toward the public charges is eligible for exemption in whole or in part from taxation under this act."

In a note from the city administration to the council, it was said:

"The City of Hamtramck adopts a policy which includes an asset and income test. The Board of Review shall follow the City of Hamtramck policy when granting or denying an exemption. When the household of an applicant meets all eligibility requirements, the Board of Review must grant a full exemption equal to a 100% reduction in taxable value or a partial exemption equal a 50% reduction in taxable value.

"MCL 211.7u(5) states that if a person claiming the poverty exemption meets all eligibility requirements, the Board of Review shall grant the poverty exemption, in whole or in part, as follows:

"(1) a full exemption equal to a 100% reduction in taxable value for the year in which the exemption is granted; or

"(2) a partial exemption equal to a 50% reduction in taxable value for the year in which the exemption is granted; or

"(3) a partial exemption equal to a 25% reduction in taxable value for the year in which the exemption is granted.

"No other method of calculating taxable value may be utilized, except for those percentage reductions specifically autho-

rized in statute, or any other percentage reduction approved by the Michigan State Tax Commission."

In another matter, a proposed change in the policy for non-union city employees, which consists of about 17 employees, was discussed.

The proposal would allow those employees to roll over their unused Personal Time Off days to their next year's PTO.

The current policy required employees to use all their PTO in one year, or lose it.

Councilmember Amanda Jaczkowski said the proposal is being made to send a message to those employees that the council "really values them."

Interim City Manager Max Garbarino noted that many of the employees are unable to take all four weeks' worth of PTO per year because the city is short-staffed.

Councilmember Mohammed Hassan proposed a compromise to allow one week's worth, or 40 hours, to be rolled over.

Councilmember Nayeem Choudhury noted that allowing employees to roll over all four weeks could mean an employee takes a two-month paid leave.

Councilmember Jaczkowski countered, saying the city could allow 60 hours' worth to be rolled over.

Eventually, the council agreed to allowing 60 hours' worth to be rolled over to the second year.

The employees are allowed to roll over their unused PTO for just one year.

Later on, the council approved a proposal to allow several city properties to be put up for a silent auction, which will end Jan. 30.

In closing remarks, Councilmember Choudhury said that, despite what some have said, the council is able to concentrate on more than one issue, such as the animal ordinance.

He said other issues of concern are community health and public safety.

During public comment, Bill Meyer noted that the several months' long debate over animal sacrifices was a "monumental waste of time."

He said the city should have researched the matter at the beginning, because a U.S. Supreme Court ruling said the practice, for religious reasons, is part of the constitution's First Amendment right to have the freedom to practice one's religion.

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