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HAPPENINGS

Winsted Women's Expo, Saturday

Winsted Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting its Women's Expo Saturday, Oct. 10 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Blue Note Ballroom in Winsted. Admission is free and the event will feature a variety of vendors. Attendees are encouraged to bring a donation for the McLeod Emergency Food Shelf.

Water hydrant flushing Oct. 14-16

Water hydrant flushing will take place in the city of Winsted Wednesday, Oct. 14 through Friday, Oct. 16. During this time, water may be rusty and water pressure may decrease. The public works department recommends not washing light-colored clothing during this time. For more information, call the public works department at 320-485-2201.

Fall Food Drive in Lester Prairie this month

Holasek Flower Power Garden Center, 18364 Co. Rd. 9 in Lester Prairie, is hosting its Fall Food Drive to benefit the McLeod Emergency Food Shelf through Saturday, Oct. 31. Everyone who brings in a food donation will receive a free 3-inch mini garden plant.

McLeod Avenue improvement project complete in Winsted

IVAN RACONTEUR
Editor

After nearly four years of planning and construction, the McLeod Avenue improvement project in Winsted has reached substantial completion.

City engineer Josh Eckstein of Bolton & Menk presented a brief review of some of the highlights during an assessment hearing for the project which took place during Tuesday's city council meeting.

In addition to street improvements, the project included the addition of sidewalks and a connecting section of trail along Kingsley Street, replacement of watermain, and storm sewer improvements.

One of the key financial components of the project was a \$750,000 MnDOT grant the city received.

Eckstein noted that two parts of the project were subject to assessment under the city's assessment project - street improvements and watermain improvements.

The project was assessed at a 3.13 percent interest rate over a 15-year period.

Affected residents who choose to prepay their assessments have 30 days during which they can pay the city.

After that time, the assessment roll will be certified to property taxes, and residents will need to pay McLeod County.

City Administrator Adam Birkholz expressed appreciation to residents for their patience during the project.

Following the hearing, the council adopted a resolution approving the assessments.



Winsted city engineer Josh Eckstein of Bolton & Menk (center) presented a summary of the McLeod Avenue project during an assessment hearing for the project during Tuesday's city council meeting.

PHOTO BY IVAN RACONTEUR

Bond refinancing

The council approved the issuance of \$3,156,000 in general obligation refunding bonds.

A proposal received from Security Bank & Trust offered the lowest overall cost of borrowing at a net effective interest rate of 1.0169 percent, according to Shannon Sweeney of David Drown Associates, the city's bond consultant.

The present value savings (net of issuance costs) are estimated at \$278,469.

Payments over the remaining 13-

year term will be reduced by an average of \$22,043 per year.

Odds and ends

In other business, the council:

- Approved election judges for the Tuesday, Nov. 3 general election, including Adam Birkholz, Anthony Hammes, Justin Heldt, James Lammer, David Meyer, John Schlechter, Jamie Stotko, Andrew Traeger, Paige Vick, and Ethel Wolff.

- accepted a \$15,000 donation from the Winsted Fire Department Relief Association to be dedicated to the Winsted Volunteer Fire Department's

capital improvement plan.

- accepted a \$2,500 donation from the Winsted Fire Department Relief Association to be dedicated to the Winsted Park Fund.

- approved a \$5,000 loan under the city's business beautification forgiveable loan program to Galen Schlagel, 121 Main Ave. Schlagel contributed \$7,100 in matching funds.

- approved nine \$5,000 grants using Coronavirus Aid, relief, and economic security (CARES) act funds, including five small businesses and four non-profit organizations.

WINSTED

Littfin Truss joins All-Fab Group

Littfin Truss of Winsted recently joined with the All-Fab Group of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Littfin Truss manufactures engineered structural building components for the residential, commercial, and agricultural building construction

markets within the midwest US region.

The All-Fab Group currently manages nine operations under the All-Fab, Nu-Fab, Olympic, and Pacific brands.

see LITTFIN, 20A

Voters guide starts today

IVAN RACONTEUR
Editor

The Herald Journal voters guide begins today, and will be completed in next week's issue.

We will run brief profiles of local candidates in contested races for the Tuesday, Nov. 3 general election. We do not include candidates who are running unopposed.



HLWW School Board meets in closed session

NANCY DASHWOOD
Staff Writer

The School Board of the Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted (HLWW) School District met in a closed session regarding "possible action with respect to employment of an employee" Oct. 5.

The school board meeting was closed to the public pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.05.

Following the meeting, Superintendent Brad Sellner said the topic of the meeting was Eric Sietsema, the district's technology director.

Sellner did not disclose if any action was taken in the meeting.

Construction is right on schedule for Lester Prairie Schools

ANDREW MEULENERS
Staff Writer

Construction on Lester Prairie Schools new building project started May 15 and is on time and on budget.

"We're tracking really well and we are running on schedule," said Paul Osterhus, the construction superintendent with H+U Construction, a statement that was also echoed by Lester Prairie Superintendent Melissa Radeke.

Four and a half months into the project construction has been going as well as can be expected.

"We had to move things around, schedule wise we concentrated a little bit more on the south addition at first. We had it set in the schedule to start the precast part of the operation by October 5. You will see us mobilizing on Monday and actual walls going up Wednesday or Thursday," said Osterhus.

Few Challenges

H+U Construction has had a few challenges on this project.

"There have been small little challenges every day but it's nothing that we can't overcome I mean, the weather has not been a challenge, the weather actually has worked well for us. You know this summer. The weather cooperated for the most part, it's a nice sandy site. So, when it does rain it dries up quickly. You know, but for the

most part the project's gone really smoothly," Osterhus said.

Pandemic issues

As for any affects on the construction due to the pandemic.

"There has been no outbreak on site. So, the workers have all been fine. As far as materials. We've gotten all the materials when we needed them. But we are proactive in that we make sure we expedite and order the materials, early enough so that, you know, we give ourselves a good lead time. But as far as precast, bar joist, and deck, concrete block all that kind of stuff has been right on time," Osterhus said.

"H+U were really proactive in developing and then presenting to us their preparedness plan. It was really detailed and they made sure to meet with us, to make sure that our preparedness plan coincided with their plans so that we were all on the same page. So I thought that was really, really some good teamwork," Radeke said.

Reports of shortages across the county for construction materials have been happening since the pandemic hit. H+U construction has had to deal with that on other jobs. "That is happening in the industry. On one of our other jobs we had some issues with some tile from Italy. On this particular job, it has not affected us yet but we are looking at our alu-



A view looking down on the construction of the north addition.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

minum windows. The shop drawings have already been approved, they're purchasing the materials so that shouldn't be a problem. We will check on our tile, we're not going to need tile until March or April of next year, but we're already checking on it now so we're giving ourselves plenty of time, in case there is a small bump or disruption in the supply chain. But, you know, everybody in the industry is looking ahead and trying to make sure that we can get the materials," Osterhus said.

In good hands

"We are in really good hands with H+U construction and Paul, who has been doing this for 30 years, if I can use the word 'seasoned' and has a lot of expertise, he really looked ahead on the project and took really good care of us so we are very fortunate to be in their hands," Radeke said.

The process has been smooth and communication is a key. "We meet bi-weekly for project update meetings with the H+U Construction team and the MLA Architects team. school board members Brian Heimerl, Chairperson Corbey Hentges and myself and so we meet frequently, just to make sure that the project is staying on track and discussing any issues. We looked at just last week the brick mockup to make sure that the brick is going to match

going around the building and just little things like that so even though the building is still in progress there are a lot of meetings still taking place," Radeke said.

Architect Mark Lenz from MLA Architects, I would say I talk to him on a daily basis. We meet bi-weekly, like Melissa said earlier, I mean he's been a great teammate. And, he has been a great source of information and helps with the daily coordination of the work out here on site, prepares documents in a way that allows me to coordinate the work here in the field," Osterhus said.

"We're really, really proud of the project and I think the community is going to be proud as well," Radeke said.

Big changes in the next few weeks

"The North edition is really going to change, because this precast is only going to take about two weeks, and all the walls will be up and it'll make a huge difference on this north addition. In that precast west side of the building there's going to be a big bulldog logo up there, it's really going to look sharp right off the bat, as you come in on the main side of the school, the community should drive by the school over the next month and you really see some big changes," Osterhus said.



Construction of the new preschool and shop class on the south side.

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