

Press Clippings 08/05/20

---The Courier-News--- 08/05/2020

Arrests at U-46 schools remain low

But number involving Black students is disproportionately high

By: Rafael Guerrero



District U-46 school board members, meeting online Monday via Zoom, discussed the renewal of contracts with police departments for school resource officers in light of things like arrests of Black students being disproportionately high in a district that has 6% Black enrollment. (Rafael Guerrero/Courier-News)

Thirty-six students were arrested in District U-46 schools in 2019-20 — a decrease of nearly 90% over the last six years — but the number involving Black students is disproportionately high, officials said Monday.

State report card data shows that Blacks make up just 6% of the district's enrollment, yet more than 50% of the arrests — 19 — were of Black students, numbers show.

The information was presented at Monday night's school board meeting as part of a discussion on school resource officers in district schools. Contracts with police departments in Elgin, South Elgin, Bartlett and Streamwood to provide the officers are up for renewal.

Like other school districts, U-46 is considering the matter of police in schools as part of the broader issues of racism, police brutality and social inequality triggered by the May death of George Floyd while being arrested in Minneapolis.

In 2013-14, data shows school resource officers made 343 student arrests, Director of School Safety and Culture John Heiderscheidt. Since then, the number of arrests has dropped dramatically: there were 102 in 2014-15, 114 in 2015-16, 68 in 2016-17, 63 in 2017-18, 29 in 2018-19 and 36 last school year.

Heiderscheidt said the decrease stems from the district's shift away from disciplinary measures like out-of-school suspensions and arrests in favor of education programs for offenses like drugs or thefts.

That said, "we are disproportionate in the area still of African-American/Black students being represented in our arrests, much like other categories of discipline in U-46 that we have concerns (about)," Heiderscheidt said.

About half of all students arrested were 15 or 16 years old, according to the data presented. Many of the arrests were for fights involving other students.

Superintendent Tony Sanders said the issue of officers in schools resulted in Heiderscheidt meeting this summer with Elgin Police Chief Ana Lalley and two of the school resource officers to discuss the resource officer program, which started in the high schools in the 1980s and in middle schools in the 1990s.

Under the contracts, the district pays for 55% to 60% of the officer's salary, Heiderscheidt said. Last fall, the school board approved contract renewals with the four police departments at a cost of \$1.07 million.

Rich Bosh, the resource officer at Bartlett High School, said his job involves such things as working with school social workers to identify students in crisis, creating a safety task force involving students and doing things to tackle issues like bullying.

Lalley said Elgin officers who work in the schools undergo in-service training for things like implicit bias, emotional intelligence, crisis intervention and rapid deployment. Some of the school resource officers end up mentoring students to foster relationships and communication with students and families, she said.

"The quality of officers that the schools have, they are consummate professionals who are there to really have some meaningful impact with both students and staff," Lalley said.

Board members praised the work resource officers have done over the years. Board member Donna Smith said "it makes me so proud of everyone" in how the program shifted.

Board member Melissa Owens raised a concern over some of the language in the officer contracts.

"I would like to see us emphasize that we are looking at (school resource officers) as a resource and not as an enforcement tool," she said. "To me, the contract right away reads that they are an enforcement tool. Whether or not that's our practice, that's how I interpret reading the contract."

Board member Kate Thommes said she was concerned the emphasis on the officers doing verbal counseling could put some students at risk. She'd like to see the next contract include language addressing officer interactions with non-verbal students, she said.

"Every kid with autism has a disruption in their language, it's part of the definition," said Thommes, whose son is autistic.

"I can tell you from personal experience, my kid has a significant language disruption. If a police officer tells him to stop and put his hands up, my son is not going to do that," she said. "And he's not alone. Our schools have a number of kids in that category."

Heiderscheidt said both sides need to work jointly in such situations.

"I certainly do not want to purport or try to convince anybody that a police officer in de-escalating a situation is more qualified than a professionally certified psychologist or social worker," he said. "But in the field, sometimes they are in the moment – and then it's time to turn it over to somebody else."

Column: How concerned are schools about COVID-19 liability?

By: Denise Crosby

Like dominoes across the state, one by one public school districts are falling away from those best-laid plans to offer in-person learning options as classes are set to resume.

It started with Plainfield's District 202 floating the remote-only scenario, with the board initially rejecting this plan in a 3-3 vote, then a week later, on July 27, giving its approval.

Elgin U-46 was also one of the early birds, with Superintendent Tony Sanders announcing July 20 that the large school district would push its opening day back to Aug. 24 and start the first seven weeks with remote-only learning.

Then, as the bewitching hour grew nearer, other districts eyeing the start of classes also pushed back opening days and reversed course. As of Tuesday, there are nearly 80 school districts statewide - rural and suburban, large and small - that have declared remote-only starts to school. And I can all but guarantee more will be falling into line as officials not only continue to feel pressure from parents and unions but also from other districts choosing to play it safe as COVID controversy and all that scientific data continues to offer more questions than answers.

Locally, East Aurora District 131, which starts Aug. 24, made the official switch to remote-only for the first quarter a few days ago, as did Naperville 203 and Indian Prairie 204, both of which will start Aug. 20. And the latest to publicly announce the scrapping of hybrid options for its start-ups were Oswego District 308 and West Aurora District 129.

There's no question school officials are watching how others are responding to the politics, the pressure and the people they serve. And while districts will rightly insist the reasons for these change-of-courses are about the safety and well-being of students and staff, what is not discussed as openly is the liability issue they could face.

Just take a glance at recent headlines and you can see that potential impact. Some employers, for example, have fired workers who refuse to sign COVID liability waivers; more states are enacting COVID-19 liability protections. And some want to push COVID liability cases to the federal courts as part of a temporary set of legal protections for businesses and other organizations.

Also, large school insurers in some states are balking at providing coverage for COVID-related claims, which leaves districts rightly worried about potential lawsuits and the costs those could bring.

The good news for local districts is that schools in Illinois can fall back on the Local Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, according to Tiffany Puckett, professor of law in the College of Education at Northern Illinois University.

While government immunity is different in each state, here in Illinois there is "extensive protection to schools" under this act, said Puckett, who has also worked as a school district attorney.

Districts would not be protected if injury was caused by conduct that shows deliberate, indifferent or conscious disregard for the safety of others, she noted. "But as long as schools have a reopening plan that's consistent with local, state and federal laws," as well as guidance under the Illinois State Board of Education, Centers for Disease Control or local health department, they will be protected against any COVID injury claims.

Yorkville School District 115 feels comfortable continuing to offer full remote, full on-site or hybrid learning when its doors open Aug. 20, said Superintendent Timothy Shimp, because

more than 100 employees spent the last few months researching, discussing, planning and developing the district's transition plan.

"While at the district level, our concern about a child who contracts COVID-19 focuses on the physical and emotional well-being of the child," he added, "an outcome of our alignment with official guidelines addresses the district's liability."

Still, the chaos surrounding this virus is, above all else, unprecedented. And just how much school districts could be on the hook if a child gets critically sick is a question that has been broached but not necessarily answered, said East Aurora School Board President Annette Johnson.

While it was not the main factor in East's decision to hold off bringing students back into the buildings, "it was definitely a subject that was brought up," she said, and a reason "to slow down the process a little" in order to get this right.

As one school official put it, when it comes to liability, there is the law of the courts and then there is the law of perception. Let's face it, no district wants to be the first to have a child die under its watch.

"If nobody gets sick," said Tom Hernandez, director of community relations for Plainfield School District 202, "then we will never be so happy to be wrong. But we just aren't willing to take that chance."

While public schools have quickly moved to this more cautious reopening plan, local private schools, which don't have to deal with large numbers, tight spaces or strong unions, are taking a far different approach and certainly one that is appealing to those who feel strongly kids need to be back in the classrooms and with their teachers.

Catholic schools in the Rockford Diocese, which are mostly set to open toward the end of the month, according to spokeswoman Penny Wiegert, are going with five days of full-day in-person learning each week. So is Aurora Christian and Covenant Christian schools, both of which are offering synchronous e-learning with live classrooms for families who don't yet feel comfortable with in-person plans.

All these private schools insist social distancing, masking and other safety protocols will be rigorously followed.

"The plan is to go full-time with all programs and after-care," said Wiegert of the Catholic schools, "with the proviso that it will be constantly monitored and evaluated to determine if we have to revert back to e-learning."

Most public schools are not asking families to sign COVID waivers because, as West Aurora Superintendent Jeff Craig put it, "it is our opinion such liability waivers would not be enforceable."

Wiegert said the Rockford Diocese had a healthy discussion before deciding against waivers as well. But both Aurora Christian and Covenant Christian are requesting its families sign these acknowledgments of risks, in large part, noted Covenant Board Chairman Bob Mack, "to show we are a team, we are in this together."

Speaking of together, as many differences of opinion as I've run across when it comes to our schools reopening, there's a couple things educators and families wholeheartedly - and with a heavy sigh - agree on when it comes to how COVID-19 has rocked our worlds.

We will continue to be in a state of flux for the unforeseeable future. And, as Wiegert so succinctly put it, "Nothing surprises me anymore."

---Daily Herald--- 08/05/2020

U-46 considers renewing police contracts

By: Madhu Krishnamurthy



Melissa Owens



Kate Thommes

Officials at Elgin-area schools are considering renewing contracts with local police departments for the school resource officer program.

Officers currently are assigned at Elgin Area School District U-46's eight middle schools, five high schools and alternative programs.

Several school board members this week stressed the importance of better training those officers on cultural competency, dealing with LGBTQ issues and students with special needs, as well as reducing the disproportionality of in-school arrests of Black and Latino students.

"I would like to see us emphasize that we are looking at SROs as a resource and not as an enforcement tool," school board member Melissa Owens said. "To me, the contract right away reads that they are an enforcement tool whether or not that's our practice."

Owens said she is concerned about student arrests for behavioral events being heavily weighted toward students of color.

U-46 has had school resource officers in high schools since the 1980s and in middle schools since the 1990s. Early on, those officers were involved in student discipline, but that role has shifted in the last six years.

In 2013, the district introduced the 3rd Millennium intervention program for offenses related to illicit drug, tobacco and alcohol use, domestic and sexual violence prevention and conflict resolution. It uses a restorative approach involving online learning and self assessment, with an educational component for parents.

Student arrests for behavioral infractions have declined significantly since then — down from 343 in the 2013-2014 school year to 36 in 2019-2020. The majority of arrests, throughout the period, involved Black and Hispanic students, said John Heiderscheidt, U-46 director of school safety and culture.

“That’s considering a lot of work we were doing to reduce exclusionary discipline, out-of-school suspensions and the school-to-prison pipeline by finding better ways to help kids after they make bad choices,” he said. “We are disproportionate in the area still of African American students being represented in our arrests, much like other categories of discipline in U-46.”

Heiderscheidt said district administrators need the same level of training as officers when it comes to cultural competency.

While the officers currently are familiar with crisis prevention training, the proposed contracts will require them to meet new Illinois Training Standards Board requirements, Heiderscheidt said.

School board member Kate Thommes said the contracts also should specify how school resource officers are trained to interact with and handle special needs populations, such as autistic students.

“Every kid with autism has a disruption in their language,” she said. “My kid has a significant language disruption. If a police officer tells him to stop and put his hands up, my son is not going to do that. He literally does not have the language ability to understand that. And he’s not alone. Our schools have a number of kids in that category. That needs to be a priority moving forward.”

Thommes questioned why a police officer would be better qualified to de-escalate a situation involving a student having a mental health crisis versus a licensed clinical psychologist, school counselor or nurse.

As part of their role, school resource officers help manage street gang issues, are experts in security plans and event management, help with crisis response and drug incidents, mentor and build relationships with students, teach classes, are present when school administrators conduct random weapons or drug searches and serve as mediators for restorative practices and home visits.

Elgin Police Chief Ana Lalley said her department’s policy emphasizes education, enforcement when appropriate, and engagement with students and staff. The department has seven resource officers in U-46 schools who are trained on fair and impartial policing and specifically implicit bias, she added.

“We really want to find a way for students to see us as people and not just for the uniforms we wear,” she said.

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"IF I WERE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN A GOVERNMENT WITHOUT A NEWSPAPER OR A NEWSPAPER WITHOUT A GOVERNMENT, I WOULD NOT HESITATE TO CHOOSE THE LATTER." THOMAS JEFFERSON

50 cents
August 5, 2020

IHSA changes sports
season structure
See Page 5

Various items
approved by U-46
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Students oppose plan for reopening U-46 schools

By Seth Hancock

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." - Franklin D. Roosevelt, 32nd president of the United States.

That was the quote Charlotte Ward, a School District U-46 student, used when she concluded her public comments at the Board of Education special meeting, held virtually, when it unanimously approved of the district reopening plan during the COVID-19 shutdown on Monday, July 27.

U-46 will open in all distance learning to start the 2020-2021 school year eventually moving to a hybrid model up to the middle school level, but high school is expected to remain online for the foreseeable future.

Ward opposed that decision citing evidence that schools opening around the world has not led to the spread of the coronavirus and noted that by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) data and standards, COVID-19 is no longer at epidemic level. She asked U-46 to be a leader in reopening.

"Students should have the choice to go back to full-time, in-person learning," Ward said. "Administrators who claim to care about the students contracting coronavirus are the very ones sucking the life out of their academic years."

Ward added: "By shutting down the schools to be strictly online, students have not been able to graduate, go on field trips, play sports, or even get to see and hang out with classmates. Parents have not been able to go back to work as they need to. Teachers have not been able to use their talents to inspire. Friendships have been lost, talents have been wasted, growth has been stunted all because of an unnecessary, crippling fear. Kids are 40 times more likely to die from driving to school than they are from coronavirus."

In contrast, board members appealed to fear as a legitimate reason for the decision including Kate Thommes accusing those who disagree of presenting "pseudoscience."

"This is not living in fear, this is stating a very real fear," Thommes said. "No amount of pseudoscience will change this."

Thommes, who said the majority of people she's spoken to support the plan and those opposed are those with high school students, added: "This plan does not meet the standard of perfection, but it does meet the standard of safety."

U-46 released a survey, which Ward called "agenda driven," which sought to gauge the fears of respondents, and the results showed that teachers were among the most fearful of returning in-person.

"Nowhere in this survey were parents given the opportunity to state that the school district should open schools completely and as normally as possible," Ward said noting students were not asked their opinions.

Teachers represented the majority of public comments the previous meeting, July 20, almost uniformly expressing fear, one said she was "terrified to return to school" and the district is responsible to "keep us safe."

Board member Melissa Owens admitted "the minority is dictating the actions of all of us," but "students do not exist in a vacuum.... Yes, students are far more likely to have a favorable outcome from COVID-19 infections, but that is not the case of our extended school family."

Owens said there aren't enough COVID-19 tests and the number of cases is increasing. She stated that CDC data suggests reopening schools will lead to "increased risk" of viral spread.

"Making this decision is even more difficult because school districts suffer a lack of clear metrics and directions on meaningful decision-making analysis," Owens said.

What should be noted is prior to the U-46 meeting, on July 23, the CDC released a statement titled "The Importance of Reopening America's Schools this Fall."

"The best available evidence indicates that COVID-19 poses relatively low risks to school-aged children.... Extended school closure is harmful to children," the CDC states noting "children and adolescents under 18 years old" are at far greater risk from the "regular flu season."

Robert Redfield, director of the CDC, has also said that among high school aged Americans, there are "sadly, far greater suicides" than COVID-19 deaths and "far greater deaths from drug overdose that are above excess that we had."

Cheyenne Ward, also a student who opposes the district's plan, noted that while cases may be increasing, death rates are dropping.

"The number of cases is only increasing due to the rapid appetite to test in

order to maintain the 'crisis' and keep the story alive," Ward said. "Just today, I heard a typical news story about coronavirus. The news reporter passionately emphasized the cases of the virus, and the governor's new dictates concerning the rise in cases. Then, very dispassionately, at the end, the reporter states the death rate is actually going down."

Ward opened: "Students should have the option whether they go back to school or not in the fall. Some people may think that masks work and some may not, but students should always have the freedom to decide. For students that are more afraid, they can stay home and learn online. And, for students that would like to go back full-time, there should be an option whether you would want to wear a mask or not."

U-46 also claims authority to mandate face masks while on its property of all staff, students, parents and the public in general. Both Charlotte and Cheyenne Ward oppose it noting the excessive levels of CO2 breathed in by the wearers.

"I care about the well-being of everyone just as much as you all do, but the mask isn't something that will help the students," Cheyenne Ward said.

"You are breathing in all of the air that you breathe out, which makes you even more sick by breathing in all of your own germs. We always try to say that it protects others, but microscopic germs get through the mask quite easily because of the tiny holes in the mask. The masks will be a considerable health risk for students while playing sports especially on account of the high intensity activities while you are breathing hard. This is why we should make it an option and not a requirement for students to wear masks."

Charlotte Ward said: "Our immune system is our defense against all viruses and must be strengthened, not weakened by the wearing of masks."

Sue Kerr, the board's president, said "this is not an easy decision" but "safety does have to come first," and board member Eva Porter said "at the end, we want everyone to be alive." Board member Veronica Noland concurred and Olivia Howell, the student advisor, voiced support for the plan.

Board member John Devereux supported the plan but said: "While many may remain unhappy with the plan, all of these voices are a valuable part of this critical dialogue."



Summer solitude

Even with dry summer weather continuing the reaction to the coronavirus has had a major impact on outdoor activities. On Sunday, Aug. 2 the Hoosier Grove Museum was in solitude amidst a virtually deserted Hoosier Grove Park.

(Examiner photo by Bruce Leighty)

Statement about mailing of unsolicited seeds

According to Illinois Department of Agriculture, it is currently working with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to address reports of unsolicited shipments of seeds from foreign countries. Anyone who receives unordered seeds in the mail should contact the Illinois Department of Agriculture by emailing the following infor-

mation to agr.seeds@Illinois.gov: First and last name, phone number and the number of packages received.

Do not open the package, plant the seeds, or throw them out. Please keep all seeds unopened and with their original packaging and labels, including mailing labels, until further instruction is provided.

Dist. U-46 Board ratifies proposals, expenses

By Seth Hancock

The Board of Education in School District U-46 unanimously approved, of a pair of resolutions and curriculum proposals as well as expenditures totaling \$2.8 million at its meeting on Monday, July 20 which was held electronically due to the COVID-19 shutdown.

The resolutions including one setting dates for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget as well as a resolution declaring the need to continue using mobile classrooms.

The tentative budget is expected to be presented on Aug. 17, a public hearing is set for Sept. 14 and a final vote is slated for Sept. 28. Regarding the mobile classrooms, U-46 expects to use eight doubles and five singles for 21 total classrooms.

Regarding curriculum proposals, a resource proposal for dual language social studies electives at the high school level was approved adding Spanish language options for World History and Advanced Placement (AP) Psychology.

“As the Dual Language program continues to roll up through high school, students continue to express interest in Social Studies elective courses in the Spanish Language,” the proposal states. “In an effort to provide more elective options for Dual Language students next year, schools will be running Dual Language AP Psychology and Dual Language World History.”

U-46 plans to purchase text and online resources, with a total projected cost of \$64,026, for both courses including Editorial Medica Panamerica’s 2015 edition of “Fundamentos de Psicología Para Ciencias Sociales y de la Salud” for AP Psychology and National Geographic’s 2016 edition of

“Great Civilizations: Ancient Through Early Modern Times” for World History for the 2020-2021 school year.

Also approved was a supplemental resource proposal, Spanish literacy resources for English Language Learners.

The district will purchase;Arriba la Lectura! at a projected cost of \$1.6 million to replace Senderos which is being phased out. The proposal is to implement the new resources in fourth and sixth grade in the 2020-2021 school year, kindergarten along with third and fifth grade in 2021-2022 and first and second grade in 2022-2023.

The largest expenditure was \$1.2 million for a three-year contract renewal for the digital literacy resource Istation which will be paid for by the nation’s taxpayers through federal grants. The annual cost is \$396,931 which is below last year’s cost of \$419,780.

Several other approved items will be paid through federal grants including \$238,147 (up from \$233,564) with Houghton Mifflin Harcourt to renew the Read 180 and System 44 resources and a year of professional development, \$197,000 with Geneva Hearing Services for audiology services, \$120,786 to renew News-2-You/Unique Learning System resources, a \$68,872 contract renewal with Northwest Illinois Association for hearing and vision supervision services \$68,550 (up from \$68,250) with Richard Van Acker for behavior consultancy.

The district will renew contracts, to be paid for through the tort fund, with CAN costing \$544,124 for its property insurance policy and with Star Insurance Company costing \$282,230 for

workers’ compensation excess coverage.

For property coverage, the cost is an increase from \$419,747 and for workers’ compensation it jumps from \$262,748. On property, the proposal states the “increase is due to our assessed property value which has risen” by \$247.5 million and for workers’ compensation “due to the increase in estimated payrolls for the upcoming year” as the district plans to continue adding staff.

TIF budget amendment approved at meeting

By Seth Hancock

The Village Board of Trustees approved of an amendment to the Elmhurst Chicago Stone Company tax increment financing (TIF) budget at its meeting on Tuesday, July 21.

The vote was 5-1, Trustee Adam Hopkins voting no and Village President Kevin Wallace voting yes. It was unclear if Wallace’s vote was necessary but Bryan Mraz, village attorney, asked that it be cast “just to be safe.”

Elmhurst Chicago Stone is developing the Brewster Creek Business Park, which is within both Cook and DuPage counties, and asked that the TIF budget be increased by \$3 million. The TIF plan was set in 1999 with a budget of \$30 million and amended in 2016 to increase it by the cost of inflation plus 5 percent through 2016, and with this second amendment the budget will be \$48 million.

“The TIF Act allows for the budget to be increased by inflation plus 5 percent,” said Todd Dowden, finance director, and the “main thing the \$3 million would do would be to complete the site, lot number eight... and also final restoration for the facility.”

The company is reimbursed TIF eligible funds for costs of improvements.

“The note would be repaid solely by incremental real estate taxes generated within the redevelopment project area,” Dowden wrote in a memo. “Current projections show that there

To be paid for by the state’s taxpayers through Illinois grant funds, the board approved a three-year contract with Solid Professor costing \$47,250. It is for an online resource which “gives students authentic hands-on learning for various industry aligned software,” the proposal states.

The board also unanimously approved a personnel report and workers’ compensation cases which included two new positions as well as \$32.7 million additional in itemized bills.

is sufficient taxes being generated to repay the current outstanding debt and the additional debt by the scheduled close of the TIF district.”

Dowden added: “I also want to highlight that even though we are amending the budget, we would not be extending the life of the TIF. So, the TIF would still be ending in December of 2023.”

A 7 percent interest rate is included on the tax increment revenue note which Hopkins questioned earlier in July when the amendment was presented. He said it was higher than normal and asked if that could be amended saying “as you outlined, I don’t think there’s much risk.”

Mraz said that “it’s not really our obligation.... These bonds are subordinate to some of the other outstanding debt which justifies a higher interest rate then what you would see on a mortgage.”

Hopkins asked if taxpayers would save money with a lower interest rate to which Mraz said “I suppose if they own property in the Brewster Creek Business Park,” but generally “the only ones paying that turns out to be Elmhurst Chicago Stone.”

“This is an interest rate that we’ve been using on the last TIF developer note,” Dowden said. “The reason why it is higher than the regular... is because all the risk is on the developer.”

Wallace added: “This isn’t a burden to the taxpayers at all.”

IGA to allow participation in COVID-19 payments

By Seth Hancock

The Village Board of Trustees unanimously approved, 5-0, an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) to participate in COVID-19 reimbursements at its meeting on Tuesday, July 21.

The reimbursements program is through DuPage County to reimburse expenses for items like personal protective equipment (PPE).

“Through their reimbursement program, DuPage County is offering cities and villages in the county a disbursement of \$51.84 per capita (up to \$1,268,732.16 for Bartlett),” wrote Scott Skrycki, assistant village administrator, in a memo.

Skrycki added: “Items that qualify under this program include PPE, sanitation and disinfectant products, and technology software/equipment necessary to hold board meetings online. Additional expenses include payroll costs for employees dedicated to mitigating the spread of or responding to COVID-19 and economic development programs designed to defray the costs to local businesses.”

DuPage County received \$161 million through the federal CARES Act and is distributing the funds based on

population, Bartlett’s population in DuPage County being 24,474.

“The Village can submit eligible expenditures from March 1, 2020 up through December 30, 2020 to the County for reimbursement,” Skrycki wrote. “DuPage is hiring a third party auditor to review submissions and once processed, DuPage will distribute reimbursements. The [village’s] first submission would be sent in shortly after the IGA is passed, with additional submissions being made monthly through December.”

The CARES Act was the largest spending bill in world history totaling over \$6 trillion between spending measures and monetary measures through the Federal Reserve. The American debt is now \$26.6 trillion and projected to reach \$45.4 trillion by 2024 according to usdebtclock.org.

The federal spending bill’s stated purpose was to help businesses, including those deemed “nonessential” by the government, that have been harmed due to the shutdown. Government agencies, those enforcing the shutdown orders, have also received the bailout funds.

ing my records for contributions from ComEd and if there are any, they are going to be donated to a fund that helps people pay their electric bills.

The Department of Justice is allowing ComEd to escape criminal prosecution in return for a \$200 million fine and cooperation in its ongoing investigation into political corruption in Illinois. The Speaker of the House was specifically identified in the filing by the department. I am working with fellow Republicans to remove Madigan immediately and invite any willing Democrat state representatives to join the cause.

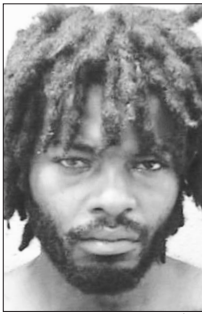
Dan Ugaste
Illinois Representative

Bartlett cyclist killed by driver trying to elude police

An Elgin man faces criminal charges after the car he was driving crashed into two bicycles, killing one bicyclist and severely injuring the other Monday afternoon, July 27.

Kane County State’s Attorney Joe McMahon and Elgin Chief of Police Ana Lalley announced that Lance C. Neal, 28, of the 1-99 block of Clifford Court, Elgin has been charged with the offenses of failure to report an accident or death, (Class 1 felony), reckless homicide (Class 3 felony), aggravated fleeing a police officer (Class 4 felony, 2 counts) and driving without insurance (Class 4 felony).

Kane County prosecutors and Elgin police allege that the afternoon of July 27, Neal was driving a car in the area of East Chicago Street and North Spring Street when he struck a vehicle and fled the scene. The driver of the vehicle followed Neal and flagged down an officer, who pursued Neal south on Raymond Street and attempted to stop him. Neal continued to accelerate well beyond the 30-miles-per-hour limit until he lost control of the vehicle and struck two bicyclists in the area of Raymond



Lance C. Neal

Street and Purify Drive. Neal abandoned the car and fled on foot. He was taken into custody about two hours later.

One of the victims, 52-year-old Sandra E. Sampey, of Bartlett was taken to a local hospital, where she was pronounced dead. The other victim received life-threatening injuries and remains hospitalized.

The Elgin Police Department’s Traffic Unit and the Kane County Major Crimes Task Force are investigating multiple elements of the incident. Anyone with information should call Elgin police at 847-289-2600.

Neal appeared in Kane County bond court on Friday, July 31 where Kane County Circuit Judge Michael Noland set Neal’s bail at \$1 million, with 10 percent (\$100,000) to apply for bond.

Noland set Neal’s next court appearance for 1 p.m. Friday, Aug. 7, in Courtroom 305 at the Kane County Judicial Center.

The charges against Neal are not proof of guilt. Neal is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial in which it is the state’s burden to prove his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Letters

Continued from page 6

tion as Speaker of the Illinois House and return all of political contributions from Madigan, Madigan’s state party PAC and Madigan’s affiliates, she makes it clear that she is part of the problem instead of part of the solution.

We can no longer tolerate a culture in Springfield that leaves our citizens with anything less than complete confidence in their state government. My staff is scour-