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Proposed extracurricular policy raises tempers at meeting

Tempers flared over a proposed extracurricular policy discussed at Thursday's Hoopeston Area School Board meeting.

The proposed policy, which eliminates a penalty for attending a party where alcohol, drug or tobacco use takes place, was to be officially presented at the meeting but was not after a discussion between the board and resident Hank Shaffer.

Shaffer, reading from a prepared statement, apologized for not attending an Oct. 2 meeting on the policy. "I was told by a board member that it wasn't at the stage for public comment," he said, asking for clarification on some points of the policy. Shaffer said the proposal might indicate to students that it is acceptable to attend parties with drugs and alcohol, that it encourages students to run from such parties if police arrive, that it

promotes students lying to administrators so they don't voluntarily admit to attending such parties and that it teaches students to have no respect for school officials who would not have the authority to report illegal activity off of school property. "Is that a good policy, Mr. Sheppard," Shaffer asked board member Duane Sheppard.

"Yes," Sheppard replied. "They're not guilty until they're proven guilty. I don't believe in punishing innocent children."

Board president Larry Lobb said administrators spent a week investigating a gathering of students in late August, which was the incentive to change the policy. "That was not a good use of their time," he said, adding no policy the board devises will be perfect.

Shaffer responded that the policy "worked fine until four people decided it didn't. We've got a majority of citizens who don't agree."

Shaffer presented the board with a petition stating that
See POLICY on other side

Hoopeston man 'little scared' by HA school board member

Dwight Judy of Hoopeston said he was "a little scared" after a verbal altercation with a Hoopeston Area school board member.

After Thursday's meeting, Judy was approached by board member Duane Sheppard regarding a letter Judy had written to a local publication about the proposed extracurricular policy. The letter referred to a comment Sheppard made at a previous meeting, but did not refer to Sheppard by name.

Sheppard asked Judy why he was not "man enough" to talk to him face-to-face, then told Judy not to "question my integrity again or you'll regret it." Sheppard then left the school.

The exchange left Judy shaken. "I hate to think verbal and physical threats could happen in a small town like this," he said later.

Board president apologizes

I wish to apologize for my actions concerning not allowing a citizen to finish his presentation at the last board meeting. I did nothing illegal by doing this, but I feel that I was in error from an ethical standpoint. I have no reason for my action except to say that I acted out of total frustration. I have personally apologized to the individual and now I want to also apologize to my fellow board members, the entire school staff, and the entire community that I represent. I ask for your forgiveness and hope this will never happen again.

Sincerely,
Larry Lobb


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Police News



Maco Management Co., of Robinson reported Thursday that someone spray-painted or threw four colors of paint on the apartment complexes in Fortees Apartments, 701 S. First Ave. Damage is estimated at more than \$300.

Ashley M. Linares, 18, of Hoopeston, was ticketed for failing to reduce speed to avoid an accident at 5:15 p.m. Thursday.

Police said Linares, in a 1997 Chrysler, hit a stopped 1997 Chevrolet driven by Chad D. Watson, also of Hoopeston, in the 200 block of East Main.

Police said Linares reported a minor injury but refused medical treatment.

A 24-year-old Hoopeston man reported Friday that someone took a gray and white 10-speed bicycle from the 600 block of East McNeil.

Dawn R. Carswell, 28, of 901 E. Wyman, was arrested at 9:23 a.m. Friday in the 900 block of E. Wyman. She was charged with domestic battery on a

complaint from a 38-year-old Hoopeston man who alleged she hit him several times with a closed fist.

Carswell was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville.

Jeffrey A. Davis, 34, of 622 S. Market, was arrested at 5:03 p.m. Saturday in the 600 block of South Market.

Davis, wanted on a Vermilion County warrant, was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville.

Donald E. Underwood Jr., 18, of 827 E. Seminary,

was arrested at 11 p.m. Saturday in the 200 block of East Main. He was charged with domestic battery on a complaint from a 44-year-old Hoopeston man and with illegal consumption of alcohol by a minor.

He was taken to the Public Safety Building in Danville.

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Policy continued from other side

signers believe there is a problem with youth violating drug and alcohol use, theft, vandalism, trespassing and other forms of illegal activity. It asks that law enforcement officials file charges and prosecute for all illegal activities to show young people they will be held accountable for illegal action and asks the board to cooperate with legal authorities and make a policy where attending parties at which illegal activities are taking place a punishable offense. The document is signed by 366 people, he said.

Lobb called those who criticize the policy the "vocal

minority" and said he received seven calls favoring the board's handling of the August incident. Confronted with 366 petition-signers, Lobb asked of Shaffer knew how many votes Lobb received in the last school board election.

Board member John Smiley said the board is not condoning underage drinking or going to parties, adding that he believes in treating students fairly. "When that

fairness goes out the window, I come down on fairness to kids," he said.

Shaffer told the board their "seats got pretty hot and you withered under that heat," at which point he was cut off by Lobb, who cited his authority as board president to do so.

Shaffer and others left the meeting, which ended shortly after.

Briefly

Multi Agency van schedule

This week's schedule for the Hoopeston Multi Agency transportation project is: Monday, Hoopeston/Rossville shuttle; Tuesday, Lafayette, Ind. - leave at 8 a.m.; Wednesday, Danville; Thursday, Hoopeston shuttle; Friday, Danville. For more information or to arrange a ride, call the Multi Agency at (217) 283-5544.

Community center activities include: Monday, ladies bridge, noon; Thursday, men's coffee 9:30 a.m., men's

euchre, noon; Friday, ladies cards, noon.

Music Booster winners

This week's winners in the Hoopeston Area Music Booster calendar drawing are: Oct. 20, Kurtis and Dawn Carswell; Oct. 21, Doris and Dave Herring, Lakeview, OH; Oct. 22, Virginia Olson; Oct. 23, Elizabeth Leigh; Oct. 24, Bob and Bev Wallace.

Drug awareness

The Hoopeston VFW will present a special program at 7 p.m. Monday on methamphetamines. Police Chief Mark Drollinger and a representative of Vermilion Metropolitan Enforcement Group (V-MEG) will speak. The public is invited to attend.

Meetings

- Rossville village board, 7 p.m. Monday, village office.
- Hoopeston city council, 7 p.m. Tuesday, city hall.

Weather



Sunny, breezy today. High 80. Tonight, mostly clear. Low 53. Tomorrow, mostly sunny. High 63, low 39.

For current weather conditions, call (217) 283-6221.

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AUCTIONS

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