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Lourdine Florek, Owner

**Just the Facts**

**Monday, December 23, 2019**

*Hoopeston's only locally-owned daily news publication!*

P.O. Box 441, Hoopeston IL 60942 [www.justthefacts.net](http://www.justthefacts.net)

## School funding, sales tax a concern for Hoopeston Area officials

A trip to the annual school board convention last month has local officials concerned about the future of school funding.

First, Illinois raised the base pay for teachers to \$40,000 annually. Second, state officials are considering a plan for the state to contribute more to education, along with a property tax freeze.

At Thursday's district board meeting, member Rich Eisenmann, chairman of the board's finance committee, said people in a convention session he went to are concerned that there will not be enough money to go around.

Eisenman said the freeze would be on the rate, so districts with significant economic growth would get more money through higher equalized assessed valuations. "We're not in that kind of area," he said, citing a proposed hotel and new gas station as examples of local economic growth.

"They give us a dollar and we spend a dollar," Eisenmann said of the state. "They're not going to give us any more than that and we need to put out more than that."

In his remarks, Supt. Robert Richardson corrected Ei-

senmann, saying the district gets a dollar and can't spend more than that but, "the state of Illinois has been doing that for many, many years."

Richardson is concerned about the state changing the funding model from property taxes to the state. "That scares me, absolutely scares me to death," he said. While not saying property taxes are the best way to fund education, "until they come up with something better, a bird in the hand is my pick every time," he added. "We're at the mercy of those clowns in Springfield."

Richardson wondered whether Gov. JB Pritzker gave thought to the effect raising teacher base pay to \$40,000 would affect district, who will pay more from the start to the end of a teacher's tenure.

Raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour and education-based funding are also bad for the district. "A government big enough to give you everything you want is big enough to take away everything you have," he said.

The board also discussed the one percent school facilities sales tax referendum that will be on the March 17

See FUNDING on other side

## Area churches list Christmas Eve, Day services

Area churches have listed their Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services, which include:

**Chestnut Street Church of Christ**, 709 E. Chestnut St., Hoopeston. Tuesday, Dec. 24, 6 p.m. Candlelight Service. The children will hold their Christmas program then.

**East Lynn Community Fellowship**, 41428 Main St., East Lynn. Tuesday, Dec. 24, 7 p.m. Candlelight Service. Gordon and Brooke Allen will share special music. John Smiley will bring the message. We hope that you can share the evening with us.

**First Christian Church of Hoopeston**, 502 E. Main., Tuesday, Dec. 24, 7 p.m. Candlelight Service

**First Presbyterian Church**, 915 E. Orange,

Hoopeston, Tuesday, Dec. 24, 7 p.m., Candlelight Service

**Hoopeston United Methodist Church**, 403 E. Main, 9 p.m. and an informal service at 11 p.m. Both will have communion and candle lighting.

**Morning Star Church**, 201 N. Chicago, Rossville, Tuesday, December 24, 10 p.m. Candlelight Service

**Rossville Church of Christ**, Tuesday, Dec. 24, 6 p.m. Candlelight Service

**St. Anthony Catholic Church**, 403 S. Third St., Hoopeston, Tuesday, Dec. 24, Christmas Eve Mass, 4 and 9 p.m.; Wednesday, Dec. 25, Christmas Day Mass, 9 a.m.



As the Holiday Season is upon us, we find ourselves reflecting on the past year and on those who have helped to shape our business in a most significant way. We value our relationship with you and look forward to working with you in the year to come. We wish you a very happy Holiday Season and a New Year filled with peace and prosperity. From the



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**Rossville Family Restaurant**  
 will be open Christmas Eve and  
 Christmas Day, 6 a.m.-3 p.m. each day.  
**Serving Christmas Dinner**  
**10:30-2:30 p.m. Christmas Day.**  
*Choice of oven roasted turkey or baked ham.*  
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**From the Blotter**  
 A **Huffy mountain bike** was found at 9:30 a.m. Thursday at First Ave. and West Maple. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.  
 No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 5:58 p.m. Saturday at Elm and Sixth Ave.  
 Police said Dorothy Rickart, 71, of Hoopeston, in a 2014 Chevrolet, failed to yield and struck the front driver's side wheel of a New Holland tractor, driven by Rogelio Rivera, 49, of Hoopeston.

**Funding** continued from other side  
 ballot.  
 Eisenmann called the sales tax “a make or break deal for the school,” saying without it, “we’re probably going to end up having to make cuts. We’re going to have some very somber decisions to make.”  
 If passed, the sales tax may be used for capital improvements, school resource officers and mental health professionals.  
 A wish list of district improvements includes air conditioning at John Greer and Maple, possibly a resource officer, as well as aesthetic improvements to some middle school halls, which some students say cause a “blah” feeling.  
 Richardson said the board must decide how it will use the money if the tax is implemented. According to information he’s seen, it is suggested to have a big push for the referendum starting 30 days before the vote. “An informed public is what we want,” he said.  
 In unrelated action, the board is taking a short break in its timeline to demolish Honeywell School, tabling action on approving Upchurch Group to design specifications for the Honeywell demolition.  
 Richardson said under the proposed agreement, the district would pay Upchurch 10 percent of the overall project cost to create specs and advertise for bids. If the board rejected the bid, the agreement called for the district to pay Upchurch 7.7 percent of the project cost, “and we still wouldn’t have it torn down,” he said.  
 After discussion, Richardson said he would contact Milford School District about how they handled demolition of its old high school.  
 In personnel action, the board:  
 • Approved Ginger Bertram’s resignation as seventh grade volleyball coach and hired Suzanne Boyer as the new coach.  
 • Approved Tim Walsh as district building and

**Briefly**  
**Christmas closings**  
 • Hoopeston Public Library will be closed Monday-Wednesday for Christmas. It will reopen Thursday with regular hours.  
 • Hoopeston city offices will be closed Tuesday and Wednesday.  
 • Republic Services will not collect trash on Wednesday.  
 • Fast Lanes will close at 3 p.m. Tuesday and be closed all day Wednesday.

grounds supervisor and Mason Layden as transportation and grounds supervisor.  
 The two replace Wade Clemmons, who resigned last month to take a position in the Milford School District.  
 • Approved Mattie Drayer’s resignation as high school personal aide.  
 • Approved Ron Cade as high school assistant track coach.  
 • Approved, pending background check, volunteers Theta Lee and Baylee Bushong, FFA; Adam Colunga, wrestling; and Chanelle Davis, volunteer sixth grade volleyball coach.  
 • Increased the athletic director stipend to \$15,791.50.  
 • Approved a search for a high school girls physical education teacher for the 2020-21 year.  
 Principal John Klaber said the position is necessary because the school would like to add an advanced PE course but that staff is already stretched thin. Currently, aides are called upon to monitor students while showering and dressing and sometimes driver’s ed teacher Ross Bryll is called in for PE duty, causing havoc with his schedule.  
 Also, he said, the class is trying to do a pickleball unit in a small gym, which leaves no room for those not playing to engage in physical fitness activity.  
 The final reason, Klaber said, is “we really need female coaches,” and a PE teacher could help that situation.  
 The board unanimously approved the search.

**Weather**  
 Patchy fog then mostly sunny today. High 53. Tonight, partly cloudy, then patchy fog. Low 29. Tomorrow, patchy fog, then mostly cloudy. High 53, low 34.

• Just the Facts will not be printed Wednesday or Thursday. Publication will resume Friday.  
**At the library**  
**Littles @ the Library** will not be held this week.

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