Municipal services building to add solar panels

Panels expected to be installed by end of April 2023

By Harrison Freuck

Cottage Grove’s municipal services building is expected to have solar panels installed on its roof by the end of April 2023.

The village sought out contractors to build solar panels for installation on the building, located at 210 Progress Drive, on July 22. Only one contractor, Full Spectrum Solar of Madison, submitted a bid.

While the village budgeted $300,000 for the project, Full Spectrum’s bid came in at $239,850. Village engineer Josh Straka said at the Aug. 15 Village board meeting that Full Spectrum gave a presentation to the village about three years ago about potential options for adding solar to the building.

By Harrison Freuck

Cottage Grove’s municipal services building is expected to have solar panels installed on its roof by the end of April 2023. The village put out a request for bids from contractors to build solar panels for installation on the building, located at 210 Progress Drive, on July 22. Only one bid was returned, coming from Full Spectrum Solar of Madison. While the village budgeted $300,000 for the project, Full Spectrum’s bid came in at $239,850.

See SOLAR, Page A2

Public art project in Monona completed

By Madison Melawolf

Vibrant Hydrants, a public art project honoring the victims of 9/11 through art pieces created on fire hydrants in Monona, has now been completed.

In honor of the 21st anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attack, 11 area artists have painted murals on 15 fire hydrants in Monona.

The artists, organizers, and Monona city officials unveiled the public art project on Sept. 11 at the Monona fire station with a reception and gallery to showcase each of the artists’ work.

“This is a special project that will bring the community together on a very important day. Art can offer a path to expression when words are sometimes difficult to find. It is one hope that these colorful hydrants will uplift someone’s day,” said Jillian Talarczyk, president of the Madison Public Art Project.

“This is such a wonderful project and I look forward to the inspiring all Vibrant Hydrant art on view throughout the City of Monona. We can look to public art as a way to address society’s challenges, and as a way to spark and ignite change. It is important that we never forget, and this is a step toward moving toward a more inclusive and peaceful world,” says Mr. Talarczyk. Visitors and residents of Monona are already looking forward to this artistic addition to the local landscape.

The project was organized by the Madison Public Art Project, a nonprofit organization working to connect communities through art. MPAP worked with the Artist selection committee, along with the city of Monona’s public works and fire EMS departments to execute the project.


To select artists, a press release said, “priority was given to artists who have been historically underrepresented in the public art discourse.”

See HYDRANTS, Page A2

District employees face allegations of civil rights violations

A trial date has been set for the civil rights lawsuit filed against four Monona Grove School District staff members for allegedly attempting an “unprofessional” and “racially motivated” search.

The trial has been set for Nov. 6, 2022, but before then, the discovery process has to be completed and any formal agreements that could arise would have to be filed.

The deadline for discovery, which is the formal process where both parties exchange the information that will be used in the trial so they can prepare their arguments, was set for Sept. 22, 2022. Settlement letters, which would detail any agreements reached between the parties to settle rather than going to trial, would also need to be filed by then.

This was all determined at a pre-trial conference on Sept. 1. The lawsuit alleges Monona Grove High School staff members históly Rilling, Sanya Grew, Scott Groff and Emily Haun, all white, attempted to perform the search during a trip for the Black Student Union members in April. The trip took Union Members to tour historically black colleges in the New Orleans area and other culturally significant sites.

On the trip the home law - suit complaint said the group stopped at a McDonald’s in Amite, Louisiana. There, the staff members allegedly forced the plaintiff, known only as M.N in the original complaint, and five of his peers, all black, to empty their pockets and attempted to search their bags in front of their peers after smelling marijuana.

See TRIAL, Page A2

Monona’s civic center could cost $10 million

Mayor expects vote next week on advisory referendum

By Will Diav

City leaders got their first look last week at preliminary design options and costs for a revamped and expanded civic building. A preliminary price tag for the project was between $46 million and $50 million, a cost that architects said likely would change as construction progresses.

More specific plans and timelines are needed to finalize the doubling of the existing 32,000 square foot city hall on North Ridgeland Street.

The approval process could include an advisory referendum in April. Mayor Mary O’Connor said she expects a vote on that at the next council meeting, Sept. 19, to gauge community support for the project.

An initial report presented on Sept. 6 to the City Council from FSM Architects laid out the project’s phases. It’s clear that the city, the council will have to renovate and expand to the city hall property.

Council members and representatives from the city’s public safety departments have long said they need a larger, more modern building to better carry out their duties.

O’Connor stressed that the proposed concepts, while a good first step, are not final plans.

“If we were to move forward, I’m sure we’d be doing some value engineering to bring the cost down,” she said. “It is by no means a finalized design concept. It’s more just to see if the space would fit on the site.”

The village hall and emergency service centers have been ongoing for more than a decade, O’Connor said. A 2012 report commissioned by the city from Rome Associates Architects found that first responders and administrators alike were in need of, office and meeting space in the current building.

See CITY HALL, Page A2

UPCOMING

Cottage Grove Area Historical Society holds speaker series. • A3

Trial date set

MONONA GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Cottage Grove Solar GROVE

SOLAR

COUGAR

build solar panels for installation on the 2023.

Cottage Grove Area

Local

build solar panels for installation on the 2023.

Cottage Grove Area

Local

build solar panels for installation on the 2023.

Cottage Grove Area

Local

build solar panels for installation on the 2023.

Cottage Grove Area

Local

build solar panels for installation on the 2023.

Cottage Grove Area

Local

build solar panels for installation on the 2023.

Cottage Grove Area

Local

build solar panels for installation on the 2023.