

CITY

Solid Waste and recycling collections to have different look spring '25

by JIM RUDISILL

Columbus Junction's residential solid waste and recycling collections will look different next spring, following a decision by the city council at its Dec. 18 meeting to consolidate both programs under one contractor.

Currently, the two collections are handled by separate contractors, but the contracts will be expiring in March; and city officials said they felt putting them both under one contractor would make the services easier to manage and administer.

To facilitate the move to a single contractor, the council reviewed a 25-page Request for Proposal (RFP), which included a schedule for implementing a new collection program.

The RFP, which the council eventually agreed to follow, was developed by public works staffer Jeff Vonnahme.

Vonnahme said the process outlined in the RFP provided interested companies an opportunity to offer options, such as a cart system, if they wished.

Both he and Mayor Mark Huston told the council there had already been interest from companies because of the upcoming contract expirations.

"There has been some interest by others, so we'll open it up for them," Huston said before turning over the explanation on the RFP to Vonnahme, who said the council would maintain control over the contracting process.

"It will basically be the same thing we are doing now," he said, explaining the new contract would extend for three years, the same as the current agreements.

Under those contract, Iowa River Sanitation, Columbus Junction, provides the solid waste collection, while WEMIGA, Mt. Pleasant, operates the recycling program.

"No matter who puts a bid in, you can go with whoever you want. It's the city council's choice," Vonnahme assured the council.

The RFP will officially be available Jan. 1 with a Feb. 11 deadline for any questions that contractors may have. Proposals must be submitted to



At Monday night's fire meeting, Kip Trader presented the Columbus Junction Fire and Rescue a check for \$15,000 from the Marillyn Schlutz Foundation. This will used towards the purchase of new rescue tools (Jaws of Life). Thank you to the Schlutz Family for your support of the CJFD.

COLUMBUS SCHOOL BOARD

Columbus School Board takes next steps in football field upgrade

by JIM RUDISILL

A Jan. 23 bid letting and a Jan. 27 public hearing were both set by the Columbus School Board during its Dec. 16 meeting, as the next steps that will be taken in a planned upgrade of the school district's football (track/soccer) facility.

According to the motion approved by the board, the bid letting will be held at 2 p.m. at the district's administrative building, while the public hearing will be held as part of the board's regular January meeting that will begin at 6 p.m.

The proposed project has been under consideration for several years, although it has only been in the past few months the board has settled on some of the details.

According to previous discussions, the school board narrowed down its list of renovation alternatives to basically two options. The first proposal called for renovating the current football field/track complex using grass sod at an estimated cost of \$700,000. That proposal also carried a \$30,000 annual maintenance expense.

A financial analysis conducted by Piper Sandler, Des Moines, showed the first option could be completed using the district's available Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL) funding.

The second option called for replacing the grass sod with artificial turf at an estimated cost of \$1.65 million.

Both scenarios also

included installing a second long jump at one end of the football field, adding other track improvements at the opposite field end, track resurfacing, engineering and other planning work.

The school board voted at a Sept. 9 meeting to use the school's sales tax revenue to cover the cost. However, the resolution used in that action mentioned installing artificial turf; and although school officials said it did not commit the board to that option, local citizens became concerned.

A petition was apparently started seeking a vote on the issue; and at its Oct. 28 meeting, the school board voted to rescind that motion. It also confirmed plans to renovate the natural

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Wildcat Robotics

The 2024 CCSD Wildbot Robotics team invites you to view our final meet on January 11th at West Burlington, either live or streaming. Additionally, our tournament on February 1st in Iowa City may be viewed the same way.

Wildbot Robotics are a FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) team and part of the Sargasso League.

FIRST® is a global nonprofit organization that prepares young people for the future through a suite of youth robotics programs that build skills, confidence, and resilience. For more information see <https://engineering.uiowa.edu/about/first-tech-challenge>, <https://www.firstinspires.org> or contact coach Tessa Pugh.

Opportunities for sponsor contributions continue to exist. Contact a team member or Coach Pugh for details.

Pictured Above (left to right) include Morgan Janssen, Sammy Valencia, Everett Allchin, Naomi Allchin, Tate Travis and Kai Allec.

Briefly ...



This Week in Wildcat Sports

BASKETBALL

January 2	JV/V Girls & Boys @ Pekin	4:30 pm
January 3	JV/V Girls & Boys @ WACO	4:30 pm

WRESTLING

January 3	Girls Tourney @ Eddyville-Blakesburg	9:30 am
January 4	Boys Tourney @ Eddyville-Blakesburg	9:30 am

Columbus School Menu - December 26 - January 1, 2025

Thursday, December 26th: NO SCHOOL WINTER BREAK

Friday, December 27th: NO SCHOOL WINTER BREAK

Monday, December 30th: NO SCHOOL WINTER BREAK

Tuesday, December 31st: NO SCHOOL WINTER BREAK

Wednesday, January 1st: NO SCHOOL WINTER BREAK

Milestone Cafe Menu - December 26- January 1, 2025

Thursday, December 26th: Cook's Choice-3oz. Goulash, 1 C Big Bowl of Tuscan Greens, Breadstick, Dressing, Strawberry Rhubarb Pie, Vanilla Ice Cream.

Friday, December 27th: 3oz. Andy's Meatloaf, Ketchup, ½ C Mashed Potatoes, 2oz. Gravy, ½ C Carrots, Whole Grain Roll, Butter, ½ C Fruit.

Monday, December 30th: Cook's Choice-3oz. Roast Beef, 2oz. Gravy, ½ C Mashed Potatoes, ½ C Beans & Crispy Noodles, Dinner Roll, Butter, Chocolate Cream Pie.

Tuesday, December 31st: All Community Cafes will be closed. No Home Deliveries.

Wednesday, January 1st: All Community Cafes will be closed. No Home Deliveries

Escape Room fun at CJ Public Library

Looking for some fun over Christmas break? The Columbus Junction Public Library will be hosting an Escape Room, "The Tell Tale Heart", on December 27th and December 30th. Call the library, 319-728-7279 to reserve your spot!

Solve puzzled, find clues, and try to break out! Perfect for groups of all ages!

Applications open for Volunteer Conservation Board Member

The Louisa County Board of Supervisors is seeking applicants for a volunteer conservation board member. The term begins January 2025 and lasts for five years. Applicants must be residents of Louisa County.

The five-member board serves without pay and is responsible for establishing the policies and goals of the Louisa County Conservation Board.

Applications and information will be available at the Louisa County Auditor's office in the courthouse or online at www.louisacountyconservation.org. Completed applications should be returned to the auditor by Friday, December 27, 2024 for consideration. Appointment will be made in January.

For more information about the conservation board, call 319-523-8381 or email gsgerst@louisacountyia.gov

SAVE THE DATE!!

JUNE 21, 2025 • CCHS ALL SPORTS REUNION

Pass the word Wildcats!! We want all coaches, all team members cheerleaders, managers, stat keepers, chain crew, water boys-you name it! If you are a CCHS Wildcat, we want you to join us.

Stay tuned! There are many more details to come. Count on this being a great time!

CJ Public Library Holiday Closures

Wed, December 25th: CLOSED	Monday, December 30th: OPEN
Thursday, December 26th: OPEN	"Escape Room"
Friday, December 27th: OPEN	Tuesday, December 31st: CLOSED
Saturday, December 28th: OPEN	Wednesday, January 1st: CLOSED
"Escape Room"	Thursday, January 2nd: OPEN
	Friday, January 3rd: OPEN
	Saturday, January 4th: OPEN



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Here's to a Wonderful Holiday Season!