

# THE HAWK EYE

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## School district tax levy will raise by 22 cents

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Correspondent

The Burlington Community School Board held a public hearing Monday on the proposed property tax levy for FY27 budget.

The school district's property tax levy is proposed to rise 22 cents/\$1,000 in assessed property valuation this year.

Board President Anika McVay began with an announcement on the tax rate. "Since the budget was submitted, the legislation has updated the school funding for next year. As a result of these legislative changes, the rate has decreased from the original estimate of \$16.75 to \$16.19.

That's a decline of 56 cents and this is a difference of (a) 22 cent increase instead of the 78 cent increase from last year," she said.

Members of the community, who are all impacted by the higher tax, came to voice their concerns. A consistent theme among nearly all five of those who came to speak was financial pressure from other areas of the economy. Speakers mentioned being affected by rising costs in gas, utilities and groceries, and stagnant income. They argued that a rise in the tax levy puts too much on the already overburdened community members.

One speaker, a business

owner, said her property taxes have gone from \$28,000 to \$46,000 in the last three years. Another speaker, a retiree, said he might have to join the workforce again, full-time, to afford to live in Burlington. Similar to last year's public tax hearing, community members asked the board to come up with ways for the school district to save rather than pass costs onto taxpayers.

Board members could not respond during the public hearing, which earned the ire of one speaker, who called it "grossly inappropriate" that the board would not respond to those who took time out of their day to make it to the

meeting. Somewhat ironically, Superintendent Robert Scott immediately responded that this rule was a state-level requirement and that it was out of the board's hands.

About an hour later, during his report, Superintendent Scott responded to assuage concerns of the speakers. "I just want to make sure that the community is aware we are making a cut of \$975,000 this year out of our budget because we are knowing where we're at, budget-wise, and trying to make sure we're being good stewards of our taxpayer dollars. And

SEE SCHOOL, PAGE 4



### NEW WARDEN

Iowa Department of Corrections names new warden for FM prison.

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## Cluck No? WB Council split on allowing chickens in city limits

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WEST BURLINGTON — The West Burlington City Council is considering revisions to its urban chicken ordinance and wants public input on the practice.

City Administrator Gregg Mandsager presented the council with some examples of urban chicken ordinances in other Iowa communities and a draft of a new policy to the West Burlington City Council on Wednesday.



Mandsager

Residents can raise chickens if given a permit. Council support for a revised code is 50-50 right now, with city staff recommending the city prohibit the practice.

City councilor Andy Crownor aligns with city staff who have said they do not want to allow chickens in town. "Farm animals belong on the farm," Crownor said Wednesday.

One possible solution is to prohibit chickens in the city's concentrated residential areas but allow it on the town's outskirts where there are larger lots for homes; this would include the area where Homestead 1839 is located on Agency Road.

City councilor Ringo Covert wants more input from the public before making a decision about the ordinance. He encouraged West Burlington residents to contact city hall or a member of the council to weigh in.

Chickens are allowed by permit and City Clerk Kelly Fry said the city has one permit holder presently. There are also incidents of residents raising chickens without a permit in West Burlington. City Police Chief Jesse Logan said his officers have been called to those locations for nuisance violations.

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## Wayne Thomson to serve as next Burlington Police Chief

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The City of Burlington has named the officer who will serve as Burlington's next Police Chief.



Thomson

"Burlington City Manager Chad Bird is pleased to announce he has selected Wayne Thomson to serve as Burlington's next Police Chief," according to a press release issued by the Burlington Police Department on Thursday afternoon.

Thomson brings over 28 years of "progressive law enforcement experience" with the Burlington Police Department and currently serves as Deputy Chief of



Adam Schaefer takes the oath of office administered by Burlington City Clerk Katie Music, as Chief of Police for the City of Burlington. Schaefer is now retiring and Wayne Thomson will be chief (File Photo)

Police, the release states. Throughout his career, Thomson has held numerous leadership roles including Lieutenant in Patrol, Investigations, and Administration Divisions,

Sergeant, Detective, and Patrol Officer. "His experience spans all facets of department

SEE CHIEF, PAGE 4



### IN THE SHOW

Former SCC player coaches at Illinois.

### INSIDE TODAY

#### NOTABLE



For Sexual Assault Awareness, the Clothesline Project will be on display at the Burlington Public Library.

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## Coffee chain 7 Brew plans Burlington shop

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Plans are brewing for a new coffee stand in Burlington with customized drink options and fast, friendly service.

7 Brew will be located in a currently vacant out-lot at 3314 E. Agency St., between the strip mall anchored by Dollar General, Planet Fitness and Marshall's that is located at 3320 E. Agency St., and Jimmy John's at 3310 Agency St., said Chase Oberg, operating partner for High Plains Brew, a franchise group based in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Concrete demolition will start soon, preparing for a 550 square foot modular structure that will offer a double drive-thru and will include a separate cooler and dry storage for products.

Plans currently are pending city approval. The business will bring about 50 jobs.

The coffee stand which likely will open in late summer or early fall will offer face-to-face service, where "brewistas" come to



A 7 Brew drive-up stand. (7 Brew)

your car window to take your order using a tablet computer, which is then beamed to the prep area and made to order, explained Oberg. Your brewista then hurries your drink back to your car.

"We have texters outside that'll meet you in your car. It's all person-to-person interaction. That's something we really pride ourselves on. It's just a really great concept and we really just try to find the best people, the friendliest

people to hire," he said.

"We focus on speed of service, quality, and the genuine reactions we have with our guests," he said. "We prioritize customer experience.

There is no indoor seating. The menu includes hot and iced coffee drinks, cold brew, teas, Italian sodas, lemonades, smoothies and shakes. 7 Brew also offers their exclusive, premium

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### DEATHS

Ethel F. Williams, 82, Burlington: Page 5

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