

TWIN CITY PLAYERS PRESENTS DARK COMEDY

Entertainment, B5



Settlement reached on Maiden Lane dispute

Lincoln, SJ Twp. to craft 30-year usage agreement

By LAUREN RICE
HP Staff Writer

Officials from Lincoln and St. Joseph townships announced Wednesday they have reached a settlement agreement regarding the Maiden Lane sewer line lawsuits. According to a joint news release

sent from the townships, both municipalities are satisfied with the settlement agreement because it reflects a balanced approach that supports the interests of both townships and lays the groundwork for a productive path forward.

"The settlement agreement creates a positive foundation for collaboration as we move forward with crafting a 30-year agreement," St. Joseph Township Manager Denise Cook said in the release. "Through

open communication and a shared commitment to our residents, we look forward to continued cooperation between the two communities."

In the release, Lincoln Township Supervisor Glenn Youngstedt echoed those sentiments.

"The Lincoln Township Board is pleased with the settlement with our neighbors in St. Joseph Township," he said. "A new 30-year sewer agreement will bring stability and benefit both communities for both

current residents and future development."

St. Joseph Township trustees voted on their approval the agreement after a closed session discussion last week. Lincoln Township officials voted unanimously to approve the agreement during their regular board meeting Tuesday.

After Tuesday's meeting, Youngstedt said he was "happy and relieved" to have passed it. The agreement had been discussed during

their closed session meeting two weeks ago as well.

The settlement marks an end of lawsuits filed on both sides of the dispute over use of the shared sewer line along Maiden Lane. A new usage agreement, like the 30-year one mentioned in the release, has not been finalized by either township.

According to Herald-Palladium archives, an agreement from 1974 was not renewed at the end of 2023. Contact: lrice@TheHP.com, 932-0360



Don Campbell / HP staff

Dalton Castle, who is the new zoning administrator for the city of St. Joseph, says one of his goals is to curtail the city's zoning ordinances to be more tailored to serve the needs of the community.

Lincoln Twp. appoints Brown as interim manager

Board initiates process to hire next manager

By LAUREN RICE
HP Staff Writer

LINCOLN TOWNSHIP — Clerk Michael Brown will once again fill in as interim manager in Lincoln Township, following the resignation of Manager Kacey Dominguez.

The decision came as a recommendation of Trustee Marc Florian, who brought up the topic during board member comments at the end of Tuesday's regular meeting.

"I would like to suggest that we initiate, once again, the recruitment process to fill that need," Florian said. "But in the interim, I would once again like to nominate our clerk, Mike Brown, to not only return to his full-time clerking duties but also to take on the manager role as needed as well."

Brown previously filled in as the interim manager after the departure of former Manager Ralph Bansen in mid-October 2025. Brown said he has developed relationships with department heads.

"I know we have to do a manager search," he said. "Both managers left for different reasons. I have a good relationship with the department heads and I think I made some progress with the structure of the township. ... Knowing the projects and the finance officer, I think I can handle the clerk duties. Some weeks are going to be light on the manager duties, some are going to be heavier. I'll get those arranged to be more economical to the township."

The pay structure Florian recommended will be different than it was when Brown filled in the position last fall. He recommended the hours be tracked, and Brown be paid at an hourly rate on par with what Dominguez was paid — about \$70 an hour. However, that would be after

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The needs of a community

Castle hopes to update ordinances as SJ zoning admin

By LAUREN RICE
HP Staff Writer

ST. JOSEPH — As the new zoning administrator for the city of St. Joseph, Dalton Castle has put an emphasize on bettering the

community. From building a shed in the backyard of a single-family home to large commercial developments, zoning ordinances affect properties around the city. Castle, who started in late February, said one of his goals is to curtail the city's zoning ordinances to be more tailored to serve the needs of the community.

Castle sat down recently with Herald-Palladium Staff Writer Lauren Rice to talk about the job and how it impacts city residents.

So, you work as a zoning administrator. Can you tell me what that means?

As a zoning administrator, I would be our main liaison to the city's planning commission and zoning board of appeals. We would

handle land use applications, so for the planning commission that would be any special land uses that would be considered to have a higher impact than a regular land use in a given area.

That would be reviewed by our bodies — planning commission and city commission — and then our zoning board of appeals handles any variance requests for anyone who wants to go against what our zoning ordinance requires, they

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Q & A DALTON CASTLE

Lakeshore schools see drop in enrollment

Projections show district to see continued decline

By LOUISE WREGG
HP Staff Writer

LINCOLN TOWNSHIP — The number of students attending Lakeshore Public Schools

declined by 49 students from the fall of 2024 to this past fall semester, according to District Chief Financial Officer Tracy Althouse.

"We can see that similar to

the rest of the state, the trending downwards of declining enrollment," Althouse told school board trustees on Monday. "... That is a Michigan problem for, I believe, 86 percent of the school districts across the state."

In the past 10 years, she said

student enrollment has declined from 2,810 students in the fall of 2016 to 2,584 this past fall — a drop of 226 students.

Althouse said the downward trend is expected to continue by

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