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THE STURGIS NEWS

Delivering For Sturgis and Union County

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UNION COUNTY DEPUTY Sheriff Brian Russellburg was the guest speaker at the county Veterans Day program last Wednesday. Additional pictures from that program can be found on page three of this week's paper.



Union County Fiscal Court Opens Bids; OKs Contract

Union County Fiscal Court met in regular session November 10, with magistrates reviewing two bids for the Hitesville Road bridge project and approving an oversite contract for the bridge work once it starts. The court also heard a report concerning activity at Moffit lake.

Two bids were received for the Hitesville Road bridge project. Scott and Murphy, Inc submitted a bid of $723,265,98 while Westwood Pro Works bid $905,514.01 for the work. The court will take the bids under advisement with the bid anticipated to be awarded on November 24.

In action related to the bridge work, magistrates approved a contract with GPD, an engineering group, that will oversee the work. The contract calls for a GPD, the company that designed and engineered the project, to have a representative onsite during construction to insure the work follows the construction plan and bid specifications. The project construction is being paid for by the state while the county will pay the $42000 engineering monitoring fee.

Sean Sheffer explained that GPD completed the design work and they will continue by working to insure correct permitting guidelines are followed and that construction follows the bid specifications.

During Tuesday's meeting, Jenna Dunn, who manages Moffit Lake Recreation Area, addressed the court to review activities and plans for the area. According to Dunn, who began work in February, in October a family Halloween event drew about 200 children and their families who enjoyed bounce houses, pumpkin painting, a golf cart parade and costume contest along with other events.

Dunn also noted that the recreation area committee met and has approved allowing seasonal campers to leave their campers onsite during the off-season for a fee. She added that six individuals have already paid that fee with nine on the waiting list for seasonal camping and 18 verbally committed for next year. The campground manager also said she would like to see the bath houses updated and some RV sites leveled during the winter. She noted that the park is six cabins short due to the tear down of some of the older cabins and some not in good enough shape to rent out.

Over all, September 2026 generated $4000 more than October 2025. Dunn also reviewed the percentage increase on various types of camping experiences, noting that every area increased by an average of 25 plus percent. Sales at the camp store are also up and since July, the lake's Facebook site has had 246,000 views.

According to Dunn the area will host additional family events in 2027. Judge/Executive Adam O'Nan told the court that "it is absolutely undeniable what Moffit brings to the area," and Dunn added that "it's amazing how many different states are represented" by Moffit visitors.

In other business, the court briefly discussed the inferior paving on KY 360 in Uniontown. Magistrate Jerri Floyd noted that the paving was completed the first week of November and crews left driveway approaches in poor condition. After viewing the paving himself, Floyd contacted O'Nan and together they spoke with the state about the issues. On Tuesday, O'Nan said that the state will withhold payment until the company returned and makes the necessary improvements. The judge/executive also noted that concerns about paving on KY 359 will also be addressed.

Dakota Jones thanked O'Nan and the state for addressing the speed limit in Sullivan. That limit has been reduced to 35 mph with county officers monitoring the speeds at various times.

The next meeting of the Union County Fiscal Court is scheduled for November 24, at 9:00 a.m.

Sturgis Council Hears Water Project Update; Approves Grant Administrator

The Sturgis City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, November 11 with Mayor Billy Adams presiding and all council members present. Also attending the session were City Clerk Sandra Germane and City Attorney Vickie Davis.

Following approval of the minutes from the October meeting and the review of the monthly financial report, council members dealt with several items of business.

The water loss for October was 24.52%. The city flushed over 400,000 gallons of water in October, and although flushing had declined as the weather has become cooler, flushing will still be necessary to keep the water quality readings at an acceptable level.

Sturgis Fire Chief Brent Thompson presented the fire report for October. He also presented council members with a two year strategic plan for the fire department. Members of the Sturgis Volunteer Fire Department responded to 23 incidents in October. Members also took part in three training dates. The department currently has 19 volunteers, according to Chief Thompson. He also told members that parts of the strategic plan are currently being implemented; however, grant funding will be sought in order to meet other goals of the plan.

Mayor Adams told the council the city has received $15,300 from the state fire commission. Those funds had been stopped in 2025 because of the legal issues involving former fire chief Chad Cullen. Mayor Adams noted that the funds which were missed during that time have not been made available, and there has been no indication from state officials that the back funding will come.

Code Enforcement Officer Greg Warmack presented his monthly report noting that two nuisance properties – 905 North Lee Street and 520 North King Street – have been targeted for demolition. He told members one of the properties will be taken down privately and he is seeking help from the Union County Fiscal Court with demolition of the other. If the two properties are demolished, that will make 30 properties in the city which have been cleaned up in 2026. He also told the council that most of the violations in recent weeks have involved mowing issues. When the city has to mow private property, liens are placed against that property to recover the city's cost of the work. According to Warmack, there have been positive responses to some of those lien notices.

Council members reviewed the Union County Sheriff Department's monthly activity report for the city. According to that report, sheriff's officers responded to 216 incidents during the month. None of those incidents were alcohol-related arrests, according to Mayor Adams.

Council members approved paying the shared costs for maintenance of the Providence Gas House with the City of Clay. That agreement has been in place for decades, and heater repairs at the location have been estimated at $14,650.00. The City of Sturgis will be responsible for $7,325.00 of that amount.

A representative from Clark Dietz Engineers updated members on the waterline renovation project in Sturgis. That project is about 34% complete, and a payment of $359,896.93 has been paid to the contractor. The project is expected to be completed in January 2027, depending on weather delays.

The council also learned that 100% funding has been secured to extend a waterline to three customers on KY 923. Those funds are coming from an Abandoned Mine Lands grant and will be available in 2027. When completed, the extension will be another major upgrade in the city's water infrastructure.

Council members approved and signed a letter of appreciation to Allan Baker, who donated a trailer of lights to the city, according to Mayor Adams. Some of those lights have been installed in the downtown area, providing a more safe and secure environment for local residents.

Council members officially adopted the city's strategic plan, and Mayor Adams will appoint a committee of local business leaders and residence to do an assessment of the downtown area and make recommendations to the council concerning improvements.

Mayor Adams reported the construction meeting for work at the wastewater treatment plant has been held, and that work is expected to begin sometime in December.

The city had agreed to lease a property to Daydream Cakery; however, needed plumbing repairs have been that lease on hold. According to the mayor, a Madisonville, Kentucky plumbing company did not get the needed work done, and the city is currently awaiting the issuance of permits to continue with the project.

The council approved Tim Troutman as the city's grant administrator for the EDA grant funds, which will be used for the water treatment plant. Mayor Adams noted that he, the city clerk, the city attorney, and a council member had evaluated three applicants to serve as grant administrator, and Troutman was the best choice. The cost of those services is $40,000, payable over a four year period.

Council members also authorized a resolution allowing Mayor Adams and Ms. Germane to secure a credit line of up to $5,000,000 from Planters Bank. Those funds will be used when payments need to be made during the construction of the water treatment plant. The funds will be repaid with the grant funding; however, the city has to make the payments before the grant funds are released. The interest rate for that credit line is not to exceed six percent; however, Mayor Adams indicated the rate is expected to be significantly lower.

The council discussed the need for a diesel generator at the main lift station for the wastewater plant and the replacement of a 300 gallon storage tank. The cost of that generator is estimated at $68,000. The cost for the storage tank is estimated at $2,835.00. Council members took no action on the generator; however, an expenditure of up to $3,500.00 for the storage tank was approved.

Mayor Adams told members the city's ordinances have not been codified since 2013. The cost to bring the codification current is estimated at $12,000 to $14,000, and the process will take 10 to 12 months to complete. Council members took no action on Wednesday; however, the proposal is expected to be discussed at a future meeting.

The mayor reported the city's 2025 is nearly complete, and work on the 2026 audit is expected to begin in the near future. ATA Audit Firm is doing that work.

No further business came before the council, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:15 P.M.

The next regular meeting of Sturgis City Council will be Wednesday, December 9, 4:00 P.M.