

Pandemic, remote learning discussed by Holgate board

By JENNY DERRINGER
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HOLGATE — Topping Monday’s Holgate Local Board of Education meeting were discussions about the pandemic, possible remote learning and the district’s five-year forecast.

Superintendent Kelly Meyers updated the board on the coronavirus situation in the district.

“To date, we’ve had only six positive student COVID cases and four positive staff cases,” said Meyers. “The concerning factor is the impact of what’s happening with community spread causing otherwise healthy students/staff to be quarantined for 14 days. We’ve had 48 students and three staff quarantined due to being close contacts of positive cases outside the school setting.

“We communicate promptly with the health department, staff and families whenever we have a positive case or quarantine situations,” she said. “I’m also in communication with (Holgate) Mayor Tijerina to keep an open dialogue. Our staff — everyone from front office people, to cafeteria staff, to custodians/maintenance, drivers, teachers, our SRO and principals — have embraced the additional daily safety/cleanliness measures. It’s all their efforts that have kept us able to continue in-person instruction. We’ve not seen COVID spread within the building. What we see in terms of

positive cases and quarantining is typically because of someone in the home or out in the community.”

Concerning remote learning plans, “the district will have two practice remote learning days on Dec. 4 and 7 during which students will stay home and run the remote learning schedule, while teachers remain in the classroom, just as we would do if we ever need to transition to remote learning,” noted Meyers.

A letter and schedule are being mailed home to every parent. Students will be given a device to take home (if they don’t already have one) on Dec. 3. Those devices need to be returned on Dec. 8. Parents are encouraged to read through the remote learning plan and schedule on the district website: www.holgateschools.org, along with checking out the resources for SeeSaw (K-2) and Google Classroom (grades 3-12). Teachers have been practicing with students and making sure they know how to log in. The district is using the two-hour delays every other Wednesday to continue to prepare lessons/materials and hone SeeSaw/Google Meet skills.

“At this time, we have no definite plans to go to remote learning,” added Meyers. “We simply want to be prepared if we do. The daily schedule will be much more structured than last spring. A building closure order from the governor, an inability to appro-

priately staff the building or an unusually high positive case count would be the biggest reasons that we would go to remote learning.

“If we have to go to remote learning, our cafeteria plans to provide meal service twice per week on Mondays and Thursdays,” she stated. “Our bus drivers will deliver meal boxes twice weekly to whoever signs up in advance. Sign-up will be available by emailing our food service supervisor. Delivery routes will begin at approximately 10 a.m. Families just need to make sure someone will be home during those mornings to receive food boxes. We’ll get all of this information out to families if we ever transition to remote learning.”

Treasurer Kent Seemann also discussed the five-year forecast for fiscal years 2021-25. Cash balances projected are: 2021, \$5,958,565; 2022, \$6,118,546; 2023, \$6,178,994; 2024, \$6,209,714; and 2025, \$5,966,585. The forecast was approved by the board.

In personnel matters, the board accepted the resignation of instructor Laura Shultz, effective May 28. Shultz has taught in the district for 22 years. A contract was rescinded with Sarah Wenzinger, resident educator mentor for RE 5-Karen Thomas. Approved was Kevin Fritz as a junior high girls basketball volunteer.

The following athletes were recognized by athletic director

Richard Finley: boys cross country team (GMC championship, Division III district champions, regional runner-up, fourth place at state) and members Anthony Swary, Bailey Sonnenberg, Hayden Hartman, Richard Bower, Addison Casillas, Levi Zachrich, Ethan Fritz, Gabe Salaz, Jack Westrick, Logan Miller, Cade Mansfield and Evan Dopp; girls cross country team (GMC championship, Division III district runner-up) and members Jenna Okuley, Cora Schwab, Bria Tijerina, Makenzie Boecker, Kathleen Hernandez, Justine Eis, Kaylynn Ashbaugh, Elisabeth Willett, Hannah Swary and Miriam Bower; varsity football, 5-3 for the season; junior high football, 4-3 for the season; and junior high volleyball, 13-2 for the season, GMC champions.

The district held a virtual Veterans Day tribute, noted Meyers. The high school student council sponsored the tribute and the video productions class produced a video tribute under the guidance of Becky Stover and Steve Mohr.

“They did a phenomenal job of bringing all the footage together,” said Meyers. “Our students and staff really shared heartfelt participation in the project. It was posted on the district website, Twitter and Facebook pages, along with the village of Holgate community and local VFW Facebook pages, and shared with the American Legion on Veterans Day.”

Meyers also clarified morning drop-off procedures in front of main entrance. The entire sidewalk along the curb is a no-parking zone from 7:45-8:10 a.m. No one is to park along the sidewalk for any reason other than to drop off a student. The procedure is to pull up to the furthest available space along the sidewalk and drop-off children out of the passenger side of the vehicle only. Meyers stressed that if parents are getting out of their vehicle for any reason, they need to park in the parking lot and use the cross walk. The concern is safety and an efficient drop-off flow with no unnecessary delays.

In other business, the board:

- held a second reading on numerous policies.
- accepted an anonymous donation of \$100 to the Latchkey program.
- approved substitutes from the Northwest Ohio Educational Service Center.
- okayed Bonnie Rosebrock as a substitute bus driver for the 2020-21 school year.
- entered into an agreement with the Holgate Lumber Company for snow removal through April 30, 2021.
- approved a contract with a parent for the transportation of her child to Holgate Local Schools at the standard mileage reimbursement rate for the 2020-21 school year.

Sherwood council passes three legislative items

SHERWOOD — During its meeting on Monday, Sherwood council approved three ordinances on third readings while also meeting the newest member of the county’s economic development office.

Former Defiance County Community Improvement Corporation executive director Jerry Hayes was on hand Monday and introduced Erika Willitzer to village officials. Willitzer will replace Hayes, who has spent the past two decades as the executive director.

Willitzer began her duties in late October. During the legislation portion of the meeting, village officials passed an ordinance on a third reading that will restrict residents from keeping farm animals within village limits.

Council also passed a pay ordinance and an ordinance amending appropriations.

In other business, council:

- approved Resolution 20-11-01 to accept the amounts and rates as determined by the budget commission and authorizing the necessary tax levies and certifying them to the county auditor.
- heard an update from zoning inspector

Gilbert Montez on nuisances delivered. Officials learned that two of the four houses are taking care of nuisances. The other two houses will be receiving letters from the solicitor stating they are not compliant with the nuisance ordinance.

- village administrator Sherri Ramey presented a quote to council from Richland Roofing to enclose the bell tower. The bell was removed last week, council approved the quote for \$6,500.
- learned that the awning on the front of village office is complete and received a quote from Siebenaler Construction to build stairs for better access to the second story for \$5,560 and Jay’s Heating and Cooling for \$1,690 to move duct work for the stairs. Council approved the quotes.
- learned the library received a couple different quotes from Siebenaler Construction to repair the outside portion of the library and community room. Council noted it would like to communicate with the Friends of the Library to see if they are willing to help offset the cost. Council made their recommendation, and the cost will be right around \$20,000.

- sold the Ranger truck for \$1,950 but still have the toolboxes for sale.
- asked for quotes to replace the Topkick with an automatic.
- bought a bucket truck from an auction for \$3,000 and will be selling the 1987 3500 bucket truck on gov deals.
- heard that Norwalk Concrete will be in this week to give a quote to upgrade the Moats liftstation.
- accepted a donation from the Foust family for two benches in memory of Gerald and Carolynne Foust at Little Reservation Station.
- heard that the village office is upgrading desks for administrator, mayor and fiscal officer to have higher fronts for better social distancing. A TV is also being purchased for the front window to display ordinances and flyers for public.
- learned that village employees will continue to park the truck at the village office on Mondays from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. for yard waste. Anyone from the village is able to drop yard waste off, they just need to sign in at the office. Officials noted that this will continue as long as the weather is decent.
- reminded the public that the food pantry is Wednesday from 8-10 a.m. at the village office. Officials also thanked Johns

Manville for a monetary donation.

- discussed having West Vine Street repaved from Harrison to Inman. Council noted it would like to see how soon next year that can be done.
- reminded the public that the office will be closed from Nov. 26-Dec. 4.
- heard an update from fire chief Rock. Rock presented one application and gave council an update on new fire station building.

Toddler taken to hospital after accidental shooting

COLUMBUS (AP) — A toddler was taken to an Ohio hospital after an apparent accidental shooting, authorities said.

Columbus police were called to a home on the city’s northeast side at about 11:30 a.m. Monday and found the 23-month-old child with a gunshot wound to the abdomen.

The child was rushed to Nationwide Children’s Hospital but was expected to survive, police said. The toddler is believed to have accidentally shot himself or herself.

NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS

CHRISTI WATER SYSTEM, INC.

PUCO CASE NO. 20-1428-WW-AIR

Pursuant to R.C. 4909.19, Christi Water System, Inc. (Applicant) hereby gives notice that, on September 24, 2020, it filed an application with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (Commission) in Case No. 20-1428-WW-AIR requesting authority to increase the rates it charges.

Any interested party seeking detailed information with respect to all affected rates, charges, regulations, and practices may inspect a copy of the application, including supporting schedules and present and proposed rate sheets, by any of the following methods: by visiting the Commission’s website at puco.ohio.gov, selecting “What is DIS?”, then selecting “Visit DIS”, selecting “Launch Docketing Information System (DIS)”, then inputting 20-1428 in the case lookup box and selecting the date the application was filed; or by contacting the Commission’s call center at 1-800-686-PUCO (7826) or the Commission’s Docketing Division at docketing@puco.ohio.gov.

The current base rates were approved in 2010 in Case No. 09-569-WW-AIR, and the current purchased water rate was approved in 2015 in Case No. 15-423-WW-PWA. Applicant alleges that, based on current expense levels, the existing rates and charges do not provide it with reasonable compensation and return for the utility service it renders. Based on this allegation, the Applicant requests that the Commission grant the Applicant authorization to charge the proposed rates and charges set forth in the rate chart below.

Any person, firm, corporation, association, or other entity may file, pursuant to R.C. 4909.19, an objection to such increase which may allege that such application contains proposals that are unjust and discriminatory or unreasonable. Recommendations which differ from the application may be made by the Staff of the Commission or by intervening parties and may be adopted by the Commission.

Rate Chart

Current Rates and Charges for Water Service

Usage Bracket	Base Rate	Purchased Water Rate
0-50 c.f./month	\$10.00/month	\$16.89/month
51-310 c.f.	.0330/c.f.	.0561/c.f.
310-1,500 c.f.	.0537/c.f.	.0290/c.f.
Over 1,500 c.f.	.0600/c.f.	.0207/c.f.

Proposed Rates and Charges for Water Service

Usage Bracket	Base Rate
0-350 c.f./month	\$92.79/month
351 and up c.f.	.1020/c.f.

Purchased Water Charges will be eliminated.

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[res-pit] - noun

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All home delivery subscribers will automatically receive the 2020 Puzzle Book premium section with their Nov. 19 edition of The Crescent-News. Subscribers’ expiration date will be adjusted to reflect the \$1.50 charge and delivery of this special edition. Subscribers may opt out from receiving the 2020 Puzzle Book by calling 419-784-5441, Ext.1 by 3 p.m. on Friday, November 13, 2020.

AREA DEATHS

Milton Gruber

ST. THOMAS, Ontario — Milton E. Gruber of St. Thomas, passed peacefully on Thursday, November 19, 2020, at the age of 86.

He was the beloved husband for over 62 years to Edna Marie (Collins) Gruber, the dearly loved father of Chris Collins (Elana), Brenda (O'Hagan) Gruber and Jennifer Gruber Ouimette and the cherished grandfather to six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Milton was the last of his family, predeceased by his siblings and his parents, Fordyce and Ida (Roe) Gruber. He will be lovingly remembered by several nieces, nephews, cousins and dear friends. Milton was born in Fort Wayne, Allen County, Indiana, on October 22, 1934. He worked as a heavy duty diesel mechanic and specialized in airplane repair. Milton was a member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 210, TOPS ON5388 and the East London Optimist Club. He loved and will be missed by all of his fur babies.

Due to COVID-19, cremation will take place. A public celebration of Milton's life will be announced by the family at a later date.

Memorial donations may be made to the Royal Canadian Legion Poppy Fund, the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation or the charity of one's choice. Williams Funeral Home, 45 Elgin Street, St. Thomas, Ontario, was entrusted with arrangements.



Gruber

DCGHD shares Thanksgiving guidelines

The Defiance County General Health District (DCGHD) has posted resources to help people evaluate their holiday plans and celebrate safely. Thanksgiving gatherings present public health concern as COVID-19 cases continue to be high across Ohio.

The health department's COVID-19 website includes a Thanksgiving Holiday Safety Guide from the Ohio Department of Health and the Wood County Health Department. You can view the entire package at defiancecohealth.org and click "COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019)."

The Thanksgiving holiday guide includes tips for having a safe Thanksgiving and factors people should consider when deciding whether to travel or gather with family and friends.

The safest gathering will include only people in your own household. If you do host guests, talk ahead of time about ways to keep the group safe and make sure everyone understands why it's important.

Some tips for a safer Thanksgiving include:

- Set up smaller dining areas or card tables as far apart as possible to allow people to be together while keeping distance between groups.
- Limit people going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled, and identify one person to do the serving so no one shares utensils.
- Instead of potluck-style gatherings, encourage guests to bring food and drinks for themselves and members of their own household only.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and items between use.
- If celebrating indoors, open windows to improve ventilation.

Hicksville board hears about book donation

By AARON GROSS

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HICKSVILLE — The Hicksville Exempted Village Board of Education heard about donations from Premier Bank of Hicksville and the United Way of Defiance for books for Hicksville Elementary School during Monday's meeting.

Elementary principal Kirsten Coffman explained that during October, the United Way conducted a book drive asking patrons to contribute \$20 to help sponsor elementary students in Defiance County as a way to provide a variety of books to students throughout the school year.

Hicksville's goal was to have 368 students adopted through the drive and Coffman noted that Premier Bank of Hicksville and United Way board members informed her that the bank had opted to adopt all Hicksville elementary students and that the school would set up future opportunities for Premier Bank to have Zoom sessions with the students to read some of the books.

Coffman also noted that the last week of October was Red Ribbon Week for elementary students and that on the Sunday of that week, around 20 staff members helped turn the front of the school building into a pumpkin patch with activities like a hayride, outdoor scavenger hunts and dress-up days helped "bring some fall, festive fun."

In his report, middle school principal Mike Altman noted that the middle school and high school started

partial remote learning Monday and Tuesday and will use partial remote learning next week (Nov. 30-Dec. 4). Altman also explained that with the contact tracing protocols in place for any positive COVID-19 tests by students, the school staff is examining ways to adjust the set-up of classrooms in the hopes of reducing the amount of students that would need to be quarantined.

Superintendent Keith Countryman noted that the school's in-service day on Nov. 18 was a "shot in the arm" for the staff in an effort to boost confidence amid the grind of the current school year. Board member Minda Jones complimented Countryman's efforts, saying "I love the energy and appreciate your leadership with this in-service ... to help boost our teachers."

The board also approved a resolution accepting a contingency fee agreement and authorizing litigation as part of all Ohio schools being allowed to join a major anti-vaping litigation designed to compensate schools for past and future costs relating to the vaping epidemic among youth in America.

"If the suit goes through, it could be additional monies for the district," noted Ruen. "The trail wouldn't be until January of 2022, these processes take years."

The board also approved a resolution for the district endorsing the recent Fair School Funding legislation in the Ohio state legislature, encouraging the 133rd General Assembly to expedite the passage of the bill.

The board went into executive ses-

sion regarding matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or rules. No action was taken following the session.

In other business, the board:

- accepted a donation of \$10,000 from the Defiance Area Foundation for the Academic/Athletic Complex currently under construction and a \$1,000 donation from Johns Manville for teaching and student supplies.
- heard from district treasurer Mike Ruen that the district will receive a \$19,235 give back from the Ohio Bureau of Worker's Compensation as part of a \$1.3 billion state-wide giveback from the bureau. Ruen also noted that he has been in contact with a bond underwriter and have had off-and-on discussions about a potential refunding of the bond for the school building that "could save taxpayers a significant amount of money" and would have more information by December.
- approved the resignation of Laura Wofford as bus driver effective Oct. 22.
- approved Jennifer Bergman as a classified substitute for the 2020-21 school year.
- approved supplemental contracts for Jeff Sleesman (assistant junior high boys basketball coach) and Jay Sowles (junior high wrestling head coach) and approved Travian Tunis as a volunteer basketball coach.
- approved the high school wrestling team for an overnight trip to Lima on Jan. 29-30, 2021.
- approved a date change for the January 2021 board meeting to Jan. 11 at 5:30 p.m.

Make fire safety your holiday centerpiece

COLUMBUS — A gold-brown turkey with delicious sides may set the stage for the perfect Thanksgiving feast, but state officials are urging Ohioans to make fire safety the real centerpiece of holiday festivities by staying alert and practicing patience in the kitchen.

"More cooking fires occur on Thanksgiving than any other day of the year, and it's not hard to see why," said State Fire Marshal Kevin S. Reardon. "Between cleaning, taking care of children and cooking multiple dishes at a time, there's no shortage of distractions in and around the kitchen. Staying alert and paying attention

to what you're cooking can go a long way in ensuring those distractions don't have tragic consequences."

According to the National Fire Protection Association, U.S. fire departments responded to 1,630 cooking-related residential fires on Thanksgiving Day in 2018 — more than three times an average day. In Ohio, cooking-related home fires throughout the month of November have been on a slight decline in recent years — going from 380 in 2017 down to 335 last year.

There were 22 reported house fires, with no fatalities, on Thanksgiving last year — down from a total of

47 in 2018.

"That's the type of trend we really want to see continue in Ohio," said Reardon. "Many wonderful holiday celebrations this time of year can be ruined by fires that are most often preventable, so it's important to remain vigilant and stay safe in the kitchen."

"Homeowners insurance generally covers cooking fire damage, but consumers should review their insurance with an agent to make sure it's adequate," said Ohio Department of Insurance Interim Director Tynesia Dorsey.

"Nobody wants to spend Thanksgiving injured in the

emergency room or having to request assistance from the fire department," said Dorsey. "Planning ahead for a busy day and staying aware in the kitchen can decrease the risk of injury and property damage that could lead to an insurance claim."

There are steps you can take to stay safe:

- Do not leave any cooking area unattended.
- Set a timer as a reminder of the food you are preparing.
- Maintain a "kid-free zone" of three feet around the stove or areas where hot food or drinks are being prepared.
- Keep paper towels and napkins away from hot surfaces.
- Keep deep-fried turkey cooking out of the garage, away from your home and wooden structures.
- Before frying a turkey, place it in the fryer and cover it with water to determine the exact amount of oil you will need to prevent a fire caused by overflow.
- Have an appropriate fire extinguisher handy.
- If the situation becomes more serious, evacuate and call 911.

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Proposed Rates and Charges for Water Service

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0-350 c.f./month	\$92.79/month
351 and up c.f.	.1020/c.f.

Purchased Water Charges will be eliminated.

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Case No(s). 20-1428-WW-AIR

Summary: Legal Notice Public Notice in local newspaper - Fall 2020 electronically filed by Mr. Kent Beilharz on behalf of Christi Water System, Inc