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Belvidere Approves Property Tax Increase

Debate filled with emotion; contentious politics dominated decision making of the tax levy.

By David Larson

The Belvidere City Council has approved a 6.6 percent increase in the city's property tax levy. This will be used to address a shortfall of 18.4 percent, based on last year's expenditures, plus hundreds of thousands in additional expenditures expected in the new year, according to Shannon Hansen, the city's Budget and Finance Director.

Beginning a series of four council meetings, the Committee of the Whole meeting of Nov 27 saw Director Hansen present the city's financial outlook. Hansen stated that the levy had not been increased since 2017, despite the city having home rule, which means that the City of Belvidere does not have to abide by tax caps. All other public bodies must abide by the tax cap rule, limiting rate increases to the lesser of the inflation rate, or five percent.

Based on last year's levy and expenses, the city will have a \$965,000 shortfall and, in addition, several hundred thousand more from known new expenses. The shortfall could be made up from reserve funds, if it is not resolved in the budgeting process due to conclude in April. Presently, reserves are 3.5 months, less approximately 1 million dollars in ARPA funds (federal money distributed during COVID-19) earmarked for ambulance funding. Hansen went on to list several categories that will add to the shortfall in the coming budget year. An exception is health insurance, which will be less in the new budget year.

Mayor Clint Morris proposed 6 different rate levels for the council to consider. From them, a motion was made by Second Ward Alderman Dan Snow and seconded by First Ward Alderman John Albertini to set the increase at 17.3 percent. Snow stated it was merely a starting point, "...for discussion purposes." Snow stated that it was the highest alternative and almost met the shortfall.

Mayor Morris quickly characterized the 17.3 percent motion as a "Vendetta on the taxpayer" by council members who would support it. Snow, in a later meeting, clarified his real position to be no increase, given public comment demanding no increase. Snow's motion for a 17.3 percent increase passed in committee, which moved through two City Council meetings to a final vote. At the final meeting on December 18th, debate and additional motions were made. According to City Attorney Mike Drella, a motion to levy must be approved on December 18th, or the city would not be able to collect any property taxes, no matter what the rate.

Bitter politics from public comment, the mayor, and council members dominated subsequent city council meetings. This hyperbolic and bellicose rhetoric forced an amended motion of 6.6

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Cab Calloway singing his first big hit in 1931 "Minnie the Moocher"

Cab Calloway an American Classic

New Years Eve, a uniquely American tradition, was invented by artists who inspired for something greater in the New Year.

By James Middleton

No, he did not come to be identified as the ambassador of New Years Eve. He did perform every year on that holiday from the 1930s through the 1940s and until he died in 1994 at the age of 86. No, his music and his musical style were not so widely recognized exclusively unto himself, but his style called "scat singing" came to identify him as one of the premier practitioners of the technique. Ella Fitzgerald was a dear colleague that distinguished herself as a superior practitioner of "scat singing." No, he did not appear across television screens during the golden age of the medium in the 1950s as a

symbol of New Year's Eve, but he did entertain enough so that people bought tickets and came to watch for him and his big band.

He was born in Rochester New York on Christmas Day, 1907 and was named Cabell but to the world of jazz music, he will forever be known and remembered as "Cab" Calloway.

Many of those that watched him would attest Cab Calloway was a master of scat singing. He altered his voice from that of a human being into a true musical instrument that created and produced almost any sort of sound that came to his mind as he propelled air to create the sound that he heard first in his mind. But he would also attest that often he did not even hear the sound before the tone sequence and sounds were made.

In the 1970s the late television reporter Harry Reasoner drew the short straw and was assigned to interview master of jazz trumpeter Miles Davis for a segment of 60 Minutes. Mr. Reasoner anguished with the musician as he

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Calloway

from page 1

endeavored to have Davis describe how he created his music. Miles rolled his eyes at the reporter as if to say, "What chew talking about, how do I create music? I am the music." A similar response might have been drawn from Cab Calloway because he was music.

Part of the reason he could create scat music was because he employed so many improvisational and extemporaneous jazz musicians in the many bands he formed over the decades he survived as a working musician. Dizzy Gillespie, the New Orleans guitar master Danny Barker, saxophonists Ben Webster and Leon "Chu" Berry and many others collaborated with Cab Calloway, off and on over the many years he and they performed.

One characteristic of jazz musicians is that they work together, then they disassemble and work

with others only to return and form again at a later date. Those musicians that worked together were only a few days, months or years from getting together again and creating together anew. Such was also the case with Cab Calloway and Dizzy Gillespie. They seemed to work together, then apart, then merge again to create even newer and different music for new audiences.

He came from a middle-class family and lived part of his early life in Baltimore where his mother, a church organist, enrolled him in voice lessons. His father, a lawyer, supported his early development as a singer though he would have preferred his talented son pursue a career that might be more reliable than that of a performer. Cab connected with a touring company of minstrels and musicians and when the tour ended in Chicago, he remained there living with his sister who was an accomplished jazz performer.

While in Chicago he performed often and emceed performances by other jazz musicians at such venues as the Dreamland Ballroom, the old Sunset Cafe and the famous Berlin Club where he met Louie Armstrong and thus was born Calloway's scat style of singing.

By the 1930s Cab Calloway and his band were replacing Duke Ellington and Count Basie in New York at the famous Cotton Club, the premier jazz venue of the day. It was at the same time Calloway was recording music that he created his famous song "Minnie the Moocher" and the "St. James Infirmary Blues" and of course, his classic "The Old Man of the Mountain" that was recorded for a Betty Boop animated film. It was also out of that 1930s-1940s' era when he obtained the nickname the "Hi-De-Ho Man" that resulted from the chorus of "Minnie the Moocher."

He continued to perform in person, on the stage, in films and on television. He even performed in acting roles in the 1960s and later in such films as "The Cincinnati Kid" and in "Porgy and Bess."

However, as the years passed he became more and more recognized with New Year's Eve celebrations. The photograph shown above had Cab Calloway performing one New Year's Eve with one of his many big bands at the Chez Maurice in Montreal, Quebec, in 1943.

There is a long tradition of celebrants even today haunting hotels and ballrooms and restaurants and bars to ring in the New Year. Though the names of the bands and the performers change over the decades, the goal of the participants remains the same; to ring out the old year and to welcome in the new year with reveling, fine food and, of course, a drink or two, or three or more. Cab Calloway and his many bands along with hundreds of other famous and not-so-famous entertainers toiled many long hours every New Year's Eve to create the music the people wanted to hear.

The next day after the Eve, well, that was the next day and a long year lay ahead. There is always plenty of time to rest, tomorrow.

The Journal wants to thank "Photographs from Montreal" for providing the photograph of Cab Calloway. We also want to acknowledge that research material for the production of this piece was obtained from wikipedia.org the Internet Encyclopedia, cabcallowayllc.com "the official site of the Cab Calloway Family" and just-the-swing.com for providing a biography and valuable timeline of his life.

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**Foster Announces
Over \$870,000
Returned to
Constituents in 2023**

Congressman Bill Foster (D-IL) announced that his office returned a total of \$874,362 to constituents in 2023.

"Making sure my constituents receive effective and efficient services from my office has been my priority ever since I began serving them in Congress," said Foster. "Chief among those services is assistance working with federal agencies like the IRS, VA, and the Social Security Administration to recover money owed to my constituents. I'm proud my office was able to intercede on behalf of so many constituents and help secure the benefits and compensation they've earned."

Constituents in need of assistance can find information and contact our office at foster.house.gov/services/help-federal-agency.

**Foster Statement
on Israeli Military
Strategy in Gaza**

Congressman Bill Foster (D-IL) released the following statement:

"I join my colleagues in expressing concern over Prime Minister Netanyahu's current military strategy in Gaza, and in their urging President Biden to use all available leverage to effect a change in that strategy.

"The mounting and unnecessary civilian death toll and worsening humanitarian crisis are unacceptable. They are not in accord with American principles or interests; nor do they make Israel safer. Maintaining the current strategy also jeopardizes efforts to permanently dismantle Hamas and secure the release of all hostages.

"In addition, I support efforts in the Senate to require weapons received by any country under the proposed national security supplemental to be used in accordance with U.S. law and international humanitarian law, and support congressional oversight to ensure those conditions are respected.

"Finally, I urge President Biden to continue using America's leverage to urge the Israeli government to pursue a long-term peace founded upon a sustainable two-state solution that respects international law and the interests of both the Israeli and Palestinian people."


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- Joan Mertz, 91, Belvidere, December 13
- Ronald Odgers, 80, Belvidere, December 20



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Capitol News Illinois Adds Digital Team, Videographer

Three new hires will strengthen outlet's web, broadcast presence

By Capitol News Illinois

Capitol News Illinois has continued its rapid expansion in recent weeks, hiring a digital engagement team and its first videographer to bolster its multi-platform presence.

K. Ellen Stackhouse joined the team in September as its director of audience development and engagement. She'll oversee a website redesign and help build an analytics infrastructure as the news outlet grows to better serve its audiences across the state.

Stackhouse, a digital media and marketing professional, comes to CNI with 20 years of experience working in public and commercial media. Over the past 15 years, she held various roles at WSIU Public Broadcasting – a PBS and NPR affiliate – where she served as a senior project manager. In that role she oversaw digital, development and marketing initiatives. For the last eight years, Stackhouse assumed the role of assistant director of digital services, where she led teams responsible for web management, marketing, social media, and data analytics.

"I'm a huge believer in the importance of data," she said. "Data should always drive decision making. In today's data-rich world, harnessing the power of data and analytics is not just an advantage; it's a necessity for organizations seeking to thrive and make a meaningful impact. I look forward to working with CNI's newsroom to expand the organization's digital footprint using this data-driven approach."

Prior to her roles at WSIU, Stackhouse worked in print media serving as a feature writer for the Southern Illinoisan newspaper in Carbondale, where she contributed to the Southern Health Journal and Leaders Among Us publication.

She'll be joined on the digital team by Jennifer Dart, who comes to Capitol News Illinois as a web administrator and analyst after a career WSIU.

Dart brings two decades of expertise in data analytics, web design and website administration. She served as assistant webmaster at the Southern Illinoisan, coordinating web, animation and graphic design projects that earned statewide recognition from the Illinois Press Association.

She moved to WSIU in 2019, taking on a web specialist role that included managing the station's web presence and implementing processes for the station's digital broadcasting, podcasting,

data analytics, and fundraising activities.

"My goal is to create an online presence that highlights the integrity of CNI's investigative journalism and Statehouse reporting while also engaging the audience with the digital storytelling tools that have the power to bring stories to life," Dart said. "Capitol News Illinois is not just another news outlet; it's a vital resource for the people of Illinois, helping citizens stay informed and engaged in the matters that affect

their lives."

While boosting CNI's digital presence, Stackhouse and Dart also bolster the outlet's presence in southern Illinois. Stackhouse and Dart both graduated with bachelor's degrees from Southern Illinois University, where Stackhouse also received a master's degree in professional media and media management studies.

The news organization also strengthened its Springfield and broadcast presence by hiring Andrew Campbell as a videographer and video editor in October. He resides in Springfield and will work from the CNI office in the state Capitol.

Prior to joining CNI, Campbell was the photojournalist for Gray TV's Illinois Capitol bureau. In this role he worked with a reporter to provide daily coverage of Illinois politics for six TV stations across the state, covering state budgets, the 2022 governor's race and the state's assault weapons ban among countless other stories.

He'll fulfill a similar role at CNI as the outlet works to distribute news content to the state's TV stations while building a standalone video presence as well.

"I believe the people of Illinois deserve to get the most up-to-date information on what is happening in state politics," Campbell said. "CNI already has a fantastic news team that provides coverage for newspapers across the state. I look forward to helping bring that quality of coverage to TV stations all over Illinois. By expanding into broadcast, we can give people the choice to consume the news how they want to; whether that be by reading it in a newspaper, watching it on TV, or doing both on our website."

Before working at Gray TV, Campbell worked as a photojournalist at ABC NewsChannel 20, where he covered a variety of local news stories including Capitol coverage.

They're the latest hires as part of a multimedia newsroom expansion driven by increased funding

from the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, the Illinois Broadcasters Foundation and the Southern Illinois Editorial Association.

Capitol News Illinois now has a team of eight full-time journalists and two full-time digital professionals. Later this month, the news organization will welcome a reporting fellow through Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, in addition to internships through the Public Affairs Reporting program at University of Illinois-Springfield and a soon-to-be-announced partnership with Southern Illinois University.

"In five years, we've grown from a three-person newsroom to a team of 10 – and I couldn't be more excited about the team we've built to report the news," said Jerry Nowicki, CNI's editor-in-chief. "These new colleagues and the work they have already begun creating will be a tremendous asset to CNI and Illinois' news consumers."

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Prohibition on Book Bans, Right to Sue For ‘Deepfake Porn’ Among New Laws Taking Effect Jan. 1

More than 300 statutes will become law in the new year

By Peter Hancok, Andrew Adams & Jerry Nowicki Capitol News Illinois

More than 300 new laws will take effect Jan. 1, ranging from a ban on book bans to the regulation of “deepfake porn” and prohibitions on videoconferencing while driving.

Thanks to a law signed in 2019, workers at the lowest end of the pay scale will see a pay raise with the new year as the state minimum wage increases by one dollar, to \$14 per hour.

Gov. JB Pritzker championed and signed that law after it was approved by lawmakers within his first two months of office. The law gradually phases in a \$15 per-hour minimum wage starting in 2025.

The minimum wage applies to most workers 18 years of age and older. Teens who work less than 650 hours in a calendar year will go up to \$13 an hour while the minimum wage for tipped workers will increase to \$9 an hour.

Also come Jan. 1, Illinoisans who own guns, ammunition and accessories prohibited under the state’s “assault weapons” ban will be in violation of the law if they don’t register them with the state. A federal judge last week chose not to temporarily halt the law’s enforcement while a broader legal challenge plays out. The U.S. Supreme Court also recently declined to stay the law.

While permanent administrative rules regulating which guns and ammunition must be registered with the Illinois State Police remain in flux, temporary rules governing registration remain in effect.

Read more: What to know about Illinois’ assault weapons ban

Other laws hitting the books include a measure granting paid leave to all workers, indoor vaping restrictions and a ban on youth solitary confinement in state correctional facilities, among others.

Paid leave for all

Starting Jan. 1, anyone who works in Illinois will be entitled to earn up to 40 hours of paid leave during a 12-month period, time they can take off work for any reason, regardless of whether they are full-time, part-time, or seasonal employees.

The Paid Leave for All Workers Act passed during the lame duck session in January – a session that was called primarily to pass the assault weapons ban. Pritzker signed it into law March 13.

“That is a game changer for many employers, particularly those who have not previously offered any type of paid leave to their employees,” Scott Cruz, a labor attorney, said during an interview with Capitol News Illinois in November.

In particular, he said, the law will be a major change for waiters, waitresses and other workers in the hospitality industry who have never received paid leave benefits in the past.

The Illinois Department of Labor has published a list of frequently asked questions to help guide employers and employees through the new law.

Banning book bans

Libraries in Illinois will lose access to grants

administered by the secretary of state’s office after Jan. 1 if they ban books or other material “because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.”

The so-called ban on book bans, House Bill 2789, was an initiative of Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias. The secretary of state in Illinois also serves as the state librarian, which awards millions of dollars a year in grants to public and school libraries around the state.

Under the new law, libraries must either adopt the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights or develop a written statement prohibiting the practice of banning specific books or resources.

Giannoulias said he proposed the legislation after extremist groups targeted Illinois libraries with efforts to ban certain materials from circulation.

“The concept of banning books contradicts the very essence of what our country stands for,” he said in a statement. “It also defies what education is all about: teaching our children to think for themselves. This landmark law is a triumph for our democracy, a win for First Amendment Rights, and a great victory for future generations.”

Digital forgeries

Lawmakers this spring approved a new protection for victims of “deepfake porn.” Starting in 2024, people who are falsely depicted in sexually explicit images or videos will be able to sue the creator of that material.

The law is an amendment to the state’s existing protections for victims of “revenge porn,” which went into effect in 2015.

In recent years, deepfakes – images and videos that falsely depict someone – have become more sophisticated with the advent of more readily available artificial intelligence tools. Women are disproportionately the subject of deepfake porn.

Some sponsors of the legislation, notably chief sponsor Rep. Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz, D-Glenview, have indicated interest in further regulating the use of artificial intelligence.

Zooming while driving

Starting on Jan. 1, it will be illegal for Illinois drivers to participate in videoconferencing or check their social media pages while behind the wheel.

The law adds the use of any mobile videoconferencing software, explicitly referencing Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Webex, to banned actions under existed distracted driving laws.

The law also specifically names social media sites Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and “Twitter,” which was rebranded to X a few months after the law’s passage.

Illinois law currently bans cell phone use generally while driving, although it does allow drivers to use phones through hands-free or voice-activated means. In 2022, more than 24,000 drivers were cited for distracted driving in Illinois, according to the secretary of state’s office.

Illinois drivers continue to be able to use cell phones in handheld mode if they are reporting an emergency, are parked on a road’s shoulder or if they are stopped due to a traffic obstruction and the vehicle is in neutral or park.

Vaping indoors

People who use electronic cigarettes or vaping devices will now face the same restrictions as cigarette smokers.

It’s an update to the state’s Smoke-Free Illinois Act, which banned smoking in most indoor public

spaces and within 15 feet of building entrances in 2008. “Public places” include restaurants, theaters, offices, stores, libraries, schools, polling places, all government-owned buildings and banks among others.

Tobacco stores and vape shops are exempt from the law, as well as some other facilities, such as smoking rooms at nursing homes, some hotel rooms and tobacco conventions.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported this summer that in 2021, nearly 5 percent of adults were e-cigarette users, although that figure was 11 percent among people 18 to 24.

Other new laws

Youth solitary confinement: House Bill 3140 prohibits solitary confinement in youth detention facilities for any purpose other than temporarily preventing serious and immediate risk of physical harm.

Grocery initiative: Senate Bill 850 created a Grocery Initiative program which will receive \$20 million to fund grants and financial aid to grocery stores opening or operating in “food deserts.” It also requires the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to study food deserts.

Underground Railroad task force: Senate Bill 1623 creates the Underground Railroad Task Force to develop a statewide plan for creating a “cohesive statewide history” of the Underground Railroad and developing new educational and tourism opportunities.

Utility shutoffs: House Bill 1541 prohibits utilities from shutting off gas or electric services due to nonpayment of bills when the temperature exceeds 90 degrees or there is a heat advisory in effect.

Rearview mirrors: It’s long been illegal in Illinois to hang an object that obstructs a driver’s view from a rearview mirror. House Bill 2389 maintains that driving with such an obstruction is prohibited, but it also prevents law enforcement from stopping and searching a vehicle solely because the driver is violating that law.

Civil rights violation: Under Senate Bill 1817, anyone who considers immigration status during a real estate transaction, including purchase and rental transactions, could be guilty of a civil rights violation.

Dangers of fentanyl: House Bill 3924 requires high schools to teach students about the dangers of fentanyl in state-required health courses. The coursework would include differentiating legal and illegal uses of the drug, details about “the process of lacing fentanyl in other drugs and why drugs get laced with fentanyl,” as well as information on how to detect fentanyl in drugs and how to save someone from an overdose.

Fentanyl test strips: House Bill 3203 allows pharmacists and retailers to sell fentanyl test strips over the counter.

Bears and primates: Senate Bill 1883 prohibits keepers of bears and nonhuman primates from allowing members of the general public to come into contact with them. Violators of the law would be subject to a Class B misdemeanor. “General public” does not include employees at the facility where the animal is kept, veterinarians or professional film crews.

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Christmas Tree Recycling Yields Free Mulch

Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful (KNIB) invites area residents to recycle their live Christmas trees and help the environment. A tree dropped off at any one of twelve area locations will be turned into mulch for free pickup on a first-come first-served basis (while supplies last). Participants need not be Rockford residents to drop trees off or pick up free mulch. This kind of “tree-cycling” not only conserves valuable landfill space, it also allows vital nutrients to return to the soil and helps beautify the landscape. This is KNIB’s oldest recycling program.

Evergreen Christmas trees taken to the landfill will release methane as they decay in that air-less environment. Methane is a greenhouse gas 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Valuable minerals stored in the tree will go to waste, buried along with all the other garbage. But Christmas trees shredded into mulch that gets spread around a yard will gradually decompose to provide necessary nutrients for healthy plant growth without the production of harmful gas. Mulch also shelters plants from extreme temperatures, cuts down on weeds, and protects the soil from drought.

Trees can be dropped off January 1 through January 15 at the locations listed below. To prepare your tree for recycling, remove all wires, ornaments, tinsel, plastic bags, and decorations. Wreaths, flocked trees, artificial trees, and tree stands cannot be recycled at these locations and will not be accepted.

Tree drop-off locations:

- Rockford:**
Alpine Park, 950 S. Alpine Road, Rockford
Andrews Park, 800 North Central, Rockford
Gambino Park, 4421 Pepper Drive, Rockford
Levings Lake, 1420 S. Pierpont Avenue, Rockford (east entrance, S. Johnston Ave. at Montague)
Sandy Hollow Golf Course, 2670 Sandy Hollow Road, Rockford
- Love’s Park:**
Martin Park, 5600 Park Ridge Road, Loves Park (northeast parking lot, south of Riverside)
- Cherry Valley:**
Bauman Park, South Walnut Street, Cherry Valley (daylight hours only)
- Rockton:**
Rockton Boat Ramp, 830 East Main Street, Rockton (parking area opposite the ballfield)
- Roscoe:**
Valley View Farms, 6440 Belvidere Road, Roscoe
- Harlem Township:**
Schoonmaker Park, 10500 Ventura Boulevard, Machesney Park

Free mulch will be available while supplies last or until the end of February. Bring your own containers and tools to gather mulch. Any extra mulch will be cleared away March 1 for use in parks, municipalities, and tree farms. Pine mulch is excellent for landscaping around acid-loving plants such as roses, lilacs, azaleas, and evergreens. Other uses include ground cover for walkways and fence rows.

Free mulch from chipped trees will be available for pickup at these locations:

- Rockford:**
Rockford City Yard, 523 S. Central in Rockford. Not sure if any mulch is available? Rockford’s Mulch Cam offers day-to-day updates for this location: <https://www.rockfordil.gov/630/Mulch-Cam>



Mulching Christmas trees

Sandy Hollow Golf Course, 2670 Sandy Hollow Road, Rockford

Love’s Park:
Martin Park, 5600 Park Ridge Road, Loves Park (northeast parking lot, south of Riverside)

Cherry Valley:
Bauman Park, South Walnut Street, Cherry Valley (daylight hours only)

Rockton:
Rockton Boat Ramp, 830 East Main Street, Rockton (parking area opposite the ballfield)

Roscoe:
Valley View Farms, 6440 Belvidere Road, Roscoe

Harlem Township:
Schoonmaker Park, 10500 Ventura Boulevard, Machesney Park



Christmas tree Mulch

FUN FACTS~

Christmas trees are grown in all 50 states and Canada. 25-30 million live Christmas trees are sold in the US every year.

The top Christmas tree producing states are Oregon, North Carolina, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Washington.

Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful is a private nonprofit 501(c)3 educational environmental organization with the mission to improve our environment through education, public awareness and community involvement. KNIB’s vision is similar: to be regionally recognized for environmental stewardship by recycling, litter prevention and beautification through education and action. Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful is a regional affiliate of Keep America Beautiful.

Federal Judge Declines to Stay Assault Weapons Ban Ahead of Jan. 1 Registration Deadline

McGlynn previously issued an injunction that was overturned by appellate court

By Beth Hundsdorfer Capitol News Illinois

A southern Illinois federal judge officially declined to issue an injunction to delay the Jan. 1 registration requirement under the state’s assault weapons ban.

U.S. District Judge Stephen McGlynn issued the 34-page order on Friday.

Gun rights advocates requested an emergency injunction to halt the registration of guns and accessories covered in the legislation, known as the Protect Illinois Communities Act, or PICA, as a condition of continued possession. The gun groups argued the requirements were unconstitutional under the Second and 14th amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

Read more: What to know about Illinois’ assault weapons ban

Lawyers for Federal Firearms Licensees of Illinois, gun rights advocates, gun dealers and three individual gun owners argued that the rules governing the registration of already-owned assault weapons are vague and the state failed to give proper notice to the owners of those weapons.

The Illinois attorney general’s office asked the

court to dismiss the due process claims.

“This Court will expeditiously conduct a full review of the legal challenges to PICA on the merits. This also points toward foregoing further preliminary wrangling and going straight to an exhaustive review of PICA and the Emergency Rules on the merits,” McGlynn wrote. “Additionally, Illinois FOID cardholders’ level of compliance with the registration scheme will be discernible within mere days. This overall level of compliance will likely be highly relevant to the review of certain claims on the merits.”

At a Dec. 12 hearing, McGlynn had foreshadowed that he might decline to issue an injunction.

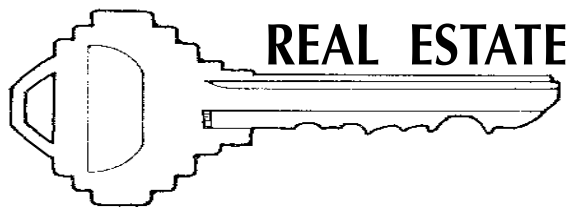
“I think there’s a mess here, and some problems, and I haven’t made my mind up,” McGlynn said at the hearing. “But I do think that entering an injunction today may create more problems than it’s worth.”

McGlynn also dismissed the 14th Amendment claim in Friday’s order and declined to address the Second Amendment claims.

During the Dec. 12 hearing, Sean Brady, an attorney for the plaintiffs, argued that the Illinois State Police was still seeking to modify the registration rules in mid-December, underscoring the need for an injunction to halt implementation before the Jan. 1 deadline.

Assistant Attorney General Christopher Wells countered that enacting the entire statute should not be delayed due to “the inevitable questions that will follow.”

In April, McGlynn issued a separate injunction



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
 COUNTY OF BOONE - BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS
NATIONSTAR MORTGAGE, LLC; Plaintiff,
 vs. **22 FC 7**
EUGENE KOZIN; JOANNA KROL; LANDMARK
CROSSINGS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION; Defendants,
NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on Thursday, January 25, 2024, at the hour of 12:15 p.m. inside the front entrance of the Boone County Courthouse, 601 North Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:

Commonly known as 1904 SAWYER RD., BELVIDERE, IL 61008.
 P.I.N. 05-22-276-025.

The improvement on the property consists of a single family residence. If the subject mortgaged real estate is a unit of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Condominium Property Act.

Sale terms: 10% down by certified funds, balance within 24 hours, by certified funds. No refunds.

The property will NOT be open for inspection.

For information call Mr. Ira T. Nevel at Plaintiff's Attorney, Law Offices of Ira T. Nevel, 175 North Franklin Street, Chicago, Illinois 60606. (312) 357-1125. 22-00354 SL

13234904

Published in The Boone County Journal Dec. 14, 21, 28 PNN

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
 SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
 BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A. Plaintiff,
 -v.- **19 CH 113**

LAURA J. ANDERSON A/K/A LAURA J. BARRY A/K/A LAURA JEAN ANDERSON A/K/A LAURA JEAN BARRY A/K/A LAURA WIEDL, UNKNOWN HEIRS AND/OR LEGATEES OF ROBERT G. ANDERSON, DECEASED, TARA DOYLE, KYLE R. ANDERSON, KOLIN R. MAYBORNE A/K/A KOLIN R. ANDERSON, TIM MILLER, AS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR ROBERT G. ANDERSON, DECEASED, ONEMAIN FINANCIAL OF ILLINOIS, INC. F/K/A AMERICAN GENERAL FINANCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS, INC., UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, UNKNOWN OCCUPANTS Defendant

NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on February 22, 2022, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:00 PM on January 26, 2024, at the NLT Title L.L.C, 530 S. State, Suite 201 (Logan Avenue entrance), Belvidere, IL, 61008, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

Commonly known as 412 WEST MADISON STREET, BELVIDERE, IL 61008

Property Index No. 05-26-406-006

The real estate is improved with a single family residence.

The judgment amount was \$134,010.13.

Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

Where a sale of real estate is made to satisfy a lien prior to that of the United States, the United States shall have one year from the date of sale within which to redeem, except that with respect to a lien arising under the internal revenue laws the period shall be 120 days or the period allowable for redemption under State law, whichever is longer, and in any case in which, under the provisions of section 505 of the Housing Act of 1950, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701k), and subsection (d) of section 3720 of title 38 of the United States Code, the right to redeem does not arise, there shall be no right of redemption.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.

If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g) (1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.

For information, contact The sales clerk, LOGS Legal Group LLP Plaintiff's Attorneys, 2121 WAUKEGAN RD., SUITE 301, Bannockburn, IL, 60015 (847) 291-1717 For information call between the hours of 1pm - 3pm. Please refer to file number 19-091405.

THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION

One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE

You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.tjsc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales.

LOGS Legal Group LLP
 2121 WAUKEGAN RD., SUITE 301
 Bannockburn IL, 60015
 847-291-1717

E-Mail: ILNotices@logs.com
 Attorney File No. 19-091405
 Case Number: 19 CH 113
 TJSC#: 43-4591

NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.
 Case # 19 CH 113
 6088-938434

Published In The Boone County Journal 12/28, 1/4, 1/11

Tax

from page 1

percent, which passed in reaction to the vitriol. The wisdom of this decision was that small incremental increases would be considerate of fixed income taxpayers.

There was an expectation that revenue from a truck stop and the sale of marijuana, expanded gaming licenses, and property tax on new General Mills and Walmart buildings could close the gap in the coming years. Alderman Matt Fleury, Ward 4 and Alderwoman Marsha Freeman, Ward 5 attempted to bring the discussion into perspective before the final vote by examining the numbers. They agreed that a 17.3 percent increase sounded horrifying when mischaracterized as a 17.3 percent property tax bill increase. In Belvidere, the average property tax bill is \$4,000, which would mean a \$700 increase. In reality, an tax increase of \$67 per \$100,000 of the market value of a property is what was proposed in the 17.3 percent increase.

This increase only reflects the City of Belvidere's portion of property taxes. It was explained that \$67 increase over that last 6 years is an average increase of only a little over \$11 per year. It was noted that 80 percent of the city's budget is police, fire, and public works wages, which are negotiated contracts that the city is either required to honor, or layoff police, fire, and, public works employees. It was also noted that total inflation over the last 6 years has been 25 percent.

In the December 18th City Council meeting, Alderwoman Sandra Gramkowski, Ward 3 made a motion to amend the original motion to 6.6 percent rate increase. Voting against the motion were Freeman, Snow, and Flury. A 6.6 percent property tax will increase tax bills at the rate of \$25.56 per \$100,000 in market value, a little over \$2 per month, as opposed to the original \$5.60 proposed in the 17.3 percent levy increase.

ANALYSIS:

Pritzker Urges 'Careful' Approach as Current-Year Surplus Could Be Followed by Deficit

Five-year forecast from gov's budget office indicates Illinois still facing structural budget hole

By Jerry Nowicki Capitol News Illinois

With Illinois lawmakers scheduled to return to legislative session in less than a month, a recent government fiscal forecast provides an overview of the budgeting landscape that awaits them.

The bottom line from the five-year forecast from the Governor's Office of Management and

Budget: The current fiscal year is now projected to end with a \$1.4 billion surplus, while the upcoming fiscal year 2025 is projected to face an \$891 million deficit.

Read the report: 2023 Illinois Economic and Fiscal Policy

Report

"So that five-year forecast, you know, we look at it as a guide for how careful do we need to be as we move forward in the in the budget year thinking about FY '25," Gov. JB Pritzker said at a recent event in Springfield.

"I think it's a signal that everybody, we need to be careful in Illinois, we have to balance our budget..." Pritzker added. "And so, if that requires us to reduce the increases that may occur in certain programs, maybe that will be necessary."

The mandatory GOMB report is published each November. It takes stock of the state's general revenue fund, which is the main discretionary spending account that's subject to budget negotiations each spring. This year's five-year forecast projected deficits of over \$1 billion from FY 2026 through FY 2029.

But, as Pritzker noted in his interview with the news media outside of the Governor's Mansion Thursday, future-year budgets can be "very hard to project" due to state, national and global economic factors.

It's noteworthy that actual revenue performances have routinely exceeded prior-year estimates during Pritzker's tenure – his GOMB has proven a conservative prognosticator. And the governor noted he expects some fluctuation in the anticipated FY 2025 revenue total as the state gets closer to the fiscal year that begins July 1.

Read more: Amid 'unprecedented' prolonged revenue boom, state finds budget breathing room

"I think you're going to see different projections as we go forward just because the economy is changing," Pritzker said, alluding to strong Thursday stock market gains after the Federal Reserve indicated interest rates would remain flat for the time being and decrease in the coming months.

While budget surpluses have routinely yielded supplemental spending plans in Pritzker's tenure amid sustained revenue booms, the governor and lawmakers have been noncommittal when asked about such a plan passing in the upcoming session.

Read more: Lawmakers announce bipartisan plan to pay down remaining unemployment debt

But Pritzker on Thursday noted at least one area of supplemental spending need.

In November, he announced \$160 million in state support to aid and house migrants being bussed to Chicago from U.S. border states, particularly Texas. That plan shifted money from elsewhere in the Department of Human Services' budget, including block grant funding and \$40 million that was backing a pending application for Federal Emergency Management Agency funding.

Continued on Page 8

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Courts*from page 5*

blocking enforcement of the ban and declaring it unlikely to be found constitutional. Two previous attempts to block the law in northern Illinois courts were also unsuccessful.

The 7th Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago overturned McGlynn's ruling in June.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to issue an injunction on PICA and the 7th Circuit declined a request for a full review of a November ruling by the three-judge panel that upheld the gun ban.

Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government. It is distributed to hundreds of print and broadcast outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, along with major contributions from the Illinois Broadcasters Foundation and Southern Illinois Editorial Association.

Prizker*from page 7*

Read more: Pritzker designates additional \$160M for migrant response as winter approaches

Pritzker said it "is going to be a requirement" that the state reexamines "whatever buckets that we've had to pull from" to provide aid to migrants as winter approaches.

The five-year report from GOMB identified another \$969 million in added "spending pressures" that could also require supplemental appropriations. Those include potential state assistance for asylum seekers, increased caseloads at the Department on Aging and the Department of Human Services, delays in other federal reimbursements, increased group insurance costs, and outstanding technology bills.

While the report didn't break down the costs in each area, it noted that the "spending pressures" serve to offset much of the anticipated surplus.

"After accounting for the supplemental budget pressures, the revised fiscal year 2024 surplus is projected to total \$422 million," GOMB noted in the report.

All told, GOMB now expects FY 2024 to see just over \$52 billion in revenues, up from the \$50.6 billion when lawmakers approved the budget in May.

GOMB's report noted the main drivers of the increase – including the state receiving hundreds of millions of dollars in reimbursement for federal matching funds not properly claimed in a previous fiscal year – are likely "one-time" in nature and shouldn't be built into annual budgets.

Other surplus drivers include a \$255 million greater-than-expected transfer from the income tax refund fund due to a strong tax filing season a year ago, good investment and interest returns, and strong corporate and sales tax performance.

The one-time nature of much of this year's surplus drivers plays into next year's projected deficit, as GOMB anticipates revenues to decline to \$51.5 billion, with expenditures growing to \$52.3 billion.

The main drivers of spending growth each year are the state's public school and pension funding formulas.

The school formula calls for an added \$350 million each year. A recent report from the legislature's Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability noted Illinois' FY 2025 general fund pension payment is also expected to grow by \$350 million, to about \$10.2

billion.

Read the report: November 2023 Special Pension Briefing

All told, that adds up to the \$891 million projected deficit for FY 2025, although that number drops to \$721 million when accounting for the statutory contribution to the state's "rainy day" savings fund.

That rainy day fund has been a major beneficiary of recent surpluses and is now at its strongest-ever balance of over \$2 billion. Pension funds have also benefitted, with lawmakers and the governor adding \$700 million to the funds beyond statutory requirements in recent years.

Other recent surpluses have gone to pay down interest-accruing debt and to replenish the state's unemployment insurance trust fund amid the crush of claims brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As for the anticipated current-year surplus, we're likely a few months away from knowing the full scope of any supplemental spending plan it will yield.

Pritzker is scheduled to give his budget address to lawmakers on Wednesday, Feb. 21. After that, budget negotiations normally continue until the legislature adjourns and approves a budget in May.

Jerry Nowicki is the editor-in-chief of Capitol News Illinois, a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government that is distributed to hundreds of print and broadcast outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, along with major contributions from the Illinois Broadcasters Foundation and Southern Illinois Editorial Association.

Illinois Supreme Court Rules Chicago Not Liable For Pothole on Street Not 'Intended' For Cyclists

High court says unless pavement markings or signs are present, cyclists are merely 'permitted' users

By Dilpreet Raju Capitol News Illinois

Bicyclists are nearly always "permitted" users of the road — but are only "intended" users of the road when bike lanes or signage are present, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled last week.

That distinction means the city of Chicago is not liable for damages sustained by a bicyclist who was injured after he hit a pothole on a city street that had no such signage.

In June 2019, Clark Alave was biking on the North Side of Chicago when he hit a pothole in a crosswalk and fell off his bicycle, resulting in fractured teeth, cuts on his face and other bodily injuries, court records state.

Alave filed a complaint for negligence against the city, alleging it neglected its duty to maintain the crosswalk, resulting in the pothole that ended up injuring him.

Alave's complaint argued the city owed him a reasonable duty of care. A state appellate court agreed and sided with Alave, but in a unanimous decision published Dec. 14, the Illinois Supreme Court reversed that decision and sided with the city.

The case pertained to a section of the Tort Immunity Act, which states local public entities have a duty

to maintain property in a safe condition for "people whom the entity intended and permitted to use the property." The act also notes a public entity "shall not be liable for injury" unless it received notice of an unsafe condition in enough time to remedy it prior to the injury.

Ultimately, the case came down to whether bikers are always "intended" users of roadways, particularly without the immediate presence of bike lanes, or whether they are simply "permitted" users.

The court cited a 4-3 decision from 1998 in the case of Boub v. Township of Wayne, which held, "Bicyclists are permitted, but not intended, users of the roads, in the absence of specific markings, signage."

Though there was no signage indicating bicyclists could ride on West Leland Avenue where the accident occurred, the plaintiff's legal team argued the presence of a Divvy bikeshare station "about 100 feet away from the pothole" was an indication of the City's intended use of the street for bicycles.

An appellate court agreed with the assertion, but the Supreme Court rejected it.

Justice David K. Overstreet authored last week's opinion, with the other six justices concurring. Overstreet wrote that because bicyclists could ride on the sidewalk adjacent to the Divvy station, riding on the pothole-ridden street was not a "necessity" for Alave.

The opinion cites the Chicago Municipal Code, which grants bicyclists the right to ride on city streets but specifically states, "This does not mean that the City intended bicyclists to use every roadway in the city that motorists are intended to use."

In April, a pair of biking advocacy nonprofits, the Active Transportation Alliance and Ride Illinois, filed amicus briefs in support of the plaintiff. The Illinois Trial Lawyers Association also filed a brief in support of Alave.

Dave Simmons, executive director of Ride Illinois, said in an interview with Capitol News Illinois he and other advocates have been "frustrated" with the 1998 decision and now the 2023 decision. He said that while people shouldn't be able to sue municipalities on a whim, some regulations would benefit everyone.

"There should be some responsibility, and the fact that bicycles are permitted – and not intended users – of the road just thwarts our efforts to make biking, in turn walking, something that more people can use to get around or enjoy," Simmons said.

During the oral arguments before the Supreme Court in September, Stephen Collins, counsel for the city, referenced the Boub decision.

In that decision, he said, the court "recognized the tremendous cost to municipalities that would be associated with making all roadways in a reasonably safe condition for bicycling."

"In my view, that would just be prohibitively expensive," he said.

Justice Lisa Holder White asked Collins if bikers in permitted but not intended areas are "biking at their own risk."

"That's right, Your Honor," Collins said.

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