



Veterans Service Office

Scott Bachowski Veterans Service Officer

Our Outreach effort since June 1st has yielded a total of 88 new veterans registering with our office! We would like to thank all the departments in the county, county board members and the citizens that have helped us reach these veterans. Our outreach efforts are continuous so please keep passing out our cards so that we can help as many veterans as possible get the benefits they have earned for their service to our country!

In a ceremony during the October 16th meeting of the Wisconsin Board of Veterans Affairs at Brookfield Suites Hotel & Convention Center in Brookfield, Herbert "Herb" T. Zimmer of Rice Lake was presented the Veteran Lifetime Achievement Award for October 2009. Scott accompanied Mr. Zimmer to the

event and was very delighted to have a highly deserving Barron County resident win this prestigious award.

We will be attending the Veteran's Day Ceremony at the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Spooner on Wednesday November 11th at 1:00 p.m.. The theme for this year's program will be "They Stood for Us - Now Stand for Them". The cemetery is located on Veterans Way just off Highway 53, three miles south of Spooner, at N4063 Veterans Way. Veterans, veterans' families and the public are invited to attend. The keynote speaker will be Brig. Gen. USA (Ret) Andrew M. Schuster, Director of Public Affairs, Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA). As the Public Affairs Director he is responsible for the department's overall outreach and public relations activities. Mr. Shuster is also re-

sponsible for scheduling "Supermarket" Outreach events throughout the state. This would be a good time to express to him our sincere interest in hosting a "Supermarket" in Rice Lake during spring of 2010.

Dawn and Scott will be attending the NW Wisconsin CVSO Association meeting in Neillsville, Clark County on December 3rd and 4th. We will be planning for the 32nd Brigades Welcome Home and Veterans Benefits Fair.

We will be taking donations for the Chippewa Falls Homeless Shelter beginning November 4th, 2009. The items of need are: coffee, printer paper, phone cards, laundry soap and of course monetary donations are welcome. The box will be in the Veterans Service Office until November 20th. Thank you!

Emergency Management

Randy Books, Director

Emergency Management has completed the Plan of Work Grant requirements for FFY 09 (October 1, 2008-September 30, 2009). Grant funds received for this period will be \$11,637.00 for the Emergency Planning Community Right to Know Act Grant and \$40,575.91 for the Emergency Management Performance Grant. Funding for FFY 10 is expected to be about the same for each grant.

Training grant applications totaling \$8,201.52 have been

submitted for hazardous materials and confined space courses. These courses are scheduled each year for fire departments, the highway department, and public works personnel to receive training and refresher courses.

The Barron County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan was adopted May 16, 2005 as the official all hazards mitigation plan for Barron County and its townships. The plan is required to be eligible for federal grant dollars for hazard mitigation projects. County cities and vil-

lages have also passed resolutions to adopt the county plan as their official plan. The plan is required to be updated every 5 years. The update is due in 2010. A Planning Grant in the amount of \$29,976.00 has been approved through the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program for Barron County. The grant funds will be used for the update of the plan.

Emergency Management continues to work closely with Public Health monitoring the H1N1 activity in Barron County.



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Economic Development

Dave Miller, Director

Current and New Projects: There are now 50 start-up projects in addition to the 30 start-up activities that rolled over to the 2009 from 2008. Expansion projects have now leveled at 10 since the first of the year. These projects do include the walk-ins and other requests like marketing and advertising assistance, financial packaging information, site specifications and so on. Be sure to take a look at Monroe Manor in Barron as the project is moving along; and of course take a look at the new Lakeview Medical Center as it's framing is well under way.

The county's highway map for 2010-2012 has begun. An "ALL MEMBERS" email was sent asking for any changes that might be considered for the reprint. This project will go to print after the first of the New Year. I had several of our county employees email me back after last month's map information appeared in the Update. If you have comments, please let me know; send to: david.miller@co.barron.wi.us or call me at 637-6871. Please let me know by November 30th.

The Department, in collaboration with the Barron County Economic Development Corporation (BCEDC) and the UW-Extension Office are preparing to conduct a Business Retention & Expansion Survey and Labor Market Study later this fall. The collaborators ran the same

studies in 2005 and it's time to update the data from our county's businesses. About 150 businesses will be contacted for both studies, initially by the Department and UW-Extension and then by members from the BCEDC, who will handle the pick-up of the surveys and person-to-person contact with the businesses. In an effort to compare the economies within our region, Polk and Rusk counties will be conducting the same studies at the same time. The surveys will be distributed in late November.

There are two new Tourism websites that feature Barron County to pass along to your friends, relatives and neighbors. In fact, please pass them along through your databases for folks to visit. But first, you should visit the sites at <http://www.wistcroixarea.com> and <http://www.nwwidowntowns.com> and take a look around.

The first site mentioned is a first, not only for the county but the state and it's also a revival, of sorts. Three years ago, I was asked to revive the "Governor's St. Croix Area Promotion Council", a sub-regional collaboration started by then Governor Tommy Thompson. The collaboration first came about, along with five others around the state, in areas where Native American Tribes were building their Casino and Hotel Operations. At the time, there was considerable difference of opinions across many counties regarding the Tribal businesses and fishing issues. Governor

Thompson thought it was a good idea to establish the Promotion Councils to assist in "Public Relations" and frankly, as a means for folks to get along. Fast forward, 20 years and the Department of Tourism thought it would be a good idea to revive the Councils, with a twist: establish a new Council that promoted all the businesses, "things to do", recreational activities and so forth. but include the counties of Barron, Burnett and Polk and the three Casino operations at Turtle Lake, Danbury and Hertel and the St. Croix River Valley. There was a "launch meeting" on October the 29th. It was attended by Senator Sheila Harsdorf, representatives from state agencies, the Governor's Office, area businesses and municipalities. It was very well received and the site is getting very good feedback! It's a "living site" so if you see activities that should be on it, please let me know. It's a great site for visitors.

The second site, <http://www.nwwidowntowns.com> features the eight counties that are a part of our Northwest WI ITBEC Collaboration and the major downtowns in each of our counties. Check this out as it's a fall and spring promotion for the NW Region. Again, it's a "living site" so if you have photos and information on activities available in our downtowns, please let me know.

Happy Thanksgiving and do have a great month.

Circuit Court

Judge James Babler

One important responsibility of the Circuit Court is assuring that individuals who are found to be incompetent to handle their financial or personal affairs through a guardianship proceeding, are provided with capable and knowledgeable guardians. The Courts monitor approximately 400 guardianship files in Barron County every year, by means of an annual account and annual report by the guardian. Ideally, guardians are found within a person's family. However, when no family members are available to help these persons, a volunteer guardian is needed.

In 2005 the Volunteer Guardian Program

was established in Barron County in order to recruit and train community members to act as a guardian under these circumstances. Considering that these community members will be working with a vulnerable population, personal and professional reference checks are completed, along with a criminal background check and an interview process. In addition, ongoing training and support services are provided to volunteers. Since the implementation of the Volunteer Guardian Program in 2005, Barron County Circuit Court Judges have appointed a volunteer guardian for 12 individuals in need.

On November 18, 2009, Barron County Adult-at-Risk Interdisciplinary Team, in

collaboration with the Circuit Courts, will be hosting a Volunteer Guardian Training at the Barron County Government Center. We have had a wonderful response from the public this year, with close to 20 registrants for the training. If you are interested in more information on the program, please contact Deanne Alsbury, Register in Probate/Volunteer Guardian Program Coordinator, at 537-6261.

Human Resources

Rachael Richie, HR Director

New / Replacement Positions				
Position Title	Office / Department	Incumbent	Date Filled	New / Replacement
Civilian Communications Officer	Sheriff	Mary Ann Bergstrom (move from PT to FT)	10/31/09	Replacement

- As you are aware, the County Board approved the tentative agreement regarding health insurance and wages with the unions. The County will now meet individually with each unit to review any specific language changes.
- The County received 42 applications for the County Administrator position. Applications were received from the following states: WI, MN, MI, TX, NY, PA, NM, IA, IL, FL, VA and MD.
- Flu shots were held on-site on 10/22/09 with approximately 140 shots administered.

Highway

Mark Servi, Highway Commissioner

It seemed like the rain would never stop. October was a very wet month, and all that rain had an impact on our project schedule. Despite this, we will still finish our paving projects the week of November 9th. Small incidental projects and shouldering will remain, and we will continue to work on these as weather allows.

The paving project on CTH B is nearing completion. The mainline paving has been finished, and crews are working on intersections. The yellow centerline stripe will be placed yet this fall. The shoulders will also be placed, but the white edge line will not be applied until next year. The shouldering operation would damage the paint, and it will be too cold to apply the paint when the shouldering is done.

We will also be working on USH 8 in the City of Barron. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has agreed to have us mill out the outside lanes thru Barron and repave them. These lanes are extremely rutted, and water cannot drain to the gutter line. This project should help mitigate that problem until USH 8 is reconstructed.

Culverts on CTH C from CTH NN east to the Rusk County Line are being replaced in preparation for reconstruction of that section of roadway next spring. The other major section of road that will be reconstructed in 2010 will be CTH K from Turtle Lake south to CTH D. Culvert work on that project will begin in the spring of 2010.

The DOT also finally released the funding for the Local Road Improvement Program. This Program provides funding to aid the local units of Government in improving their road systems. By State Statute, the Highway Commissioner is responsible for the administration of this Program in the county. We have had meetings for all the local units to explain the program and process. Applications are due to the Commissioner no later than November 20th. We will then meet with the locals in December to determine the level of funding for each project and the timeline for construction. Final submittals to the DOT are due in January.

There have already been several times where we have had to send out the plow trucks. Thanks to the Shop Crew, our fleet was prepared to go with very few issues. These events provided us with the opportunity to run the plow trucks and insure that everything is functioning correctly before we have a major snow storm. We have also made some modifications to our salt/sand mixing operation. It is anticipated that these changes will help us increase our efficiency of the mixing. We were looking at purchasing some different equipment to improve this operation. But the staff and mixing crew got together and took a hard look at what we had and how we could improve the operation utilizing what we already had. Several modifications were made to the equipment and some equipment was realigned. We have had the opportunity to run this production line, and so far it appears that the changes are an improvement over what we had. Thanks

to the members of the staff and crew involved in this.

We have also been preparing our equipment to begin using salt brine as a pre-wetting agent for road salt. We are getting the salt brine as a waste product of the cheese manufacturing process. The brine is carried on the trucks in a tank, and is applied to the salt as it falls onto the spinner. Pre-wetting of the salt serves several purposes. It helps reduce the bounce when the salt is applied to the road, which means more of the salt stays on the road. This helps to reduce overall salt use. Additionally, salt needs moisture to activate the melting process. By applying the liquid salt brine, we are providing that moisture which enables the salt to begin working quicker. In the future we will also be using salt brine in our salt/sanding operations. Our goal is to provide a safer driving surface sooner, will potentially reducing the overall quantity of salt used. Use of this salt brine will be limited as we begin, but if we find it effective, we foresee it being used on all the state and county plow routes.

As we head into winter, please remember to allow extra travel time when we have winter storms. Our crew will be there plowing, but you still need to exercise additional caution when driving in winter conditions. Safety is our primary concern, and needs to be yours, also.

County Clerk

DeeAnn Cook, County Clerk

The special election held on Nov. 3 resulted in the school districts of Chetek and Weyerhaeuser consolidating. The referenda passed by a sizeable margin.

We are gearing up for a big election year in 2010. Spring elections will include Circuit Court, Branch 1 in Barron County along with all seats on the Barron County Board of Supervisors. The Multijurisdictional Municipal Judge seat which serves the Villages of Almena and Turtle Lake and the Town of Almena is up for election. There will also be several races at the municipal level. The fall will include a hotly contested

race for the governor seat among other races.

Candidates for the County Board Supervisory race should file their Campaign Registration Statement (GAB-1) in the County Clerk's office before circulating nomination papers or spending/collecting any funds. December 1, 2009 is the first day nomination papers can be circulated. 20-100 signatures are required and signers must reside within the supervisory district. It is recommended to get more than the minimum (20) in case any signatures are deemed not valid. Maps for every supervisory district are available in electronic format via email or a hard copy can be purchased at Land Information. The Decla-

ration of Candidacy (GAB-162), Campaign Registration Statement (GAB-1) and Nomination Papers (GAB-169) all **must** be filed in the County Clerk's office by 5 P.M. on January 5, 2010 in order for a candidate's name to appear on the ballot.

Important! Please note: Notification of Non-Candidacy (GAB-163) must be filed if an incumbent is not seeking re-election no later than December 28, 2009. Failure to file will force an extension of the nomination deadline by 72 hours for that supervisory district for all candidates except the incumbent.

Just a reminder to please pay \$10 to the County Board Bereavement/Retirement fund if you have not done so already.

Sheriff Department

Chris Fitzgerald, Sheriff

The Sheriff's Dept has received 3 grants in the last month. The first is the Click It or Ticket Traffic Safety Grant for \$18,000. This will be used for deputy overtime and new equipment.

The second is an Underage Alcohol Grant for \$10,000. This will also be used for deputy overtime and equipment and we will be implemented in conjunction with the alcohol grant that Barron County Safe and Stable Families received as we work together to solve the problem of underage drink-

ing.

The third is a County Tribal Law Enforcement Grant for 13,730 that we hope to use, along with other grants we are applying for, to help continue our drug enforcement efforts in the county and tribal areas. While meth cases were down this summer, on the rise in the last 2 months though, our marijuana cases are on the rise and our drug cases in the county have almost doubled with 2 months to go this year over our 2008 numbers.

The sheriff's dept is handling the shoot-

ing in Rusk Co from last weeks bank robbery in Sawyer CO and hopes to complete that investigation next week

With the holiday season approaching I want to remind people that when they go shopping to lock there cars and place anything in buy in the truck area or cover it and if you leave your purse, wallet or cell phone in the car place it under the seat or cover it also, as people who break into cars look in first to see if they can see these type of items, before attempting to gain entry.

As always drive safe, don't drink and drive and buckle up

Comprehensive Plan Update

An "Open House" for the Barron County Comprehensive Plan

The Public Advisory Group (PAG) of the Barron County Comprehensive Plan is offering another opportunity for citizen involvement. There will be two Open Houses, one in Barron on December 8th, and the other in Rice Lake on December 10th. This is a time for informal discussion and public comment before the final draft is prepared.

The results of one year of planning meetings and public feedback are now in the form of a preliminary draft. Display boards

will show the Preferred Land Use Map, interesting charts and photographs, and results from public Issues and Opportunities Sessions. The goals, objectives, and recommendations for subjects related to Housing, Transportation, Economic Development, Agriculture, Natural Resources, Cultural Resources, Land Use, Intergovernmental Cooperation, and Utilities and Community Facilities will be available for discussion and comments.

PAG is asking for your continued participation in this planning process. Everyone is welcomed, and everyone's participation is valuable.

Barron Location:
Tuesday December 8th (3:00 – 6:00 PM)
Barron County Government Center Auditorium, 330 E. LaSalle Ave

Rice Lake Location:
Thursday December 10th (4:00 – 7:00 PM)
UW-Barron County, Meggers Hall Commons, 1800 College Drive, in Rice Lake

Please contact Catherine Tuminaro, Comprehensive Plan Intern at 537-6343 if you have any questions.

Health & Human Services

Judy Demers, Director

- Influenza activity remains high across Barron County. The supply and shipping of the vaccine has been unpredictable and less than expected. For three weeks, 100 doses per week were received. Some of these initial shipments were shared with the local medical community to ensure that healthcare providers were immunized. The week of November 2, 400 doses were received, and Public Health held a community clinic for the targeted risk groups on Thursday, November 5, in the Government Center. About 20 vaccinations were given. The State Department of Health has redefined their vaccine priority groups to the following:
 - Caretakers of children 6 months of age and under
 - All children age 6 months to 4 years
 - Children age 5 through 18 who have chronic medical conditions that put them at increased risk for influenza complications, and
 - Pregnant women

The State had asked that school-based immunization clinics be postponed until sufficient supplies of vaccine were received and to only focus on the priority groups. It appears now that the vaccine will be coming in the anticipated allotments of about 900 per week, so school clinics will begin to be conducted.

Public Health is able to offer vaccine to the public at no cost due to special Public Health Emergency Funding that has been received specifically for H1N1.

- A number of counties in the Western Region have been meeting to discuss the potential for developing local resources for behavioral health services for adults and children, specifically for crisis stabilization, social detoxification, and emergency detentions. A consultant is working with us to develop a plan to fill some of the gaps in services. It is hoped that a plan can be developed in about 6 months and that some services may begin to be offered later in 2010. We have recently been informed that Mendota State Hospital will no longer accept children age 0-12 beginning 2-1-10 and that Winnebago State Hospital is planning to downsize their staff numbers making these resources more difficult to access.

- Children's Service Society of Wisconsin (CSSW) has been awarded a \$1.2 million federal grant over a period of three years for developing a Family Finding program for children who are in foster care. Family Finding locates extended biological family members through an electronic search, in partnership with US Search, for these children when reunification with a biological parent is not possible. CSSW has successfully performed this work in Milwaukee County; they will now be able to provide the service to all counties in the state and anticipate serving over 300 children in the 3-year period. Barron County has several children in care who may benefit from this service. Studies show that children thrive best when placed with biological relatives. This is a great opportunity to improve outcomes for children.
- To date, about 1400 households have applied for heating assistance for the 2009-2010 season. For those who have received benefits, a recalculation is being done due to additional funding being made available, and supplementary checks will be issued.

Register of Deeds

Joyce Kaseno, Register of Deeds

The last intern has stayed on to do scanning for us as an LTE. We are very pleased with the progress she is making. The microfiche ended in Volume 824 when the documents were then scanned into the Laredo program. She is now scanning Volume 785. That is 39 Volumes that have been completed. We still have to go back through Volume 496 to have them all completed.

Below is a record of the documents we have recorded so far this year in a comparison to last year. We are ahead of last year by 388 documents as of the end of October. November and Decem-

ber of 2008 were the two lowest counts for any months since the documents have been entered into the computer beginning January 1, 1999. It will be interesting to see how many documents are brought in for recording in the next two months.

TOTAL DOCUMENTS - REGISTER OF DEEDS

	2009	YEAR TO DATE		2008	YEAR TO DATE
JAN	882	882		832	832
FEB	1026	1908		996	1828
MAR	1178	3086		1007	2835
APR	1104	4190		1192	4027
MAY	1142	5332		965	4992
JUN	1165	6497		969	5961
JUL	996	7493		1055	7016
AUG	847	8340		826	7842
SEP	806	9146		957	8799
OCT	892	10038		851	9650
NOV				601	10251
DEC				625	10876
TOTAL	10038			10876	

Treasurer's Office

Vonnie Ritchie, Treasurer

We are getting prepared for the 2009 tax collection by updating mailing addresses and lottery credits claims for the new tax bills. We are also getting ready to start the In-rem tax foreclosure process on the 2006 delinquent taxes. There are approximately 201 parcels unpaid for the tax year 2006 in the amount of \$212,549.75, plus interest and penalty in the amount of \$108,400. The

owners and mortgage holders will be notified by certified mail when the documents are filed with the court in January. The list will also be published in all the county newspapers and posted on our website.

The tax deed properties for sale are listed on the Barron County Website.



UW Extension

Tim Jergenson, Ag Agent

Corn and soybean growers from all parts of Barron County have their backs against the wall this fall due to harvest delays caused by recent wet weather. This year's corn and soybeans crop is the most expensive ever grown and much of it still sitting in saturated farm fields. To address this challenge, a group of University of Wisconsin-Extension specialists and county agriculture agents put together a webinar, titled "Harvest, Storage, and Feed Management Considerations for the 2009 Crop" focusing on a discussion of corn ear molds and offer strategies for harvesting and storing moldy corn.

The program was hosted in Barron on November 6th by Tim Jergenson, Barron

County agricultural agent and was well attended by crop advisors, dairy ration advisors and other agri-business professionals from the area. By training the agri-business professionals, UW-Extension can reach hundreds of farmers throughout Barron County with research-based information that will help them develop strategies to deal with this year's harvest challenges.

Barron County dairy farm families are also feeling the impact of the U.S. dairy industry being hit hard by events in the global economy. Low milk prices are causing a ripple effect on agribusinesses and communities throughout the area. As a result, many dairy owners, families and businesses may be facing a financial crisis.

The University of Wisconsin-Extension and the Farm Center at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, Consumer Protection have organized nine workshops throughout Wisconsin from mid November through mid December. The first program will be held on Tuesday, November 17, 1 – 4 p.m., Augustana Lutheran Church, 1025 2nd Ave., Cumberland. Tim Jergenson and other UW-Extension professionals will help farmers better understand the national and global influences affecting dairy markets and what they can do about it. Participants in these workshops will also learn how to develop strategies for negotiating with vendors during difficult times, how to assemble and use financial reports to communicate with their lender, and what tax strategies and legal options to take advantage of during tough times.

Aging & Disability Resource Center

Charlene Oftedahl, Director

November 15 through December 31 is the window for Medicare beneficiaries to enroll or make changes regarding Part C (Medicare Advantage Plans) or Part D (prescription drug coverage). Benefit Specialists in the ADRC can help people evaluate their current health care coverage and explore options, but appointments are necessary during this very busy time. A schedule of Medicare presentations at senior

centers can be found in the Senior Review.

If you are interested in becoming a Tax-Aide Volunteer, contact Mary Simpson at 537-6225. AARP and IRS will be training volunteers in January to help older persons complete simple federal and state tax returns, including Homestead Credit.

A public hearing will be held for the purpose of receiving comment for Barron County's proposed 2010 Specialized Trans-

portation Assistance Program for Counties (per s.85.21, Wisconsin Statutes) on Tuesday, November 17, 11:00 a.m., in Room 111 of the Government Center. This service is for elderly and disabled persons and gives priority to rides related to medical, nutritional, and employment needs. Transportation is provided by volunteers using their private vehicles, county-owned buses, and through contracts with Namekagon Transit and the Rice Lake City Cab.



Administration

Jeff French, Interim Administrator

Property Committee:

Approved Kiosk for Ice Age Trail at Cumberland Area Ski Trail Association, construction and installation to be completed by Ice Age Trail personnel.

Received update from Barron County Forester John Cisek and information pertaining to annual DNR partnership/planning meeting. Coordination of effort and task completion between Barron County and DNR is exemplary with no issues.

Reviewed Power Point of Forest & Recreation and Maintenance and Conservation Deputy – this information to be presented at County Board at 11-10 meeting.

Discussed County Conservation Aids and improvements at Turtle Creek handicapped accessible fishing pier.

Approved removal of restrooms at outdoor classrooms, east of Cameron, and moving of gate closer to road.

Allowed Interim Administrator to work with individuals encroaching on County Land next to County Trunk HWY V – Town of Cedar Lake. Same issue was approved by Highway Committee.

Received information on restoration plan, Martin Island, Prairie Lake. Please note work is proceeding with partial re-hab work being completed this fall and the remainder next spring.

Directed Forester to work-out completion of sale #328 in a successful manner.

Building use policy – referred to Staff.

Staff reports were informational only with not action taken.

Suggested future items were discussed with no action taken.

Moon Lake Dam: After consulting numerous individuals and because the current dam is in no imminent danger of failure this project will be postponed until spring 2010.

LCC/Extension:

Reviewed, considered and made changes to the Comprehensive Plan.

Scheduled final 4-H interviews.

Executive:

Received and reviewed information from Sean Lentz, (Ehlers and Associates), pertaining to the refinancing of the first \$10M bond issue on the B/C Justice Center. After much consideration decided to postpone refinancing for now.

Received and reviewed information from Sean Lentz, (Ehlers and Associates), pertaining to the financing of the WTE Electrical Generation Upgrade. This matter was referred to County Board for their consideration and approval.

Approved 2010 tax levy and non-union salaries – forwarded to County Board, see

separate transmittal for more information.

Reviewed staffing changes 2003 vs. 2009, reduction of 35 FTE's over this time period.

No action taken on \$ 4,000 request from Tracy Mofle for sustainable gardens project.

Received update from Barron County Forestry John Cizek and information pertaining to annual DNR partnership/planning meeting. Coordination of effort and task completion between Barron County and DNR is exemplary with no issues.

Reviewed Power Point of Forest & Recreation and Maintenance and Conservation Deputy – this information to be presented at 11-10 meeting.

Approved and forwarded to County Board Resolution pertaining to consolidation of departments as has been previously discussed and approved by various Committees.

Directed Corporation Counsel to research and determine if Tax Deed Property within City of Rice Lake could be changed from duplex to single family.

Building use and Fax/Copy Fees – referred to Staff.

Staff reports were received with no action taken.

