

The Verona Press

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Photo by Kimberly Wethal

Mother-daughter duo Terry and Alyssa Dvorak stand in front of the Verona Area Community Theater building. The two have taken on several leadership roles within the organization. Terry was the person who signed on to lead the first children's program for the organization in 2004 and started the teen program five years later.

A family affair

Dvoraks' time, talents help drive VACT's growth

KIMBERLY WETHAL
Unified Newspaper Group

Terry Dvorak doesn't like working on Verona Area Community Theater shows without her daughter Alyssa.

When Alyssa went on a three-week sabbatical earlier this year, "it broke my heart," Terry, who is a board member, director and producer, said.

Luckily for Terry, Alyssa loves working with the woman she considers her best friend.

"She is the one that gave me my start and she is the one that has supported me non-stop," Alyssa said. "Working with her is just fun."

The mother-daughter pair have been taking on volunteer leadership roles with VACT for 15 years, serving on the nonprofit's board of directors, directing and producing shows or in Alyssa's case, choreographing at the age of 11.

Dee Baldock, who founded VACT in 1992, said the Dvoraks have played a "pivotal role" in VACT's growth over

the years.

"If they were to disappear, I think we'd have a hard time figuring out how to take their place," she said.

Terry got involved in VACT when her children became old enough to start participating, and as a stay-at-home mom, she stuck around because she'd loved theater throughout her life.

"It was an easy sell, let's put it that way," she said. "There is just

Turn to **VACT**/Page 10

Verona Rotarian receives Paul Harris Fellow designation

Honor one of the 'highest' at international level

EMILIE HEIDEMANN
Unified Newspaper Group

The Fitchburg-Verona Rotary Club presented seven of its 18 members one of the "highest (awards) a Rotarian can obtain at the

international level" last month.

Verona resident Amanda Pun, a past treasurer of the club, was among the recipients of the Paul Harris award Tuesday, June 25.

Paul Harris was a Chicago attorney best known for founding Rotary International in 1905, according to the Rotary International website. The Paul Harris Fellow program recognizes

individuals who contribute \$1,000 to the Rotary Foundation or Rotary International.

The website states the honor was established in 1957 to show appreciation for the funds that help support the Rotary's Annual Fund, PolioPlus or any approved Foundation grants.

Six members were already recognized as Paul

Harris fellows prior to June 25, giving the club 13 of its 18 members recognized, past president Eric Gormanson told the Press.

Pun is among the pool of recipients recognized for their contributions to the club and for their services to the community. She and the six other members received their distinctions

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Verona Area School District

Boundary decision next week

Board aims to approve at July 23 meeting

SCOTT GIRARD
Unified Newspaper Group

Elementary attendance boundaries for fall 2020 and beyond could be approved as soon as next week.

At their last meeting, Verona Area school board members signaled their intention to set those new boundaries at the Tuesday, July 23, meeting. The upcoming changes are a result of a new high school being built, and the only remaining option they've discussed adjusting – Option E – would plan for another referendum to build a new elementary school within about five years.

"We are getting to a point where we are going to need to be making a decision," board vice president Meredith Stier Christensen said to begin the Wednesday, July 10, meeting. "A lot of decisions are really hinging on our elementary decision."

That decision is not expected to include whether the plan will allow grandfathering – allowing some students to stay at their current schools. That is still under consideration, and other considerations that will follow include busing changes, school start times and middle school boundaries.

The decision will come almost exactly one year after the board approved a "charge" to the Attendance Area Advisory Committee last July 30. That committee met 10 times between October 2018 and April 2019 to discuss options created by consultant Mark Roffers and eventually

If you go

What: Verona Area school board meeting

When: 6 p.m. Tuesday, July 23

Where: District office, 700 N. Main St.

Info: verona.k12.wi.us

forward recommendations to the board.

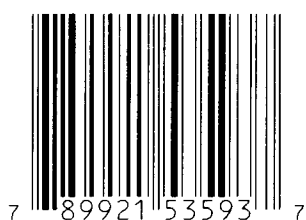
Those recommendations were Options A1, D and E. Option D, which would have had Sugar Creek and Country View elementaries pair with one housing grades K-2 and the other 3-5, was dismissed first. That left A1 and E, which were generally similar, but had some differences in diversity statistics and the population growth at each of the four attendance area elementary schools.

Board members elected to use Option E as a base plan moving forward, and they spent the July 10 meeting suggesting neighborhood swaps to iron out some of their remaining concerns. They pointed out that while Option E was considered the one that most directly planned for another referendum for a new elementary school, all of the options would've required a referendum sometime in the 2020s.

"It's clear that none of them avoid the need to have a fifth elementary school," said board member Kristina Navarro-Haffner. "It would be a misconception to think we could pick an option that would make it less necessary."

The boundaries will go into effect for fall 2020 when the new high school opens. At that time, Badger

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VACT: Getting to work alongside her daughter is a 'beautiful experience' for her, Terry says

Continued from page 1

something magical about being around people that share a passion for something so deeply, and it was a welcoming, friendly group."

Terry, who began her involvement in theater as a high schooler at Madison East and has a degree in theater, founded the children's program at VACT in 2004 and the teen program five years later. She brought Alyssa, who was 11 at the time, on board to assist the adult choreographer for the show.

"It was really exciting, and I was so young that I didn't have any of the insecurities about my age," Alyssa said.

Alyssa continued to choreograph throughout high school, and when she left for New York University after graduating, she continued to "long-distance choreograph."

At the end of her senior year, her classes were limited to one day and her father had racked up enough frequent flyer miles that she would fly home to assist with productions.

"Even at 11, she was learning about leadership and creativity and volunteerism, and she never stopped," Terry said. "She never looked back."

Lynn Vilker, who has been volunteering alongside the Dvoraks since 2012 doing costume design and producing, said they have set an incredible example for volunteers.



Vilker

"VACT is full of incredible volunteers, and they just top the list of being willing to do anything that anyone needs, at any time," she said. "They really lead by example, and it makes you want to do more, and makes all of our volunteers want to do more."

The Dvoraks don't limit their volunteering to the

productions – they've spent hours fundraising for the new building and chipping in to do things as seemingly minor as taking out the trash, just because they're around.

Terry said their love for VACT matches that of many of the other volunteers, but she's thankful they've been able to give to the organization through their time and talent as extensively as they have.

"We're committed to the families and the kids, and that's the biggest passion," she said. "I absolutely know what theater does for kids, because I've seen it firsthand."

"I've seen a kid bawl and not be able to get through an audition at an early age go on to be a lead in their high school show, or go on to major in some leadership skill in college. You would never even remember that was the same kid that was crying in the corner?"

From the ground up

Terry and Alyssa have done quite a bit of building with VACT – both figuratively and literally.

Not only was Terry the one leading the charge in starting the children's and teen programs, she was also instrumental in getting VACT's current building built.

That \$2 million building opened in 2017.

Terry knew that the interest in the children's program was growing, and they would need a different facility to better accommodate that need, Alyssa said.

"My mom, if she sees something in the future that she wants, she will not stop until it's done," she said. "She was one of the frontrunners in getting the new building started because through the children's theater and the camps, she said, 'This building is too flipping' small.'"

There's a lot of people who are new enough to VACT who don't remember the former facility on Bruce Street – a pole shed now used

by the city for truck storage – that was never designed for theater needs and lacked sufficient heating on cold days.

"If you had to rehearse in winter, you better double up your socks," Alyssa said.

Baldock said Terry put an enormous amount of effort into the new building, located just south of the fire department on Lincoln Street, working with multiple architects and builders and doing much of the fundraising necessary for the facility.



Baldock

"She led that wonderfully," she said. "It was a long, long process, but boy, it came out wonderfully, and she was a strong leader in that."

'Lifeblood of this theater'

When Vilker's daughter Madelyn first decided she wanted to try out for a VACT children's show, her parents were shocked.

At that age, she suffered from anxiety, and Vilker had a hard time getting her out the door to go to school, so the idea of her being on stage didn't quite line up.

But once Madelyn was cast in Terry's production of "Seussical Jr.," and got more involved with VACT, it made all the difference in her life, Vilker said.

"I look at the life my daughter has, and it's impacted her," she said. "So I see personally the impact it had on one child, but as a volunteer, I see the impact that it's had on thousands of children all around Dane County."

Vilker said the Dvoraks' leadership goes beyond teaching performers acting and choreography.

"The face of those youth and teen programs really is Terry and Alyssa," she said. "They also learn family and community, and how to treat each other and give of



Photo submitted

Terry Dvorak, front row left, and her daughter Alyssa front row right, pose with children in a summer camp program. Terry started the children's program in 2004.

yourself. They're always setting that example."

It's rare, Vilker said, that people give back their talents through volunteer work like the Dvoraks do.

"Frankly, they are the lifeblood of this theater," she said. "There would need to be 10 people to fill the role of Terry and Alyssa ... without them, we wouldn't be where we are today."

'Beautiful experience'

Working together for the past decade-and-a-half on VACT shows with her daughter, Terry said, has been a "beautiful experience."

"We bounce ideas off each other, we have this common thought process that often we don't have to speak about, we just know what each other's thinking," she said. "It's a chance as an adult to spend really wonderful time with your adult daughter."

Terry said performers at VACT are all the better thanks to Alyssa's talents as a choreographer, and she added that she sometimes pinches herself because she can't believe she's lucky enough to have her daughter working alongside her.

"I think she elevated us," Terry said.

Alyssa came back to Wisconsin after college after her father suggested to her college boyfriend-turned-fiancee that he consider working at Epic, and she made the decision to come home to create valuable work rather than struggle for years to get noticed in New York City.

"I could stay in New York, be dirt poor, be far away from my boyfriend, have to get help from my parents and not really have a clear direction of where my life was going, or I could move home where I can actually afford to

live by myself and do what I love to do," she said.

That decision has allowed her to work side by side with her mother and has provided her the opportunity to contribute to an organization she is "grateful" for because it's given her so much, Alyssa said.

"It's a lot of volunteering, but I've never considered it to be volunteering because I enjoy it so much," she said. "I've gotten so much out of VACT over the years for myself in terms of my choreographing and in terms of getting to work on projects."

"And how great is it to have a job where you literally get to work with your mom?"

Email reporter Kimberly Wethal at kimberly.wethal@wcinet.com and follow her on Twitter @kimberly_wethal.

Legals

NOTICES

The City of Verona Plan Commission will hold Public Hearings on August 5, 2019 at City Hall, 111 Lincoln Street, at 6:30 PM for the following planning and zoning matters:

- 1) Precise Implementation Plan (PIP) amendment for façade changes to the building at 118 South Main Street.
- 2) Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a proposed community information sign for the Verona Area School District to be located south of West Verona Avenue,

east of West End Circle, north of Half Mile Road, and west of Nine Mound Road.

Interested persons may comment on these planning and zoning matters during the public hearings at the August 5, 2019 meeting. The Plan Commission will make recommendations for these matters, which will then be reviewed by the Common Council for final decisions on Monday, August 12th.

Contact Adam Sayre, Director of Planning and Development, at 608-848-9941 for more information on these items

or to receive copies of the submittals. Maps showing the location of the affected properties may be viewed at City Hall or may be obtained once the applicable copying fee has been paid to the City.

Ellen Clark, City Clerk

Published: July 18 and 25, 2019
WNAXLP

CITY OF VERONA MINUTES COMMON COUNCIL

JUNE 24, 2019 VERONA CITY HALL

1. Mayor Diaz called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll call: Alderpersons Cronin, Gaskell, Kemp, Kohl, Posey, Reekie and Touchett were present. Also present: Interim City Administrator Sayre, Finance Director Lamers, City Attorney Kleinmair, AECOM Engineer Fischer, and Deputy City Clerk Martin. Alderperson Jerney was absent and excused.

4. Public Comment: None

5. Approval of minutes from the June 10, 2019 Common Council meeting. Motion by Kohl, seconded by Reekie, to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2019 Common Council meeting. Motion carried 7-0.

6. Mayor's Business:

A. Appointment of Library Board Members:

Mayor Diaz recommended the following Library Board member appointments:

Mawara Sohail, Reappointment, 3 year term expiring July 2022

Jay Huemmer, New appointment, 3 year term expiring July 2022

7. Announcements

8. Administrator's Report:

* The Sugar Creek Elementary School property is still being worked on.

* All new subdivisions are required to include cluster mailboxes that will have 15-20 mailboxes in them as required by the postal service.

9. Engineer's Report:

* 2019 streets rehabilitation project: The contractor is scheduled to begin the first week of July, with completion scheduled for August 16th.

* CTH PD - Woods Road to CTH M: Contracts have been sent out for signature to the contractor. City staff is working on a schedule for a pre-construction conference and setting the start of construction.

10. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee

(1) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Payment of bills. Motion by Kemp, seconded by Cronin, to pay the bills in the amount of \$1,149,084.19. Motion carried 7-0.

(2) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Resolution No. R-19-030 Awarding the Sale of \$2,510,000 General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series 2019A. Motion by Kemp, seconded by Posey, to approve Resolution No. R-19-030 awarding the sale of \$2,480,000 General Obligation Corporate Purpose Bonds, Series 2019A. This resolution awards the sale of 2019 General Obligation Bonds totaling \$2,480,000 for street improvement projects, Public Works facility project, and Fire Department equipment. The issue size was reduced from \$2,510,000 to \$2,480,000 because the cost of issuance was reduced, the City received a premium on the notes, and the underwriting allowance amount was less than expected.

On roll call: Alder Kemp – Aye; Alder Kohl – Aye; Alder Posey – Aye; Alder Reekie – Aye; Alder Touchett – Aye; Alder Cronin – Aye; Alder Gaskell – Aye; Motion carried 7-0.

B. Public Safety and Welfare Committee

(1) Discussion and Possible Action Re: An application for a Class "B" Fermented Malt Beverage and "Class C" Wine Retailer's License for Knit and Sip The Sow's Ear Verona, LLC, d/b/a The Sow's Ear, 125 South Main Street, Verona, Wisconsin, Jennifer Davis, Agent. Motion by Reekie, seconded by Kohl, to approve a Class "B" Fermented Malt Beverage and "Class C" Wine Retailer's License for Knit and Sip The Sow's Ear Verona, LLC, d/b/a The Sow's Ear, 125 South Main Street, Verona, Wisconsin. Motion carried 7-0.

11. Old Business

Re: Development Agreement for Sugar Creek Commons Project in Tax Incremental District #9. The Common Council may convene in a closed session, as authorized by Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(e), for the purpose of deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public properties, the investing of public funds or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons deem a closed session necessary. The Common Council may reconvene in an open session to discuss and take action on the subject matter discussed in the closed session.

Sayre stated that the last discussion by the Council about this was done in

February 2018. Staff would like to have this closed session to update and discuss future negotiations with the Council. Staff would like to talk with the Council about numbers that have come out from discussions between the developer and Ehlers.

Motion by Touchett, seconded by Kemp, to convene in a closed session as authorized by Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(e), for the purpose of deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public properties, the investing of public funds or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons deem a closed session necessary. The Common Council may reconvene in an open session to discuss and take action on the subject matter discussed in the closed session. On roll call: Alder Kemp – Aye; Alder Kohl – Aye; Alder Posey – Aye; Alder Reekie – Aye; Alder Touchett – Aye; Alder Cronin – Aye; Alder Gaskell – Aye. Motion carried 7-0. The Common Council convened in closed session at 7:31 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Touchett, seconded by Kemp, to reconvene in open session at 8:33 p.m.

No action was taken by the Common Council in closed session.

B. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Offer to purchase for lands necessary on Parcel 11 for Transportation Project Plat 100-00-53100-230-173 under Project ID 2016-123, CTH PD. The Common Council may convene in a closed session, as authorized by Wisconsin Statute 19.85(1)(e), for the purpose of deliberating or negotiating the purchase of public properties, the investing of public funds or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons deem a closed session necessary. The Common Council may reconvene in an open session to discuss and take action on the subject matter discussed in the closed session. On roll call: Alder Kohl – Aye; Alder Posey – Aye; Alder Reekie – Aye;

Alder Touchett – Aye; Alder Cronin – Aye; Alder Gaskell – Aye; Alder Kemp – Aye. Motion carried 7-0. The Common Council convened in closed session at 7:32 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Touchett, seconded by Kemp, to reconvene in open session at 8:33 p.m.

12. New Business

A. Discussion and Possible Action Re: A pre-annexation review agreement between the City of Verona and VH RG Land, LLC. Sayre explained that this is an agreement that we enter into with the developers before the land is annexed into the city. This requires a \$20,000 deposit from the developer that we draw upon for review fees, and legal and engineering costs. In this case, it does require an Urban Service Area amendment, as well. This agreement is required before any property comes into the City in case the property never annexes. This property is at Range Trail and County Highway M.

Motion by Touchett, seconded by Gaskell, to approve the pre-annexation review agreement between the City of Verona and VH RG Land, LLC. Motion carried 7-0.

B. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Ordinance No. 19-939 – An Ordinance amending Sections within Title 2, Chapters 2 and 3 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Verona, regarding parliamentary procedure and City Officer appointments.

Motion by Touchett, seconded by Cronin, to approve Ordinance No. 19-939 – An Ordinance amending Sections within Title 2, Chapters 2 and 3 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Verona, regarding parliamentary procedure and City Officer appointments. Motion carried 7-0.

C. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Approval of operator licenses for the 2019-2020 and 2019-2021 licensing periods. Motion by Touchett, seconded by Reekie, to approve operator licenses for the 2019-2020 and 2019-2021 licensing periods as presented by the Deputy City Clerk. Motion carried 7-0.

13. Adjournment:

Motion by Kohl, seconded by Touchett, to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.

Kayla Martin
Deputy City Clerk

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