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Middleton's free community newspaper

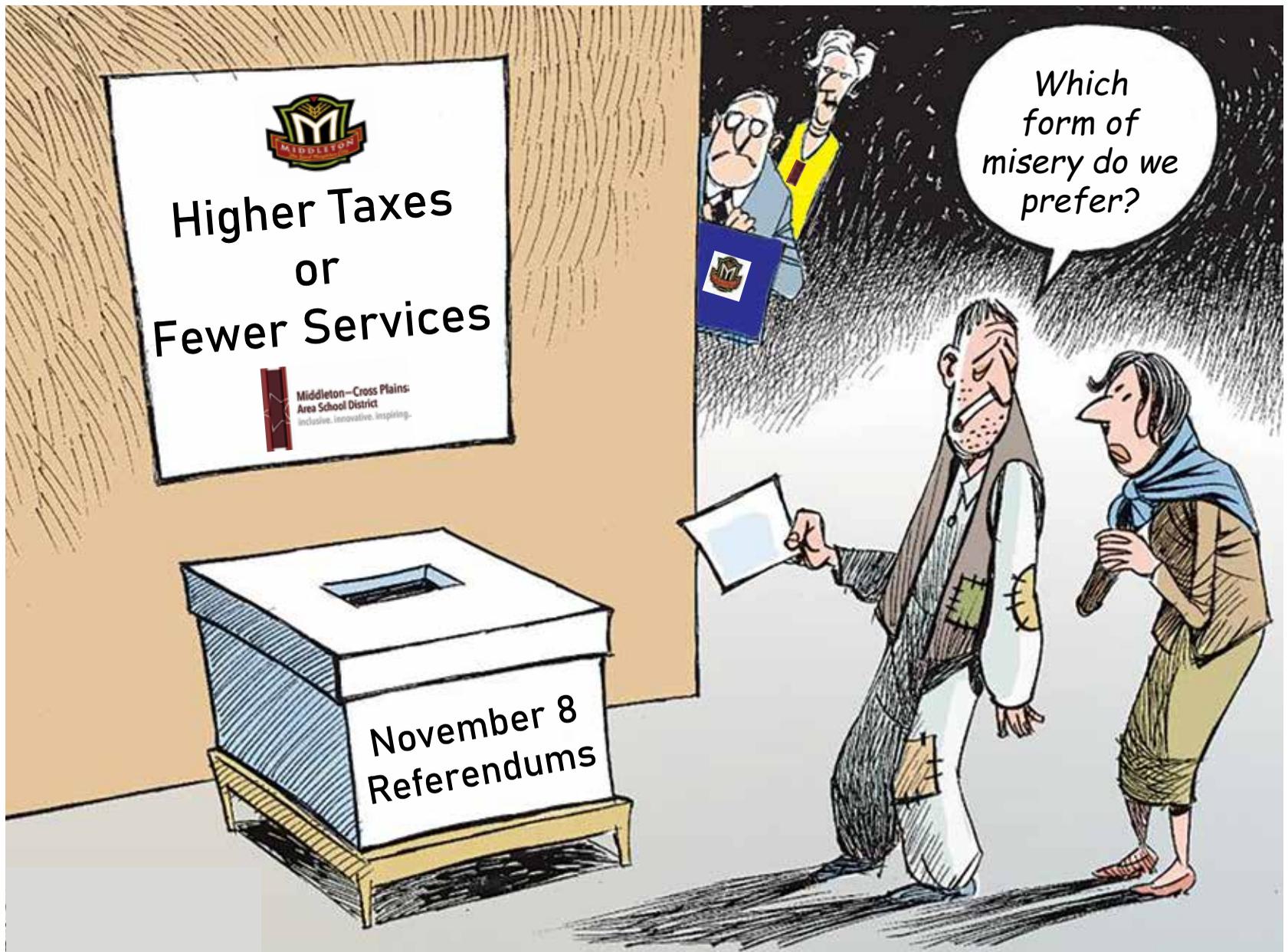
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Middleton's online newsletter

Issue 128 - October 2022/Nov '22

NOVEMBER 8 REFERENDUMS:

## Q&A from the City and the School District





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*Cover illustration: Adapted from a cartoon by Patrick Chappatte*

### Middleton Review

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ZENSIBLE OBSERVATIONS

## About the November 8 referendums

by GEORGE ZENS

Dear Reader,

In this issue you will find a lot of information about the November 8 City and School District referendums. It comes directly from their respective websites and presents their reasons for going to referendum, as well as some, rather vague it is true, assumptions about what will happen if the referendum questions fail.

The situation is in fact unique: As far as I could ascertain, neither the City nor the School District have ever asked their taxpayers for more money through stand-alone operational referendums. It adds to the uniqueness, and to officials' nervousness, that they take place at the same time.

Operational referendums, if they are successful, are the decisions that keep on costing. As opposed to referendums for capital projects (building new infrastructure for instance), which are for one-off expenses, operational referendums are to fund on-going costs, which by their very definition keep reoccurring - and growing.

The City's request for a recurring increase of \$770,000 means that the amount would be added the tax base for next year and become permanent. It doesn't mean, however, that the City won't be back asking for more in a few years. It very well might once the value of the \$770,000 has been eroded by inflation. The School District's request for \$24.9 million spread out over four years, while non-recurring, virtually guarantees that they will be back after those four years asking for a similar amount again. If one or both referendums fail this fall, the affected entities will almost certainly be back next spring.

I am not going to make a recommendation on how anyone should vote in the referendums. But I will make some observations.

On the face of it, the City's case is fairly strong. The city as a community and geographic entity has grown much faster than the City's (as government) resources available to provide the required services, especially when it comes to essential services like police and maintenance of public infrastructure. For historic reasons, the City has a comparatively (to other Dane county municipal governments) low tax base, which puts it at a disadvantage when it comes to the levy cap. Some of the City's financial problems, however, are self-inflicted: It has expanded some services it provides at its own initiative; it has built new infrastructure that is expensive to maintain; and it has in all but name added at least two new administrative departments in the last few years. So, what is legitimate growth, and what is bureaucratic empire-building?

The School District's case is more difficult to evaluate. As opposed to the City, which has in-depth and (reasonably) easy to understand financial documents readily available for the public, the School District's finances are much more hidden and opaque. While the City has a 380-page budget book for 2023 available on its website, the School District provides a 13-page document for last year. It is true that the District is at the mercy of school enrollment, but, as was openly stated at a recent Finance Committee meeting, the District's first priority is staff compensation. That would imply that students are mostly a means to that end, and their education, such as it is, a happy byproduct. In what might be a sign that parents are increasingly dissatisfied with the (education) services the District provides, open enrollment out of the district is growing and much higher than open enrollment in, and the gap is widening.

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THE MONTH IN REVIEW

# Knoche's - Airport I, II and III - 'Complete Streets' - Downtown Parking Map

By GEORGE ZENS

## Knoche's: The end of an era

Knoche's Food Center has been sold and is now closed (the last business day was Saturday, October 15). The small grocery store and butcher shop, located on Old Middleton Road in Madison and owned by Middleton residents Steve and Stephanie Knoche, was world-famous for its quality cuts of meat and ground beef sold as hamburgers in over sixty fine bars and restaurants in the Middleton metropolitan area (many displaying signs 'Knoche's Ground Beef' as a hallmark of quality).

The store had been in the Knoche family since 1938. Steve Knoche was the third generation Knoche to be in the business, following his grandparents, uncles, and dad. He worked there for 55 years, starting as a young boy stocking shelves for his grandparents Nancy and George Knoche before taking over as owner and operator in January 1998.

Apart from coming after a long professional career in the business, their decision to sell and retire was apparently made easier, or less difficult, by the impact of the months-long reconstruction of Old Middleton

Road. Especially the retail business has taken a hit because of the one-way system installed during construction.

The space will now become the new location of Taigu, a Chinese restaurant currently on Elmwood Avenue in Middleton.

## Airport (I): An unnecessary provocation?

At the start of the September 6 Middleton City Council meeting, the chairman of the town of Springfield, Jim Pulvermacher, read a letter from the Springfield Town Board to the city's elected officials and the City administrator:

*To the Honorable Mayor Brar, City of Middleton Council Members, & City Administrator Gadow.*

*I wanted to follow up after our last in-person meeting at town hall in Springfield [on July 28]. I believe that it was a good, informed meeting and allowed everyone to speak openly. As a Board, we decided to wait a little to see what the next steps would bring.*

*We didn't have to wait long until we learned that the Airport Commission is proposing a three-mile ring around the airport to stop or control growth in the towns. How unfortunate. Isn't this the very reason the City and*

*Springfield signed a growth agreement twenty years ago? This again is a topic that elected officials should discuss and amend our agreement together collaboratively. If enacted, does this mean the 120+ acres of Springfield land being annexed for housing should not be developed as it is within a half-mile and due east of the main runway? I bet not.*

*The man in charge of the airport commission lives elsewhere, at least 16 miles from the airport, so he isn't personally impacted by noise and loss of land-tax revenue [airport commission chairman John Hallick lives in the town of Vermont]. In fact, he is one of the 75% of the approximately one hundred planes based at Morey Airport that doesn't live in the city of Middleton. The amount of time and money being spent on this airport is better than winning the lottery. Springfield has proposed to work with the City on a number of issues of mutual interest, but if you allow the expansion of runways and hangars to move forward, why in the world should we try to help you?*

*Surveys from the towns and the city show that the vast majority of residents do not want Morey Airport expanded. But, in Springfield, we fear that a small, wealthy, elite group are trying to get planning done, to then get grant money with little transparency, to then take prime farmland, expand the number and size of hangars,*





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and add new runways before anyone can stop them.

*We ask you in charge, why? What is the rush? Please explain to us why adding more airplanes and runways overrides the quality of life, health, and safety for those not flying out of Morey Airport who do live and pay taxes here.*

*Again, you, the elected officials, are in charge of the city and its airport. Springfield waited almost three years to meet in person with the City of Middleton. Your former City administrator said you should not meet or listen to us, so the former City Council approved the Airport Master Plan with every detrimental expansion option that could be put in it. That is just not right.*

*Mayor Brar and I have been discussing ways to deal with the flooding problems that occurred in 2018 for four years. Thankfully we have had normal to drought years since then. One day it will start raining again and then you will want us to be your friend to assist you with water control.*

*On another point, residents from Springfield and the town of Middleton expressed concern over lead pollution coming from the use and burning of leaded aircraft gasoline in piston-engine aircraft. They were chided and belittled before being dismissed as being radicals. I got involved and again found that these people had legitimate concerns and the issue was all but buried. But thanks to the Town of Middleton, there is proof that validates the prior modeling report indicating airborne lead contamination from the airport aircrafts' use of leaded aviation gas.*

*So, think about this. My own children attended schools in Middleton. There are five schools within half a mile of this airport. Somebody knew about this. Your city residents are generally downwind and are affected even more than ours. So again, we at Springfield ask you, the people in charge, to please, just stop. Please, do not expand. A plan is only a plan, but if left as-is, in the not-so-distant future, individuals will just point to the plan and say, "It says we can do this, so we will." Let's discuss this plan together.*

*By the way, Federal monies should be used for regional transportation and storm water issues in Middleton that help everyone, not just one hundred people with aircraft based at Morey Airport. We await and expect a reply from our fellow elected officials.*

*With the full knowledge and support of my fellow Town supervisors, sincerely, Jim Pulvermacher, chairman, Town of Springfield.*

The letter is insofar misleading as, one, the Airport Commission has not proposed "a three-mile ring around the airport to stop or control the growth in the towns", and, two, the City Council has not decided to "allow the expansion of runways and hangars to move forward". In fact, there is no expansion the council could allow "to move forward", as no expansion has been proposed (yet).

On August 4, the Airport Commission unanimously did approve an 'amended motion by John Hallick, seconded by Kevin Munson, that the airport commission suggest for future land use compatibility, that the City Council explore the feasibility, costs, benefits, and implications of adopting an airport land

use zoning ordinance' (from the meeting minutes). The original motion, also by John Hallick and Kevin Munson, had been to 'recommend that the City Council adopt a land use zoning ordinance', but this wording raised concerns from the two City Council members on the commission, Lisa Janairo (district 6) and Luke Fuszard (whose district 5 includes the airport). They recommended the phrasing of the amended motion as adopted.

John Hallick also noted that any airport land use zoning ordinance should be worked out in coordination with the townships.

The City Council has not yet taken up the matter, nor is it known when or if it will do so. There are those who say that the council would be wise to let the issue rest, for several reasons:

First, such a land use ordinance (also called 'airport overlay zoning' - please see below for more details) would most likely have very little practical use since many schools, medical facilities and other theoretically 'incompatible uses' already exist within a three-mile radius of the airport, and it would mostly inhibit the economic development of the city.

Second, considering how sensitive a topic anything airport-related is in the towns, just a council-level discussion at this stage, with nerves still raw from the Airport Master Plan controversy, would provoke needless hostility and bad blood, especially if representatives from the town boards were not included in the discussion. (The Airport Commission's motion has already led to misinformation on social media.)

Although based on past experience there is little chance of any constructive contribution from the Middleton Town Board under its current chair, Springfield is a different matter. Its Town Board, through the person of its chairman, has repeatedly reached out to the City and publicly proclaimed its willingness to cooperate and have a dialogue, and it would behoove the Middleton city government not to piss off all surrounding townships simultaneously (Westport is also in a snit, but over a different matter).

Which leads to the third reason. The city of Middleton needs Springfield's cooperation for its stormwater management, and the last thing the council should do now is pour oil on the flames through a discussion over an unnecessary land use ordinance. The airport commission's rash initiative has already done enough of that.

*What is a land use zoning ordinance?*

In an email to Airport Commission chairman John Hallick, Hal Davis, airport compliance manager for the Wisconsin Bureau of Aeronautics (BOA), explains airport land use zoning, officially called 'airport overlay zone':

*An airport overlay zone (AOZ) is a tool that promotes compatible land uses within a three-mile radius of an airport. This type of zoning applies additional review, conditions and/or restrictions to a specified area while retaining the existing base zoning classification. [A]*

*airport sponsors [in this case the city of Middleton] have the authority to extraterritorially zone, thus an AOZ supersedes zoning ordinances in those municipalities within a three-mile radius of the airport. The AOZ can be highly effective in addressing a number of potential incompatibilities relative to airports and airport operations, which are often difficult to address in the general zoning ordinance. For example, the AOZ may limit the height of objects surrounding an airport within three miles, restrict land uses that produce conditions potentially hazardous to air navigation (e.g., smoke and glare), sound-sensitive, or attract hazardous wildlife. AOZs can take a variety of forms depending on the needs of the airport and surrounding community. (...) It is important to recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all zoning ordinance and an ordinance that works for one community may not work for another. Each community should structure their ordinance to meet their individual needs. The BOA has resources for AOZ projects, including an AOZ ordinance funding program, and should be contacted before a community begins their zoning endeavor.*

*I usually describe a LUZO [land use zoning ordinance] as taking your existing three-mile height limitation ordinance map and adding land use restrictions to prevent land uses which might be hazardous to pilots (e.g. attract hazardous wildlife) or hazardous to people on the ground (e.g. hotels, hospitals, schools, churches right off the end of the runways). Land use zoning ordinances are not required, but they are strongly recommended by BOA and FAA as an effective tool to protect the airport. Currently, about 15 airports in the state have LUZO's in place. They are often contentious to adopt. However, as pressure to develop land around the airport grows over time, they will always become more challenging to implement the longer a community waits.*

One could say that the City of Middleton might have waited too long.

## **Airport (II): Study shows lead levels far below EPA limits**

The Middleton Town Board has released a study it commissioned on 'ambient lead concentrations' at various locations around Middleton's Morey Field airport (piston aircraft use low-lead aviation fuel). The lead concentrations were initially estimated by modeling of monthly and annual averages at 22 locations, and complemented by sampling at three locations (Middleton Gymnastics Academy, Hickory Woods Park and a barn on the Ziegler property on Capitol View Road).

The results of the study, which was done by Trinity Consultants, an environmental testing firm with offices nationwide, show that even the highest concentrations close to the airport are far below EPA limits. The EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standard sets the maximum lead concentration at 0.15 microgram (millionth of a gram) of lead per cubic meter of air. They also show that the actual measurements reveal lead concentrations that are significantly lower than

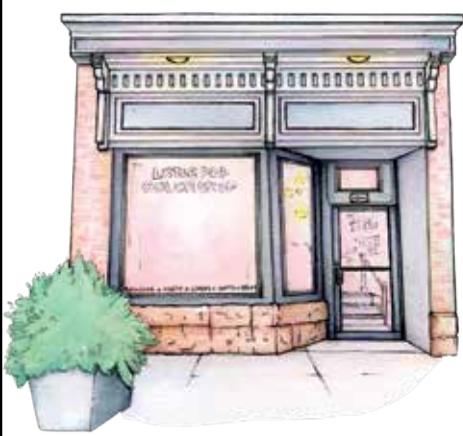
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the modeling had indicated (and all are magnitudes lower than the EPA limit).

The concentrations measured by the consultants ranged from a low 0.000778 microgram per cubic meter at Hickory Woods (from two measurements) to a high of 0.00444 at the Gymnastics Academy (from four measurements). The two measurements at the barn showed a maximum of 0.00131 and a minimum of 0.00111.

The monthly modeling's estimates predicted higher ambient lead concentrations for those locations at 0.0121 (Gymnastics Academy), 0.0021 (Hickory Woods Park) and 0.0019 (Tallard Park, close to the Ziegler barn). The annual modeling's estimates predicted concentrations ranging from lows of 0.0003 at Enchanted Valley Park and Summit Ridge Park to a high of 0.0082 at Keva.

Town of Middleton chair Cynthia Richson does not let scientific data get in the way of politics, however. At a public hearing on a conditional use permit expansion for Keva at the September 27 meeting of the City of Middleton Plan Commission, she called for the airport to be closed and Morey Field to be turned into 'family housing, green space, wetlands and family-friendly, healthy businesses'.

Until that happens, she wants the City to end all sales of leaded fuel at the airport and ban all fly-in events (including, presumably, the annual fundraiser for Badger Honor Flight), according to a letter to the City Council approved by her Town Board. But in the spirit of inter-municipal cooperation and goodwill, the letter also helpfully suggests that 'if some aircraft must bum leaded gas, it is available just nine nautical miles away at Dane County Regional Airport'. The assumption here seems to be that leaded fuel does less harm over the low-income apartments on the north side of Madison than over the board members' mansions in the town of Middleton.

Meanwhile, City and airport officials are continuing the transition to unleaded fuel as it is approved by the FAA and becomes commercially available.

### **Airport (III): Pen pals**

The City of Middleton has replied to a Town of Middleton's September 21 letter about lead emissions from aircraft around Middleton's Morey Field airport, and in which they asked, among other things, for the airport to immediately stop the sale of leaded aviation fuel. Besides being 'pleased that the lead levels measured by Trinity at the three sites they selected are significantly less than the average ambient lead in the air as measured by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the United States at 0.03 µg/m<sup>3</sup> [micrograms per cubic meter] over the past three years, particularly given that one of the sites was located so close to a decommissioned shooting range', and pointing out that 'the Trinity test results indicate that airborne lead levels are well below the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standard of 0.15 µg/m<sup>3</sup>', the City's letter also outlines 'three steps toward embracing

the new unleaded fuel:

1. On November 16, 2021, the Common Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2021-59 to increase the airport capital budget by \$30,000 for design engineering for an unleaded fuel tank. As a proactive measure, the Common Council approved this request before the FAA approved the new G100UL [unleaded] fuel.

2. On January 11, 2022, the Common Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2022-02 to petition the Wisconsin Department of Transportation for assistance with installing an unleaded fuel tank at the airport. Again, as a proactive measure, the Common Council approved this request before the FAA approved the new G100UL fuel. Since then, the Bureau of Aeronautics has worked to obtain proposals for designing the modifications to the airport fuel farm that are necessary to accommodate this tank. The adoption of this new national standard means that aircraft that currently rely on the use of 100LL [leaded] fuel can start using G100UL once it is commercially available. This also means that the City could convert its existing low-lead fuel tank to unleaded fuel, making the acquisition of a new tank unnecessary.

3. City administration has authorized a City staff member to serve on an FAA panel that will guide research on how to phase in lead-free fuel at airports, should they be selected to join the panel.'

The Middleton Town Board's prolific letter writers have meanwhile composed 'an updated addition' to their September 21 letter, in which they ask that the airport switch to UL94 (94-octane unleaded fuel) from Indiana-based Swift Fuels: 'We have recently learned from Swift Fuels that as of Thursday, September 29, 2022, Morey Airport could have already received an 8,000 gallon truckload of Unleaded94 [UL94] Swift Fuel aviation gas as early as Monday, October 3, 2022. We also learned that Unleaded94 Swift Fuel aviation gas, which has been available since 2015, has already received all three required regulatory approvals from the FAA, ASTM and OEMs.

Moreover, those nationwide airports already receiving Unleaded94 Swift Fuels aviation gas will be given priority for distribution of Unleaded 100R high octane aviation gas going forward. This is a very important additional public health consideration for the City to expeditiously reduce and eliminate airborne Morey Airport aircraft toxic lead emissions immediately. Swift Fuels further advised that it estimates its newest Unleaded 100R aviation gas will be fully approved and available by late summer of 2023.'

Like so many airport-related statements coming from the Middleton Town Board, this one also seems reasonable and sensible on the face of it, but further investigation quickly reveals that it is misleading by what it omits. (And of course one should also not forget that the chair of the Middleton Town Board is really not interested in making constructive contributions to ensure the airport's future, as it is her

stated goal to get rid of the airport altogether. Any statements by her about the airport need to be viewed in that context.)

It is true that Swift Fuels' UL94 has been approved for many years and that it is commercially available at many airports, including Waunakee and Sauk Prairie in our area. But it is also true that it is of only limited use in general aviation because of its lower octane rating. According to Middleton airport manager Rich Morey, UL94 is not a direct replacement for 100LL, the low-level leaded aviation fuel currently used and available at Morey Field: "94UL is not usable in Capital Flight's Cirrus aircraft, and in much of Morey Airplane Company's training aircraft. It is definitely not usable in MAC's charter aircraft. An additional tank, pump and card reader would be required for Middleton Municipal airport to be able to offer 94UL for sale unless we stopped selling Jet A or 100LL. The cost of an additional tank is in the \$700,000 range. As you know, the FAA has approved the newly formulated 100UL unleaded fuel. This is a direct replacement for the 100LL and will be available in the next few years. When 100UL is available we will switch over to it." It also seems that Swift Fuels' 100-octane unleaded fuel won't be available until the end of 2024 at the earliest.

According to a statement by aviation distribution and logistics company Avfuel Corporation and engineering company General Aviation Modifications, Inc. (GAMI), the developer of the newly approved unleaded aviation fuel G100UL, G100UL has not only been approved for use 'in all spark-ignition piston aircraft and engines in the general aviation fleet, but it has also successfully proved to be able to replace and mix with 100LL avgas, a key characteristic for an unleaded avgas solution as it embarks on the ambitious task of replacing low-lead avgas location by location.' It is expected to 'expand nationally over a period of a few years at a pace driven by the rate at which the production and distribution infrastructure can be put in place'.

While popular pressure to quickly transition to unleaded fuel is growing, government, industry and aviation experts stress the need for a viable and safe transition, and warn, as in a recent EAA statement, of a hodgepodge of locally available fuels that could leave aviators stranded - or worse: 'A patchwork of airport-specific requirements leading to inconsistency in what fuels are available would lead to airports that may or may not carry the necessary fuels, thus creating a situation where aircraft could be misfueled, leading to safety and operational concerns.'

### **MCPASD: A symbolic annual meeting**

In what are largely symbolic, albeit legally required, actions, the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District's annual meeting on Monday, September 19, approved three resolutions, the first one levying a tax in the 2022-2023 fiscal over \$1 million to add to the capital fund, the second one adopting the district-wide

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*New restaurant will replace Tanner's and Maurices  
Tanner's Bar & Grill and Maurices at Greenway Station are going to be replaced by Cooper's Hawk Winery & Restaurant. On October 11, the Middleton Plan Commission approved the new design.*

tax levy over \$82.8 million for operations, and the third approving school board salaries of \$4,200 for the president and \$3,600 for the other members. These resolutions were voted on by all district residents and taxpayers present, not just the School Board members, although in practice that made very little difference, since barely more than a dozen non-board members were in attendance, and, apart from yours truly and the correspondent for the Middleton-Cross Plains Times Tribune, all were school district employees or retirees, and not all of them live in the district.

During the budget hearing that preceded the annual meeting, School Board treasurer Sheila Hibner went over the basic budget numbers, pointing out challenges facing the district, such as covid (still catching up), inflation (too high), state and federal aid (too low), and enrollment (at that moment forecast to be declining).

She also pointed out that the planned property tax levy approved at the annual meeting (the exact number is \$82,808,961, compared to \$79,590,285 last year) is "strategic and advisory", in other words an estimate. Exact numbers won't be known until final enrollment is established, property values have been fixed and the state's department of public instruction will have

certified its aid.

The board of education will adopt the final budget and certify the tax levy on October 24. Meanwhile, the current estimates assume property value increases of 4%, and a mill rate of 9.95 (unchanged from last year), or \$2,850 per \$300,000 property. The 4% value increase (to \$312,000) would add \$119 to that tax bill.

#### **'Complete streets': Incompleteness theorem?**

Middleton streets are generally safe for pedestrians and bicyclists, despite bike lanes that lull inexperienced bikers into a false sense of security, and pedestrian-crossing lights whose timing provokes impatient walkers into crossing busy streets against the light. Generally, motorists also behave better than their reputation would lead one to believe, and many accidents between cars and bicyclists or pedestrians are avoided because it was the motorist who was paying attention, rather than the other way around.

Of course, if everybody followed the rules of the road (and stayed off their phones while driving, riding or walking) there would hardly be any conflicts between traffic participants at all. But that is obviously not the case and traffic safety remains a serious issue,

while with steadily increasing numbers of cars and more and more new electric vehicles (including e-bikes, scooters and one-wheel skateboards) entering the parade, sharing the road space is only going to become more challenging.

In fact, e-bikes, scooters and one-wheel skateboards are already causing problems for and conflicts with pedestrians on sidewalks and trails, and a serious argument could be made that, as motorized vehicles, they should not be allowed on sidewalks and trails at all.

The City of Middleton is, among other things, trying to find the means for a more peaceful coexistence between the various traffic participants by making the transportation infrastructure less auto-centric. The Pedestrian, Bicycle and Transit Committee has been working on this 'complete streets' policy for many months now, and after a couple of rounds of feedback from other committees, the City Council adopted the corresponding resolution on October 4.

The main inspiration for Middleton's version is a similar policy called 'Complete and Green Streets' from Cleveland Heights, Ohio, which is being upheld

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*North Mendota Trail: Trying not to repeat a fiasco*

*It is official: The North Mendota Trail's eastern segment between Highland Way and the town of Westport will not be finished on schedule this year. As they did last year during construction of the western segment, City officials and the consulting engineers blame MG&E for the delays, although there is plenty of other blame to go around, too. According to the latest revised schedule, the trail east of County Highway Q (pictured) will be completed, with paving, before winter. The remaining unpaved bit of the western segment, west of the Goodwill building, will also be paved before winter. The final part between Highland Way (east) and County Q will be built in the spring. Some preliminary work on that part will be done this winter, but the sidewalk will not be torn up before next spring, so as not to repeat last year's western segment fiasco when the sidewalk along Century Avenue was closed for months without any work being done.*

as a model to follow by complete-streets advocates nationwide.

Building sidewalks, painting bike lanes, narrowing roadways or adjusting the timing of traffic lights may make life more comfortable for non-motorists, but it does not fundamentally change transportation needs and patterns. Decades of urban and suburban planning and zoning have segregated human spaces into residential, commercial, retail, industrial, leisure, agricultural and others, and cemented the role of the automobile as the central driver of all our activities. The automobile is the king of the road because there is no realistic alternative to it. Redesigning streets is not going to change that fact.

Still, 'complete streets' may be the start of a new way of thinking about traffic in Middleton, and, in spite of the draft resolution's lofty jargon (that also hits all the right political talking points), it might even have some

useful practical applications (it does actually go further in its aspirations than making mere cosmetic changes to the city's transportation infrastructure). The policy's intentions are described thus:

*\* Make streets safer, more comfortable, and more convenient for users of all travel modes, including walking, using mobility aids, bicycling, riding public, transportation, and driving motor vehicles.*

*\* Encourage a deliberative thought process about the design and operational aspects of a particular roadway, rather than imposing a "one size fits all" approach, such as having frequent and safer street crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, and appropriate allocation of roadway space for motorized and human-powered mobility.*

*\* Facilitate evaluation of existing roadways and proposed street projects to ensure that the policy is implemented in a manner that fosters equity across city*

*neighborhoods.*

*\* Ensure that the design and function of each street are sensitive to the surrounding context (including buildings and land uses) to reflect the unique characteristics and needs of individual neighborhoods and Middleton overall.*

*\* Articulate a clear set of expectations and standards for not only city officials but also developers and residents.*

*\* Help implement the Comprehensive Plan by encouraging infill, mixed-use, and transit-oriented development that better supports travel needs resulting from increased density in neighborhoods and along corridors.*

*\* Avoid costly retrofits by integrating sidewalks, bicycle facilities, nominally safe crossings, traffic calming treatments, and transit facilities in initial designs.*

*\* Reduce congestion, improve transportation network capacity, and increase consumer choice by providing accessible and efficient connections between home, school,*

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Later in the text the draft states that [t]he City should prioritize universal and equitable investment in underserved communities which lack existing infrastructure that encourages walking, biking, and transit trips, as well as areas where data indicate crash risk and health disparities.

That is a political talking point too far, and one that indicates that the policy might not address the main

issues that have misdirected our traffic for decades. Used in a sentence like this, ‘equitable’, ‘underserved’ and ‘health disparities’ is code for prioritizing areas with low-income (Black) residents.

In Middleton, however, the most ‘underserved’ areas of the city (in the context of ‘complete streets’ that is) are the likes of Northlake and Bishops Bay, which are residential deserts at the outskirts of the city with no retail within walking distance, and no connection to public transportation. And while these neighborhoods are thoroughly walkable and bikeable in themselves for recreational purposes, and close to the Pheasant Branch Conservancy on one side and Governor Nelson State Park on the other (with trail connections even), ‘complete streets’ is of no use to them (and others like them) if it does not address the

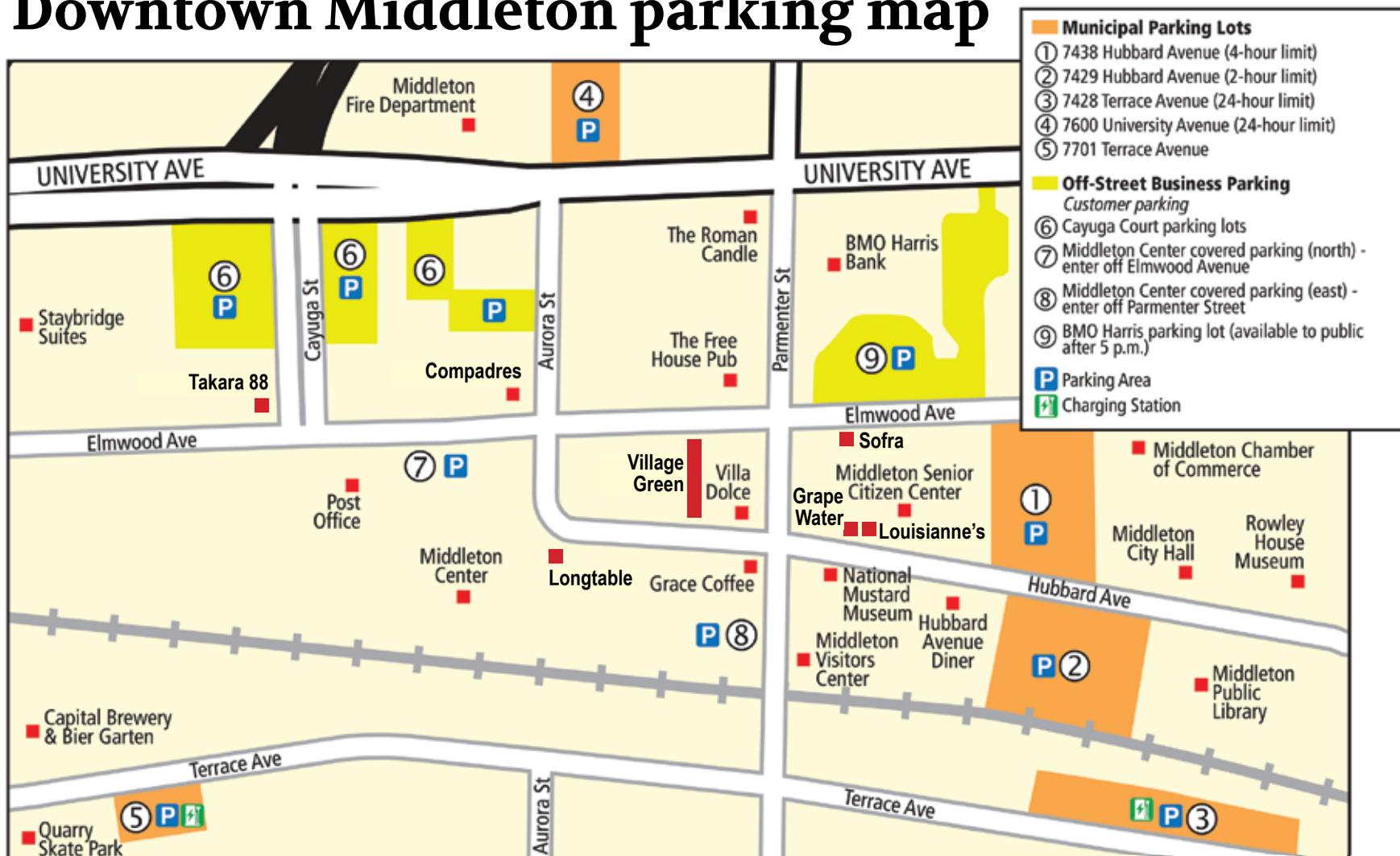
basic planning and zoning issues underlying the need to rely on the automobile.

That said, some of the newer developments planned for Middleton, such as Belle Farm, might end up being less dependent on the automobile for people’s non-recreational everyday needs.

A ‘complete streets policy’ might help push future development in that direction. It might also help retrofit existing streets, although the biggest obstacle here is not in the infrastructure, but in people’s minds, especially those of our elected officials.

Their reluctance, and ultimate failure, to make downtown Middleton pedestrian-friendly even on a small scale these last three summers does not offer a lot of hope for a successful implementation of ‘complete streets’.

## Downtown Middleton parking map



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CITY REFERENDUM

# Questions and answers

## CITY OF MIDDLETON STAFFING REFERENDUM FAQs



**Q What is the proposed referendum on the ballot Tuesday, November 8?**

The referendum will ask voters to decide whether or not to support an increase in the City's annual tax levy, beginning with tax bills issued in December 2022, to cover the cost of adding two police officers, one communications specialist and one full-time parks maintenance crew member, and to enable an up to 4% cost-of-living wage increases for City staff.

**Q What will appear on the ballot?**

The formal resolution requesting permission to exceed the state revenue limit will appear as follows on the November 8 ballot:

*"Under state law, the increase in the levy of the City of Middleton for the tax to be imposed for the next fiscal year, 2023, is limited to 2.5%, which results in a levy of \$19,781,229. Shall the City of Middleton be allowed to exceed this limit and increase the levy for the next fiscal year, 2023, for the purpose of additional police, parks, communications staffing and employment in cost increases by a total of 3.9%, which results in a levy of \$20,551,229, and on an ongoing basis, include the increase of \$770,000 for each fiscal year going forward?"*

**Q Why do we need a referendum to raise the tax levy limit?**

Currently, the City does not have funding to support additional staff or necessary wage increases. **Middleton's property tax levy is**

**the primary source of funding for services and expenses**, but because of state-imposed limits, we need voter approval to exceed our annual levy limits.

**Q What will it mean if a majority of voters vote "yes"?**

If voters approve the referendum, the **City will be able to fund additional staff at the Police Department and Parks Department, and will be able to improve public outreach by hiring a dedicated communications specialist.** The City will also be able to improve recruitment and retention efforts by providing an up to 4% cost-of-living increases to City staff.

**Q What will it mean if a majority of voters vote "no"?**

If voters reject the referendum, **the City will need to determine how to serve residents as our population and needs increase, but our revenues do not keep pace.** A "no" vote would result in maintaining current funding for staffing and wages, which may limit the City's ability to employ and retain quality staff to provide high-quality services to City residents.

**Q Why is the city asking for this increase now?**

The City's **current funding and staffing levels are insufficient to meet the growing needs of our community.** While our departments have risen to meet the needs of our community by working smarter, creating efficiencies, collaborating with stakeholders and prioritizing what types of service we can provide, **it has become increasingly difficult to provide the high-quality services our residents expect and deserve.**

Source: CITY OF MIDDLETON

## CITY OF MIDDLETON STAFFING REFERENDUM FAQs

### Q What will be the impact on taxpayers if the referendum passes?

An approved referendum would **increase City property taxes by \$19.79 annually per \$100,000 in assessed property value.** Because the City also plans to increase the levy up to its state-limited amount, the total City property tax increase on bills issued in December 2022 would be \$32.35 per \$100,000.

### Q How will updated property assessments alter the tax impact of the proposed referendum?

You may have received an estimate regarding an updated assessment of your property. The impact of reassessments on the City's mill rate (and subsequent tax levy) has been factored into the estimated impact of the referendum. You can use your updated assessment to determine the effect of an approved referendum on your property taxes.

### Q Why do we need additional police officers?

**The Middleton Police Department is experiencing an increasing number of complex, time-consuming calls for service, challenging officers' ability to provide proactive policing services in the community.**

As our population has grown, the relative number of sworn police officers has not kept up.

With an increasing number of calls related to violent incidents and mental health crises, the demand on officers' time has increased. The Middleton Police Department responded to 81% more

significant incidents in 2021 than in 2017, growing from 69 incidents in 2017 to 125 in 2021.

### **Responding to complex calls demands more time and attention from officers.**

The time required to complete the average call for services has grown in the last decade, increasing nearly 11% between 2017 and 2021.

### Q Why do we need to add a full-time parks crew member?

The City of Middleton is responsible for 800 acres of conservancy and almost 300 acres of active recreation land, including hundreds of acres that have been added over the last 20 years, yet **the Parks Department currently has just six full-time staff.**

The Parks Department hasn't had funding available to hire any new full-time parks maintenance staff for more than 24 years.

### Q Why do we need a full-time communications specialist? Can't others at the city continue performing communications functions?

**The City's growth has underscored its lack of available staff to provide timely communications to the public and support City goals of openness and transparency.**

If approved, the referendum would fund a dedicated communications specialist to keep community members informed about timely programs, resources and opportunities to engage in their city government and community.

Continued on page 28

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## CITY OF MIDDLETON STAFFING REFERENDUM FAQs

### Q Why are wage increases needed?

The City's ability to hire and retain staff has been significantly challenged by its inability to adjust for changes in cost of living. **In 2022 alone, the City has lost 29 staff, including 17 of its 147 full-time employees.** These vacant positions must be filled, and the City wants to do everything it can to keep high-quality employees.

Understanding that the impact of a \$1.5 million increase to the tax levy would place a heavy burden on Middleton taxpayers, **the Common Council opted to address the most emergent staffing needs at the City - the need for additional police officers, full-time parks crew, a dedicated communications professional, and wage increases for City staff,** in a referendum requesting to increase the municipal tax levy by \$770,000 going forward.

### Q How does the city determine an appropriate salary for city employees?

In Middleton, City salary ranges typically are adjusted by the September employment cost index (ECI) each year, and a more comprehensive salary study is conducted every five years.

### Q What other alternatives were considered to fund these staffing needs?

While state laws limit municipalities' ability to raise revenue, **the City of Middleton has explored multiple other avenues to fund staffing needs,** including:

- A vehicle registration fee or "wheel tax"
- Special additional charges for refuse and recycling services
- An increased storm-water utility fee

These options **were deemed not to be viable** for a few reasons, including the limited allowable use of funds related to each and that none would generate sufficient revenue to meet the City's needs.

### Q Why does this question include funding for several departments? Can't the city pose this referendum as multiple questions?

Wisconsin state law outlines the requirements municipalities must follow when developing referendum questions related to exceeding levy limits. The Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) has also provided guidance regarding acceptable referendum question timing and has indicated that multiple questions impacting the same levy in one year would not be allowable.

The City determined it would be unsustainable to leverage American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for personnel or operational costs, as those are one-time funds and would create a hole in future budgets.

At the direction of the Common Council, the City Administrator, Finance Director and Human Resources Manager developed and presented to the Council a five-year staffing plan, which identified a need for 16.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in 2023 at a total cost of approximately \$1.5 million.

Continued from page 23

## CITY OF MIDDLETON STAFFING REFERENDUM FAQs

### Q The school board is also asking for money. Is this a larger issue with how the city is budgeting?

While both the school district and City are putting referendums on the ballot this year, they are different government entities and levy taxes individually.

The City has taken a prudent approach to budgeting and making the most out of tax dollars. The needs of our public safety and other City departments have grown, and it is getting increasingly difficult to meet the growing demands for service without additional resources.

Questions regarding the school district's budget and referendum are best directed to the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School Board. *(See school district Q&A on pages 32-37.)*

### Q I've heard a lot about public safety referendums recently and the need for additional police officers in other communities. Why is this a topic in the news?

The situation we are facing is not unique. **Across the state, the needs of public safety responders have grown**, and it is getting increasingly difficult to meet the growing demands for service without additional resources. This is requiring more municipalities to seek funding for their public safety departments through a referendum.

### Q When and where do I vote?

**Middleton voters can cast their vote one of three ways:** through absentee mail-in ballots, early in-person voting at the Clerk's office, or in-person voting on election day, November 8, 2022.

Voters can request a mailed absentee ballot from the Clerk's office. The application must be received by the Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on November 3.

In-person early voting will take place Monday through Friday, Oct. 25 through Nov. 3 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and on Nov. 4 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 7426 Hubbard Avenue.

On November 8, all polling places will open at 7:00 a.m. and will close at 8:00 p.m. Wisconsin voters are required to show an acceptable photo ID in order to vote.

Additional voting information, including about polling places and requesting an absentee ballot, can be found on at [myvote.wi.gov](https://myvote.wi.gov).

### Q Who can I contact for more information?

Send any questions or feedback to the City of Middleton via email at [referendum@cityofmiddleton.us](mailto:referendum@cityofmiddleton.us). You may also contact the alder-person in your district by visiting [cityofmiddleton.us/113/Common-Council](https://cityofmiddleton.us/113/Common-Council).

### Q Where can I learn more about this referendum?

Additional information about this referendum is available online at [cityofmiddleton.us/referendum](https://cityofmiddleton.us/referendum).

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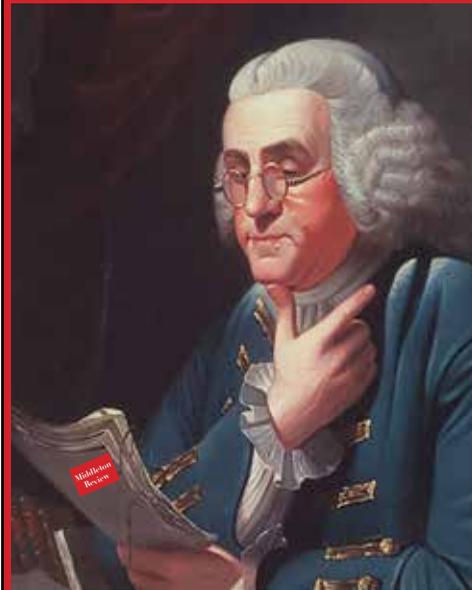
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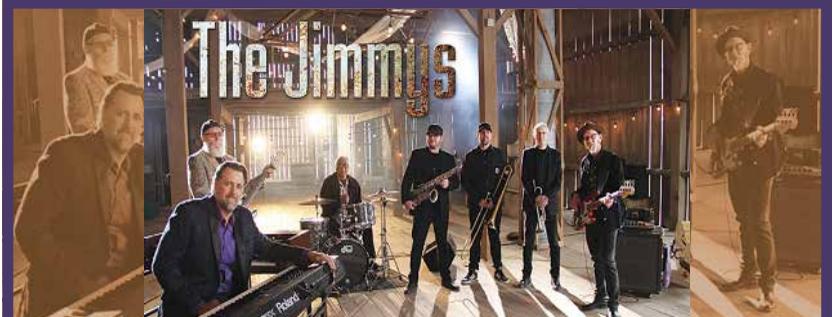
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## SCHOOL DISTRICT REFERENDUM

## Questions and answers

**Q: What is an operational referendum?**

An operational referendum asks voters for permission to exceed the State-imposed revenue limit authority for the purpose of increasing revenue to fund day-to-day school operations. The Board of Education must approve going to referendum, along with the question that would appear on an election ballot for taxpayers to vote on.

**Q: Why is MCPASD asking voters to consider an operational referendum in November 2022?**

Due to multiple factors, including a drop in student enrollment, no increase by the state in the revenue limit as part of the current two-year state budget, additional state, and historically high inflation, our district predicts a significant operational budget shortfall heading into the 2022-23 school year and beyond. *[2022/2023 enrollment is in fact higher than last year, but because State aid is calculated based on a three-year average, it is still down.]*

While MCPASD has received one-time monies from sources such as the federal covid relief packages and the sale of land we own at Pope Farm, this does not help address the year-over-year rising operational costs that impact all aspects of district operations from salaries and benefits to transportation.

It's important to note that the increased costs are continuing expenses, and the extra funds we receive cannot support long-term continuing costs. Some examples of continuing costs that operational referendum dollars would help cover are faculty and staff salary and benefits, student technology software and devices, curriculum and student programming, utility and transportation costs, and general maintenance and custodial expenses.

**Q: What are the various types of referendums?**

It is important to note that there are two different types of referendums. The two types of referendums are defined below.

**Operational:** Taxpayer support to increase the tax levy in support of increases to the district operating budget to maintain current educational programming, enhance safety and security efforts, and continue to retain and recruit high-quality staff. This ranges from staff salaries and supplies to program funding to name a few. These funds are extremely impactful because they control the day-to-day functions of our district.

**Capital (Bond):** Taxpayer support to increase the tax levy in support of major remodels to district facilities or the construction of new district facilities. This is the type of referendum that was overwhelmingly approved

by area voters in 2018 and was used to help rebuild and expand Middleton High School and build the new Pope Farm Elementary School.

MCPASD is considering an operational referendum. Additionally, there are two options for how the operational referendum impacts the revenue limit formula year over year.

**Non-recurring referendum:** Exceed the district's revenue limit by voter-approved referendum on a non-recurring basis. The amount is added to the revenue limit in the designated year and the levied amount is removed from the next year's base. If the full amount of the referendum is not levied, no carryover of the remaining amount is eligible to be levied in future years.

**Recurring referendum:** Exceed the district's revenue limit by voter-approved referendum on a recurring basis. The amount is added to the revenue limit in the designated year, and the levied amount is included in the following year's base. If the full amount of the referendum is not levied, 100% carryover of the remaining amount is eligible to be levied in a future year. *[The City referendum is recurring.]*

**Q: How will the District Use these Funds**

- Address operational needs across departments and schools.

- Staffing levels and programming options for students will be largely maintained.

Forecasted operational deficits include estimates of inflation and assume no increase in student enrollment and no additional state funding. These variables are unpredictable and may impact the district's use of funds secured by a referendum.

**Q: Did MCPASD ask the community if they would support an operational Referendum before the BOE voted for it?**

Yes. In the late fall of 2021, the Board of Education decided to conduct a community survey to provide residents with information about the financial issue our district is facing and collect data on the community's willingness to provide funds through a standalone operational referendum.

The survey included:

- Demographic questions and statements
- Communication questions and statements
- General questions
- Background information on operational funding (how our district is funded, the main factors that can impact our revenue limit, and how an operational referendum can help).

- Background information on funding (how our district's declining enrollment negatively impacted the budget and the ways we have already cut expenses).

**• Open response**

The results of this survey were reviewed and presented to the Board Of Education to use during their decision-making process to approve the operational referendum question on the November ballot.

**Q: Governor Tony Evers has announced a considerable increase in public school funding. With that in mind, do we need an operational referendum?**

It is important to note that the school funding increase mentioned by the governor would be part of the biennial budget he will submit to the legislature. There is no promise that such an increase will be part of the final budget signed into law, especially since several legislative leaders have indicated that they do not support it.

As district leaders plan for the future, they must do so based on current realities. While any increase in school funding and revenue limit authority would be welcomed, the need for our district for more revenue limit authority now and in the foreseeable future is clear despite efforts to keep costs low. The fact is that district leaders see a need for an operational referendum.

**Q: What is a revenue limit?**

Revenue limits were established for school districts in Wisconsin in 1993 by the state legislature. They were intended to be a means by which the State could control property taxes. A district's revenue limit is made up of State aid and local taxes.

As State aid to the district decreases, property taxes increase and vice versa. Up until 2009, the state granted an inflationary increase to the revenue limit each year so school districts could keep up with increasing costs for the same services.

Since then, the revenue limit has decreased or seen only small increases. In order to exceed the state-imposed revenue limit a school district must go to referendum and ask the local taxpayers for the additional revenue it may need.

**Q: How are schools in Wisconsin funded?**

The State has established a maximum revenue amount allowed for each school district through the revenue limit. Since the state legislature has the desire to not increase property taxes, more and more of the funding for local schools has shifted to the local property taxpayer. While this is a shift, it does provide more local control over school funding as the state is not taxing the property and deciding where the funds go. Rather, the local school district is taxing the property and each dollar that is approved through a referendum goes directly to the schools rather than flowing through the State.



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# GET THE FACTS!

## 2022 OPERATIONAL REFERENDUM

On Tuesday, November 8, 2022, residents of the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District will vote on a \$24.9 million, non-recurring operational referendum question. If the referendum is approved, MCPASD would use the funds to address operational needs across all departments and schools.



### WHAT'S BEHIND THE DISTRICT'S FINANCIAL CHALLENGES?

- 
Inadequate funding from the state
- Rising inflation impacting all district operations

- 
Declining enrollment & lower birth rates
- Fewer young families entering the district

- 
Impact of the pandemic

Over the past two years, MCPASD has been able to find more than \$6 million in savings through good financial stewardship. However, our operational costs moving forward are expected to rise significantly. An operational referendum would help reduce the deficit and ensure the long-term fiscal health of our school district.

### WHY IS AN OPERATIONAL REFERENDUM NEEDED?



In Wisconsin, a school district's revenue limit is directly linked to enrollment and state-approved adjustments. As a result of recent declines in enrollment and minimal state adjustments, MCPASD's revenue limit has not kept pace with inflation. Like many districts statewide, we are now turning to voters to approve an operational referendum to help fund our schools.

### HOW WOULD THE REFERENDUM AFFECT PROPERTY TAXES?



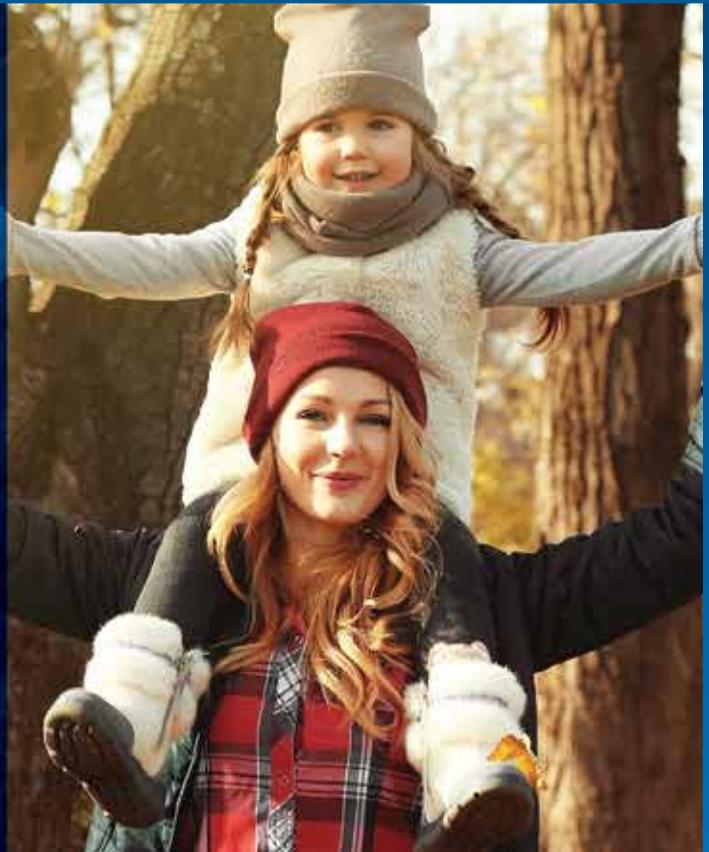
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Year 3	Year 4
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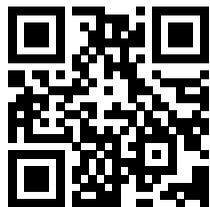
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**Q: Doesn't the district have other funding sources, such as revenue from the capital project referendum in November 2018, they could use?**

No. The revenue limit authority can be used on three fund categories of expenses: general operational, non-referendum debt, and/or capital projects. These three categories are separate 'buckets of money' that a school must use within the defined guidelines for those categories.

It is helpful to think of our school district fund categories similar to multiple financial accounts one may have as an individual. One likely have a checking, emergency savings, and a retirement account one uses to budget income, pay bills, plan for emergencies, and save for retirement.

If you pay your bills from your checking account and find that you still need extra funds, you may be able to pull from your savings but might not be able to pull from your retirement account. School districts have limited-to-no flexibility to use money from the different fund categories.

**Q: How will this impact my taxes?**

The tax impact over a four-year period on \$100,000 of assessed property value is projected to be:

Year one: \$7

Year two: \$53

Year three: \$39

Year four: \$36

It is important to note that the estimated tax impact for the 2012 and 2018 referendums district voters overwhelmingly improved ended up being less than projected.

**Q: Has the district looked at ways to decrease its operating costs?**

Yes, the district has found \$6 million in savings by reducing programs, software restructures, right-sizing classroom and support staff while maintaining current class size guidelines, restructuring benefit packages and decreasing building and department budgets over the past two years.

The district saved \$2 million during the 2021-22 school year and has saved \$4 million for the upcoming 2022-23 school year.

Even if voters approve the operational referendum, the district will continue to annually look at ways to save using the same measures mentioned above.

**Q: Why did the district have a \$4 million deficit for the 2022-23 school year?**

Historically high inflation, a drop in enrollment during the pandemic, and no increases to the revenue limit during the current state two-year budget all played a role.

In addition, our district remains committed to prioritizing competitive salaries and benefits to retain our staff and recruit staff to continue to provide high-quality

instructional and support services for all our students and families. We know the hiring market is extremely competitive in Dane county.

Many Dane county districts are prioritizing staff raises based on the consumer price index. We want to provide the same raises to keep our staff, especially with the cost of living increasing due to inflation.

Additionally, ongoing expenses such as health benefits, utilities, contracted services and insurance continues to rise. It will cost the district more money to operate, but we are not receiving more money from the State to support the growing expenses.

**Q: Why can't MCPASD use the money from the sale of Pope Farm lots for operational expenses?**

There is no law that prohibits using those funds, but the money we generate from the sale of these lots will be one-time money.

Expenditures such as furniture or facility replacement are better suited for one-time funds. The district can't depend on one-time money for continuing costs such as salaries and benefits.

**Q: The district is receiving large amounts of money called ESSER [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief] funding. Why can't that money be used to help with operational expenses?**

We can spend the money on operational expenses; however, there are federal requirements on how the district can spend those funds, and they are a one-time source of revenue. The one-time funds do not address our long-term financial needs.

Let's compare one-time revenue to your own household. When you receive an insurance rebate check for good driving, a gift card to a local store, or a child care tax credit from the federal government, those are one-time monies. Once they are used, the funds aren't replenished. If you decided to earmark the one-time monies for paying your mortgage or rent, you would be short the following month because those one-time monies are not continuing income.

While we are grateful for the ESSER money, it would not be fiscally prudent to rely on one-time money for ongoing costs. Using one-time funding to balance a budget with continued costs is not sound financial practice, especially in the long term.

**Q: How much of the district operational budget is related to building utility costs, and what is the district doing to reduce these costs?**

Our utility costs are approximately 1.5% of MCPASD's overall budget. Over the years, our district has taken many steps to reduce energy consumption as well as look at other alternative sources, including:

- The district recently completed a district-wide LED lighting project in all of our buildings.

- The district partners with the City of Middleton and MG&E to access one megawatt of solar energy from the array built on Morey Field. As a result, approximately 25% of our energy for our buildings in the

MG&E territory is coming from solar.

- Pope Farm Elementary School was built to operate using geothermal heat pumps. This school joins Kromrey Middle School as well as portions of Glacier Creek Middle School in their use.

- All of our schools have an energy star rating of 86% or higher with Kromrey Middle School being the highest at 99%.

- The district, in conjunction with the Oregon, Sun Prairie and Monona Grove school districts, has applied for an Energy Innovation Grant through the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin's Office of Energy Innovation. If approved, the districts will work collaboratively to reduce energy usage while learning best practices from and alongside each other. A comprehensive planning process would allow the districts to develop a list of near-term and medium-term opportunities to meet their goals; institutionalize a school district sustainability consortium; and share their expertise on school energy management.

- The Board of Education passed a sustainability resolution and currently has a sustainability committee working on an action plan that would move the district closer to being 100% renewable energy by 2035.

**Q: Why can't MCPASD operate more like a private business?**

Being a local government entity, the federal and state governments drive much of what can be done in a public school. Unlike a private business where sales drive revenue, the school's revenue is at the discretion of state and federal government officials, which cannot be easily predicted.

Also, as a public school, we are mandated by law to provide an education to any student that shows up at our doorstep regardless of socioeconomic status, language barriers or special educational needs. While we openly embrace all children and work to meet their needs, sometimes the funding granted by the State or federal government is insufficient to cover all of the costs associated with the educational challenges students face.

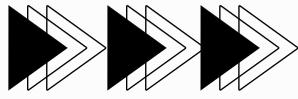
**Q: What if the State grants the district more revenue than projected?**

If the State were to grant additional revenue to the district, the Board of Education would have several options.

They may decide not to levy some of the referenda-approved property taxes; carry over those funds to determine the best long-term course of action based on changing state and federal funding; invest those funds into new programs and services to enhance the educational offerings of the district; or any combination of these.

**Q: The district has a fund balance available. Why not just use those funds?**

Due to the district having only two main sources of revenue (taxes and state aid), and the timing of when



## WHAT WILL THE REFERENDUM FUNDS DO?



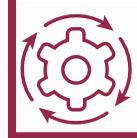
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Address operational needs across all departments and schools

those funds are received, it is necessary for the district to maintain a fund balance to avoid borrowing to meet short-term cash flow needs.

In fact, due to the timing of when our revenue is received, our fund balance gets low enough that it could not cover one month's worth of expenses. Therefore, the district maintains this fund balance at a level that avoids having to borrow funds to pay monthly operating expenses.

A healthy fund balance also results in lower interest rates when MCPASD has to borrow. For example, the district saved more than \$1 million when borrowing funds after each of the successful referendum questions in 2012 and 2018.

### Q: If the referendum fails, will my taxes go down?

It should be noted that there may not be any reduction in taxes if the referendum does not pass.

If the referendum does not pass, the School Board would have the option to continue to keep the tax levy at the same level and continue to prepay debt, therefore saving taxpayers additional interest costs.

This would not, however, grant the money the district needs to continue operating the same programs and services currently offered. Rather, the funds would be used to prepay debt.

While taxes would not decrease and debt payments would be made earlier than scheduled, the board would have to navigate a projected budget deficit of \$5 million to \$7 million over the next four years based on current economic factors.

### Q: What happens if the referendum doesn't pass?

The district will have to look at all programs and services, along with staff, for areas to reduce. Class sizes, staff wage and benefit packages, facility maintenance, and transportation walk zones may be impacted. All employee groups and all areas of the budget would be reviewed.

### Q: Didn't the district just pass a 2018 referendum? Are you asking for something similar again?

Yes, in November 2018, the community approved a \$138.9 million referendum to renovate or rebuild mul-

tiple schools in the district.

The referendum projects included the renovation and expansion of Middleton High School, the cafeteria addition and light interior renovation at Park Elementary School, the construction of a new elementary school at Pope Farm and the repurposing of the Clark Street Community School building into an Early Learning Center.

It's important to note that our district is only allowed to use monies from that referendum for these projects. The 2018 referendum included a \$4.8 million operational referendum, which was used to fund new positions based on enrollment growth, adding another elementary school, and additional utility and facility costs needed to expand our schools.

No, our district is not asking for a similar referendum. If an operational referendum is approved in November 2022, the funds would be used to try and maintain current programming and staffing across all schools and levels.

### Q: If the referendum is approved, will it be used for the new Middleton High School stadium improvement project?

No, the referendum funds will not go toward this project. The district has agreed to put forward \$2 million toward the project using one-time monies generated from the sale of lots near Pope Farm Elementary School. Approximately 75% of the \$2 million will be used to make the restrooms at Breitenbach Stadium ADA compliant.

### Q: Will building a third middle school on the Pope Farm land be part of this referendum?

No, there are currently no plans to use the land south of Pope Farm Elementary School for a third middle school or any other school building.

When the Board of Education purchased the land at Pope Farm, they purchased enough land so that two buildings could fit on the site, along with fifteen or so residential lots, which the district would sell to raise funds for a future land purchase.

The district has sold a handful of the residential lots and approximately ten remain. When future enrollment

projections support the need for an additional school, the district will likely form a facilities planning committee, similar to what they did before the 2018 referendum, to gain stakeholder input about the best way to move forward.

### Q: How is MCPASD taking learning loss during covid into consideration?

Our teachers are frequently assessing and through lesson design working to identify learning gaps and fill them with their students. If you have specific questions about your student, please contact your teachers directly.

### Q: What does a 'Yes' vote mean and what does a 'No' vote mean?

The referendum question on the ballot is asking taxpayers permission to levy an additional tax above the revenue limit for operational purposes.

Therefore, a 'Yes' vote means that you support the district's ability to levy that tax and a 'No' vote means you do not support the district's ability to levy that tax.



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## MIDDLETON HIGH SCHOOL Ribbon cutting and open house



*Many Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District representatives and some members of the public attended the official ribbon-cutting of the new and (presumably) improved Middleton High School on Thursday, October 6, which was followed by an open house and tours of the new facility.*



Photos by GEORGE ZENS

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Clean and shine (no repairs).  
Will pick up and deliver (minimum 5 pairs).  
*Please call for appointment before dropping off shoes.*

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Shoes (men's or women's) - \$10.00 per pair  
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BEER CAFE • BOTTLE SHOP • TASTING ROOM

***Bringing a communal experience to craft beer and food***



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lunch and dinner**  
Tue.- Sat. 11:30 am - 10:00 pm

**Free underground parking  
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Enter on Parmenter Street.**



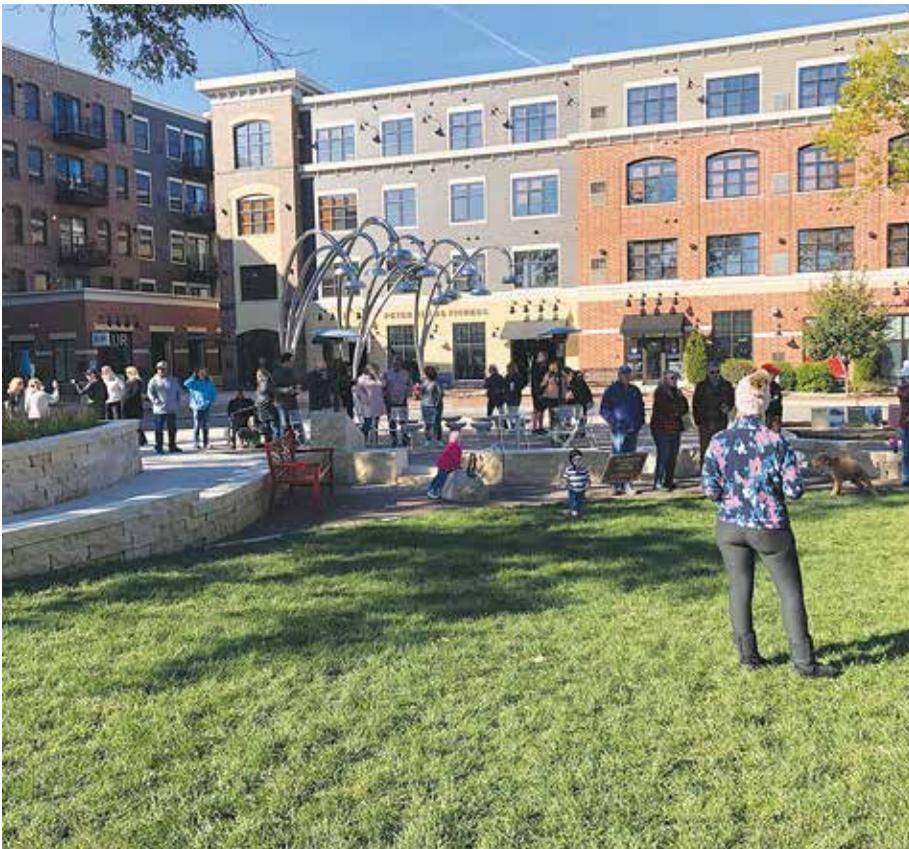
7545 Hubbard Avenue - Downtown Middleton Center - (608) 841-2337 - [www.longtablebeercafe.com](http://www.longtablebeercafe.com)

DOWNTOWN

# ‘Stone Horse Green’ ribbon cutting



*On Saturday, October 8, the official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the ‘Stone Horse Green’ downtown plaza took place in the presence of many current and former City officials and other people who contributed to the project in one capacity or another, as well as members of the public.*



Photos by GEORGE ZENS

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[TritonAutoSpa.com](http://TritonAutoSpa.com)

## Daily Specials

**Tuesday:**

Taco Tuesday - \$3.00 Tacos

**Wednesday:**

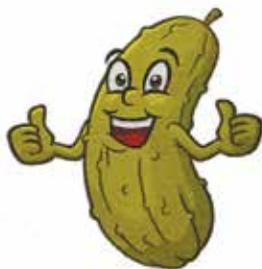
Sloppy Joe - \$8.50

**Thursday:**

Road Kill (tastes like chicken) - \$7.50

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Exclusive deals  
for pickle holders!  
(Pickle must be present)



## Friday Tavern Fish Fry



**Fridays  
Starting at 3 pm**

Fish Dinner: \$15.00  
Shrimp Dinner: \$15.00  
1/2 & 1/2 Dinner  
(Shrimp & Fish):  
\$15.00

**Lunch Only (11 am - 2 pm)**

Fish Basket: \$9.50  
Fish Sandwich: \$8.50  
Shrimp N' Fries Basket: \$10.50

# The Village

# • Green •

## Old Fashioned Tavern

**Downtown Middleton**  
Across from Middleton Center

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11:00 am until noon**  
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(add cheese \$0.50)

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