

QUARTERLY ISSUES/PROGRAMS LIST

Station WJBC-AM

Location: 236 Greenwood Avenue, Bloomington, Il. 61704

For quarter beginning:

	January 1, 2020
_____	April 1, 2020
X	July 1, 2020
_____	October 1, 2020

Attached hereto are descriptions of local issues addressed by the station and descriptions of how each issue was treated through the stations most significant issues-responsive programming or announcements during the report period.

QUARTERLY REPORT July 2020- September 2020

ISSUE: Community, Health

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Hospital Fire Handled Quickly

DATE:07/01/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Firefighters from Normal had to put out a fire Tuesday afternoon at Advocate BroMenn Medical Center.

Fire crews were called to the hospital around 3 o'clock and saw smoke coming from the roof on the east side of the building.

Firefighters located smoke coming from a roof vent leading to an air handler unit. Once inside the building, firefighters were able to gain access to the mechanical room which housed the air handler to extinguish the fire.

Fire damage was isolated to the air handler, the ductwork, the roof fan assembly, and the surrounding materials between the roof and the ceiling of the mechanical room.

During the incident, only the affected area of the hospital was evacuated. Hospital operations were otherwise not affected and no patients were relocated.

A dollar estimate of damage is not available and the cause of the fire is still under investigation.

ISSUE: Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Traffic Stop leads to weapons arrest

DATE:07/01/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

A 16-year-old boy from Bloomington was arrested Tuesday night for having a gun in his waistband.

Bloomington Police made a traffic stop around 10:20 near Roosevelt Avenue and Market Street for an equipment violation. BPD says during the traffic stop, one of the passengers attempted to run away shortly after handing over a small amount of cannabis.

When the passenger attempted to flee, officers arrested the passenger and placed him into handcuffs after a short struggle. Police located a loaded 9 mm handgun with an extended magazine in the boy's waistband.

One officer sustained a minor injury from the arrest and the suspect was not injured.

The boy was arrested for unlawful use of a weapon, unlawful possession of ammunition, and illegal transportation of cannabis.

ISSUE: Community, Business, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Phase Four Remains in Effect

DATE:07/06/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

All of Gov. JB Pritzker's executive orders since April 8 pertaining to the novel coronavirus pandemic are void - or are they?

A Clay County Judge thinks so and ruled last week saying the governor exceeded his authority when he used his emergency powers for more than 30 days.

His decision, which he expanded to apply to all Illinoisans, is the latest ruling in Rep. Darren Bailey's lawsuit.

Even though Clay County Circuit Judge Michael McHaney ruled in Bailey's favor it doesn't mean everything goes back to pre-pandemic ways.

The governor's office says Phase four remains in effect and this latest decision is one circuit court case that's contradicted by multiple other Illinois circuit courts.

Adding it's not a final judgment and has no injunction.

ISSUE: Business, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Connect Transit Makes Appointment

DATE:07/07/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Political divisions on the Normal Town Council were evident Monday night as Mayor Chris Koos made a much-anticipated appointment to the Twin-Cities public transit system board.

News partner, Heart of Illinois ABC reports the council voted 6-0, with member Stan Nord abstaining, to approve Timothy McCue's appointment to fill a seat on the Connect Transit Board that's been vacant for more than a year.

McCue is an area coordinator of university housing services at Illinois State University. He's wheelchair-bound, apparently meeting one of the demands of disability advocates for a voice on the transit board. Town officials said McCue promoted accessibility for the disabled in restaurants and other businesses while working for convention and visitors bureaus in Oklahoma and Ohio.

Two council members, including Nord, did not object to McCue's qualifications, but they expressed frustration the council was not able to talk to McCue before the vote.

ISSUE: Community, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Annual Parade cancelled due to Pandemic

DATE:07/07/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Due to COVID 19 restrictions and to help ensure community health, the 2020 Bloomington Labor Day Parade has been cancelled.

Bloomington & Normal Trades & Labor Assembly President Ron Morehead says while the parade has always been the highlight of the year's labor activities, and a chance to salute everyday working men and women, they have to keep public safety in mind.

Morehead adds it was not an easy decision, but the last thing they want in the current health situation is to have large crowds gathering.

Since 1977 it only missed one year, because of a severe thunderstorm.

The Trades & Labor is exploring social media and other options to mark the holiday and give voice to workers' concerns.

ISSUE: Business, COVID-19, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Pot numbers climb during Pandemic

DATE:07/09/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Adult-use marijuana sales in Illinois continued to climb, with June setting another record.

Total sales for adult-use marijuana came in at almost 48 million dollars, the highest month for sales of the year, and three million dollars higher than May's numbers, the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation reported Tuesday.

According to news partner HOI-ABC, in-state residents spent more than 35.2 million dollars on adult-use marijuana and out-of-state residents over 12.3 million dollars.

Combined, in-state and out-of-state residents bought about one hundred thousand adult-use items in June.

Since January 1, Illinois has had a total of 239 million dollars in sales.

However, the IDFPR report did not include taxes collected.

ISSUE: Business, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Rivian receives first 2020 investment

DATE:07/11/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

Another investment is coming to Rivian - the first for 2020.

In a statement from the company, Rivian announced an investment round of \$2.5 billion led by funds and accounts advised by T. Rowe Price Associates.

Participants in this investment round include Soros Fund Management LLC, Coatue, Fidelity Management and Research Company, and Baron Capital Group. Existing shareholders Amazon and funds managed by BlackRock also participated.

Rivian Founder and CEO RJ Scaringe says the company is focused on the launch of the R1T, R1S and Amazon delivery vehicles. All three are expected to launch in 2021.

Additional details about this investment haven't been disclosed at this time.

ISSUE: Community, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:A stand for social justice

DATE:07/15/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

About 30 people gathered on the lawn of the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts Tuesday, including Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner, to take part in a "die in".

The demonstration included people holding up tombstones with the names of those killed by police, and when a symbolic "gunshot" rang out and the names were said, protesters sat on the ground.

Mayor Renner addressed the crowd, saying we must fight for the better part of human beings.

He went on to say too many people in power, including the president of the United States, appeal to the worst in people, and that's also not what the Twin Cities are about.

The protest, hosted by Stand Up For Social Justice, also addressed systemic racism in the healthcare, housing, and collegiate fields.

ISSUE: Community, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Grant issued for LGBTQI+ Community

DATE:07/18/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

A local organization will be distributing a grant of over 12-thousand dollars to LGBTQI+ community members who have been hit financially by the pandemic.

Prairie Pride Coalition is partnering with Equality Illinois to help LGBTQI+ community members in McLean, Livingston, and DeWitt counties.

Prairie Pride Coalition president Dave Bentlin says the grant is the largest ever secured by the organization.

He says applicants must be 18 or older to qualify. A link to the application is on our website - WJBC.com.

ISSUE: Education, Community, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Local schools plan fall return

DATE:07/21/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

District 87 has released its plan for the fall semester - giving students an option to return to in-person learning or continue remote learning at home.

Superintendent Dr. Barry Reilly says families will choose between these two options for the entire fall semester. Reilly tells WJBC's Scott Miller students and staff in buildings will be required to wear a face mask.

As for other measures, Reilly says all schools will be deep-cleaned and disinfected every night. Each classroom will be equipped with cleaning supplies to spot clean high-traffic areas throughout the day.

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, District 87 will work in cooperation with the McLean County Health Department and Illinois Department of Public Health to determine appropriate measures. You can find the complete District 87 Back to School Plan on WJBC.com.

ISSUE: Education, Community, Business

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Terminations postponed on campus

DATE:08/02/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3 pm

Faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University voted to postpone termination notices to employees affected by the decision to discontinue certain programs earlier this month.

A 111-13 majority voted during a meeting Thursday night for the Council on University Programs and Policy (CUPP) on if the school should wait on sending out the notices. Following the vote, President Georgia Nugent issued a letter to faculty members explaining administrative action going forward.

Nugent states that no faculty members in affected programs will get termination notices for the time being, and that the school will use the month of August to try and develop new positions for some members of the staff.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC says the letter also states that after August 31, any affected faculty member who has not been placed in a position or accommodated through other "arrangements" will get a termination letter. The handbook says that each terminated faculty member will stay employed at the University for a year after their letter is issued.

No follow-up meeting is scheduled at this time in regards to how the process will be handled.

ISSUE: Education, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Graduation cancelled for Normal West

DATE:08/04/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

Hundreds of 2020 high school grads are part of a club they didn't sign up for - not walking the stage and receiving their diplomas in person.

Though some districts opted for virtual ceremonies that wasn't the case for Normal Community High and Normal West's seniors.

Both schools were scheduled to have graduation events at Corn Crib Stadium, but in a post on Facebook, the schools said "Due to the current and upcoming weather...graduation ceremonies have been canceled. We are sad that weather and the pandemic have changed how the Class of 2020 ended their high school career."

A Unit 5 spokesperson said the district made the decision, not the facility. The Facebook post from Unit 5 said there is no alternate date, so the graduation ceremonies will not be made up.

ISSUE: Politics, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Police Chief stepping down

DATE:08/06/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

The leader of the Bloomington Police Department announced Thursday that he will retire in September after serving in the role for one year.

Police Chief Dan Donath was selected for the position in August of 2019 by Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason. Gleason says Donath's decision was unexpected.

Donath, who started his career with BPD in 1994, says he made the choice after careful consideration and says it's time to close this chapter of his life.

Gleason says current assistant chief Greg Scott will serve as interim chief starting September 1st. The city manager says Scott will serve as the interim for a longer period of time because the city will not start a search for its next police chief until the start of the new year.

The city held a national search after Chief Clay Wheeler retired in June last year. Donath was a finalist along with Parkland College Chief William Colbrook.

ISSUE: Crime, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:COVID scams start to surface

DATE:08/09/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

As the country continues to deal with the coronavirus pandemic while getting back to work, scams are targeting individuals trying to get back on their feet.

Connie Unruh with the TS Institute indicates there are fake job postings popping up on all sorts of platforms. From job boards to social media, she indicates maybe dig a little further before offering up critical information an employer would want.

Unruh urges residents to be on the lookout for the unemployment scams.

If you suspect any form of identity theft, contact authorities immediately.

ISSUE: Crime, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Com-Ed Settlement in the works

DATE:08/11/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3 pm

A federal judge was asked Monday to force Commonwealth Edison, Mike Madigan and others to pay back those who were affected by an alleged extortion scandal.

The group of ratepayers said “at least” \$450 million should be split among all those damaged by the scheme.

The number of those affected could grow to more than 3.8 million, according to a lawsuit filed by attorneys representing six residents that resided in the Chicagoland area at some time in the last decade.

In an agreement to avoid prosecution, ComEd officials in July acknowledged to the U.S. government they funneled money through contractors to colleagues and friends of Madigan.

ISSUE: Community, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Grant awarded for infrastructure work

DATE:08/20/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

A \$590,000 state grant will fund a costly infrastructure repair in the Town of Normal.

With that money, the town government will replace the damaged water main on Oak Street in Normal, 105th District State Rep. Dan Brady (R-Bloomington) announced on Wednesday.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports the funding is awarded through the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (DCEO) Fast-Track Public Infrastructure Grants program, said Brady in a news release.

He said the grant is in addition to \$240,000 in DCEO Business Interruption Grants that local communities are sharing to help with Coronavirus-related difficulties.

"With all of our added challenges this year, local budgets are stretched to the breaking point. I am very appreciative of the Administration and DCEO for this much-needed assistance," Rep. Brady said in a prepared statement.

ISSUE: Education, COVID-19, Health

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Saliva test given emergency approval

DATE:08/20/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3 pm

Months ago, the University of Illinois announced that they were planning on being able to widely test students and faculty on campus for COVID-19 with a saliva test.

The U of I has been granted emergency approval to use the test and now there comes hope that the state of Illinois can have access to the test that could lead to widespread testing of the general population.

Dr. Martin Burke, the Associate Dean for the U of I College of Medicine, says the real impact of the test will be that it is fast and cheap.

Burke says the salvia test also cuts down on other laboratory material that is needed when using nasal swabs.

ISSUE: Politics, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Congressman says focus needs to shift from USPS

DATE:08/21/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

One central Illinois congressman says Congress should focus on a new stimulus package instead of the postal service calling the lack of a vote a "tragedy."

U.S. House lawmakers could vote on a \$25 billion emergency funding bill for the postal service this weekend. U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis says the blame for not voting on a stimulus lies on the shoulders of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Earlier this month, postal workers warned new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy implemented cuts to overtime and limited post office hours.

Postal workers are worried that could cause a delay in the vote by mail process this November.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:COVID count doubles in just one day

DATE:08/23/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

The McLean County Health Department reported 98 new cases of COVID-19 Sunday, nearly doubling the previous day's record of 53 cases and bringing the county total to just over one thousand.

The majority of new cases are people in their 20s.

At this time 311 people are isolating at home. Four are currently in the hospital while 713 people have been released from isolation and are considered to be recovered from the disease.

There have been 16 lives lost in McLean County.

The cumulative positivity rate currently sits at 2.6%, and the rolling 7-day positivity rate has jumped to 6.2%.

In Uptown Normal the Pub 2 in has closed its doors after an employee, who was asymptomatic, tested positive for the disease.

Across the street from the Pub 2, Brewe-ha's will also be closed as a precautionary measure for deep cleaning and employee testing.

Sunday evening, Maggie Miley's posted on Facebook that the restaurant will also be closing after a positive test from an employee. The social media post said they would be sanitizing and deep cleaning the restaurant. The entire staff at Maggie's will be tested, and no member will return back to work until they receive negative Covid-19 test results.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Cases of coronavirus top 200 in one day

DATE:08/30/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Coronavirus cases are on the rise in McLean County with health officials announcing 219 new cases of COVID-19 on Sunday, increasing the county's total to 1,621 cases.

Health officials report 702 individuals are isolating at home. Four individuals are hospitalized, with one currently in the ICU.

McLean County Health Department Administrator Jessica McKnight reports 899 individuals have been released from isolation and are considered recovered.

There have been 16 COVID-related deaths in the county.

Over 45,100 tests have resulted in a cumulative positivity rate of 3.5%. The rolling 7-day positivity rate increased to 10.1%.

Meanwhile, Illinois State University announced 187 more students tested positive for COVID-19 increasing the campus total to 933 cases.

In the last 7-days, school officials report 732 students have tested positive for COVID-19 resulting in a 7-day rolling positivity rate of 23.5%.

ISSUE: Community, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Contact Tracers falling behind

DATE:09/01/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3 pm

McLean County has seen such a surge in COVID-19 cases, contract tracers are no longer able to keep up.

At Monday's board of health meeting, the health department and the board brainstormed on what they could do to help slow down the rise of cases in McLean County.

Health Dept. Administrator Jessica McKnight said the best thing that can be done is have contact tracers reach out to those who may have been infected before they go out, but their limited number of contact tracers is making that difficult.

McKnight says the health department hired 10 additional contact tracers, bringing the total to 30, with about seven working directly with ISU, and they are still interviewing and taking applications for more.

Vice Chairman Carlo Robustelli said the town needs to invest in more contact tracers and McKnight says-money isn't the problem.

Contact tracers are expected to work four to five hours per day, seven days a week. McKnight says it has been difficult finding people willing to commit to that schedule.

News partner, Heart of Illinois ABC reports the board, along with McKnight, ultimately agreed they were doing all they could to fight the spread. They say it is now time for the community to step up.

ISSUE: Education, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Cases fall as testing increases

DATE:09/04/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

The positivity rate at Illinois State University went down Friday as 105 additional students tested positive for coronavirus.

ISU's COVID total is now almost 13-hundred and the positivity rate is 20%.

Meanwhile, Illinois Wesleyan University Thursday reported three additional COVID cases among students, the running total now 71.

IWU dean of students Karla Carney-Hall says surveillance testing will start next week to help monitor the spread of the virus.

Approximately 100 students will be tested each week at the Shirk Center.

ISSUE: Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Gas tax hike on Normal agenda

DATE:09/08/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3 pm

Normal town staffers want to know if elected officials are open to the idea of raising the local gasoline tax to the same level charged in neighboring Bloomington.

Staffers have scheduled a evening work session for this Tuesday evening to gauge the town council's appetite for collecting additional gas tax dollars, just like their Twin-City counterparts did last year.

Normal currently collects four cents per gallon, while Bloomington doubled its gas tax to eight cents per gallon last year to pay for various road improvements.

Normal has its own list of road projects, and the motor fuel tax could also be used to cover the cost of raising the local government's contribution to Connect Transit, which is Bloomington-Normal's public transportation system.

Earlier this year, the Connect to the Future Working Group recommended the bus system request an additional \$100,000 a year in subsidies from Normal and a \$150,000 annual subsidy increase from Bloomington.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports no final action is expected from Normal's council on Tuesday, but staffers beginning budget planning for next fiscal year want to know where elected leaders stand on the gas tax, said Normal City Manager Pam Reece.

The council's virtual work session starts at 6 p.m., prior to the regularly scheduled council meeting at 7 p.m.

ISSUE: Crime, Education

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Charges dropped against Unit 5 teacher

DATE:09/08/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

McLean County prosecutors have dismissed all charges against a former Unit 5 teacher accused of sexually molesting two first graders in his class when he taught at Glenn Elementary School in Normal.

In a motion filed Tuesday, the State's Attorney's Office dropped charges against 48-year-old Jonathon Hovey of Forsyth, because of "unavailable witnesses."

Hovey faced two counts of predatory criminal sexual assault and six counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse, alleging he inappropriately touched one of the children in 2004 and the other in 2017.

Our news partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports the state has the right to refile the charges. Both prosecutors as well as Hovey's lawyer, Tristan Bullington, declined to comment.

The charges against Hovey were initially filed in August 2019.

ISSUE: Crime, Politics, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Tavern in court for not following mandates

DATE:09/08/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

The Bloomington liquor commission will meet Thursday to discuss the status of Cadillac Jacks liquor license.

According to a news release, Bloomington Police performed an estimated 50 COVID-19 compliance checks with various establishments over the weekend with an initial focus on downtown. Of the checks, three establishments were issued noncompliance notices as provided by state law with most adhering to the rules once given notice.

The city says Cadillac Jacks, located at 1507 South Main Street, was observed to be noncompliant with mandated IDPH emergency rules on four separate occasions Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Two weeks ago, Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner, who also serves as the city's liquor commissioner, issued a stern warning to establishments that don't follow coronavirus safety guidelines. BPD has been conducting compliance checks for masking, distancing and occupancy in response to the local uptick in COVID cases.

The liquor commission hearing will be held at 4 p.m. at city hall.

ISSUE: Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Coins stolen, suspects still on the run

DATE:09/11/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Bloomington police are asking for the public's help to identify two suspects who stole multiple gold coins from a pawn shop.

Police say the incident happened August 31st when two suspects entered the pawn shop and asked to see a variety of gold and silver items. Authorities say during negotiations to buy the items, the women were able to steal multiple gold coins

The suspects are described as two Hispanic women, one in her 20s, the other in her 50s, both wearing a COVID mask and hat.

Anyone with information is asked to contact BPD or McLean County Crime Stoppers.

ISSUE: Education, Community, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: IHSA protests planned

DATE:09/15/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

A rally will be held in Chicago and Springfield this weekend to support getting high school students back on the field.

The “Let Us Play” event will aim to fill the grounds of the Thompson Center and State Capitol with coaches, players, parents and supporters of returning all fall sports to action.

East St. Louis head football coach Darren Sunkett is one of the organizers of the event and he says they have a plan to play football in just a few weeks.

Currently Illinois and Minnesota are the only states in the Midwest who have no plan to play high school football this fall.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Senator has a message for the White House

DATE:09/16/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin is trying to send a message to Congress and the White House regarding the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Senator told WJBC's Scott Miller, politicians need to keep their hands-off vaccine developments and leave it to the scientists.

President Trump said during an interview Tuesday on "Fox & Friends" that a vaccine could be approved in a matter of weeks. However, researchers say a vaccine won't be available until mid-2021.

You can read more about this story on our website at W-J-B-C dot-com.

ISSUE: Politics, Education

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Voter turnout turned into competition

DATE:09/22/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

On National Voter Registration Day, colleges and local officials from the Twin-Cities are kicking off a student voter registration competition.

The competition between Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, and Heartland Community College aims at getting students to exercise their right to vote.

Katy Strzeppek, the Director of the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning team at ISU, said even if students do not like the presidential candidates, it's still vital to vote.

Statistically speaking, McLean County Clerk Kathy Michael said that student voter turnout is normally high in a presidential election. Michael reminds students that if they've moved apartments or dorms, they will have to re-register to vote.

Since Heartland does not have student housing, Student Government Advisor Skylar Guimond said the campus has been using emails and social media to get students to register to vote.

ISSUE: Community, Politics, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: With pandemic closings city uses time to demo local pool

DATE:09/29/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Due to COVID-19, public pools in Bloomington did not open this season, lending a unique opportunity for a new aquatics project at O'Neil Pool.

Demolition of the pool started last week, as local officials are preparing to revamp the 46-year-old facility on the city's west side. Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason spoke with WJBC's Scott Miller.

Gleason says designs for the project are still being finalized and should be brought to the city council soon. A completion date for the project is yet to be determined, but Gleason is hoping construction will start by next year.

QUARTERLY REPORT July 2020- September 2020

ISSUE: Community, Health

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Hospital Fire Handled Quickly

DATE:07/01/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Firefighters from Normal had to put out a fire Tuesday afternoon at Advocate BroMenn Medical Center.

Fire crews were called to the hospital around 3 o'clock and saw smoke coming from the roof on the east side of the building.

Firefighters located smoke coming from a roof vent leading to an air handler unit. Once inside the building, firefighters were able to gain access to the mechanical room which housed the air handler to extinguish the fire.

Fire damage was isolated to the air handler, the ductwork, the roof fan assembly, and the surrounding materials between the roof and the ceiling of the mechanical room.

During the incident, only the affected area of the hospital was evacuated. Hospital operations were otherwise not affected and no patients were relocated.

A dollar estimate of damage is not available and the cause of the fire is still under investigation.

ISSUE: Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Traffic Stop leads to weapons arrest

DATE:07/01/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

A 16-year-old boy from Bloomington was arrested Tuesday night for having a gun in his waistband.

Bloomington Police made a traffic stop around 10:20 near Roosevelt Avenue and Market Street for an equipment violation. BPD says during the traffic stop, one of the passengers attempted to run away shortly after handing over a small amount of cannabis.

When the passenger attempted to flee, officers arrested the passenger and placed him into handcuffs after a short struggle. Police located a loaded 9 mm handgun with an extended magazine in the boy's waistband.

One officer sustained a minor injury from the arrest and the suspect was not injured.

The boy was arrested for unlawful use of a weapon, unlawful possession of ammunition, and illegal transportation of cannabis.

ISSUE: Community, Business, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Phase Four Remains in Effect

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DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

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Even though Clay County Circuit Judge Michael McHaney ruled in Bailey's favor it doesn't mean everything goes back to pre-pandemic ways.

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McCue is an area coordinator of university housing services at Illinois State University. He's wheelchair-bound, apparently meeting one of the demands of disability advocates for a voice on the transit board. Town officials said McCue promoted accessibility for the disabled in restaurants and other businesses while working for convention and visitors bureaus in Oklahoma and Ohio.

Two council members, including Nord, did not object to McCue's qualifications, but they expressed frustration the council was not able to talk to McCue before the vote.

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HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

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Morehead adds it was not an easy decision, but the last thing they want in the current health situation is to have large crowds gathering.

Since 1977 it only missed one year, because of a severe thunderstorm.

The Trades & Labor is exploring social media and other options to mark the holiday and give voice to workers' concerns.

ISSUE: Business, COVID-19, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Pot numbers climb during Pandemic

DATE:07/09/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Adult-use marijuana sales in Illinois continued to climb, with June setting another record.

Total sales for adult-use marijuana came in at almost 48 million dollars, the highest month for sales of the year, and three million dollars higher than May's numbers, the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation reported Tuesday.

According to news partner HOI-ABC, in-state residents spent more than 35.2 million dollars on adult-use marijuana and out-of-state residents over 12.3 million dollars.

Combined, in-state and out-of-state residents bought about one hundred thousand adult-use items in June.

Since January 1, Illinois has had a total of 239 million dollars in sales.

However, the IDFPR report did not include taxes collected.

ISSUE: Business, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Rivian receives first 2020 investment

DATE:07/11/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

Another investment is coming to Rivian - the first for 2020.

In a statement from the company, Rivian announced an investment round of \$2.5 billion led by funds and accounts advised by T. Rowe Price Associates.

Participants in this investment round include Soros Fund Management LLC, Coatue, Fidelity Management and Research Company, and Baron Capital Group. Existing shareholders Amazon and funds managed by BlackRock also participated.

Rivian Founder and CEO RJ Scaringe says the company is focused on the launch of the R1T, R1S and Amazon delivery vehicles. All three are expected to launch in 2021.

Additional details about this investment haven't been disclosed at this time.

ISSUE: Community, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:A stand for social justice

DATE:07/15/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

About 30 people gathered on the lawn of the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts Tuesday, including Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner, to take part in a "die in".

The demonstration included people holding up tombstones with the names of those killed by police, and when a symbolic "gunshot" rang out and the names were said, protesters sat on the ground.

Mayor Renner addressed the crowd, saying we must fight for the better part of human beings.

He went on to say too many people in power, including the president of the United States, appeal to the worst in people, and that's also not what the Twin Cities are about.

The protest, hosted by Stand Up For Social Justice, also addressed systemic racism in the healthcare, housing, and collegiate fields.

ISSUE: Community, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Grant issued for LGBTQI+ Community

DATE:07/18/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

A local organization will be distributing a grant of over 12-thousand dollars to LGBTQI+ community members who have been hit financially by the pandemic.

Prairie Pride Coalition is partnering with Equality Illinois to help LGBTQI+ community members in McLean, Livingston, and DeWitt counties.

Prairie Pride Coalition president Dave Bentlin says the grant is the largest ever secured by the organization.

He says applicants must be 18 or older to qualify. A link to the application is on our website - WJBC.com.

ISSUE: Education, Community, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Local schools plan fall return

DATE:07/21/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

District 87 has released its plan for the fall semester - giving students an option to return to in-person learning or continue remote learning at home.

Superintendent Dr. Barry Reilly says families will choose between these two options for the entire fall semester. Reilly tells WJBC's Scott Miller students and staff in buildings will be required to wear a face mask.

As for other measures, Reilly says all schools will be deep-cleaned and disinfected every night. Each classroom will be equipped with cleaning supplies to spot clean high-traffic areas throughout the day.

If a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, District 87 will work in cooperation with the McLean County Health Department and Illinois Department of Public Health to determine appropriate measures. You can find the complete District 87 Back to School Plan on WJBC.com.

ISSUE: Education, Community, Business

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Terminations postponed on campus

DATE:08/02/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3 pm

Faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University voted to postpone termination notices to employees affected by the decision to discontinue certain programs earlier this month.

A 111-13 majority voted during a meeting Thursday night for the Council on University Programs and Policy (CUPP) on if the school should wait on sending out the notices. Following the vote, President Georgia Nugent issued a letter to faculty members explaining administrative action going forward.

Nugent states that no faculty members in affected programs will get termination notices for the time being, and that the school will use the month of August to try and develop new positions for some members of the staff.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC says the letter also states that after August 31, any affected faculty member who has not been placed in a position or accommodated through other "arrangements" will get a termination letter. The handbook says that each terminated faculty member will stay employed at the University for a year after their letter is issued.

No follow-up meeting is scheduled at this time in regards to how the process will be handled.

ISSUE: Education, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Graduation cancelled for Normal West

DATE:08/04/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

Hundreds of 2020 high school grads are part of a club they didn't sign up for - not walking the stage and receiving their diplomas in person.

Though some districts opted for virtual ceremonies that wasn't the case for Normal Community High and Normal West's seniors.

Both schools were scheduled to have graduation events at Corn Crib Stadium, but in a post on Facebook, the schools said "Due to the current and upcoming weather...graduation ceremonies have been canceled. We are sad that weather and the pandemic have changed how the Class of 2020 ended their high school career."

A Unit 5 spokesperson said the district made the decision, not the facility. The Facebook post from Unit 5 said there is no alternate date, so the graduation ceremonies will not be made up.

ISSUE: Politics, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Police Chief stepping down

DATE:08/06/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

The leader of the Bloomington Police Department announced Thursday that he will retire in September after serving in the role for one year.

Police Chief Dan Donath was selected for the position in August of 2019 by Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason. Gleason says Donath's decision was unexpected.

Donath, who started his career with BPD in 1994, says he made the choice after careful consideration and says it's time to close this chapter of his life.

Gleason says current assistant chief Greg Scott will serve as interim chief starting September 1st. The city manager says Scott will serve as the interim for a longer period of time because the city will not start a search for its next police chief until the start of the new year.

The city held a national search after Chief Clay Wheeler retired in June last year. Donath was a finalist along with Parkland College Chief William Colbrook.

ISSUE: Crime, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:COVID scams start to surface

DATE:08/09/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

As the country continues to deal with the coronavirus pandemic while getting back to work, scams are targeting individuals trying to get back on their feet.

Connie Unruh with the TS Institute indicates there are fake job postings popping up on all sorts of platforms. From job boards to social media, she indicates maybe dig a little further before offering up critical information an employer would want.

Unruh urges residents to be on the lookout for the unemployment scams.

If you suspect any form of identity theft, contact authorities immediately.

ISSUE: Crime, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Com-Ed Settlement in the works

DATE:08/11/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3 pm

A federal judge was asked Monday to force Commonwealth Edison, Mike Madigan and others to pay back those who were affected by an alleged extortion scandal.

The group of ratepayers said “at least” \$450 million should be split among all those damaged by the scheme.

The number of those affected could grow to more than 3.8 million, according to a lawsuit filed by attorneys representing six residents that resided in the Chicagoland area at some time in the last decade.

In an agreement to avoid prosecution, ComEd officials in July acknowledged to the U.S. government they funneled money through contractors to colleagues and friends of Madigan.

ISSUE: Community, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Grant awarded for infrastructure work

DATE:08/20/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

A \$590,000 state grant will fund a costly infrastructure repair in the Town of Normal.

With that money, the town government will replace the damaged water main on Oak Street in Normal, 105th District State Rep. Dan Brady (R-Bloomington) announced on Wednesday.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports the funding is awarded through the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (DCEO) Fast-Track Public Infrastructure Grants program, said Brady in a news release.

He said the grant is in addition to \$240,000 in DCEO Business Interruption Grants that local communities are sharing to help with Coronavirus-related difficulties.

"With all of our added challenges this year, local budgets are stretched to the breaking point. I am very appreciative of the Administration and DCEO for this much-needed assistance," Rep. Brady said in a prepared statement.

ISSUE: Education, COVID-19, Health

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Saliva test given emergency approval

DATE:08/20/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3 pm

Months ago, the University of Illinois announced that they were planning on being able to widely test students and faculty on campus for COVID-19 with a saliva test.

The U of I has been granted emergency approval to use the test and now there comes hope that the state of Illinois can have access to the test that could lead to widespread testing of the general population.

Dr. Martin Burke, the Associate Dean for the U of I College of Medicine, says the real impact of the test will be that it is fast and cheap.

Burke says the salvia test also cuts down on other laboratory material that is needed when using nasal swabs.

ISSUE: Politics, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Congressman says focus needs to shift from USPS

DATE:08/21/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

One central Illinois congressman says Congress should focus on a new stimulus package instead of the postal service calling the lack of a vote a "tragedy."

U.S. House lawmakers could vote on a \$25 billion emergency funding bill for the postal service this weekend. U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis says the blame for not voting on a stimulus lies on the shoulders of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Earlier this month, postal workers warned new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy implemented cuts to overtime and limited post office hours.

Postal workers are worried that could cause a delay in the vote by mail process this November.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:COVID count doubles in just one day

DATE:08/23/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

The McLean County Health Department reported 98 new cases of COVID-19 Sunday, nearly doubling the previous day's record of 53 cases and bringing the county total to just over one thousand.

The majority of new cases are people in their 20s.

At this time 311 people are isolating at home. Four are currently in the hospital while 713 people have been released from isolation and are considered to be recovered from the disease.

There have been 16 lives lost in McLean County.

The cumulative positivity rate currently sits at 2.6%, and the rolling 7-day positivity rate has jumped to 6.2%.

In Uptown Normal the Pub 2 in has closed its doors after an employee, who was asymptomatic, tested positive for the disease.

Across the street from the Pub 2, Brewe-ha's will also be closed as a precautionary measure for deep cleaning and employee testing.

Sunday evening, Maggie Miley's posted on Facebook that the restaurant will also be closing after a positive test from an employee. The social media post said they would be sanitizing and deep cleaning the restaurant. The entire staff at Maggie's will be tested, and no member will return back to work until they receive negative Covid-19 test results.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Cases of coronavirus top 200 in one day

DATE:08/30/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Coronavirus cases are on the rise in McLean County with health officials announcing 219 new cases of COVID-19 on Sunday, increasing the county's total to 1,621 cases.

Health officials report 702 individuals are isolating at home. Four individuals are hospitalized, with one currently in the ICU.

McLean County Health Department Administrator Jessica McKnight reports 899 individuals have been released from isolation and are considered recovered.

There have been 16 COVID-related deaths in the county.

Over 45,100 tests have resulted in a cumulative positivity rate of 3.5%. The rolling 7-day positivity rate increased to 10.1%.

Meanwhile, Illinois State University announced 187 more students tested positive for COVID-19 increasing the campus total to 933 cases.

In the last 7-days, school officials report 732 students have tested positive for COVID-19 resulting in a 7-day rolling positivity rate of 23.5%.

ISSUE: Community, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Contact Tracers falling behind

DATE:09/01/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3 pm

McLean County has seen such a surge in COVID-19 cases, contract tracers are no longer able to keep up.

At Monday's board of health meeting, the health department and the board brainstormed on what they could do to help slow down the rise of cases in McLean County.

Health Dept. Administrator Jessica McKnight said the best thing that can be done is have contact tracers reach out to those who may have been infected before they go out, but their limited number of contact tracers is making that difficult.

McKnight says the health department hired 10 additional contact tracers, bringing the total to 30, with about seven working directly with ISU, and they are still interviewing and taking applications for more.

Vice Chairman Carlo Robustelli said the town needs to invest in more contact tracers and McKnight says-money isn't the problem.

Contact tracers are expected to work four to five hours per day, seven days a week. McKnight says it has been difficult finding people willing to commit to that schedule.

News partner, Heart of Illinois ABC reports the board, along with McKnight, ultimately agreed they were doing all they could to fight the spread. They say it is now time for the community to step up.

ISSUE: Education, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Cases fall as testing increases

DATE:09/04/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

The positivity rate at Illinois State University went down Friday as 105 additional students tested positive for coronavirus.

ISU's COVID total is now almost 13-hundred and the positivity rate is 20%.

Meanwhile, Illinois Wesleyan University Thursday reported three additional COVID cases among students, the running total now 71.

IWU dean of students Karla Carney-Hall says surveillance testing will start next week to help monitor the spread of the virus.

Approximately 100 students will be tested each week at the Shirk Center.

ISSUE: Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Gas tax hike on Normal agenda

DATE:09/08/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3 pm

Normal town staffers want to know if elected officials are open to the idea of raising the local gasoline tax to the same level charged in neighboring Bloomington.

Staffers have scheduled a evening work session for this Tuesday evening to gauge the town council's appetite for collecting additional gas tax dollars, just like their Twin-City counterparts did last year.

Normal currently collects four cents per gallon, while Bloomington doubled its gas tax to eight cents per gallon last year to pay for various road improvements.

Normal has its own list of road projects, and the motor fuel tax could also be used to cover the cost of raising the local government's contribution to Connect Transit, which is Bloomington-Normal's public transportation system.

Earlier this year, the Connect to the Future Working Group recommended the bus system request an additional \$100,000 a year in subsidies from Normal and a \$150,000 annual subsidy increase from Bloomington.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports no final action is expected from Normal's council on Tuesday, but staffers beginning budget planning for next fiscal year want to know where elected leaders stand on the gas tax, said Normal City Manager Pam Reece.

The council's virtual work session starts at 6 p.m., prior to the regularly scheduled council meeting at 7 p.m.

ISSUE: Crime, Education

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Charges dropped against Unit 5 teacher

DATE:09/08/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

McLean County prosecutors have dismissed all charges against a former Unit 5 teacher accused of sexually molesting two first graders in his class when he taught at Glenn Elementary School in Normal.

In a motion filed Tuesday, the State's Attorney's Office dropped charges against 48-year-old Jonathon Hovey of Forsyth, because of "unavailable witnesses."

Hovey faced two counts of predatory criminal sexual assault and six counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse, alleging he inappropriately touched one of the children in 2004 and the other in 2017.

Our news partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports the state has the right to refile the charges. Both prosecutors as well as Hovey's lawyer, Tristan Bullington, declined to comment.

The charges against Hovey were initially filed in August 2019.

ISSUE: Crime, Politics, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Tavern in court for not following mandates

DATE:09/08/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

The Bloomington liquor commission will meet Thursday to discuss the status of Cadillac Jacks liquor license.

According to a news release, Bloomington Police performed an estimated 50 COVID-19 compliance checks with various establishments over the weekend with an initial focus on downtown. Of the checks, three establishments were issued noncompliance notices as provided by state law with most adhering to the rules once given notice.

The city says Cadillac Jacks, located at 1507 South Main Street, was observed to be noncompliant with mandated IDPH emergency rules on four separate occasions Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Two weeks ago, Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner, who also serves as the city's liquor commissioner, issued a stern warning to establishments that don't follow coronavirus safety guidelines. BPD has been conducting compliance checks for masking, distancing and occupancy in response to the local uptick in COVID cases.

The liquor commission hearing will be held at 4 p.m. at city hall.

ISSUE: Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Coins stolen, suspects still on the run

DATE:09/11/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Bloomington police are asking for the public's help to identify two suspects who stole multiple gold coins from a pawn shop.

Police say the incident happened August 31st when two suspects entered the pawn shop and asked to see a variety of gold and silver items. Authorities say during negotiations to buy the items, the women were able to steal multiple gold coins

The suspects are described as two Hispanic women, one in her 20s, the other in her 50s, both wearing a COVID mask and hat.

Anyone with information is asked to contact BPD or McLean County Crime Stoppers.

ISSUE: Education, Community, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: IHSA protests planned

DATE:09/15/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

A rally will be held in Chicago and Springfield this weekend to support getting high school students back on the field.

The “Let Us Play” event will aim to fill the grounds of the Thompson Center and State Capitol with coaches, players, parents and supporters of returning all fall sports to action.

East St. Louis head football coach Darren Sunkett is one of the organizers of the event and he says they have a plan to play football in just a few weeks.

Currently Illinois and Minnesota are the only states in the Midwest who have no plan to play high school football this fall.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Politics

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Senator has a message for the White House

DATE:09/16/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin is trying to send a message to Congress and the White House regarding the COVID-19 vaccine.

The Senator told WJBC's Scott Miller, politicians need to keep their hands-off vaccine developments and leave it to the scientists.

President Trump said during an interview Tuesday on "Fox & Friends" that a vaccine could be approved in a matter of weeks. However, researchers say a vaccine won't be available until mid-2021.

You can read more about this story on our website at W-J-B-C dot-com.

ISSUE: Politics, Education

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Voter turnout turned into competition

DATE:09/22/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and 3pm

On National Voter Registration Day, colleges and local officials from the Twin-Cities are kicking off a student voter registration competition.

The competition between Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, and Heartland Community College aims at getting students to exercise their right to vote.

Katy Strzeppek, the Director of the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning team at ISU, said even if students do not like the presidential candidates, it's still vital to vote.

Statistically speaking, McLean County Clerk Kathy Michael said that student voter turnout is normally high in a presidential election. Michael reminds students that if they've moved apartments or dorms, they will have to re-register to vote.

Since Heartland does not have student housing, Student Government Advisor Skylar Guimond said the campus has been using emails and social media to get students to register to vote.

ISSUE: Community, Politics, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: With pandemic closings city uses time to demo local pool

DATE:09/29/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Due to COVID-19, public pools in Bloomington did not open this season, lending a unique opportunity for a new aquatics project at O'Neil Pool.

Demolition of the pool started last week, as local officials are preparing to revamp the 46-year-old facility on the city's west side. Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason spoke with WJBC's Scott Miller.

Gleason says designs for the project are still being finalized and should be brought to the city council soon. A completion date for the project is yet to be determined, but Gleason is hoping construction will start by next year.