

MERRY CHRISTMAS: The Christmas story P6

Township, City do not reach agreement on fire service

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Sandstone Township has not approved a contract with the Sandstone Fire Department or any other department for fire services in 2022.

What this means for Sandstone Township residents is unclear.

Sandstone Township chairman Jon Dorau said, "We are not against fire protection, we want to provide that for our residents."

He explained part of the reason they did not approve a contract came down to cost and some contract details.

The township's fire service contract

for 2021 was approximately \$31,000; this went up from approximately \$14,000 in previous years. The proposed cost for the year 2022 was initially \$28,062; after negotiations between the City of Sandstone and all of the townships they serve, the cost for Sandstone Township was reduced to \$20,044.

Sandstone City Administrator Kathy George said the reason for cost increases included phasing out the 30% reduction that had been applied during previous years and increased costs for equipment and supplies.

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MIKE DRAHOSH | PINE COUNTY COURIER

East Central Elementary hosts 'Winter Adventure'

The East Central 1st through 4th grade performed for family and friends last Friday. They performed classics such as Feliz Navidad and Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer as well as some new favorites.

New city employee looks forward to projects, programs

BY JAMIE LUND
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Rental inspector, check, animal control service, check, and ready to build new relationships with the Sandstone community, a big check.

Sirena Samuelson is the new Community Service Partner and is ready to tackle all of that and more.

"Sandstone is in my heart," Samuelson said. She said she is excited to get the training and get to work on her long list of projects as well as get to know local business owners and community members. Other projects include an animal control service and restarting the defunct Neighborhood Watch program.

According to Kathy George, city administrator, the city council had been tossing the idea of creating a new position to deal with a variety of issues for several years.

"It started with the frustration in town with nuisance properties, specifically, drug houses and how the situation is very scary and nerve-wracking for neighbors," George said. "The Sheriff's Department, covering the whole County, just doesn't seem to have the resources to help deter these situations... So, after more discussion, we decided to rename it Community Service Partner and focus more on building relationships - with local business owners, residents, and Sheriff's Deputies, in an effort to make Sandstone a nicer place to live and work."

Samuelson said she will be meeting with the Pine City Fire Marshal to learn how to conduct rental inspections and learn the fire codes.

She grew up in Sandstone, lived life, then returned full circle to her hometown. She began the new position last week.

"I'm excited to help create a safer community," Samuelson said. Other job duties include providing resources and assistance to city residents with safety concerns that do not require the assistance of law enforcement, nuisance issues and crime prevention, participating in a variety of local events and activities and more.

Anyone interested in volunteering for the Neighborhood Watch program should call Samuelson at 320-245-5241.



Samuelson

