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Hackman reclaims chair seat

Cerwinske one of two to nominate former chair, who wins position on 3-2 vote

By BOB FENSKE
editor@nhtrib.com

The Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors elected a new chairman during its first meeting of 2025 this past Thursday morning, but he's not new to the job.

Board members voted 3-2 to have Jake Hackman lead them for the next calendar year, and he will replace Scott

Cerwinske, who represents the Nashua area, as the head of the board in what, for some courthouse observers, was a surprise.

Supervisor Steve Breitbach opened the nominations for chairman by nominating Cerwinske while board members Travis Suckow nominated Hackman. Cerwinske, though, showed his proverbial hand by also nominating Hackman.

Hackman, Suckow and Cerwinske all voted for Hackman while Breitbach and new District 4 Supervisor Issac Carter voted for Cerwinske.

Hackman is the longest tenured supervisor and won a third term to represent District 3 in this past November's election. He served as board chairman from 2018 to 2020. In 2021, the late Rick Holthaus won the chairmanship by a 3-2 vote over Hackman. A year

later, following Holthaus' death, Hackman withdrew from the chairman race after the remaining four supervisors deadlocked between him and Matt Kuhn 2-2. In 2023, Kuhn was re-elected to the chairman's seat on a 4-1 vote over Hackman, and a year ago, Cerwinske won the chairman's position with three votes while

Breitbach and Travis Suckow each received one.

Hackman took over as chairman immediately after the vote Thursday.

SEE CHAIR, 2



All good things must come to an end

New Hampton High School English teacher Rick Meisner (above) talks with his English 10 students during class while middle school students begin to fill up the lunch room on Monday morning.

While teachers and staff members headed back to work a week ago today (Thursday), students began the "second half" of the school year on Friday.

But here's a comforting thought for the kids who liked that almost two-week break from classes and homework: One hundred-thirty-four days from today, you'll be wrapping up the 2024-25 academic year.

Hey, we at least tried, right?
Bob Fenske/Tribune



Board agrees on raises for county's elected officials

Supervisors reach a consensus for wage increases ranging from 2.5 to 8 percent

By BOB FENSKE
editor@nhtrib.com

Chickasaw County's elected officials will receive pay increases ranging from 2.5% to 8% in fiscal year 2025-26, if a consensus reached by the Board of Supervisors Monday remains in place.

Supervisors also agreed to recommend to its four autonomous boards that they limit pay raises to its employees to 3%.

The consensus reached came after a discussion that was lively at times, especially when it came to increasing the salaries of the five supervisors.

The subject came up when New Hampton resident Terry Johnson, who frequently attends board meetings, wanted to know how the supervisor were going to "justify" pay increases, which they are required to do under a new law that allowed the county to disband its Compensation Board and have supervisors do that board's work.

That's when Conservation Board Director Chad Humpal went to bat for the Board of Supervisors.

"I don't think it's fair that we sit here year after year, and we push 0 percent increases on this board," Humpal said. "I mean this is the most important board we have in the county, and we have people sitting every year saying they should take no raise? That is not normal, nor is that realistic. I mean I don't understand that theory. You put these guys in uncomfortable situations and it isn't right."

Johnson, though, pressed his point about supervisors justifying their work, if you will, and County Attorney David Laudner said he believed that Monday's discussion that lasted for more than an hour was doing just that.

"There's nothing in the code that says that they have to give a written report and cite 18 things or anything," he said. "It's wide open. There's no precedent whatsoever on what they have to do. ... I think they're doing what they're supposed to be doing right now, during this discussion."

In past years, the county attorney, auditor, recorder, sheriff and treasurer each had one "representative" on the Compensation Board while the Board of Supervisors had two. The Comp Board would then make recommendations to supervisors, who could accept the wage increases recommended by the Comp Board.

SEE PAY RAISES, 2

City Council takes initial step on capital projects

After months of discussion, council members unanimously vote to take step to 'issue debt'

By BOB FENSKE
editor@nhtrib.com

The New Hampton City Council on Monday night took the first step in borrowing millions of dollars to fund future capital projects, but when — or even if — those projects will become a reality remain unanswered.

Council members unanimously approved a resolution "to direct city staff to initiate the proceedings with financial and

legal council to issue debt for a municipal corporate purpose."

For the past several months, city leaders have held numerous "committee as a whole meetings" — essentially work sessions — to discuss a number of capital improvement projects, but a decision on proceeding with the projects eluded them until Monday night.

Those projects range from street and utility improvements

SEE CITY COUNCIL, 5



Kelly Terpstra/Tribune

Two pretty good days!

New Hampton/Turkey Valley girls wrestling coaches Josh Holthaus and Caleb Ciavarelli watch the action on the mat last Thursday at the Osage Invitational, and when the week was over, the coaches had plenty to celebrate.

SEE STORIES, Pages 10 and 12

County moves forward on TIF with approval of two resolutions

After Bassett approves joint agreement, supervisors OK urban-renewal area, ability to capture increased tax revenue

By BOB FENSKE
editor@nhtrib.com

Chickasaw County leaders on Tuesday took the first step in capturing millions of dollars of tax-increment financing (TIF) that they would use for a variety of projects — ranging from road work to updating the Secondary Roads shop to constructing a new storage building for the Conservation Board to remodeling the current Sheriff's Office building and constructing a new

24-hour facility.

The two resolutions approved by the Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors — one designating an urban-renewal area and one allowing the county to capture increased tax collections from the Chickasaw Wind Farm — do not necessarily mean that all, or any, of the projects will become a reality.

They do, however, give supervisors the option to

SEE SUPERVISORS, 5

Reduced levy rate

Chickasaw County's General Basic tax levy rate will drop during 2025-26 fiscal year

Page 5

Another record

New Hampton's Kleen rolls a 288 as the Chickasaws pick up another win

Page 9

Trojan wins

Turkey Valley basketball teams pick up wins, albeit on different nights

Page 11

Briefs

North Fayette grad to work in mental health field at F'burg clinic

Community Memorial Hospital of Sumner recently welcomed Aubrey Klosterman, LMHC, to the CMH and Fredericksburg Medical Clinics.

Klosterman started seeing patients in October.

Mental health counseling is a new service to CMH. Klosterman will provide therapy services for individuals, primarily adolescents and adults, utilizing a person-centered approach while adding in tools from other therapeutic modalities.

Klosterman is a graduate of North Fayette High School and obtained a bachelor's in psychology and master's in mental health counseling at the University of Northern Iowa.

"How the mind works is very intriguing to me" Klosterman says. "I chose clinical mental health counseling because I wanted to work one-on-one with clients for healing and growth.

"My goal is to create a non-judgmental space for patients to come express and process safely," Klosterman says. "It's keeping the human in humanity by incorporating compassion so that it might transform lives. People can be good, and each individual does matter. Being open-minded is very important to me. We might not always agree, but we can try to understand."

Klosterman and her husband keep busy with their Flame-Point Siamese cat and a Blue Quaker parrot, along with spending time with family and friends, boating, motorcycling, golfing and going on adventures.

Classic Tractor of Northeast Iowa club party set for Jan. 18

Classic Tractors of Northeast Iowa — a non-profit organization that donates its proceeds to local food pantries, NICC Student Crisis Fund, local celebrations and more — invites antique tractor enthusiasts, spouses and friends to its annual Christmas party beginning at 11 a.m. Jan. 18 at Johnson's Restaurant, 916 High St. NE, in Elkader.

It's a great way to meet "Old Iron" lovers to learn about the club, share pictures, memories and discuss 2025 club activities. Rather than an evening event the party begins with social hour at 11 a.m., a buffet dinner at noon followed by a program.

The menu includes chicken, roast beef, mashed potatoes, corn, full salad bar, chicken soup, chili, and beverage. Paid 2025 Club Members receive a \$5 discount on their meals. In the event of bad weather, the party will be Jan 25. Call Denny at 563 379-0817 or Jan at 563-380-7600 for reservations or more information.

No classes for New Hampton students on Jan. 20

New Hampton Community Schools and St. Joseph Community School students will soon get a three-day weekend, but that doesn't mean the teachers will enjoy the game.

That's because the two school districts will have a professional development day on Monday, Jan. 20. The districts also have another professional development day set for Monday, Feb. 17.

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The longest tenured member of the Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors, Jake Hackman (left), takes over the duties of board chairman from Scott Cerwinski (right) during last Thursday's meeting, the first of 2025 for county leaders.

Cerwinski will serve as vice chairman of Board of Supervisors

CHAIR: FROM 1

and although he said that he had "no idea" how Thursday's vote would go, he was prepared with a list of committee assignments for board members, who approved them unanimously.

Supervisors dealt with a number of routine items in a meeting that organized the board for the year.

They elected Cerwinski as the board's vice chairman by a 3-2 vote over Breitbach, who served in the position during 2024.

The vote was the same as the chairman's vote as Hackman, Cerwinski and Suckow all favored the former chairman over the former vice chairman.

Board members also set the county mileage rate at 70 cents to match the IRS-allowed expense and approved meal reimbursement for those attending training or conducting business out of the county at \$50 a day.

That's an increase from the \$30 a day in 2024, but supervisors pointed out that it would bring all county employees in line

with the Sheriff's Office, which allows for the \$50 per day in meal reimbursement.

And supervisors "temporarily" designated the New Hampton Tribune and the Nashua Reporter as the official newspapers of the county, but they also declared a "contest."

Supervisors asked the publishers of the Reporter and the Fredericksburg Review to provide a list of "in-county" subscribers before officially deciding which paper will serve as the "second" legal newspaper for Chickasaw County.

Board members come to consensus on salaries for county's elected officials

PAY RAISES: FROM 1

or reduce them by the same percentage. The only exception was with the Board of Supervisors, who could decrease the Compensation Board's recommendations by any amount.

Last summer, supervisors decided to eliminate the "middle man" and disband the Compensation Board, and in December, elected officials stated their cases for wage increases.

Board members also discussed wage increases for so-called "non-union" employees of the county — ranging from office clerks to assistants to other office personnel — but decided to tackle the elected officials' wage increases first.

They finally settled on an 8 percent increase for the county attorney, 5 percent for the sheriff and 3 percent for the auditor, recorder and treasurer.

Board Chairman Jake Hackman pointed out that he understood Laudner's request for an 8 percent increase and pointed out that, unlike other county attorney offices, he shoulders all the attorney work in his office.



Chickasaw County Conservation Board Director Chad Humpal makes his budget presentation to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday morning, and one item he touched on was the need to "catch up" wages of two of his employees so that they are more in line with not only surrounding counties but also counties that are similar in size to Chickasaw County around the state. Humpal told supervisors Conservation Board members had approved 3 percent raises, plus an additional \$2,500 for the two employees, when the autonomous board adopted its budget the night before.

"The attorney's office is different, in my opinion, than most elected officials. He presented that he does not have a part-time attorney, that he does not contract for service," Hackman said. "He's covering the whole workload. If you go back to his budgets ... that budget [2019-20] is a lot higher than his current one by almost \$30,000. He is picking up the workload."

Hackman also pointed out that even with the "\$10,000 in adjustment" of Laudner's salary, Laudner would still be making less money than other county attorneys whose offices are set up in a similar fashion to Chickasaw County's.

"We all know what rural Iowa is doing," he said. "It's going to be hard to find a replacement. I'm not saying he's leaving. ... It's a challenge."

While Shawver had requested a 4 percent increase, Hackman pointed out that the similar jobs — police chiefs in cities with the same population as Chickasaw County, for example — "are all higher than us currently."

That led to a consensus to raise Shawver's salary in 2025-26 by 5 percent, and board members also reached agreement to raise the salaries of the auditor, recorder and treasurer by 3 percent.

That left them to consider their own salaries, and the board's newest member, Issac Carter, said he was willing to not adjust the supervisors' sala-

ries and fellow Supervisor Steve Breitbach said he would agree to zero percent but would go along with the rest of the board.

"I'm new so I'm going to stick with zero obviously," said Carter, who took over the District 4 seat on Jan. 1. "I've only been here for 2 weeks."

The remaining board members, though, settled on a 2.5 percent wage increase.

During the discussion on elected officials' salaries, board members also spent considerable time discussing potential other wage increases for county employees who are not part of unions that will receive a 4 percent increase in wages during the fiscal year that begins July 1.

"I think to get this all started," Supervisor Travis Suckow said, "let's throw a 4% in there and we can go from there," Suckow said. "I'm not saying we're going to stay there, but it can help us get some numbers figured out."

But instead of coming up with a concrete number, save for the county's autonomous boards, supervisors, in the end, took a more wait-and-see attitude.

They did ask those autonomous boards — Emergency Management, Public Health, Veterans Affairs and the Conservation Board — to limit wage increases to 3 percent. Those boards have control of their own budgets, but the

Board of Supervisors approves, as several supervisors said, "the bottom line" when it comes to how much they can spend.

County Engineer Roman Lensing said he was concerned on a couple of fronts when it came to his employees who are not represented by a union.

"My one fear is that if the union continues to exceed non-union wage increases, we're going to have the potential for workers making more than their foreman. ... I don't really see anyone wanting to be the shop foreman if they can make more as a mechanic," he said. "Aside from that, we are on the lower end of compensation for assistants. If other counties have openings, money talks. We did lose one previously due to that fact, besides benefits and proximity."

Hackman pondered how "do we get our low clerks up?" He pointed out that 2.5, 3 percent to them "is nothing compared to the elected officials."

The board chair said "this might be the year to some kind of dollar amount, [instead of] a 2.5 percent across the board. It's a catch-up year is what I'm stating."

Near the end of the meeting, though, Hackman responded to a question from Lensing about what kind of wage increases for his non-union employees he should put in his budget, saying "I think 3 percent unless you can justify the gap needed to do more."

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Community Foundation grant application deadline nears

The deadline to apply for 2025 Chickasaw County Foundation grants is fast approaching; in fact, those applications are due by 5 p.m. this coming Wednesday, Jan. 15.

Grants are awarded to projects within the program areas of arts and culture, community betterment, education and youth development, environment and animal welfare, and health and human services.

The online grant application can be found on the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa's website at www.cfneia.org/grants/grant-oppor-tunities.

Technical support will be available to applicants until 5 p.m. on Jan. 15. Grant recipients will be announced in March.

Grants are available to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and government entities.

Tax-exempt organizations classified as other than 501(c)(3) are also eligible, if and only if, the project is deemed charitable; please contact Dotti Thompson at 319-243-1358 or dthompson@cfneia.org to discuss the project's eligibility prior to submitting a proposal.

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It all adds up to baptism

Gospels are proof that we all see things from different perspectives

Last month I witnessed a car accident. No one got hurt, but the vehicles did. I was amazed that even driving slow can cause such damage.

One of the drivers called the police and both drivers got out to take photos for their insurance while I sat in my vehicle and waited for the police to come.

I was able to give the officer my version of the accident, left my information, and went on to get my errands done. The drivers and the officer thanked me for telling what I saw. I'm not

sure whether the drivers had the same story or not as I didn't stick around to find out.

Have you noticed that the four gospels have different versions of the same stories?

I'm guessing you have or someone has told you of this before. Isn't it strange how a group of people can see the same incident from different perspectives?

Is it what we focus on ... whatever catches our eye? Perhaps.

That seems to be happening in the gospel this

week. Luke's version is different than that of Matthew and Mark – Jesus is not baptized by John in Luke because John is in prison.

Jesus still gets baptized, the heavens are opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove, plus God's voice proclaimed Jesus beloved Son.

All the same results.

How good it is that we can have different perspectives on the same stories with mostly the same outcomes – even now in our time of

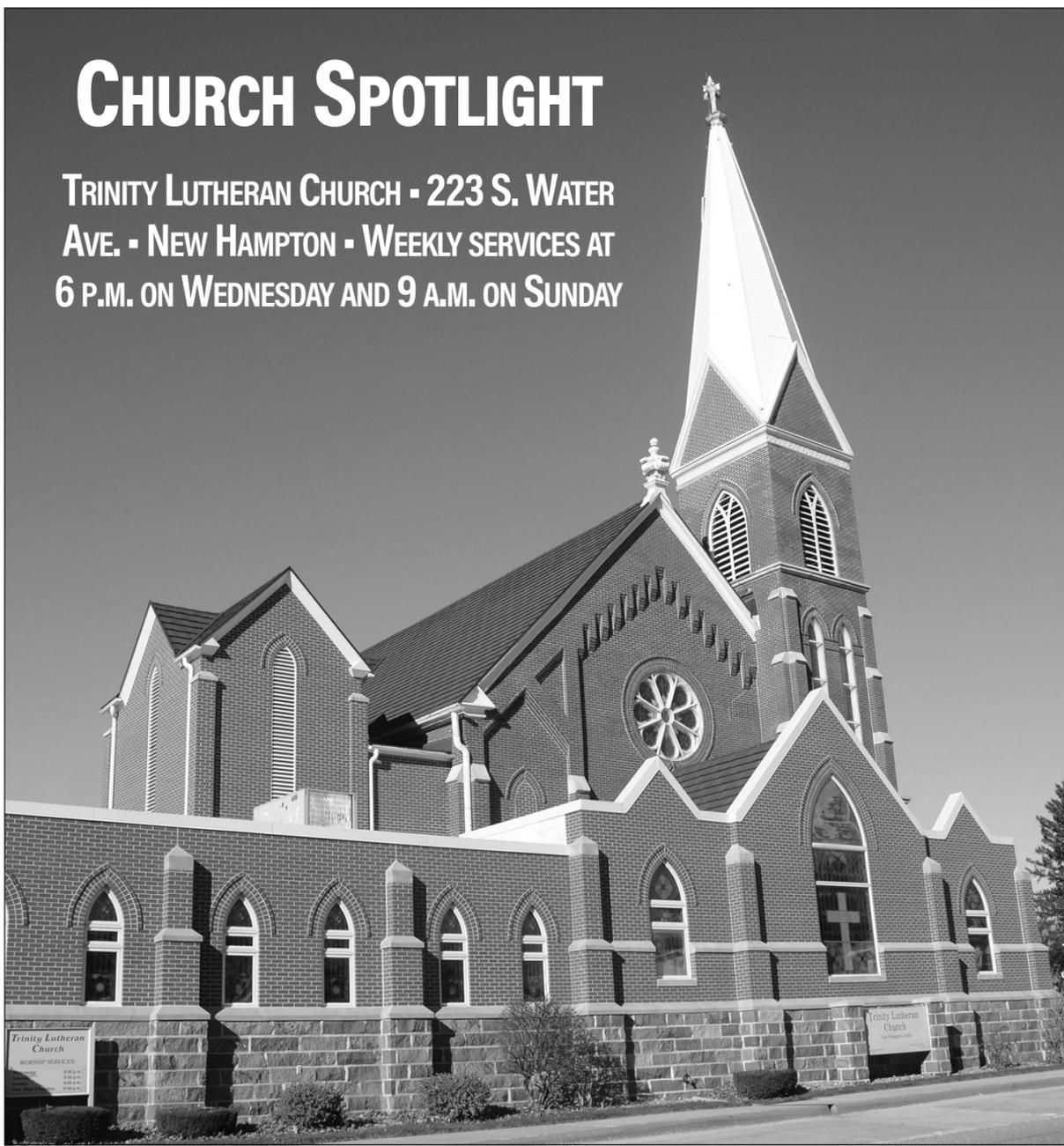


Pastor Sue Cira serves Immanuel Crane Creek Lutheran Church in rural Lawler and is also a transitional pastor at Trinity Lutheran in New Hampton.

beginning this new year of 2025. I hope you all have plenty of great stories to tell!

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know how to give good gifts to
your children, how much more will
your Father in heaven give the
Holy Spirit to those who ask him!
Luke 11:13



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Time for New Year's Financial Resolutions



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Now that the calendar has flipped, it's time for some New Year's resolutions. You could decide you're going to exercise more, lose weight, learn a new skill, reconnect with old friends — the possibilities are almost limitless. This year, why not add a few financial resolutions to your list?

Here are a few to consider:

- Reduce your debts. It may be easier said than done, but if you can cut down on your debt load, you'll increase your cash flow and have more money available to invest for your future. So, look for ways to lower your expenses and spending. You might find it helpful to use one of the budgeting apps available online.

- Boost your retirement savings. Try to put in as much as you can afford to your IRA and your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. If your salary goes up this year, you've got a good opportunity to increase your contributions to these retirement accounts. And once you turn 50, you can make pre-tax catch-up contributions for your 401(k) and traditional IRA. You might also want to review the investment mix within your 401(k) or similar plan to determine whether it's still providing the growth potential you need, given your risk tolerance and time horizon.

- Build an emergency fund. It's generally a good idea to maintain an emergency fund containing up to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account. Without such fund, you might be forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for short-term needs, such as an expensive auto or home repair.

- Keep funding your non-retirement goals. Your traditional IRA and 401(k) are good ways to save for retirement — but you likely have other goals, too, and you'll need to save and invest for them. So, for example, if you want your children

to go to college or receive some other type of post-secondary training, you might want to invest in a tax-advantaged 529 education savings plan. And if you have short-term goals, such as saving for a wedding or taking an overseas vacation, you might want to put some money away in a liquid account. For a short-term goal, you don't necessarily need to invest aggressively for growth — you just want the money to be there for you when you need it.

- Review your estate plans. If you haven't already created your estate plans, you may want to do so in 2025. Of course, if you're relatively young, you might not think you need to have estate plans in place just yet, but life is unpredictable, and the future is not ours to see. If you have already drawn up estate plans, you may want to review them, especially if you've recently experienced changes in your life and family situation, such as marriage, remarriage or the addition of a new child. Because estate planning can be complex, you'll want to work with a qualified legal professional. You may not be able to tackle all these resolutions in 2025. But by addressing as many of them as you can, you may find that, by the end of the year, you have made progress toward your goals and set yourself on a positive course for all the years to come.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

County General Basic levy rate will drop in 2025-26

Because valuation increase by more than 3 percent, supervisors required under state law to cut GB rate by 2 percent

By **BOB FENSKE**
editor@nhtrib.com

Budget season began on Monday for the Chickasaw County Board of Supervisors, and although county leaders are months away from certifying its 2025-26 budget and tax levy, they know one thing for sure.

The tax-levy rate for General Basic, one of three levy rates the board controls, will definitely drop in the fiscal year that begins July 1.

Board Chairman Jake Hackman on Monday said that county officials have confirmed that valuations in the county increased by more than 3 percent, and that means a relatively new state law will come into play for the county.

Basically, the law states that if valuations

increase by more than 3 percent, the levy rate, if at the maximum allowed by state law, must drop by 2 percent.

Chickasaw County levied the maximum \$3.50 per \$1,000 valuation for the 2024-25 fiscal year, which means the county must drop that rate by 2 percent in 2025-26.

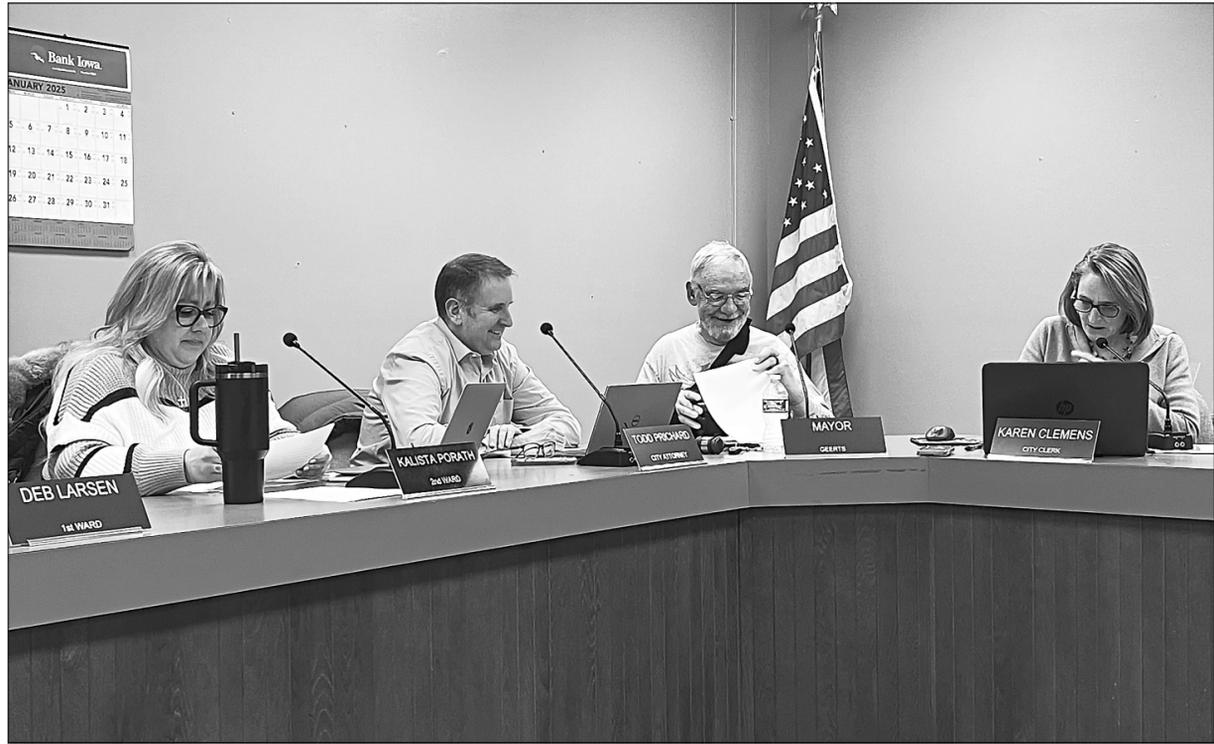
The good news is that the county, if it implements the maximum levy allowed by the law, will still receive more than \$68,600 in so-called "new money," but Hackman also sounded a warning when it came to Rural Services Basic (RSB), saying that valuations in that levy had slightly declined.

That means if the supervisors keep the same levy rate — \$3.52073 per \$1,000 valuation — that it had for this fiscal year in 2025-26, the county will collect about \$26,000 less in RSB property tax revenue.

"My goal is to keep the levy rate the same," said Hackman, who took over as the supervisors' chairman last week, "so if we're going to do that, we've got our work cut out for us."

He pointed out that General Supplemental (GS) is not affected by the state law. A year ago, it was GS that was the main driver that saw the tax-asking for the three levies controlled by the supervisors increase by 14 percent. GS's tax-asking went from \$1.08 million in 2023-24 to almost \$1.8 million in 2024-25, a jump of 66 percent.

While the new state laws don't have mandates for the GS levy rate, Hackman pointed out that GS funds can only be spent on certain items — ranging from employee benefits to elections to tort liability and property insurance.



Bob Fenske/Tribune

New Hampton City Attorney Todd Prichard and Mayor Steve Geerts (center) share a light moment during Monday's meeting, the first of the year for city leaders.

Council takes the first step on capital projects

CITY COUNCIL: FROM 1

on four city streets to the extension of Garfield Street so that it connects with Western Avenue to the purchase of two new fire trucks to the purchase of new filters for the New Hampton Municipal Pool.

"This is really just the first step of many," City Clerk Karen Clemens said after Monday night's meeting. "This gets the ball rolling a little."

During an hour-long committee as a whole meeting before Monday's regular council meeting, city leaders looked over three financing scenarios to fund the projects, which would cost about \$12.53 million. City leaders discussed bonding for the entire amount; bonding for all the capital projects, save for one fire truck; and bonding for the projects without either of the two fire trucks.

In recent months, the council has also discussed the need to replace the city's wastewater treatment plant — a \$28.5 million project that city leaders have said will be funded by revenue bonds — and the need to build more roads in the city's south-side industrial park that would be funded by tax-increment financing.

On the table Monday, though, were the following projects:

- The reconstruction of the city-owned Mikkelson Parking Lot, which is located just off the intersection of South Locust Avenue and East Spring Street and sits across the street from the New Hampton Police Department. That project, Public Works Director Casey Mai estimates, will cost around \$500,000.
- Street and utility improvements to stretches of Logan Street (\$2.12 million), East

Cleveland Street (\$1.24 million), South Broadway Avenue (\$2.63 million) and North Maple Avenue (just under \$680,000).

- The extension of Garfield from Croell Drive to Western Avenue, which would provide what Mai calls "adequate ingress and egress" if more housing is developed in the area, that would cost about \$1 million.

- The purchase of a new engine truck and a new tanker for the New Hampton Fire Department, which would total about \$1.96 million, which the city would be responsible for 59 percent and New Hampton and Dayton townships would pay the remainder.

- And the pool filters, which will cost a little more than \$100,000, that are vital to ensure that the pool can reopen. Parks and Recreation

Director Tara Hackman has told council members that the old filters were installed in 1999 and replacement parts are not available. She has also pointed out that the concern with the current filters "is not if they fail but when they fail."

Left unsaid on Monday night is just how much the City Council is willing to borrow and what projects will receive priority.

Before they discussed the capital projects, council members took care of a number of organizational items during their first meeting of 2025.

Among those included approving Mayor Steve Geerts' appointments of Deb Larsen as mayor pro tem, Clemens as city clerk, Conrad Rosendahl as chief of police, Mai as public works director and Mai and Clemens as the city's zoning administrators.

Supervisors still have plenty to say when it comes to using, or not using, TIF funds

SUPERVISORS: FROM 1

proceed with the recommendations made by the county's TIF Committee that were presented to the board earlier this year.

Those recommendations called on the county to use the additional taxes for the following projects:

- Almost \$9.59 million for road projects for work on V18 from the south city limits of Alta Vista to the Chickasaw County line, reconstruction of North Linn and South Linn and two bridge replacements — one on 170th Street and one on B57.

- Up to \$750,000 for the replacement of the Conservation Board's storage building located at 2456 Hickory Avenue.

- Up to \$1.6 million to undertake improvements and/or construct replacement buildings at the Roads Shop that is located at 1990 Mission Ave.

- And up to \$20 million for the renovation of the current Sheriff's Office building and the construction of an adjacent new 24-hour holding facility.

After the TIF Committee made its findings, Homeland Energy Solutions asked supervisors to include the ethanol plant located between Lawler and New Hampton in the urban-renewal plan so that it could receive almost \$1.18 million in TIF funding over a 10-year period for a \$40 million plant expansion.

Supervisors did so and were expected to act on the two resolutions during a Dec. 9 meeting; however, that plan hit a snag because the city of Bassett had not held what is called a "consultation" meeting and had yet to approve a joint agreement that would allow the supervisors to move forward with the TIF plan.

Any cities within two miles of the proposed urban renewal area had to sign off on the plan, and that meant county leaders had to wait until Monday night's Bassett City Council meeting to proceed.

The morning after Bassett approved the joint agreement, supervisors moved ahead and approved the urban renewal area and the ability to use those TIF funds to finance projects.

Board Chairman Jake Hackman reminded his fellow supervisors that Monday's votes did not approve any projects and that the county now has until Dec. 1 to decide if it will use all of the TIF funds, some of the TIF funds or none of the TIF funds.

Essentially, the county can capture the additional tax revenue from the 86 parcels of land affected by the Chickasaw Wind Farm, although there are

exceptions for items like taxing bodies' debt service.

Hackman was echoing the words of the county's bond attorney, Jason Comiskey, who told supervisors during a September meeting that even after approving the resolutions they did on Monday that it didn't mean the supervisors couldn't opt out of using the TIF funds or that the projects within the area considered blighted or in need of economic development couldn't change.

"This is a planning document," Comiskey said during that meeting. "It says we may use tax increment in the future so we're authorizing it as an urban-renewal project."

"It doesn't mean you absolutely have to do the project. It doesn't mean that you have to issue debt for it. It just means that you now have the general authority to do that in the future."

Briefs

Conservation Board to hold 'Full Moon Hike' Monday

The Chickasaw County Conservation Board will be hosting a Full Moon Snowshoe Hike at Twin Ponds this coming Monday, Jan. 13.

The event starts at 6:30 p.m. and will be held on the grounds of the Twin Ponds Nature Center. Conservation Board staff will fit those attending for snowshoes before heading out into the moonlit woods.

"We'll keep an eye out for tracks and other signs of animals," said the press release by Naturalist Matt Crayne. "If there isn't enough snow, we'll just head out on foot. Make sure to dress for the weather."

This is a free event and no registration is required. Questions may be answered by calling 641-394-4714.

'Lessons of the Holocaust' set for Jan. 22 at New Hampton Library

Historian and former teacher Brad Wilkening will present the program "Lessons of the Holocaust" at the New Hampton Public Library on Wednesday, Jan. 22 at 6 p.m.

Wilkening took a continuing education class on the topic and it changed his life. He now speaks to schools and libraries reminding people of all ages to Never Stop Asking Why.

Lawler man faces criminal mischief charges in Fayette County

The Fayette County Sheriff's Department last week announced that it had arrested a Lawler man after an investigation into multiple reports of property damage that were made in the Waucoma area during October and November.

Luke Langreck, 19, was arrested on Saturday, Dec. 28, by Fayette County sheriff's deputies and charged with criminal mischief in the second degree, which is classified as a D felony.

According to a press release issued on Dec. 31, Langreck's arrest came after the Sheriff's Office had received reports of property damage ranging from multiple road signs to mailboxes to trash bins to Waucoma City Park property being destroyed.

According to the criminal complaint, "it was determined that the defendant and an accomplice committed the acts and used a Red 2001 Ford F150 truck to commit the acts and that the damages to property totaled more than \$1,500.

Langreck was transported to the Fayette County Jail, where he posted a \$500 bond and was released. His initial appearance in court was scheduled for Wednesday.



Langreck

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Trojans get win, but momentum doesn't carry over

Turkey Valley boys get non-league win against Clarksville but played 'scared' in loss to rivals

By **BOB FENSKE**
editor@nhtrib.com

Turkey Valley boys basketball coach John Izer knew the level of competition was going to be different — vastly so — when the Trojans took the court for a home game against South Winneshiek on Friday.

But fresh off a 62-47 win over Clarksville the preceding night, Izer was hoping for more from Turkey Valley.

Instead, South Winneshiek blew open a relatively close game in the final three minutes of the first half on its way to a 69-35 Upper Iowa Conference victory.

"We played a good game against Clarksville, no doubt about it," Izer said after his team fell to 3-5 overall and 2-4 in UIC play. "I mean, if we'd have played as good tonight as we did against Clarksville, it would have been tighter. Maybe we wouldn't have won, but we could have given a really good team a game at least."

The Trojans never really solved the Warriors' trapping defense, but hung around for a while with scrappy defense, aided by South Winn's penchant for missing layups. When J.D. Kruse powered his way to an inside bucket more than halfway through the second quarter, the Trojans trailed just 17-12.

The Warriors, who improved to 6-2, turned on the switch, outsourcing Turkey Valley 15-1 to take a 32-13 lead into the break.

"We played scared," Izer said, "and you can't do that against a team like South Winn. They jump trapped the crap out of us or we'd get the ball inside and we thought they were going to block every shot."

Logan Busta led the Trojans with 16 points and three steals

while Kruse finished with eight points and seven rebounds.

Izer, as he did often in December, pointed out that youth and inexperience is an issue the Trojans are dealing with this season, and he's not wrong. Turkey Valley has just one senior on the roster and a host of sophomores get plenty of meaningful minutes each night.

"I told them tonight we know where we stand," he said. "South Winn was in the district final last year, and it's not hard to believe they won't be back again in the same position. I told our guys they're better than us right now, but the season isn't over, either. ... You gotta start throwing that youth out the window too. You know, we need to be making strides. Last night, we looked good; tonight, not so good."

Against Clarksville, the Trojans used a 20-10 third quarter to break open what had been a close game at halftime.

Busta and Kruse led the way with 19 points apiece, and Kruse and Jordan Kriener both recorded double-doubles as Kruse hauled down 10 boards while Kriener scored 12 points and grabbed 12 rebounds.

The key for his team, Izer said, is to find more ballhandlers.

"We're killing Logan Busta right now," he said. "We can't take the load night in and night out. I mean, he put us over the top last night [against Clarksville], and we've got to get him some help when it comes to ball handling."

That makes this week a key one for the Trojans. After playing at West Central on Tuesday, the Trojans step out of UIC play with a home game against Riceville before traveling to Postville on Friday.

"I think this next week is



Bob Fenske/Tribune

Turkey Valley's Jordan Kriener (above) gets loose and scores an inside basket while teammate Logan Busta (below) passes the ball to a teammate during Friday's game against South Winneshiek.

a big one for us, because you know, all three games, you should be competitive in," he said. "Anything less than 2-1, we're in trouble. I'm going to have a hard time keeping their attitudes, so, you bet, it's a big week for our boys."

TURKEY VALLEY 62, CLARKSVILLE 47

Clark 16 10 10 11 - 47
TV 14 14 20 14 - 62
Logan Busta 7-18 3-4 19, J.D. Kruse 6-18 6-9 19, Cale Langreck 1-4 0-0 2, Treyton Franzen 4-9 0-0 8, Jordan Kriener 6-12 0-1 12, Jayden Rausch 0-0 0-0 0, Kaden Schmidt 0-0 0-0 0, Jonah Orvis 0-1 0-0 0, Tucker Reicks 0-3 1-2 1. Totals 24-65 10-16 62.

3-point field goals - Busta 2-6, Langreck 1-2, Kruse 1-5, Orvis 0-1, Reicks 0-2, Kriener 0-3, Franzen 0-4.

Rebounds - Kriener 12, Kruse 10, Busta 6, Langreck 1, Franzen 1, Rausch 1, Reicks 1.

Assists - Langreck 5, Busta 3, Reicks 1, Franzen 1.

Steals - Busta 3, Langreck 2, Franzen 2, Kriener 2, Schmitt 1.

SOUTH WINNESHIK 69, TURKEY VALLEY 35

SW 12 20 22 15 - 69
TV 7 6 11 11 - 35



Bob Fenske/Tribune

Busta 6-13 2-2 16, Kruse 4-8 0-2 8, Langreck 0-5 0-0 0, Franzen 1-4 0-0 3, Kriener 2-8 1-2 5, Rausch 0-0 0-2 0, Schmidt 0-0 0-0 0, Orvis 0-2 0-0 0, Reicks 1-4 0-0 0. Totals 14-44 3-8 35.

3-point field goals - Busta 2-4, Franzen 1-1, Reicks 1-3, Orvis 0-1, Langreck 0-2, Kruse 0-3.

Rebounds - Kruse 7, Langreck 5, Kriener 3, Reicks 2, Busta 1, Franzen 1, Rausch 1, Orvis 1.

Assists - Langreck 2, Busta 1, Kruse 1, Schmidt 1, Reicks 1.

Steals - Busta 3, Reicks 2, Kruse 1, Langreck 1.

Defense leads balanced Trojan girls to big win over UIC rival

Turkey Valley picks up dominating victory to remain atop Upper Iowa

By **BOB FENSKE**
editor@nhtrib.com

It was the first game coming out of the Christmas break. It was a rivalry game. Those two facts alone were enough to concern Turkey Valley girls basketball coach Steve Hoffert.

No need to fret coach; your girls had this one from the very start.

Using a defense that was suffocating at times and mixing in a balanced scoring attack, Turkey Valley remained in a three-way tie atop the Upper Iowa Conference with a dominating 51-27 win over South Winneshiek on Friday.

"South Winn is rebuilding, we know that, but this is a rivalry game. Turkey Valley-South Winn anything goes," Hoffert said after his team improved to 6-2 overall and 6-1 in UIC play. "It doesn't make any difference so it was nice to stick together and grind this one out. And that's what we did, we ground it out."

It started with a defense that limited the Warriors to just 8-for-46 shooting from the field, and anytime a team holds an opponent to 17.4 percent field-goal shooting, it's on the path to victory.

"We really put a premium on defense in practice," Hoffert said. "We spent a lot of time with help-and-recover defense, hedging defense, communication on defense, cutter defense. A couple of times we got kind of lost on things, but for the most part, we played pretty good fundamental, solid defense."

And the offense wasn't bad, either.

The Trojans got 10 points from Addison Steinlage in the opening quarter as they raced out to a 14-7 lead, and then Annika Bodensteiner hit a pair of 3-pointers early in the sec-



ond quarter and the Trojans built a 28-14 lead at the break. In the second half, Ellaney Bodensteiner heated up inside, scoring 10 points, and the Trojans pulled away for what, on paper, looked like an easy victory.

Addison Steinlage finished with 13 points, Ellaney Bodensteiner added 12 while Annika Bodensteiner finished with eight.

"That's what we need to do," Hoffert said when asked about

his team's balance. "We've talked to Addy, and she's going to draw more attention so someone needs to step up and help us out. We need girls to do things to help us out — be a primary ball handler, shooter, be a rebounder, be a passer."

Turkey Valley also had a huge night on the boards — out-rebounding South Winneshiek 51-23. Three Trojans finished in double digits with rebounds as Ellaney Bodensteiner had 14, Bella Stika had 13 and Delaney



Bob Fenske/Tribune

Turkey Valley's Hazel Nieman (above) and Addison Steinlage (above) drive past South Winneshiek defenders during Friday's Upper Iowa Conference game.

Busta finished with 11.

"That's the way you grind out wins in games like this," Hoffert said. "You go to the boards and you battle. We did that tonight; I thought we did that very well. ... First game back with the holidays, and having those holidays on a Wednesday and kids being gone, which is fine, for family things, it always makes you nervous, [but] a lot of things we emphasized during the break, we put to work tonight — maintain our ground in the post, rebounding, those type of things — were all good."

Turkey Valley is tied for the UIC lead with Kee High and MFL MarMac, but the Trojans

are in the midst of the busiest part of their schedule — playing six games in 11 days.

The Trojans played at West Central Tuesday, host fourth-ranked Riceville in a non-conference game tonight [Thursday] and travel to Postville on Friday. And it remains hectic next week with three more games — including home tilts with Kee on Tuesday and MFL MarMac on Friday.

"We've got to keep playing strong, keep improving and stay healthy," Hoffert said. "We've got to keep grinding."

TURKEY VALLEY 51, SOUTH WINNESHIK 27

SW 7 7 6 7 - 27
TV 14 14 8 15 - 51

Addison Steinlage 5-10 5-10 13, Annika Bodensteiner 2-7 2-4 8, Layni Schuchhardt 1-1 0-0 2, Bella Stika 1-3 1-7 3, Delaney Busta 2-4 2-2 6, Hazel Nieman 0-2 3-6 3, Ella Ives 0-0 0-0 0, Emersyn Hoffert 2-4 0-0 4, Kendall Kuennen 0-1 0-0 0, Brynlee Hayek 0-0 0-0 0, Ellaney Bodensteiner 6-14 0-0 12, Ashlyn Busta 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 18-46 13-29 51.

3-point field goals - A. Bodensteiner 2-6, Steinlage 0-3, Stika 0-1.

Rebounds - E. Bodensteiner 14, Stika 13, Busta 11, Nieman 4, Hoffert 3, Steinlage 3, A. Bodensteiner 2.

Assists - A. Bodensteiner 3, Stika 3, E. Bodensteiner 1, Hayek 1, Kuennen 1, Nieman 1, Busta 1, Schuchhardt 1, Steinlage 1.

Steals - Steinlage 4, E. Bodensteiner 2, Busta 2, A. Bodensteiner 1, Stika 1, Kuennen 1.

Blocks - E. Bodensteiner 2, Hoffert 1, Busta 1, A. Bodensteiner 1.

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NH/TV's Glaser nabs her first gold medal

Several Chickasaws make their mark on the mat at the first tournament back from holiday break

By KELLY TERPSTRA
sports@nhtrib.com

It really was just a matter of time before New Hampton/Turkey Valley's Sophie Glaser rose to the top step of the podium stand.

She's that good, so it was a tad surprising that Glaser hadn't already claimed a tournament title in her impressive mat career thus far. Glaser did just that as she was able to reel in her first gold medal at the Osage Invite this past Thursday in the first mat action back from the holiday winter break.

What a difference a year makes at Osage, where the NH state qualifier last year as a freshman went 2-3 for a sixth-place finish and thought she might have been shown the door with an early exit after her second loss.

"Last year I'm pretty sure I came here and got beat three times and I didn't get kicked out the first two times," said Glaser about not getting eliminated as a freshman at the Osage Invite.

The sophomore standout wrestler for Caleb Ciavarelli's Chickasaws didn't mess around at the loaded tournament that featured a slew of ranked wrestlers — including Glaser's 130-pound finals' match against Pieper Lester of Clear Lake.

Glaser (21-8) trailed 6-0 right



Kelly Terpstra/Tribune

New Hampton/Turkey Valley's Sophie Glaser (above) continues a tough ride on Clear Lake's Pieper Lester while teammate Ava Trende (below) finishes off a pin of NH/TV's Kaidance Hall during the Osage Invitational last week.

CHICKASAWS CROWN THREE CHAMPS AT DENVER TOURNEY.

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from the get-go, but scored an escape and reversal to close the deficit to 6-3 after the first

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Kelly Terpstra/Tribune

New Hampton's Cora Schwickerath puts up a half-court shot — one that she drained — at the end of the first half during Friday's game at Sumner-Fredricksburg.

Chickasaw girls battle but fall to Sumner-Fred

New Hampton falls 58-50 in non-league tilt

By KELLY TERPSTRA
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Down a key Chickasaw starter — the New Hampton girls basketball squad continued to fight on Friday night at Sumner-Fredricksburg.

In the end the Cougars would prevail, but David Leichtman's collective bunch was able to produce many highlights in a 58-50 loss that saw New Hampton take the lead early in the fourth quarter despite missing junior starter Chloe Weigel due to sickness.

There was junior forward Jordan Thronson's career-high 14 points — the best performance of her career thus far that included double-digit rebounds (12).

"She was all-out — every second, every minute," said Leichtman. "Jordan is starting to win those small battles and the confidence just gets huge throughout the game."

Then there was Cora Schwickerath — one of two seniors on the team. She drained a half-court shot right as the first-quarter horn sounded. She would later roll an ankle in the second half after a made bucket, but toughed it out and returned to the game, which was still in doubt late into the non-conference fray.

Despite its leading scorer, junior guard Ava Leichtman, having somewhat of an off night with 12 points, these

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Bob Fenske/Tribune

NH/TV's Jackson Kellogg (right) battles for position during a home triangular that was held last month.

Chickasaw boys show growth

NH/TV coach sees 'development' in team at Solon tournament

By BOB FENSKE
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The buzzword in the New Hampton/Turkey Valley wrestling room these days is "development," and as much as coach Matt Paulus wants to see wins, he's reminding his wrestlers — and himself at times — that growth is the ultimate goal.

It's why Paulus will take what he saw from his Chickasaws on Saturday, when they traveled out of the "bubble" if you will to the Solon Duals, where New Hampton/Turkey Valley came away with a 2-3 record.

"It was good in that we saw some really good signs of growth," Paulus said, "and it was

nice to see some different competition and see where we're at. We definitely saw some improvements up and down the lineup so it was a good start to 2025 for our guys."

NH/TV dropped its first three duals — 41-34 to Central DeWitt, 49-30 to eventual tournament champion Wilton and 41-30 to Solon — but finished the tournament with a 53-17 victory over Cascade and a 50-27 victory over Albia.

And maybe the best news of all is this: After a grinding December in which New Hampton/Turkey Valley varsity competed in tournaments or duals nine times in 19 days, the

SEE NH/TV BOYS, 10

New Hampton boys struggle in first game of '25

Sumner-Fred doubles up on Chickasaws in 82-41 victory

By KELLY TERPSTRA
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With just under six minutes left before halftime in New Hampton's first game back from holiday break on the road Friday night at Sumner-Fredricksburg, Ryan Rausch's Chickasaw bench sprung to their feet and roared in unison after a game-changing play went the way of the black and red.

Reid Rausch had just come up with a pivotal charge call that looked to have swung momentum back in New Hampton's favor in the non-conference tussle between Chickasaw County squads.

Adam Ewert, one of four seniors on NH's roster alongside Rausch, promptly went down the other end on the next possession and splashed down a 3-point shot from deep.

While those plays might have not seemed like a lot — when you're 1-7 coming into the first game of 2025, you'll take what you can get.

That Ewert shot from beyond the arc cut S-F's lead to 34-22.

"I felt like when we got it to

SEE NH BOYS, 9



Bob Fenske/Tribune

New Hampton post player Jacob McDonald puts up an inside shot during Friday's game.

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