

**SL GIRLS BASKETBALL  
MAKES HISTORY WITH  
FIRST EVER REGIONAL WIN**  
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**MOPED CAUSES MULTI-CAR  
CRASH ON U.S. 31**  
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**GRAND HAVEN**



The Board of Light & Power's Board of Directors talks during a recent meeting.

Tribune photo / Matt DeYoung

**OTTAWA COUNTY**

## Jon Anderson selected as interim county administrator

By KAYLA TUCKER  
Grand Haven Tribune

WEST OLIVE — In a 5-4 vote, Jon Anderson was appointed interim Ottawa County administrator by the board of commissioners Tuesday morning.

Residents during public comment and commissioners were divided in opinion whether to appoint an existing county employee or an external candidate.



ANDERSON

The vote came down to two candidates: Fiscal Services Director Karen Karasinski and Jon Anderson, a Grand Haven Township resident.

Anderson is a retired sheriff's captain and current co-owner of Bullet Hole Firearms and Training in Holland.

"I'm looking forward to it, I love the challenge," Anderson said, during a recess of Tuesday's meeting. "I think I have a lot of experience with problem solving, bringing people together so I'm really hoping to do that in that role."

Commission Chair Joe Moss said while current staff understand the county internally, he didn't want to take them away from their current duties.

"I do want to see a leader come in and coordinate all the things that are already happening, I'd like to add to the team, I don't want to be short staffed in any area," Moss said.

Commissioner Rebekah Curran, who voted for Karasinski, admitted she was torn between the decision before voting Tuesday.

"I think that Karen offers a lot of stability in the sense she's been here, where Jon has not been in the county, so people don't know him," Curran said.

Curran asked if the responsibilities could be divided up among multiple people in the interim, to which Moss said no. Curran asked legal counsel Jack Jordan if that was permitted legally, to which he shook his head, no.

Moss said a search committee will be established and a formal search for a county administrator will take place in the coming months.

"Coming from the outside I actually see as an advantage," Anderson said. "There's no predetermined notions I have about anything or anyone, so I hope I can bring some perspective that'll just help bring some people together and move the county forward."

Anderson fills the vacancy created when the county terminated John Gibbs on March 2.

On Tuesday, Commissioners Jacob Bonnema and Roger Bergman were absent for the more than three hour meeting. In the vote for an interim administrator, Commissioners Allison Miedema, Kendra Wenzel, Sylvia Rhodea, Roger Belknap and Moss voted for Anderson, while Commissioners Lucy Ebel, Gretchen Cosby, Curran and Doug Zylstra voted for Karasinski.

Other names considered, but not voted on, were Deputy Administrator Benjamin Wetmore and County Director of Strategic Impact Paul Sachs.

During public comment, some residents said the board was moving too fast in appointing an

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## Investigators: No 'substantiated evidence' to whistleblower complaints against BLP

By MATT DEYOUNG  
Grand Haven Tribune

A months-long investigation failed to turn up any substantiated evidence into complaints brought by a whistleblower against the Grand Haven Board of Light and Power.

Grand Haven City Manager Ashley Latsch shared the outcome of the investigation Tuesday morning.

Attorneys Michael Homier and Laura Genovich from the firm Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, P.C. — the law firm that Grand Haven City Council hired to investigate the complaints — released a 25-page report. They reviewed "voluminous emails and documents" and interviewed

10 witnesses, and concluded that "the whistleblower's allegations are not substantiated by the evidence."

The investigation stemmed from complaints filed in September 2023, which alleged that the "BLP coordinated an attempt to delete records related to [the Andrea Hendrick FOIA] request" and the BLP "considered and decided to pursue the permanent deletion of documents and email records to avoid disclosure per FOIA."

To those charges, the investigators state that "our review of the data found no evidence that emails were deleted in response to Andrea Hendrick's FOIA request. Rather, some emails had been deleted before the Hendrick FOIA request, when no FOIA re-

quest was pending, and the BLP's document retention policy did not require the emails to be retained."

The whistleblower — who has not been named — also alleged that the BLP made "repeated false and misleading statements to its employees regarding a proposed charter amendment" and that the BLP "pressured employees to sign a letter, to contribute funds, and to distribute door signs, all opposed to the proposed charter amendment."

The investigation states that "none of the witnesses that were interviewed (some of whom were identified by the whistleblower) substantiated the whistleblower's claim that senior staff pressured employees to contribute to the charter amendment campaign."

Lastly, the whistleblower alleged that the "BLP has at least attempted to avoid compliance with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act." The investigation, through a review of BLP board members' emails, found "no deliberations among a quorum outside of an open meeting, and none of the witnesses or documents substantiated by the whistleblower's concerns about a quorum of BLP board members meeting (physically or telephonically) at the BLP offices."

Investigators added that some of the whistleblower's allegations would not amount to violations of the OMA, even if substantiated.

"Consequently, we do not

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**EDUCATION**

## GHAPS Board selects superintendent candidates for interviews

By LAUREN FORMOSA  
Grand Haven Tribune

Six candidates were selected by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools' Board of Education to be extended offers to interview for the role of district superintendent.

Prior to Monday night's Board of Education meeting, board members had the weekend to review a field of around 30 candidates and came with a list of those they were interested in interviewing. Jay Bennett, assistant director of executive search services at the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB), assigned the candidates a number at random to keep them anonymous until they accepted the offer for an interview.

- The six candidates are:
- John Denney, Superintendent, Hanover-Horton School District
  - Jennifer Herbstreit, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Holly Area Schools
  - Kristin Perkowski, Associate Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, Traverse City Area Public Schools
  - Jason Reinecke, Assistant Su-



Jay Bennett, assistant director of executive search services at the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB), left, answers GHAPS Board of Education President Chris Streng's question about the upcoming interview process for the district's superintendent search.

Tribune photo / Lauren Formosa

perintendent of Human Services, Grand Haven Area Public Schools

- Raphael Rittenhouse, Superintendent, Gull Lake Community Schools

- Scott Smith, Superintendent, Cedar Springs Public Schools

Bennet recommended that the first round of interviews span two days, with three candidates inter-

viewed each day. Interviews for GHAPS superintendent position will be split into

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HIGH 55 | LOW 41  
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## BRIEFS

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was a minor at the time of the shooting, said David Santacroce, one of Boyd's lawyers.

The Associated Press left a message Tuesday with the county prosecutor about the shooting case.

The lawsuit accuses JSD Supply and Boyd's former friend of negligence. The Associated Press was unable to reach the former friend, now 19, for comment, and is not naming him. JSD Supply in Prospect, Pennsylvania, didn't immediately respond to a voicemail and an email seeking comment.

The lawsuit alleges that JSD Supply "proudly, publicly, yet falsely advertised that the guns assembled from its kits required no licensing, could be owned completely 'off-the-books,' and required 'absolutely no paperwork.'"

New Jersey's attorney general sued JSD Supply and another company in December alleging that they tried to sell ghost guns which are illegal in that state.

Ghost guns are privately made firearms without serial numbers and are made of parts that are assembled into weapons at home. The critical component in building an untraceable gun is what is known as the lower receiver.

On April 9, 2021, the teen named in the Michigan lawsuit allegedly purchased ghost gun build and completion kits online. His mother found the first assembled pistol and took it away because he was underage, the lawsuit says.

Eighteen days later, he purchased two more of the companion kits for \$474.97 and also had them shipped to his home.

Boyd and the teen had been best friends for more than 10 years and were drinking alcohol or smoking marijuana with two other friends in late May 2021 when the gun was pointed at Boyd and the trigger was pulled.

Doctors were unable to remove all of the bullet fragments, and some remain in Boyd's brain, the lawsuit says.

A jury would decide on the amount of damages if the lawsuit succeeds, Santacroce said.

## ANDERSON

From page A1

interim administrator.

"The interim leader should be appointed quickly and fill the gap," Moss said during the meeting.

Miedema said she called several professional references for Anderson last week, including a current salesman at his business.

"He commented about Jon's ability to listen, to take on tasks versus ordering them simply to be done and by leading by example," Miedema said. "Lincoln shared that Jon takes idea from others well that he has the ability to make instant decisions but also knows when to spend the time researching before coming to an answer."

Anderson previously put his name in as a candidate for the Ottawa County Sheriff's position, which is up for election this November, and said he still plans to continue that campaign while serving this interim role.

Anderson is a retired sheriff's captain, having served for Riverside County Sheriff's Department in California. More recently, he worked as a probation specialist for Ottawa County, and Manager of Security Operations for Spectrum Health Security Police Services.

"I have quite extensive experience with my previous assignment with Riverside Sheriff's - I was in an administration role for about seven years, leadership for about 13 years," Anderson said. "I got transferred a lot there, I was kind of known or seen as a problem solver."

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# ALONG THE LAKESHORE

## COMMUNITY

## Tri-Cities Aktion Club provides happy birthdays

## CONTRIBUTED

The Tri-Cities Aktion Club has launched a new service project making "birthday party kits" for disadvantaged children, just in time for national Aktion Club Week.

Aktion Club is a Kiwanis-sponsored service leadership program for adults with disabilities, providing opportunities to develop initiative and leadership skills, and to serve their communities. National Aktion Club Week takes place the first week of March every year as an opportunity for Aktion Clubs to celebrate their work and spread kindness in their communities.

The Tri-Cities Aktion Club has 10 members and meets at the Momentum Center every Thursday afternoon. Fundraising activities include making and selling crafts and selling candy bars at summer concerts in Grand Haven and Spring Lake.

The Tri-Cities Aktion Club launched its new service



Courtesy photo / Amy Urick

The Tri-Cities Aktion Club poses with completed birthday party kits at their meeting on Thursday, Feb. 29.

project by collecting donations of birthday supplies at its second annual Valentine Dance on Feb. 16. While the dance itself was not as well attended as the previous year, the community was very generous, according to organizers, and a large

amount of donations were collected.

The club then went shopping online and at dollar stores to fill in the necessary items to create 13 complete party kits with individual themes, packed in matching gift bags. The kits were

donated to Love In Action for distribution to needy families.

"Thanks to our community, we were able to make some really cool kits," said Amy Urick, advisor of the Tri-Cities Aktion Club. "The Aktion Clubbers were thrilled to

receive supplies for Mickey and Minnie Mouse themes, unicorns, dinosaurs, and jungle animals. One kit is 'confetti and balloons,' with lots of bright colored balloons."

"Thank you so much for the amazing birthday kits you have donated to Love in Action," added April McAboy, Director of Community Care at Love in Action. "These will be offered to members of the LIA Community Coop, who can benefit from this blessing. Love in Action is grateful to organizations such as yours who serve our community well."

"The club heard about the need, and decided to make this an ongoing project," Urick said. "We have more kits started already, and we'll keep collecting and buying supplies all year so kids can have happy birthdays."

The Tri-Cities Aktion Club is happy to take donations of cake mix, frosting, party supplies, decorations, favors and gift bags.

Club contact information is posted at [Aktion.TriCitiesKiwanis.org](http://Aktion.TriCitiesKiwanis.org).

## COURTS

## Jury sees bedroom photo of empty box that held gun used in Michigan school shooting

By ED WHITE

Associated Press

PONTIAC — Jurors on Tuesday saw a photo of an empty gun case and an ammunition box found on a bed after a mass shooting at a Michigan school in 2021.

The open case and box were in James Crumbley's home bedroom. He's the father of Ethan Crumbley, who killed four students and wounded more at Oxford High School.

James Crumbley, 47, is charged with involuntary manslaughter. He's accused of failing to safely store a Sig Sauer 9 mm handgun used by his son in the Nov. 30, 2021, attack and ignoring signs of the boy's mental despair.

The gun was purchased by James Crumbley four days earlier during the Thanksgiving weekend. Fifteen-year-old Ethan and his mother, Jennifer Crumbley, used it to shoot at targets at a shooting range.



AP photo / Carlos Osorio

Defense attorney Mariell Lehman questions detective Adam Stoyek during the trial for James Crumbley, the father of a Michigan school shooter, Tuesday, in Pontiac.

"I found no evidence that a cable lock was ever installed on that firearm," federal agent Brett Brandon testified Monday, describing how the gun was kept at the Crumbley home.

Conversely, James Crumbley had two smaller guns in a small gun safe in the house, Oakland County sheriff's detective Adam Stoyek told

the jury.

Stoyek testified on the fourth day of trial in suburban Detroit. Prosecutors have been trying to show that the father was grossly negligent in how he took care of a gun that was secretly toted to school by his son.

James Crumbley's attorney has argued that he

was not aware that Ethan had access.

Stoyek said James Crumbley was cooperative while in a patrol car in the aftermath of the tragedy. He told the investigator about other guns in the house, including a BB gun, while a video camera recorded them.

"It's unloaded but it looks like a freakin' assault rifle. Don't freak out when you see that," James Crumbley said in the video played in court.

The jury saw photos of Ethan's messy bedroom, which had targets from the shooting range displayed on the wall.

The Crumbleys are the first U.S. parents to be charged with having criminal responsibility for a mass school shooting committed by a child. Jennifer Crumbley was found guilty of the same involuntary manslaughter charges last month.

The Crumbleys weren't easy to find back in 2021 despite knowing they'd been

charged. The jury saw police video of a wee-hours arrest in a friend's Detroit art studio where they were sleeping on the floor, 12 hours after charges were widely publicized.

James Crumbley could be heard wailing before he calmed down. An eagle-eyed coffee roaster in the same commercial building had learned through social media that police were looking for the couple and spotted their Kia vehicle in the parking lot.

"I can't believe it," Luke Kirtley said on a 911 call. "They're here!"

Defense lawyers insist the Crumbleys were not fleeing and had planned to appear in court later that morning.

Ethan Crumbley, now 17, is serving a life prison sentence for murder and terrorism.

He told a judge when he pleaded guilty that the gun was "not locked" when he stuffed it in his backpack before school.

## WHISTLEBLOWER

From page A1

recommend that the City take any action in response to the whistleblower's allegations," the investigators concluded. "Although we find that the whistleblower's allegations are unsupported by the evidence, we caution against any retaliation against the whistleblower for bringing forward these claims, as reporting 'suspected' violations entitles the whistleblower to protection under Michigan law."

During the investigation, Homier and Genovich interviewed the whistleblower, along with then-BLP General Manager Dave Walters, interim General Manager Rob Shelley, Finance Manager Lynn Diffell, engineer and technician Earl Fisher, system operator and union president Beau Ryther, billing specialist Michelle Balast, system operator and

union secretary/treasurer Shawn Kuck, operations and power supply manager Erik Booth, and retired administrative services manager Renee Molyneux.

The investigators said more than 221,000 emails were turned over by the whistleblower; of those, around 6,000 were considered "especially pertinent," according to attorney Ron Bultje, who represents both the BLP and the city of Grand Haven.

The whistleblower was represented by attorney Sarah Riley Howard.

Walters was released from his duties as the BLP's general manager in late January; his retirement will become official on April 24.

"From my perspective, I think it's pertinent what's stated in the executive summary of the report - 'We conclude that the whistleblower's allegations are not substantiated by the evidence,'" Walters said. "I

think the report speaks for itself. ... They spent a boatload of time, energy and money, and as far as I'm concerned, it completely exonerates the staff at the BLP."

Mike Westbrook, chairman of the BLP's Board of Directors, was happy to see the investigation concluded, and with the outcome of the investigation.

"The BLP and staff conducts its affairs with integrity beyond reproach," Westbrook said in an email to the Tribune. "As a publicly-owned organization, we adhere to the highest standards and clear processes for transparency and accountability. The independent findings from Foster Swift's unbiased and thorough investigation align with the high expectations we hold for each and every member of our team."

"In regards to allegations around employee opposition to the proposed charter

amendment, it's important to note that I am proud of our team members for taking a stand in what they believe in and for exercising their First Amendment rights while following the law. Our team and the community at large have sent a clear message of trust in the BLP and the value of public power. We value that trust immensely and will continue to earn it through transparent operations and excellence of service."

Howard said the whistleblower complaints were initiated because her client felt unsafe bringing the information to anyone within the BLP.

"My client, the whistleblower employee, came to me with a concern that there is a culture at the BLP where employees do not feel

safe telling the truth," Howard said in an email to the Tribune. "I was in a difficult position, and I still am, to provide an opinion about how this investigation would turn out or should turn out because I could not (and did not) review the BLP employees' emails which were so intermingled with privileged communications with attorneys other than City Attorney Ron Bultje."

"Once I determined that it was impossible to separate the volume of privileged communications, all I could do was report my client's good faith belief about suspected violations of the law to Mr. Bultje. My client is brave and credible. I applaud him no matter the investigation outcome, and the law strongly protects him from retaliation."

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