

PROUDLY SERVING THE MERRIMACK VALLEY AND SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE

INSIDE THIS EDITION

Today	Tuesday
63° 47°	70° 51°
More clouds than sun	Cloudy with a shower
RealFeel 66°/49° UV 2	RealFeel 68°/53° UV 1

WEATHER & TV PAGE 16



LAWRENCE GENERAL DEEMED GREAT PLACE TO WORK PAGE 3

HAVERTHILL TESTING SITES EXTEND SERVICES PAGE 3

BILL BURT: NO EXCUSES FOR CAM NEWTON PAGE 9



COMING TOMORROW ON EAGLETRIBUNE.COM
Students revive Andover High Key Club
Bill Burt on sports

COVID-19 CASE COUNT

► WORLDWIDE	Cases confirmed..... 39,848,453	Deaths..... 1,112,142
► UNITED STATES	Cases confirmed..... 8,147,060	Deaths..... 219,667
► MASSACHUSETTS	Cases confirmed..... 140,647	Deaths..... 9,517
► NEW HAMPSHIRE	Cases confirmed..... 9,694	Deaths..... 467

Statistics source: Johns Hopkins University Tracking COVID-19 Dashboard (Sunday, Oct. 18, 7 p.m.); Mass. Department of Public Health; N.H. Department of Health and Human Services

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SPECIAL WEB FEATURE

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Methuen official cries foul over missing recording

By BILL KIRK
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METHUEN — Questions are being raised by a city councilor about why a controversial executive session — conducted in a Zoom meeting in July — was not recorded.

During a City Council meeting earlier this month,

At-Large Councilor Jessica Finocchiaro raised the issue when the council was considering whether to approve the minutes from a July 13 executive session.

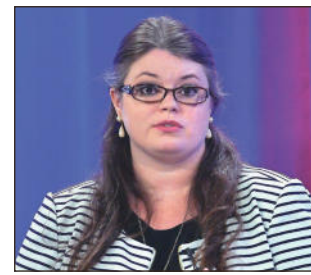
The council agreed to hold off on taking a vote until the minutes could be amended or a recording of the meeting is found. They may take up the issue at Monday night's

meeting. The July 13 session was marked by controversy as it was called by Mayor Neil Perry at the last minute without any details of the subject matter.

It turns out the session concerned the hacking of the city's computers by a sophisticated Russian organization that was attempting to

install ransomware — software embedded in the city's IT system that would render it inaccessible unless the city agreed to pay a hefty ransom.

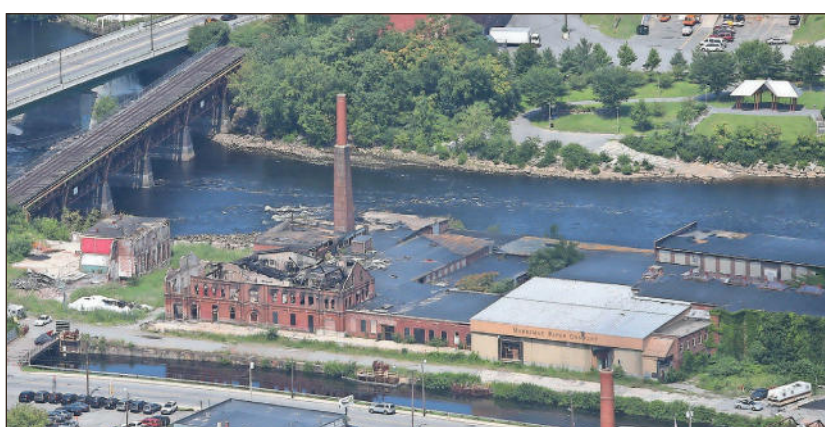
Perry claimed at the time that an executive session was needed because publicity about the ongoing incident would signal other,



Methuen City Councilor At-Large Jessica Finocchiaro

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Reinventing Merrimac paper mill



MARY SCHWALM/Staff file photo

The shell of Merrimac Paper Company remains after a January 2014 fire ripped through the property on the banks of the Merrimack River in Lawrence.

Redevelopment of site takes shape in Lawrence

By ALLISON CORNEAU
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LAWRENCE — Six years after fire ripped through the Merrimac Paper Company site, plans are underway to redevelop the 19th-century paper mill on the south bank of the Merrimack River.

City officials and local environmental experts held a virtual public meeting over Zoom last week to outline the first of many steps necessary to redevelop the site before overhauling the property that once employed as many as 275 people. The former paper company on South Canal Street sits on three lots totaling 4.75 acres, according to a study prepared by Credere Associates, the firm hired by the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission to analyze Brownfields cleanup alternatives.

Brownfields is a federal program that provides grant money to communities redeveloping properties such

“This site has a lot of potential to knit the two sides of the city together instead of being big-box industrial.”

Marianne Paley Nadel, owner of Everett Mills in Lawrence and a member of the Groundwork Lawrence board

as old factories that contain hazardous contaminants.

While final plans for the site have not been determined, those involved hope that residential and commercial mixed-use buildings, along with parking and a riverfront walkway, eventually take over the property.

The work initially targets lots 1 and 2, located at 7 and 9 South Canal St., according to project director Brad

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MARY SCHWALM/Staff file photo

Firefighters work at the scene of a five-alarm blaze at Merrimac Paper Company in Lawrence in January 2014.

Memorial Hall Library holds 2nd StoryWalk

By MADELINE HUGHES
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ANDOVER — Pages of a book are scattered around town, posted here and there by various businesses.

It's part of the second annual StoryWalk hosted by Memorial Hall Library, during which a narrative unfolds as people read pages while walking around town.

This year's book is “I Am Perfectly Designed” by Karamo Brown, one of the stars from Netflix's “Queer Eye.”

Those at the library chose

the book in hopes it will bring kids together with their dads, said Beth Kerrigan, coordinator of children's services.

Over the past few months, as the library switched children's programs online, Kerrigan noticed that dads were less involved.

The library had previously hosted a weekly “Donuts with Dad” event that was well attended.

So, as they were looking for a book to use for the StoryWalk, “I Am Perfectly

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Andover Memorial Hall Library is displaying in front of the library a book cover and pages of the book “I Am Perfectly Designed” by Karamo Brown for the annual StoryWalk.

CARL RUSSO/Staff photo

Governor's new budget slim on aid

By CHRISTIAN M. WADE
Statehouse Reporter

BOSTON — Gov. Charlie Baker rolled out a new \$45.5 billion budget late last week that boosts funding for cities, towns and schools over the previous fiscal year, but some lawmakers say it won't go far enough to buoy pandemic-battered local governments.

Baker's latest proposal, filed four months into the fiscal year, calls for more than \$4.5 billion in state aid for cities and towns. That's about \$279 million more than the previous year but still \$181 million less than what he proposed in January, months before the coronavirus forced the state government to shudder the economy.

The new spending plan also calls for \$5.28 billion in Chapter 70 aid to schools. That's about \$108 million more than last year but \$196 million less than his original proposal.

The fluctuating funding levels reflect the Baker administration's struggle to sustain education and local funding despite an unprecedented drop in tax revenue due to the economic fallout of COVID-19, as well as uncertainty over additional federal relief.

Finance Secretary Michael Heffernan projects state revenues will decline by \$3.6 billion this fiscal year, despite recent upticks in overall tax collections.

See BUDGET, Page 7

► Haverhill

More housing planned for downtown

Project with 24 apartments continues trend in city center

By MIKE LABELLA
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HAVERTHILL — More housing is coming to the downtown, after City Council approved an apartment complex for the former site of a Comcast office and other businesses.

The project continues a trend of new housing not only in large buildings such as old shoe factories, but also in smaller locations that bring in a few units each, but together give downtown a bigger residential identity.

A public hearing was held last week on a request from Anthony Rossi, manager of Emerson Investment LLC, for a permit to erect a building at 66 Emerson St. and create 24 market-rate two- and three-bedroom apartments.

The existing building, which will be demolished, is diagonally across from the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Haverhill and is close to the multi-story Cordovan apartment complex.

The Cordovan, a building that was once part of

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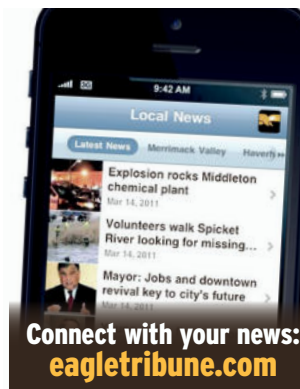


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