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**Quick Hits**  
**One more reminder about parking**

By Charles Sercombe

The Hamtramck Labor Day Festival is this weekend, and here's one more reminder for residents near the festival grounds to get ready to find alternative parking during the weekend.

Side streets leading into Jos. Campau from Caniff to Pulaski will be blocked off – meaning you won't be able to get through or park there.

The streets will be blocked off starting at 7 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 29 through Tuesday, Sept. 2 at 7 a.m.

We know this is an inconvenience, but it's also a holiday weekend and a number of folks go out of town, and even some businesses close up.

Weather-wise, according to local forecasters this weekend will be sunny with mild temperatures in the 70s – perfect for an end-of-the-summer party.



— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

**City manager fired with police chief and police officer to follow**

By Charles Sercombe

The heads are rolling in city hall.

And the local media is having a field day with their coverage of Hamtramck.

At Tuesday's city council meeting, the council agreed to fire City Manger Max Garbarino.

Police Chief Jamiel Altaheri and police investigator Dave Adamczyk are next on the chopping block.

Garbarino had been on paid administrative leave for about a month, along with Altaheri and Adamczyk.

All were under an internal investigation, by a legal firm hired by the city council, after allegations of wrongdoing. The results of this investigation, which has so far cost the city over \$300,000 – and could possibly end up costing \$500,000 or more – found serious issues of wrongdoing with the police chief and police investigator Adamczyk.

As for Garbarino, he was criticized for recommending the chief hire investigator Adamczyk, and for not acting soon enough to take disciplinary action against Chief Altaheri.

The internal report on Altaheri included instances of drunk driving and being involved in transporting a stolen vehicle, among other alleged offenses.

Altaheri has denied the accusations.

Adamczyk initiated an

investigation into Altaheri including secretly tape recording him, violating various department policies.

The council is also recommending that the city's acting city manager – Syed Aamir Ahsan, who is also the city's Finance Director – fire both Chief Altaheri and Adamczyk because the council does not have the authority to take that action.

That decision was reached after the mayor and council met in a closed session for nearly 90 minutes.

City Attorney Odey Meroueh said the decision is also based on a discussion with the city's insurance attorney and the legal firm Miller Johnson, which conducted the internal investigation.

"We came to the undeniable conclusion, unfortunately, based on evidence presented, we have to terminate Police Chief Jamiel Altaheri," Meroueh said.

Mayor Amer Ghalib said the decision to fire all three "seemed like the only solution at this time – or the safest one."

All of this stems from an explosive internal 59-page report recently submitted by the law firm Miller Johnson. The Review obtained a copy of the report through a Freedom of Information Act request.

Here are some of the findings, verbatim:

**Police Chief Jamiel Al-**



**City Manager Max Garbarino was fired this week after the mayor and city council reviewed an internal investigation into him, as well as the police chief and a police investigator.**

**taheri**

The investigation substantiated several of the allegations against Police Chief Jamiel Altaheri.

**Destroying evidence and obstructing the investigation**

When Altaheri was placed on administrative leave by Garbarino, one of Altaheri's first reactions after leaving Garbarino's office was to wipe his City-issued phone. Altaheri directed an evidence technician (and Altaheri's friend) to erase the data on his phone. The technician immediately did so. Altaheri's directive to destroy evidence violated multiple City policies.

**Driving his City-issued vehicle after consuming alcohol**

The investigation substantiated a widely known instance of Altaheri driving recklessly in his City-issued

sued truck after consuming alcohol.

The evidence established that, on September 19, 2024, after attending an officer appreciation party and consuming alcohol, Altaheri drove to and from a strip club, with other officers riding with him, in his City-issued truck.

He activated his police lights to run red lights and drove erratically. Multiple witnesses observed him consuming significant amounts of alcohol and/or appearing inebriated before driving that night. Multiple officers also witnessed him driving recklessly.

Videos of his driving taken that night confirm their account, including showing Altaheri activating his police lights to run a red light and then immediately turning off his lights after he drove through

**Continued on page 3**



**Taxpayers will likely be hit with a legal bill for close to \$500,000 for an internal city hall investigation.**

**City socked with a steep legal bill for internal investigations**

By Charles Sercombe

The cost of an internal investigation into three city officials has reached over \$300,000, and that cost will continue to get higher.

The Review obtained, through a Freedom of Information Act request, a legal bill submitted by the Miller Johnson law firm that was hired by the mayor and city council to conduct the investigation.

That bill is now at \$339,439 and, according

to sources, will climb closer to \$500,000.

The law firm investigated various allegations of wrongdoing by Police Chief Jamiel Altaheri, officer David Adamczyk, and City Manager Max Garbarino.

The results of those investigations were discussed at Tuesday's city council meeting.

The law firm's involvement stems from City Manager Garbarino putting Police Chief Altaheri on

**Continued on page 2**

**City's party of the year this weekend**

By Charles Sercombe

Seems like we say this every year, mostly because indeed we do say this: It's hard to believe it's time again this weekend for the annual Hamtramck Labor Day Festival.

That's how quickly a Michigan summer goes by.

The festival is now celebrating its 45th year since it was first started, way back in 1980.

In those 45 years, there was at least one year that the festival was canceled. That was back when the city was under the control of its first state-appointed emergency manager – so, sometime around 2000 or so.

As usual, this weekend's festival offers a musical lineup of the area's leading bands and performers, as well as a variety of food, local craft folks and other vendors, Big Time wrestling, the famed Canoe Race and a carnival midway with rides and games.

Did we mention beer and drinks? Yes, that too, for those who imbibe.

And, as usual, it's free to attend the festival.

On top of all that, on Monday – Labor Day – the City of Hamtramck struts its stuff in the parade by featuring local organizations, businesses, marching bands and who knows what else. It's all homegrown, and distinctly Hamtramck.

The highlight of the weekend, not counting the continuous rotation of performers on two stages, is the Canoe Race held on Monday at noon, sharp.

There is a change to the canoe event this year. It is being held at the north end of the festival grounds, past the carnival.

According to organizers, this was done to give both spectators and participants more room.

So, just what is involved with a canoe race that is held on pavement?

Well, there is water involved – and plenty of it – in the form of water balloons and high-powered super soaker "guns."

**Continued on page 2**

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## City's party of the year this weekend Cont. from front page

But the canoes?

They are homemade and mostly triangle-shaped, each one on wheels, and pushed and manned by folks who have no fear of being badly injured.

Of course, for some of the racers, they seem to come pretty lubed up, beverage-wise, and probably feel no pain. At least until

Tuesday.

Did we mention water balloons and water guns? Yes, we did, and the point is to expect getting wet merely by being a bystander, 'cause those water balloons know no boundaries or constraints.

And some folks just take delight in purposely bombing some unexpect-

ing onlooker.

The festival kicks off on Saturday, Aug. 30, starting at noon (-ish) and continuing until 10 p.m.

You can get more information on all of the particulars by going online to the festival's Facebook page or its website.

At the time we went to press on Thursday, the

weather forecast was calling for sunshine and moderate temperatures in the 70s for the weekend.

We'll be there to do a toast to summer, and you should be too, with whatever is your beverage of choice, and we'll see you back there next year!

## City socked with a steep legal bill for internal investigations Cont. from front page

paid administrative leave, pending an investigation into various allegations of wrongdoing.

The internal department investigation into the chief was performed by officer Dave Adamczyk, and that prompted an angry outburst from Mayor Amer Ghalib at a city council meeting two months ago.

Mayor Ghalib said the investigation into the police chief was about a "power" conflict with City Manager Garbarino.

Ghalib also insisted that only he and the council have the authority to authorize an internal investigation into city employees – including the mayor and city councilmembers.

"This body decides who gets investigated here or not," Ghalib said.

At the mayor's behest, Garbarino was placed on paid administrative leave. The rift between the mayor and Garbarino appears to be beyond repair, and the city council has since fired Garbarino.

Garbarino filed a lawsuit against the mayor and city council over the suspension, and has now filed another lawsuit claim-

ing wrongful termination.

Mayor Ghalib told The Review that the costs of the investigations are justified.

"This is the price of miscalculated decisions and mismanagement. The investigation report is almost ready and we will find out soon who is responsible for all of these damages to the city's reputation and finance," Ghalib said.

City Manager Garbarino, not surprisingly, disagreed.

"That's an awful lot of money to waste to tell people the same thing I already told them," Garbarino said.

"Perhaps next time they can save \$300,000 and listen to what the professional City Manager recommends."

In an engagement letter to the city, the Miller Johnson law firm told the mayor and council:

"The investigation does not include determining potential criminal liability except as relevant to whether any allegations of criminal conduct were sufficiently credible to warrant administrative actions undertaken ba-

sed on the applicable civil administrative rules and regulations."

The hourly legal fee for the attorneys involved in the investigation is \$550 per hour per attorney, and the deal required the city to pay a \$100,000 retainer fee up front.

The internal investigations into the three city officials followed an internal department investigation by officer Dave Adamczyk in which some of the allegations made about Altaheri included:

- Being involved in domestic assaults with a woman who had their child

- Arranging a payment ranging from \$1 million to \$5 million, through a metro area associate of President Trump, to get a presidential pardon for a convicted New York financier friend

- Being involved in transporting a stolen car out of New York; attempting to get the city council to fire Garbarino for reporting election fraud

- Directing Adamczyk to seek \$40,000 to \$50,000 from an unnamed towing company to sponsor the chief's podcast

- In two separate incidents, driving a vehicle while drunk

Chief Altaheri has vehemently denied the allegations.

The FBI is reportedly conducting an investigation into the chief.

Adamczyk was placed on paid suspension by Garbarino after he submitted his investigation into the police chief. Garbarino said he suspended Adamczyk as a matter of department policy – not for wrongdoing.

Police Chief Altaheri is accusing Adamczyk and Garbarino of various wrongdoings.

Adamczyk has since joined Garbarino's lawsuit against the mayor and council.

Police Chief Altaheri has recently filed a lawsuit against the city manager, and the mayor and city council.

The city council has since directed the acting manager to fire both the police chief and Adamczyk.

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## This week at the Library . . .

August 29, 2025

**Jazz Youth Masterclasses:** Library is holding preservation of jazz youth masterclasses every Thursday in July, August and September from 3 pm to 5 pm. Classes are conducted by Jazz vocalist, Sky Covington and are free to Hamtramck residents. To register for classes sign up at the library or call 248-383-3385 to speak with the instructor. The final meeting will consist of a performance on September 25th at 3 pm.

**Treaty of Paris:** On September 3, 1983, John Adams, Ben Franklin and John Jay, formally signed a treaty ending the American Revolutionary War between Britain and the United States.

**Yoga at the Library:** The exercise program featuring Yoga will start again on Tuesday's at 2:30 pm starting September 2, 2025. The class is limited to 10 participants, so please register early to secure your place.

**New York Sun:** On September 3, 1933 this newspaper first appeared marking the beginning of the penny press. Inexpensive newspapers were sold on sidewalk by newspaper boys. The paper focused on human interest stories and sensationalism and by 1836 was the largest seller in America with a circulation of 30,000.

**ESL Classes:** These classes will start again after the summer break ends in the middle of September. More information about the program will be posted soon.

**Manhattan:** This New York island was discovered on September 4, 1609,

by the navigator Henry Hudson.

**Los Angeles:** This city was founded on September 4, 1781 by the Spanish Governor of California, Felipe de Neve, near the site of the Native American village of Yang-na. The original name was El Pueblo dela Reina de Los Angeles (The town of the Queen of the Angels).

**Game Night:** We are moving to Wednesdays. Join us for Game Night at the library. We are serving up something fun each Wednesday at 4 pm. Stop by and let us know that you have come to play. Everyone invited.

**First Congress:** The First Continental Congress assembled on September 5, 1774 in Philadelphia with 56 delegates representing every colony, except Georgia. Attendants included Patrick Henry, George Washington, Sam Adams and John Hancock.

**Jesse James:** This wild west legend was born on September 5, 1847 in Centerville, Missouri. Following the American Civil War. Jesse and his brother Frank formed a group of outlaws, robbing banks, trains, stage-coaches and stores. In 1882, after the governor of Missouri offered a \$10,000.00 reward for their capture dead or alive, a member of the gang shot 34-year old Jesse in the back of the head and claimed the reward.

**Darryl F. Zanuck:** This film producer was born on September 5, 1902 in Wahoo, Nebraska. He co-founded 20th Century Studios, which later merged with Fox.

Library is located at 2360 Caniff Avenue, Phone (313) 733-6822  
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# Review: Opinion Page

## In Our Opinion

### Taxpayers' money is going down the drain

Let's all take a deep breath for a moment, and absorb the earth-shaking decisions our mayor and city council took this week regarding the city manager, police chief and a police investigator.

By now, most folks have likely heard that they will all be fired.

We will dig deeper into that in the coming weeks, but what sticks out to us this week, is the absurd cost to taxpayers to foot the bill for a legal firm to conduct an investigation into the three.

Specifically, the price tag is already over \$300,000 and will likely end up costing us closer to \$500,000.

Instead of trusting City Manager Max Garbarino, who was cited for what we think are minor missteps in the handling of an investigation into the police chief, the mayor and council soug-

ht out a high-priced legal firm to conduct an internal investigation.

As you would assume, all three city officials involved in the investigation have strong objections to the report's findings – something that will surely play out in the courts, again likely at taxpayers' further expense.

The money spent so far on the investigation is just one part of what else is happening.

On top of the cost of this internal investigation, the mayor and council also recently decided not to renew the city's contract with a parking meter company, a decision that will end up in the loss of \$200,000 a year in revenue for the city.

Admittedly, the parking meter system was a failure, but the mayor and council didn't bother

to find an alternative system.

That's a total cost of about \$700,000 just for these two issues.

These elected officials have been reckless caretakers of the public's money, and have given zero thought about Hamtramck's financial future.

And this is all because they think they run the city, instead of relying on the city manager to conduct the city's business.

We pity property owners here because it's looking more and more likely they'll end up footing the city's bills through increases in property taxes.

Folks, this is why our elected officials – some of whom may not even really live here, and some of whom may have violated election law to get elected – should trust their city manager and get out of the way.

### City manager fired with police chief and police officer to follow Cont. from front page

the intersection with no plausible legitimate justification.

In addition to this significant incident, the investigation revealed other likely instances in which Altaheri consumed alcohol before driving his City-issued truck.

**Reducing another officer's discipline in exchange for the destruction of evidence**

The video of Altaheri's reckless driving also gave rise to another violation of HPD's rules and regulations. A few months after the reckless driving incident, it was discovered that an HPD officer had

committed timecard fraud. The officer, however, had a copy of the reckless driving video.

During the officer's recorded disciplinary hearing, the officer should have been terminated or forced to resign in lieu of termination for timecard fraud, and Altaheri concluded as much.

However, prior to the hearing's conclusion, Altaheri and the other officers involved in the disciplinary proceeding went off the record and met in a hallway to discuss the officer's corrective action further. During that hallway conversation, Altaheri ag-

reed to a lesser penalty in exchange for the officer deleting the reckless driving video.

Altaheri then came back on the record and changed the resignation in lieu of termination (as previously negotiated) to a 30-day suspension.

Because the evidence demonstrated that Altaheri's decision to reduce the severity of the discipline was influenced by his desire for the officer to destroy compromising evidence against him, Altaheri's conduct violated HPD's rules and regulations.

**Handing a loaded gun to**  
**Continued on page 4**

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Open enrollment for the Hamtramck academic school year ends on 2/27/2026 at 5pm. Applications can be obtained at the school or by calling 866-NHA-ENROLL. Should the number of applications received during open enrollment exceed available seats, a random-selection drawing will be held via live stream on 3/9/2026 at 10 am. Applications received after open enrollment will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis for remaining open seats. Waiting lists will be formed accordingly.

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## Odds & Ends

**Swing!...** The good folks at Post 6 are lending a helping hand to the fledging Hamtramck High School golf team.

The post is opening its doors to anyone who would like to donate their used golf equipment – such as clubs, golf bags, balls – you name it.

If you would like to donate, stop by the Post (9545 McDougall at Evaline) anytime between Tuesday and Sunday from noon to 9 p.m.

While there, stay for a moment and say hello.

**It's time to go back in time...** Back, roughly a century or so, give or take, to those wild and woolly 1920s where jazz swirled, hairstyles bobbed, dresses flapped and alcohol (shhh) still very much, and very illegally, flowed.

Oh, and marijuana and cocaine came into public consciousness – but that's another story.

Highlighting this scandalous behavior, appropriately, will be our own Hamtramck Historical Museum, reprising their very successful Roaring 20s Speakeasy Party from last year.

The date for this year's version will be Saturday, Oct. 4, from 6-10 p.m. at the PLAV Post 1, 3105 Holbrook Ave., on the northeast corner at McDougall St.

Hosted by Steven C. Flum, Inc., the bash will once again replicate the wild times of the 1920s, with food and drink, music of the era, entertainment to include games, a fashion show, a silent auction and more.

It's all a fundraiser for the Hamtramck Historical Museum. Ticket prices are: \$50 for one General Admission ticket; \$90 per couple General Admission; and \$100 per person for a VIP experience that includes one-hour-early entry (at 5 p.m.), a champagne toast, and reserved seating.

General Admission includes one drink ticket per person and appetizers.

You have until around Sept. 28 to get tickets at these prices. As of Aug. 27, there were 50 single General Admission tickets left, 30 couple General Admission tickets left, and only 14 VIP tickets left for this event.

Oh – and we'd advise avoiding jazz with a hangover.

**Snake rattle and roll...** Inbreeding in animals is rarely a good thing. Often, it is out of a lack of options for the creatures in question. In general, it is a growing issue due to ongoing habitat losses from overdevelopment.

This affects biodiversity, the very thing that keeps many species adapting over the long haul.

So it seems to be with Michigan's lone venomous snake, the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake.

What's that you say, you hate snakes, and why in the world would we want the venomous ones around in particular?

Because they're important to the ecosystems in which they live, both as predator and as prey.

These smaller (two- to two-and-a-half feet max.), well-camouflaged snakes have a diverse diet that includes insects, birds, other snakes, frogs, rodents, eggs, centipedes and more.

They are, in turn, food themselves for eagles and hawks, foxes, raccoons and skunks.

They have been found recently in the Matthaei Botanical Gardens and the Nichols Arboretum in the Ann Arbor area, including one observed on a nest with its eggs.

The problem, according to a new article in Smithsonian Magazine, is that human sprawl, with its attendant roads, homes, businesses and clear-cutting, is narrowing the critters' range, leaving them fewer potential mating partners, and thus increasing the likelihood of them inbreeding.

This information comes courtesy of a 15-year-long

study that wrapped up last year, where researchers tracked individual specimens year after year in Barry County (west of Lansing) and Cass County (down at the Indiana border).

They found significant evidence of inbreeding, and significant effects from that inbreeding as well: of the top 5 percent most-inbred individuals, these had an 11.6 percent less chance of survival, year to year, and they were 13.5 percent less likely to have any surviving offspring.

For this keystone species of Michigan – a "keystone" species is one considered playing a crucial role in their ecosystem niche, in this case, the wetlands – the solution would seem to lie in both connected wetlands preservation efforts, and under-tunnels to offer attractive alternatives to crossing, or basking on, roads and highways.

**Checking out...** If you rely on or prefer to get your Social Security check by mail, kiss that goodbye.

And if this upsets you, you are not alone.

Here's what the U.S. Department of the Treasury just announced:

"Starting September 30, 2025, the federal government will no longer issue paper checks for Social Security benefits, tax refunds, or any other federal payments.

"After that date, all payments will be made electronically – either through direct deposit to your bank or credit union account, or to a prepaid debit card.

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## ROOMS FOR RENT

Room for rent, upper flat, needs work, Tinken Ave., Warren, MI, 586-209-6445. *6/13*

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## Coming Events

**SATURDAY, Sept. 13, 2-4 p.m.** – Take-out only Soup Kitchen at Holy Cross P.N.C. Church, 2311 Pulaski at Fleming. Everyone is welcome!

## Obituaries

### KOLON



Richard Kolon (age 77), died August 26, 2025.

He is also survived by many nieces and nephews. Rich was a avid hunter and fisherman and loved his family. He also served in the United States Armed Forces. Visitation, Friday, August 29, 2025 from 2 – 8 PM at Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home, 2396 Caniff, Hamtramck MI 48212. Funeral service Saturday, August 30, 2025 10 AM at Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home.

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August 22, 2025

## Hamtramck Public TV-19

Broadcasting on Comcast Channel 19 in Hamtramck area and YouTube Live world wide (Hamtramck Library Channel)

### What's on this coming week?

Sakura Japanese Instrumental Group Concert  
Special Meeting of the City Council  
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Interviews and Announcements  
Meetings of the City Council  
Common Word Alliance Health & Food Fair 2025 and more

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**Hamtramck Public TV is broadcasting from Hamtramck Public Library On Comcast Channel 19 and streaming on YouTube Live (24/7) Google "Hamtramck Public TV", and click on link "Hamtramck Public TV" Or go to YouTube; Hamtramck Public TV; Hamtramck Public Library; Videos, or Live**

To place community announcement call the Library at 313-733-6822 Or email: HamtramckTV@gmail.com Announcements submitted by 10 am Will go on air the same day (evening) To upload video files go to ([bit.ly/hamtramcktv](http://bit.ly/hamtramcktv))



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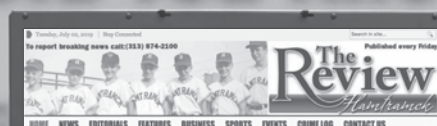
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### By Charles Sercombe

This week's Crime Log covers Aug. 19-25.

#### Tuesday, Aug. 19

- A theft from a vehicle was reported on Charest.
- A suspect was arrested on Evaline for domestic assault.
- An incident of fraud was reported on Jos. Campau.
- A theft was reported on Dyar.
- A vehicle was reported stolen in the 12000 block of Nagel.
- A fight was reported in the area of Lumpkin and Edwin.
- A break-in was reported in the 3800 block of Norwalk.

#### Wednesday, Aug. 20

- A hit-and-run accident was reported.
- A theft from a vehicle was reported in the 3200 block of Evaline.
- A dispute was reported in the 8800 block of Conant.
- A theft from a vehicle was reported in the 11400 block of Mitchell.

#### Thursday, Aug. 21

- An emotional person was reported in the area of Conant and Comstock.
- A break-in was reported in the 11600 block of Jos. Campau.
- A suspect was arrested on Selfridge for assault.
- Reckless drivers were reported at Jos. Campau and Evaline.

#### Friday, Aug. 22

- At 12:45 a.m., officers investigating an assault in the 12000 block of Dyar arrested a male suspect and female suspect.
- A break-in was reported in the 12000 block of Gallagher.
- A theft from a vehicle was reported on Jos. Campau.
- A suspect was arrested in the area of Carpenter and Dyar for multiple misdemeanor offenses.
- Thefts were reported in

the 9300 block of McDougall and in the 5100 block of Evaline.

- A motorcycle crash was reported in the 11600 block of Sobieski.
- A theft was reported in the 3000 block of Roosevelt.
- A complaint was made about fireworks in the area of Conant and Lehman.
- An incident of fraud was reported in the 12000 block of Conant.
- A reckless driver was reported at Evaline and Gallagher.

#### Saturday, Aug. 23

- At 3 a.m., officers responded to a call about a suspicious circumstance in the area of Dequindre and Caniff. Following an investigation, a male suspect was arrested for drunk driving and carrying a concealed weapon.
- Family trouble was reported in the 12000 block of Faber.
- Property damage was reported in the area of Gallagher and Hanley.
- A theft was reported in the 8800 block of Jos. Campau.

#### Sunday, Aug. 24

- Following a traffic stop, a male suspect was arrested for driving without a license, and for obstruction.
- A person was ticketed on Caniff for urinating in public.
- A reckless driver was reported in the area of Norwalk and Lumpkin.
- A complaint was made about fireworks in the area of Jos. Campau and Faber.
- A complaint was made about a juvenile in the 12000 block of Dyar.

#### Monday, Aug. 25

- Officers investigated an open door of a residence in the 3100 block of Carpenter.
- Officers who recovered a stolen vehicle arrested a female suspect for possession of a stolen vehicle.

## City manager fired with police chief and police officer to follow

Continued from page 3

a civilian and instructing her to put it to someone's head

The evidence also substantiated the allegation that Altaheri handed a loaded gun to a civilian volunteer and told her to put it to someone's head.

A recording of that incident was previously released publicly and is the subject of local news articles. An officer who witnessed the event – and who quickly took the gun away from the volunteer – confirmed that the recording was accurate and that Altaheri handed the gun to the civilian volunteer.

During the investigation, Altaheri largely confirmed the facts but claimed that it was a joke. Whether or not Altaheri was "joking," as he has claimed, the evidence shows that he created a serious danger in handing a loaded firearm

to an untrained civilian volunteer in a crowded room.

Further, Altaheri's contention that the firearm was unloaded is implausible given the available evidence, and even handing an unloaded gun to the civilian in that setting would violate HPD policies.

**Pressuring officers to help him in a custody dispute**

At least five 911 calls prompted HPD officers to respond to the residence that Altaheri shared with the mother of his two-year-old son.

There is evidence reflecting that in one instance, Altaheri suggested that officers conduct an investigation at the residence in a way that would be favorable to his position in a dispute over custody of his son.

On September 19, 2024

Continued on page 5

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# City manager fired with police chief and police officer to follow Cont. from page 4

(the same night as the driving incident described above), officers responded to the house following a 911 hang-up call on which Altaheri and the woman can be heard arguing. Altaheri then apparently left the residence and arrived back at the house, giving the appearance that he was not at home when the 911 call was placed.

The police observed that the woman's foot was injured, and the officers treated the call like a medical incident. Altaheri, however, told the officers to investigate her for drug use, conveying to three of them that he was hoping to use what they found (and any resulting police report) to gain custody of his son.

Two of the four officers thought that she might be intoxicated, but none of them believed there was a basis to investigate her for drug activity. Altaheri then told one of the officers to write the police report in a way that would be as vague as possible while helping him build his custody case.

The police report described the woman's eyes as "glossy, bloodshot, and ... not to react to light," while omitting any mention of Altaheri's presence during the incident.

In using his inherent

power as Police Chief for personal benefit in this fashion, Altaheri violated HPD's rules and regulations.

### Violating policies and procedures regarding stolen property

The investigation substantiated that Altaheri participated in the recovery of a vehicle that had been reported as stolen without following standard police practices and procedures. The vehicle, an expensive Mercedes Benz, was in the possession of one of Altaheri's acquaintances.

Altaheri persuaded the acquaintance to turn over the car voluntarily to one of Altaheri's longtime friends from New York. Adamczyk and two civilians - one a convicted felon - participated in the effort to recover the car and transport it to New York.

Although there were differing accounts as to whose idea this escape was, with Altaheri and Adamczyk pointing fingers at each other, it is undisputed that both of them participated in the conduct and failed to follow basic police procedures governing the recovery of a stolen car.

### Violating other policies and procedures

The evidence obtained during the investigation

also revealed that Altaheri gave Adamczyk unfettered access to his electronic signature and to at least one of his City-issued email accounts in violation of HPD policies. Altaheri's conduct during two meetings in May 2025, one of which was recorded, also included physical and verbal threats that violated HPD's rules and regulations.

### Unsubstantiated allegations

The investigation did not confirm or dispel the allegation that Altaheri committed domestic violence and did not substantiate the allegation that he misused his authority as Police Chief to cover up acts of domestic violence. The investigation also did not uncover evidence that Altaheri improperly solicited money from a local towing company operator.

### Officer David Adamczyk

The investigation likewise substantiated some of the allegations against Officer David Adamczyk.

### Recording other officers

Adamczyk's recordings were not per se illegal, nor a violation of HPD's rules and regulation. But because Adamczyk made some of those recordings as part of a broader plan to exert leverage over Altaheri and other officers,

his conduct violated HPD's rules and regulations and City policies in other ways.

Further, when asked during his interview about the extent of his recordings, Adamczyk lied about them - as evidenced by the additional recordings recovered from his City-issued phone, which is an independent basis for issuing corrective action against him.

### Attempting to manipulate the sergeant's examination and then leaking other allegations to pressure Altaheri

The evidence showed that, with Altaheri's assistance, Adamczyk attempted to rig a sergeant's promotion examination in his favor. When Adamczyk learned that he still finished second, after seniority points, he compiled and released the list of allegations against Altaheri that eventually precipitated this investigation.

The timing of Adamczyk's actions, the content of contemporaneous recordings that he made, and Adamczyk's subsequent leaking of those allegations to other HPD officers strongly support the inference that Adamczyk was seeking to pressure Altaheri into promoting him. In using his allegations here as leverage for personal

benefit, Adamczyk violated HPD's rules and regulations.

### Violating policies and procedures regarding stolen property

As discussed above, Adamczyk participated in the improper recovery of a stolen car. In failing to write a report, use his body camera, or record the recovery of the vehicle through official law enforcement channels, Adamczyk violated myriad policies.

Although he later claimed he did so at the express direction of Altaheri, Altaheri did not have the authority to order him to conduct law enforcement activity outside Hamtramck, and even if he did, based on Adamczyk's version of the events, any such order would have been illegal and Adamczyk should not have followed it.

### Committing overtime abuse

The investigation uncovered evidence that Adamczyk submitted overtime for hours that he did not actually work, or mischaracterized the nature of his overtime.

The investigation of this allegation was limited by the lack of documentation for Adamczyk's work and by the fact that Altaheri permitted Adamczyk

to sign his own overtime slips using Altaheri's electronic signature.

But GPS location data from Adamczyk's City-issued phone shows that, on at least two occasions, Adamczyk was at his home during the hours when he claimed overtime for a special assignment with the Detroit Police Department's Commercial Auto Theft Section (CATS).

He also claimed overtime for three other instances when he claimed to be working for a different special assignment, this time with the Wayne County Sheriff's Office, even though Wayne County officials have since confirmed that he did virtually no work for them.

### Unsubstantiated allegations

The remaining allegations against Adamczyk were not substantiated.

### City Manager Max Garbarino

The investigation largely did not substantiate the initial allegations against City Manager Max Garbarino, but it identified that Garbarino exercised significant poor judgment in his role as City Manager and other instances in which his actions did not comport with his obligations under the Hamtramck City Charter, City policies, or supervisory expectations for his position.

### Garbarino's prior separation agreement with the City

Garbarino did not breach or improperly conceal his prior separation agreement with the City when he returned to City employment in late 2019 as the Director of Community Safety and Services. Garbarino's prior separation agreement was well-known, and openly discussed at the City Council meeting when his rehiring and new employment agreement were approved.

As the then-City Attorney explained at the time, the City was permitted to modify Garbarino's prior separation agreement with his new employment agreement. And the new employment agreement, by its own terms, superseded that previous separation agreement.

### Garbarino's attendance at the City Council meeting on June 10, 2025

The investigation did not substantiate the allegations that Garbarino's conduct in attending the City Council meeting on June 10, 2025, violated any laws or policies.

It was a public meeting, and the terms of Garbarino's administrative leave did not prohibit his attendance or interactions at that meeting.

But we question whether Garbarino exercised good judgment in attending that meeting, while armed with his concealed pistol, so soon after being put on administrative leave.

### Rehiring of David Adamczyk

On multiple occasions, Garbarino asked both the former Police Chief and

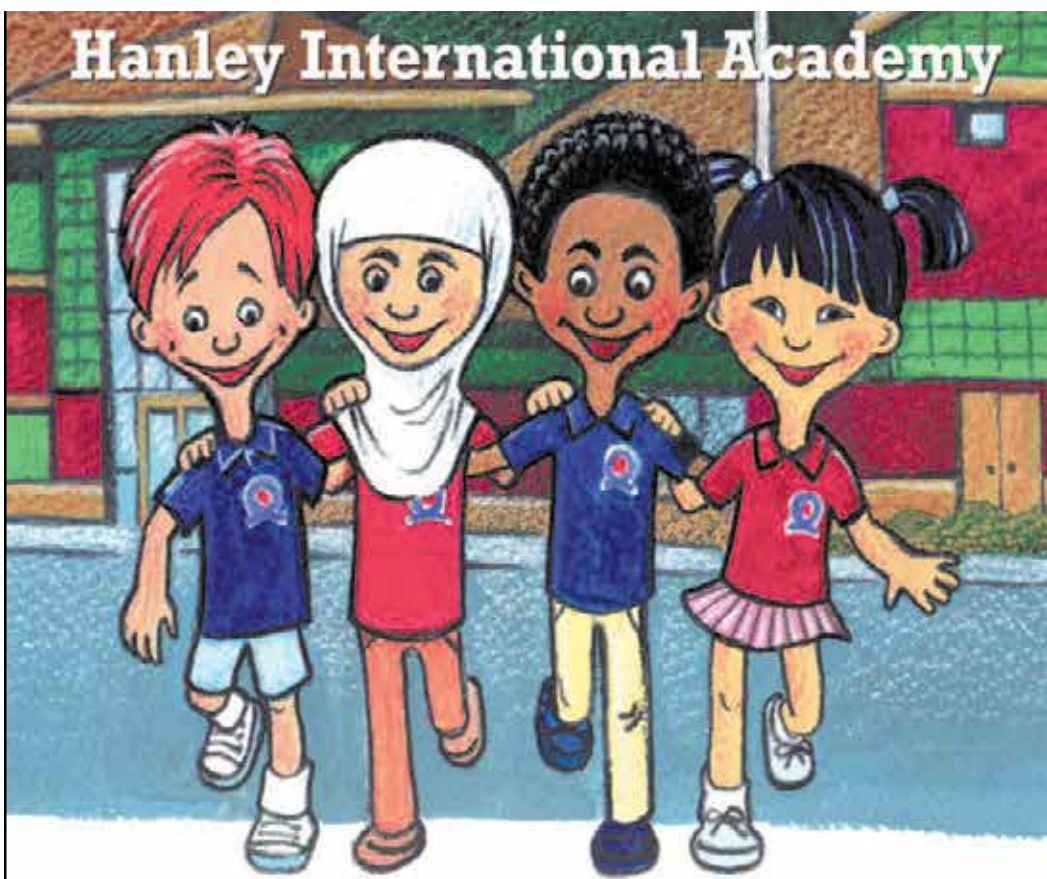
Continued on page 6

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## City manager fired with police chief and police officer to follow Cont. from page 5

Altaheri to consider rehiring Adamczyk as an HPD officer.

The investigation revealed that Adamczyk left HPD employment in 2002 under a cloud, and Garbarino too quickly ignored other officers' concerns about rehiring him.

Garbarino also did not conduct any investigation into the circumstances of Adamczyk's previous departure from HPD, other than just accepting Adamczyk's characterization of what had happened.

During his interview with Miller Johnson, Garbarino downplayed his own responsibility for Adamczyk's rehiring, repeatedly stating that he made only an "introduction" of Adamczyk to Altaheri and left the ultimate hiring decision to Altaheri. Garbarino's account understates the impact and pressure that a supervisor's "introduction" would have on a relatively new subordinate, which Altaheri was at the time.

Garbarino's characterization also minimizes the unique personal relationship that Adamczyk and Garbarino enjoyed, with Adamczyk previously providing Garbarino employment after Garbarino's prior separation from the City, and Garbarino already trying unsuccessfully to get Adamczyk rehired by the former Police Chief. Given this circumstantial evidence, a reasonable deci-

sion-maker could find that Garbarino was motivated to get Adamczyk rehired due to their personal relationship and was not simply making introductions.

### Delays in addressing allegations of misconduct

The information obtained during the investigation, including many of the allegations noted above, supported Garbarino's decision to place Altaheri and Adamczyk on administrative leave on May 21, 2025.

If anything, Garbarino should have suspended them even earlier, given the seriousness of the allegations and when he was made aware of them. Garbarino, for instance, appears to have learned several months earlier that Altaheri was recklessly driving his City-provided vehicle after consuming alcohol and that Altaheri reduced the severity of discipline imposed for an officer's timecard fraud at least in part to ensure that the officer would destroy a compromising video of him.

Garbarino also knew that those instances by the Police Chief were well-known within the police department, which negatively impacted the workforce. Garbarino suggested to Miller Johnson that he did not have enough evidence to act, but given his responsibilities as City Manager, it seems more likely that he failed to act earlier for personal reasons, namely out of fear that intervening might jeopardize his own job. Garbarino's delays in taking action were inconsistent with his obligations under the Hamtramck City Charter, City policies, and supervisory expectations for his position.

### Other miscellaneous allegations of misconduct

The investigation did not substantiate the other allegations levied against Garbarino, including the allegations in the written

memorandum that was released publicly and then subsequently passed along to Miller Johnson.

The Review will dig deep into the report in the weeks to come.

Meanwhile, Chief Altaheri issued a statement through a public relations company and his attorney, Amir Makled, to say the following:

"Throughout my time as Chief, my priority has always been the safety and well-being of the people of Hamtramck. Under my leadership, we have expanded community outreach, built trust with residents and businesses while taking steps to modernize the department. It is unfortunate that these contributions are being overshadowed by a process that disregards due process and fairness."

Altaheri's statement continued:

"Termination is not only unfair to me but also harmful to our city. The people of Hamtramck deserve steady leadership, not more division. I remain committed to defending my reputation through the legal process and to ensuring that the truth is heard."

The attorney for both City Manager Garbarino and police investigator Adamczyk, Reno Arabo, told The Review:

"This is just the latest in a long line of mistakes by the city council. They relied on a report from an employment-defense firm that was biased from the very beginning.

"I was in my clients' interviews myself, and I saw how their statements were mischaracterized and twisted to fit a narrative.

"That report is not reliable. Instead of scapegoating two whistleblowers who tried to protect this city, the council should be holding each other accountable for the fraud and corruption they're involved in."

## From the Office of Wayne County Treasurer Eric R. Sabree



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