The Union R-XI School District is expected to take over the former Scenic Regional Library Union Branch building.

The Board of Education approved the $950,000 purchase at a special meeting Tuesday, May 3. Superintendent Dr. Scott Hayes said the district is buying the building using federal Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief Fund money.

Hayes said the district will discuss its plans for the building, located at 308 Hawthorne Drive, after inspections are completed and the sale closes, which is expected in late May.

The nearest Union R-XI school to the former library is Central Elementary, six-tenths of a mile away, across Highway 50.

The former library building opened in the then-new building in 1991, Campbell said.

The library district came down $100,000 from its original asking price of $1,050,000 for the 10,800-square-foot former library, Scenic Regional Library Director Steve Campbell said Thursday. The building was on the market for more than four years.

"It's very exciting to finally sell it," he said. "And I think the people that live in the houses around the (old) library will be very happy that the school has purchased it versus a business, although I still thought it was a great location for a retail type of business. But I think it's so close to a residential area that it's going to be a nice addition to have a school there versus a business."

The sale did not include the former Scenic Regional Library administration building, which is around 2,400 square feet. Campbell said that remains on the market, with a $550,000 asking price.

Both buildings have been mostly shuttered since August 2019, when Scenic Regional opened its new Union branch at 251 Union Plaza Drive, off Highway 47 north, which includes administration offices for the nine-library system.

The Franklin County Health Department used the old Union branch for about six months in 2021 as a COVID-19 vaccination clinic site. Campbell said the sheriff's office briefly used the building for training, as well.

Originally, Scenic Regional planned to use money raised from the sale of the old Union library and administration building to help with the cost of the new Hermann Branch, which is scheduled to open June 27.

"It was on the market so long, and we were waiting, so we decided to just go ahead and finance Hermann," he said.

Now the money from...
Shining up

Slim Kohrs, left, prepares his 1937 Chevy for the Saturday, May 7, car show at Union High School. The school's band boosters use the 16th annual event to raise money for things like instruments, equipment, trips and uniforms for the band.

Missourian Photo/Geoff Folsom

RAISE

CONTINUED FROM 6B

Everybody deserves a raise over a year's time, I think some of it needs to be a straight raise, and some of it needs to be merit.”

Alderman Tom Strubberg suggested a 5 percent raise for all employees, plus additional funds for merit increases.

"Things have changed a lot in the last year," Strubberg said.

"There are places that are giving literally 50 percent cut their salaries," Strubberg said. "Alderman Barbara Laber re-said. "Alderman Barbara Laber re-said the cost of paying for benefits for the city also is going up. "It costs the city more for health insurance, everything," she said.

Strubberg and Alderman Jacob Deopke raised the possibility of employees leaving if wages are not competitive.

Alderman Karen Erwin, the only member of the Personnel, Finance and Public Works Committee, is expected to go before the full Board of Aldermen at its Monday, May 9 meeting.

"With the 2 1/2 percent cost of living increase, I say we just give them the 5 percent this year, look at it again next year," Pickard said.

"If it's still the same, we might have to do 5 percent again next year." Zimmermann said the city is doing a salary study to compare its employee pay to other places.

Library

CONTINUED FROM 6B

the sale of the old library will go into reserves, Campbell said. "With all these new buildings, down the road 10 years, or whenever, we're going to need furniture and new equipment for these branches," he said. "It will be nice to have that in place in reserves so we can use it when the time comes."

The sale will save the library district some money on cutting grass and removing snow, Campbell said. "We're talking about thousands of dollars, not tens of thousands of dollars," he said. "It was costing us a small amount of money, and the insurance, of course, on the building."

The discussions on the sale took a little over a week, Campbell said.

The Fussbudget

by Geoff Folsom

Hospital pains

I love nothing more than writing about funny things I get to do with my family, well other than actually doing the fun things like going to ballgames, concerts or museums.

Well, this week I'm writing about something not so fun — having a family member in the hospital and not knowing for how long.

My mother-in-law came from Oregon to stay with us a little over six months ago. She was planning to go back to Oregon soon but decided to get her right foot, which was turning purple and causing her pain, examined.

She had a residency stipend, and my mother-in-law was pretty tired and ready to sleep.

Meanwhile midway through the surgery on April 29, I started feeling crummy. By the next morning, I had a really bad sore throat and stuffy head. I felt better as the day went on, but the sore throat was even worse Sunday morning.

We took one of the COVID tests the government mailed us. It came back negative, but it made going to the hospital even more uncomfortable than it already is.

I returned to writing while in the hospital. One nice thing was the room had no condition to be making health care decisions on her own.

They also informed us that we should have been talking to my mother-in-law's case manager, who we did not realize existed after five days in the hospital.

The two brief discussions with that doctor were the only conversations we've had with any of the vascular team members in the 10 days since the surgery. No phone calls, no emails, no other in-person discussions. This did not make anyone happy.

I next saw my mother-in-law Saturday at the hospital.