



November 2016

3033 St. Croix Trail South
P.O. Box 219
Afton, MN 55001

Dogs diverging?...Cats cavorting?...

Afton Licensing is Important...It Saves Money and Heartache

The city requires dogs and cats to be licensed because we require proof of rabies vaccination for each animal. This is an important health, safety and welfare issue for residents in Afton, which is reportedly a high rabies incidence area. The cost for licensing is \$5.00 per altered animal (neutered or spayed) per two-year period. (Cats are permanently licensed.) Your \$5.00 investment can save you hundreds of dollars if your pet inadvertently leaves your property.

Now is the time to get your dog licensed for the next two-years. You may get the license form on the city website or at City Hall. Submit the completed form, the pet's current rabies certificate and fee to City Hall. You will receive a new tag and a treat for your pup(s). Better yet, bring the pups in to meet us! **We love 'em!**

A recent incident came to the city's attention involving a "stray" dog. Admittedly, the definition of "stray" means different things to different people. Staff at the City Office work hard to put as many pets as possible back into their owner's hands without having animal control called. One way we do this is to **POST ON THE CITY WEBSITE** any dog or cat that has been found or is missing. We try to post a picture as well. **Please check the city website first to see if there has been a report of a MISSING or FOUND animal.**

If you find an animal that is friendly and looks well-cared-for that has wandered into your yard, porch or garage, please check with your neighbors first! Second, report the animal found or missing to Afton City Office, 651-436-5090 (off hours, leave a message & a return phone number) or call the Sheriff's dispatch 651-439-9381. If we can put the animal back together with its owner(s) it makes all of us feel better. It is a significant cost savings to residents and saves the "city" money (which, again, means cost savings to residents, through property taxes).

Unfortunately, the recent incident involved a very friendly dog who was cavorting in the woods on its own property while the owner worked in the yard. A resident stopping at the nearby stop sign saw the dog, who began happily circling the car. In an effort to protect the dog, the resident loaded the "burr-ridden, smelly dog" into the car and contacted authorities. It being a Saturday afternoon, the Sheriff's dispatch took the call and Animal Control was contacted. A series of unfortunate events landed this dog in impound "jail" for the weekend: the dog did not have an Afton dog tag; the dog was not "wanded" at pick up, even though the dog had a microchip; Hillcrest Animal Hospital closes at noon on Saturday and is not open on Sunday. The owner was contacted Monday morning when Hillcrest staff wanded the dog. Frustrated that his dog was taken from so near his property without his notification, he was understandably upset to have to pay the two-day impound fee in order to be reunited with his pet. Gratefully, this story has a happy ending. The dog was safe from cars and was eventually returned to its owner.

Could this pain and heartache have been avoided? An Afton dog tag would have given Animal Control the information it needed to call the owner immediately. If the resident had told the dog to "Go Home!" it may have run happily through the trees into its yard. Had the resident honked the car horn, the owner might have been alerted that the dog was "off property" temporarily. All good options.

Please register your pets with the City. It's the cost-effective and responsible thing to do! We're just glad this one had a happy ending!!

CITY MEETINGS

November 1, 2016

(New Date and Time)

Natural Resources & Groundwater
5:00 P.M.

November 7, 2016

Planning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

GENERAL ELECTION, NOV 8

No City Meetings May be Held

November 15, 2016

City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

November 16, 2016

Heritage Preservation Commission
5:00 P.M.

November 30, 2016

Parks Committee
6:00 P.M.

*All meetings are held at City Hall
unless otherwise noted.*

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor:	Richard Bend	436-7684
Ward 1:	Bill Palmquist	308-0569
Ward 2:	Joe Richter	436-1819
Ward 3:	Stan Ross	436-1346
Ward 4:	Randy Nelson	436-2479

CITY HALL

Monday — Friday

9:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.

651 - 436 - 5090

CITY WEBSITE

www.ci.afton.mn.us

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Animal Control	715-386-7789
Building Inspector	436-6469
Burning Permits	248-5103
Environmental Center	430-6655
Highland Sanitation	458-0043
Hillcrest Animal Hosp	484-7211
LSCV Fire Dept	436-7033
Sheriff's Office	439-9381

EMERGENCY 911

Notes from the Mayor

by Richard Bend

Belwin has a program called "Open First Saturday." It is one day a month when members can walk their trails, including trails not usually open to the public. It includes a vast area that I as a boy used to roam looking for birds, snakes, small animals and, when lucky, sightings of foxes and deer.

Last month my wife accompanied me on a walk through the creek-threaded valley below Belwin's Visitor Center. We followed trails around what once were bare sand dunes, now tree-covered, over floating walkways above bogs and past woodland ponds jeweled with wood ducks. Along the way we met a woman lost in the wilderness, unsure of which direction in 360 pointed to the Visitor Center from which she left.

In what suburb but Afton could she have become lost in the wilderness? In what suburb could we who live here feel so much at home?

Manning Avenue Work

The Minnesota Department of Transportation will be completing three Manning Avenue/Hwy 95 safety improvement projects in 2017, 2018 & 2019. MNDOT has a website which shows locations, summarizes the work and lists project specific contact information for all three.



The 2018 Hwy 95 project from Bailey Road to 70th St/County Rd 22 is currently in development and mailings have been sent to property owners along Hwy 95 to provide information of the upcoming work and property needs related to the project.

Project information can be accessed on the home page of the City website (right sidebar) or at the MNDOT website at:

mndot.gov/metro/projects/hwy95safetyimprovements

RESIDENTS BE AWARE (or beware!!!)

Did You Know? The City of Afton, in 2015, passed an ordinance regulating solar installations. This Solar Ordinance does not allow "solar farms" (aka, "community solar gardens").



If you are approached by a commercial solar energy company wanting to lease your land for a solar farm, please be aware that the Planning Commission and City Council specifically PROHIBITED solar farms in Afton, as they felt they would not add to the community's rural character.

Residents are encouraged to **be aware** of this city regulation. **This ordinance can be accessed on the city website in Chapter 12, Section 12-230.**

From the Fire Department...

BURNING LEAVES AND GARDEN VEGETATION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED IN THE FIVE CITY AREA.

Recreational fires are allowed with logs greater than 3" diameter and 3 feet by 3 feet in size. Burning brush and leaves in a recreational fire is not allowed.

Please contact Deputy Chief Jim Stanley at 651-248-5103 with questions on recreational fires or to get other burning permits.

GENERAL ELECTION, NOV 8

VOTE IN PERSON - 7:00 A.M.— 8:00 P.M.
at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
14107 Hudson Road S, Afton, MN
Use the East Entrance; proceed to the Gymnasium

VOTE ABSENTEE - through November 7
at any Washington County Service Center:

- ✓ Cottage Grove Service Center, 13000 Ravine Parkway
- ✓ Government Center in Stillwater, 14949 62nd Street N
- ✓ Forest Lake Service Center, 19955 Forest Road N
- ✓ Woodbury Service Center, 2150 Radio Drive



Important 2016 Afton Elections

VOTE for City Council in the 2016 Election:

- Ward 1 — 4-year term** (one open seat)
Bill Palmquist
Simon Wirth
- Ward 4 — 4-year term**
Randy Nelson (unopposed)
- Mayor — 2-year term**
Richard Bend (unopposed)

All City Council seats are non-partisan.

Planning Commission, October 3

- **Continued** the Public Hearing for the JoAnn Fox application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Private Kennel at 2855 Nybeck Avenue S to the November 7, 2016 Planning Commission meeting.
- **Recommended** Council approve the ordinance amendment, as revised, to limit the exception only to driveways crossing man-made steep slopes that were created by the construction of public roads and/or related ditches, and that extend only perpendicular to the road for a horizontal distance of 30 feet or less, and, where no other option is available to the landowner.
- **Recommended** Council approve the ordinance amendment for additional septic system compliance inspection triggers with the revisions: DELETING item B, for building permits of 40% of the assessed value of the principal structure, and ADDING item C, for building permits that add square footage to the footprint of the principal structure.
- **Strongly recommended** to City Council that the draft ordinance integrating Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) into Afton City Code be DENIED due to the findings that: 1) Afton ordinances sufficiently cover the topic; 2) the workload to staff to take on the MSCWMO approach to changing the Afton City Code would be a heavy burden; and, 3) in several areas the proposed regulations are less restrictive than Afton's, which the Commission felt is undesirable.

City Council Meeting, October 18

- **Accepted the withdrawal** of the application for a Solar Energy Ordinance Amendment by SEV MN1, LLC and Janice Schwitters & Steven Moll to allow a solar farm as a conditional use or interim use in the Agricultural District to enable a solar farm at 12351 15th Street.
- **Approved** a Conditional Use Permit for a trailer parking facility for Brockman Investments located on Hudson Road with PID# 05.028.20.11.0007, including compliance with an amended landscape plan.
- **Amended and Approved** an ordinance amending Sec. 12-2041, Septic System Compliance and Inspection, which includes additional requirements for septic system compliance inspections. Item B was retained and item C, which was added by the Planning Commission, was deleted.
- **Approved** an Ordinance Amendment to provide an exception to steep slope restrictions for areas of man-made ditches, which was amended by the Planning Commission to allow the exception only to driveway crossings of a limited scope.
- **Continued** the Public Hearing for the Vacation of the City Cartway #7 off of Afton Boulevard with PID# 22.028.20.32.0007, so that owners of the property at 14925 Afton Blvd S could be present.
- **Approved** moving forward with negotiations with two Solid Waste and Recycling Service hauler proposals.
- **Approved**, under reconsideration, the installation of cluster mailboxes for residents on Indian Trail Path S, 11th Street S and Afton Hills Court S, with the understanding that a majority of the residents on the street want the cluster mailboxes, and that the Post Office agrees to deliver mail to those residents that choose to keep their own mailbox.
- **Approved** replacing the City Hall phone system for \$2,336.64 with a 5-year warranty, saving the city an annual maintenance fee of \$727.56, which will recoup the cost within three years.
- **Approved** additional fill material needed for the Pennington Avenue erosion repair at an additional cost of \$1,500.

MEETING PACKETS AND APPROVED MEETING MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE ON THE CITY WEBSITE: www.ci.afton.mn.us.

Downtown Improvements Project Update

- A consultation meeting with tribal government representatives has been scheduled for Monday, November 7, to resolve their objections related to the Rattlesnake Mound and determine a path forward to enable a Spring 2017 construction start.

The 411 on Doggy Doodoo and Kitty Litter...

A resident recently wrote to ask if we could please put a reminder in the Afton newsletter about picking up after dogs when walking them on streets and roads in Afton. Also, they were concerned that people may not be disposing of cat litter in an environmentally safe manner. They wondered if Afton has any guidelines for this?

Great question...glad you asked!

Afton's ordinances list nuisances in several places: Chapter 10, Environment Sec 10-26 includes a general prohibition of nuisances. Also, Chapter 12, Sec. 12-205, C. *Toxic and noxious matter*, says no "discharge may be made in such concentration as to be detrimental or to endanger the public health, comfort or general welfare." Sec. 12-207, C.2, contains miscellaneous nuisances that would specifically cause or suffer "the pollution of any public well, stream or lake, canal or body of water by sewage, industrial waste or other substances," which means cat waste and litter must be properly disposed of and not thrown outside where run off could pollute the environment.

The city website home page has more on the dangers of not picking up after your dog and of parasites found in cat feces and kitty litter.





CITY OF AFTON
3033 ST CROIX TRAIL SO
P.O. BOX 219
AFTON, MN 55001



PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
AFTON MN 55001
PERMIT NO. 15

Valley Branch Library November Events

**Library closed — November 11 (Veterans Day)
and November 24 & 25 (Thanksgiving Holiday)**

Preschool Storytime

Mondays, Nov. 7, 14, 21 & 28, 10:30 to 11 a.m.

Stories, songs, rhymes develop early literacy skills.



STEM Saturday

Saturday, Nov. 19, 11 a.m. to noon

Explore STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) through hands-on activities and creative projects!

Dog Gone Reading

Tuesday, Nov. 22, from 4 to 6 p.m.

Children K-7 read aloud to Legacy, a certified therapy dog and its owner. Sign up for 15 minute reading sessions at the library or call 436-5882.



STEAM Storytime

Monday, Nov. 28, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Stories, songs, rhymes and special activities involving fun with Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math.

**PATRON
AFTON, MN 55001**

View this newsletter
IN COLOR
on the city website.



Please recycle this
newsletter after use.

Internationally Renowned Author Sy Montgomery

Featured at Woodbury Library
November 2, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Naturalist, author, documentarian and media commentator Sy Montgomery is sometimes described as “part Indiana Jones, part Emily Dickinson” (Boston Globe). Montgomery’s distinguished career in animal behavior has taken her to far-flung locations including Costa Rica, the Congo and Mongolia’s deserts. Her impressive writing spans 10 books for adults and 10 for children. Bestsellers include “The Good Pig,” a personal memoir about her family’s 750-pound pet pig, and “Birdology.” Her latest New York Times bestseller, “The Soul of an Octopus,” was short-listed for a National Book Award. In it, she explores the psyche of this extraordinary species, including their remarkable ability to forge personal connections with humans.

Seating is first-come, first-served; doors open 45 minutes before the program; books will be available for sale/signing.

LSCV FD IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Lower St Croix Valley Fire Department provides quality training based on real world experience and always considers it an honor and privilege to work with the citizens we serve.

We provide a variety of training programs to meet the community's needs. Visit www.lscvfd.com to download an employment application packet today.

There’s nothing else in the world like being a Firefighter/EMT. ***It’s the best job in the world! Come join us!***

Veteran’s Day Dinner

**Thursday, November 10th
5:00—7:00 p.m.**

St. Francis of Assisi Church
Lakeland

FREE Veteran’s day dinner & prizes hosted by Yellow Ribbon Alliance of the Lower St. Croix Valley for all area veterans and their families.

No advance registration required.

?? Contact Mary: 651-436-8696 or www.st.croixvalleyyellowribbon.org

FIRE EXTINGUISHER RECHARGING

The Lower St Croix Valley Fire Department is hosting a fire extinguisher recharging service at the Fire Station at 1560 St Croix Trail South in Lake St Croix Beach on Tuesday, November 15th from 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Residents and Business Owners are welcome.

A representative and service technician from Becker Fire & Safety will be recharging and certifying residential and commercial extinguishers. Service and fees will be rendered directly to the vendor on the day of service. Bill Becker has been providing this service and has been a reputable provider for many years.