



February 2017

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

Firefighters Honored

The Lower St Croix Valley Fire Department held it's annual awards celebration and banquet this past Saturday, January 14th, at Stoneridge Golf Club and honored four firefighters for Years of Service Awards. Presented with awards were as follows:

Kevin R Johnson (Afton) - 30 Years of Service; John Jurek (Lake St Croix Beach) - 10 Years of Service; Lt. Adam Stafne (Lakeland) - 5 Years of Service; Capt. Steve Fogarty (Lake St Croix Beach) - 5 Years of Service

All members of the department, including Chief Officers from our neighboring mutual aid departments in attendance, were also presented with commemorative coins from Dear American Hero Founder Richard Glasgow. These coins were distributed in honor of the individual member's commitment to service for our communities. The presentation of the coin and expression of thanks was conveyed by each member's personal mayor or city representative.

The evening was capped off with a video capturing the events that were 2016 put together as always by Firefighter/EMT Brenda McKenzie. A special thanks to all who made this such a wonderful evening.

Jim Stanley -



Please contact City Hall at 651-436-5090 if you have any questions, concerns or comments regarding our snow plowing service. A snow plow route map is located on the city's website at www.ci.afton.mn.us

You will find the map on the tab:

- Roads & Bridges
- Snow Removal
- Map of Snow Plow Routes.

Licensing protects pets!

ALL DOGS (& cats) that venture out-of-doors in Afton are required to be licensed and have current rabies vaccinations. This is for the health & safety of residents, pets and wildlife.

Should an animal be **lost** or **found**, residents should **call City Hall first** to attempt reuniting pets with owners, saving Animal Control and impound charges.

Two year licenses for "altered" pets is \$5; unaltered is \$10. Current license period is January 1, 2017 — December 31, 2018. *(What a deal!)* **An additional \$5 late fee applies after March 31.**

For each pet, complete an Animal License Form, found on Afton's Home Page, attach a copy of the current rabies vaccination certificate and appropriate fee per animal. Mail or bring to City Hall.

Thank you!

The Washington Conservation District (WCD) annual Tree Sale on 2-23-17, 5:30-7:30, their office located at 455 Hayward Ave N, Oakdale, MN 55128. WCD is offering dinner and a short evening workshop. Find answers to questions like— what trees would thrive in my yard, which are most resilient in MN's changing climate and what's the proper method of planting a tree? Expert guest presenters: US Forest Service, DNR and the WCD. Cost is **FREE** but a **RSVP** is required for dinner through tinyurl.com/2017Trees or call Jenn Radtke at 651-330-8220 x44. **To order trees:** www.mnwcd.org/land/trees/

CITY MEETINGS

**The City Office is Closed
Monday, February 20, 2017**

In observance of Presidents' Day

February 6, 2017

Planning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

February 7, 2017

Natural Resources & Groundwater
5:00 P.M.

February 15, 2017

Heritage Preservation Commission
5:00 P.M.

February 21, 2017

City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

February 22, 2017

Parks Committee
7:00 P.M.

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

CITY COUNCIL

<u>Mayor:</u>	Richard Bend	436-7684
<u>Ward 1:</u>	Bill Palmquist	308-0569
<u>Ward 2:</u>	Joe Richter	436-1819
<u>Ward 3:</u>	Stan Ross	436-1346
<u>Ward 4:</u>	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

The City Council has established a Grant Writing Committee. It is authorized to identify projects benefiting Afton and its residents for which grants are available, to recommend them to the Council and to write grant applications for approved projects. Project areas can include, but are not limited to, the arts, city infrastructure, protection of the environment, sustainability, home business development, city planning and business development. If you have experience in grant writing or a strong interest in helping Afton locate and receive grants in any of these areas, I encourage you to volunteer for the Grant Writing Committee by filling out the application available on the City website under the tab "City Commissions and Committees". We also have openings on the Public Works Committee which is a particularly interesting and active committee, currently focused on street improvements. It has been hard to find vacancies on our committees recently, so this is your chance: openings on two at once. You can take your pick.

At the annual fire district awards banquet I was once again this year overwhelmed by the incredible contribution made to Afton and our fellow valley cities by members of the Lower St. Croix Valley Fire Department. For scant pay they respond in foul weather and fair, whether it be day or night, Christmas Eve or in the middle of their children's birthday parties. They rush to us when our houses and belongings are threatened, when our family's lives are at stake and with care and expertise rescue us or attack fires that threaten. For those of you visited by their ambulance or fire trucks, join me in thanks. For those who haven't needed them yet, know they are there and ready when you do.

Richard Bend

Highway 95/Manning Avenue Safety Improvement Projects

About this project: Hwy 95 between Hwy 61 to Valley Creek Rd will undergo a series of safety improvement projects from 2017 through 2019.

Construction Schedule:

Spring 2017:

Hwy 95/Manning Avenue at Valley Creek Rd

Spring 2018:

Bailey Rd/Co Rd 18 to 70th St/Co Rd 22

Spring 2019:

70th St/Co Rd 22 to Hwy 61

Traffic impacts:

Hwy 95 at Valley Creek Rd (2017)

SB Hwy 95 will be detoured for approximately 3 months

Detour: WB I-94 to Woodbury Dr, Bailey Rd to Hwy 95

Note: NB Hwy 95 access will be maintained during construction

Hwy 95 from Bailey Rd to Hwy 61 (2018-2019)

There will be temporary road closures and lane closures.

Dates for specific traffic impacts will be posted once they are available.

DNR Forestry Stewardship Cost Share Program

Do you own woodlands in rural Minnesota? Are you looking to practice good forest stewardship on your land? If so, there is money available to share the costs of your woodland projects.

The DNR's Private Forestry Management (PFM) cost share program provides money for non-industrial private landowners to practice good forest stewardship on their land. A forester works with the landowner and develops a specific project plan to accomplish their goal. The landowner does the work themselves or hires it out to a contractor. After the work is completed and approved by the forester, the landowner receives a payment that should equate to roughly 50% of the cost to install the project.

Some project examples include tree planting, bud capping, crop tree release, tree tube installation, invasive species removal, oak wilt control, wildlife habitat improvement, and forest road rehab. This year we will also be offering a payment to any landowner who gets a new, or updated, Woodland Stewardship Plan prepared for their property.

Taking care of your woodlands benefits all Minnesotan's by:

Enhancing recreational opportunities such as bird watching, hunting, and fishing.

Improving and protecting water quality.

Enhancing wildlife habitat.

Supporting a healthy forest products economy.

Providing clean air.

More information:

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/foreststewardship/index.html>

Downtown Improvements Project Update

As part of planning for the start of construction of the Downtown Village Improvements Project in the spring, the City is in the process of meeting with the contractors to determine the staging and timing of the various project elements. Once the staging plan is developed, a public information meeting is planned to be held in early March to share this plan with residents and businesses. Information regarding the public information meeting will be provided in the City Newsletter and through a mailing to the residents and businesses in the project area.

Planning Commission, January 9

Chris Eng, Washington County Economic Development Director provided information regarding the feasibility and benefits of attracting data center and high-tech and medical uses to the Industrial Zones.

Motion approved to recommend approval of the Marcus and McLaurin Variance Application at 4270 River Road with the staff's recommended conditions.

Motion approved to continue the ordinance amendment to Sec. 12-134 to the February 6, 2017 Planning Commission meeting to enable the ordinance language to be clarified, in the IIA and IIB Zoning Districts, to eliminate only storage screened as a principal use and not storage enclosed.

Motion approved to recommend approval of the ordinance amendment to Sec. 12-132. B.3 with the following revised exception language: "In the case of two contiguous existing nonconforming lots under common ownership, each containing an existing residence, these lots will be excepted from this subparagraph, as long as the residences continue to qualify as existing legally nonconforming structures."

Motion approved to recommend the Council disregard adding Minimal Impact Design Standards to the zoning code.

City Council Special and Regular Meetings

Special Council Meeting Highlights of January 12, 2017

The oaths of office were administered to Mayor Bend, and Council members Randy Nelson and Bill Palmquist for their new terms beginning in 2017.

The Council approved the annual appointments for 2017.

The Council Reconsidered its action regarding moving forward with the process to issue Street Reconstruction Bonds to fund street improvements in 2017, in favor of issuing Abatement Bonds for the same purpose, and cancelled the Street Reconstruction Bonds hearing that was scheduled for January 17, 2017.

The Council approved moving forward with the refinancing of the Downtown Village Improvement Project Temporary Bonds Series 2015A through the issuance of new temporary improvement bonds in the amount of \$2 million.

The Council authorized staff to obtain information regarding the replacement of the existing projector in the Council chambers with a large screen TV.

The Council discussed a proposal for engineering services related to developing bid specifications for the 2017 street improvement projects, and continued action on the proposal to the January 17, 2017 Council meeting.

The Council reviewed updated financial information regarding the Downtown Village Improvements Project.

Regular Council Meeting of January 17, 2017

The Council Designated US Bank as the City's official depository, and designated the St. Paul Pioneer Press as the City's Official Newspaper where public notices are published.

The Council adopted the 2017 regular meeting schedule for the Council and the Planning Commission.

The Council approved the Marcus and McLaurin Variance application for an addition and remodel to the house at 4270 River Road.

The Council adopted Ordinance 01-2017 amending Sec. 12-132.B.3 regarding minimum requirements for contiguous parcels under common ownership, with a revision recommended by the Planning Commission.

The Council directed that an ordinance amendment eliminating "Storage Enclosed or Screened Principal Use" from the list of allowed uses in the IIA and IIB Zoning Districts be referred back to the Planning Commission as written.

The Council authorized staff to move forward with the process of finalizing an ordinance to integrate Minimal Impact Design Standards into the Zoning Code.

The Council accepted a proposal from WSB for engineering services related to the 2017 Street Reclamation Projects in the amount not to exceed \$150,995.

The Council directed staff to survey other cities regarding the percentage increase in consulting engineer rate schedules for 2017.

The Council approved the Brown Trout LLC application for Variance and Minor Subdivision for a lot line rearrangement and shared driveway at 15311 Putnam Boulevard and 2573 Stagecoach Trail.

The Council adopted a resolution authorizing the sale of \$2 million of General Obligation Temporary Improvement Bonds, Series 2017A.

The Council designated the firm of Holstad and Knaak as the City Attorney and Prosecuting Attorney for 2017, and designated WSB as the City Engineer for 2017.

The Council approved the outline for the formation of a Grants Committee.

The Council approved the payout of 50% of accrued sick leave for former City Clerk Kim Swanson Linner.

The Council approved temporary staffing for 20 hours per week during the hiring process for the City Clerk position.

The Council directed that Requests for Proposals for Auditor and IT consultant be conducted during 2017.

The Council directed that a public hearing be scheduled regarding the sale of Abatement Bonds to fund the 2017 Street Improvement projects.

The Council approved the Public Works Committee to investigate the paving of 60th Street from Trading Post Trail to Neal Avenue, including discussions with Denmark Township and identification of funding sources, and authorized the Public Works Committee to consult with the City Attorney.



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



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PERMIT NO. 15

The Library is CLOSED Monday, February 20, 2016 for Presidents' Day

Valley Branch Library February Events

Sing Play Learn with MacPhail : A Musical Snowstorm

Monday, February 06, 2017 at 10:30 AM

Join MacPhail Center for Music's early childhood specialists to explore the magic of music and play through hands-on musical play activities.

Age(s): Baby, Toddler, Preschool

Family Storytime: Valley Library

Monday, February 13, 2017 at 10:30 AM

Join us for stories, songs, fingerplays and more to encourage the development of early literacy skills. For all children and their families.

Age(s): Children, Family, Preschool

STEM Saturdays at Valley

Saturday, February 18, 2017 at 11:00 AM

Explore STEM through hands-on activities and creative projects! Each month the library will have an activity focused on science, technology, engineering, and/or math. Registration not required.

Age(s): Children, Preschool, Teen

Toy Lab

Saturday, February 18, 2017 at 11:00 AM

Come design and create your very own toys! Kids will use materials such as wood, fabric, wire, magnets, springs, and glue to build creations that scoot, fly, pounce, zoom and ooze.

Book Club: Valley Branch

Thursday, February 23, 2017 at 5:00 PM

Valley Library has a group that gathers and will discuss the book "The devil in the white city: murder, magic and madness at the fair that changed America" by Erik Larson. Visit Valley Library to pick up a copy of the book...

Age(s): Adult

STEAM Storytime

Monday, February 27, 2017 at 10:30 AM

Join us on the fourth Monday of each month for a special STEAM Storytime. In addition to stories, songs and rhymes, there will be special activities incorporating science, technology, engineering, art...

Age(s): Family, Children, Preschool

come and discuss. Open to all.



Dog Gone Reading with Legacy

Tuesday, Feb. 28, from 4 to 6 p.m.

Children in grades K-7 may practice reading aloud to a certified therapy dog and its owner/trainer. Reading sessions are 15 minutes in length. Sign up at the Info Desk or call 651-436-5882.

**PATRON
AFTON, MN 55001**

View this newsletter
IN COLOR
on the city website.



*Please recycle this
newsletter after use.*

Slippery Out There!

With the ice being a problem this year, just a friendly reminder that the City provides a sand/salt mixture for Afton residents to use to control ice on driveways. Please fill buckets only - no skid loaders - **This service is not for commercial use.** The mixture is at the garage located at 1675 Stagecoach Trail. If you go there and its gone, please call and advise City Hall. Thank you.



Belwin Conservancy Events –

Belwin Conservancy Open House,
February 18.

All Welcome.

HOURS: Trails open at the Belwin Outdoor Science center from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Woodland fire with s'mores, warm drinks and desserts in the Education Center and star viewing at the observatory 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.



Location:
1553 Stagecoach Trail South