



February 2023

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

**City of Afton Dashboard
A Summary of Current Happenings**

- ◆ Because we have had so many snow events this winter, we wanted to share the method used to clear snow during a snow emergency. Afton plows the local roads with steep hills early during a snow event and then the major east/west roads. When these are completed, the balance of Afton's roads are cleared. The city plows only the local roads. County Roads 18, 21 and 71 are plowed by the county and Manning /Hwy 95 is plowed by the state.
- ◆ Snow removal is one of the city's largest expenses. Please help keep costs down by moving your cars off the public roads when there is a snow event.
- ◆ The Comcast broadband expansion to the four under-served areas of Afton is planned to start this spring. Residents in the four areas will receive a letter regarding the project prior to work commencing.
- ◆ The lawsuit brought by the Afton Marina has ended. The court dismissed two of the three issues and the marina decided to dismiss the remaining issue.
- ◆ The process of restoring the vegetation that was illegally clear-cut on the bluff and shoreline on Lake Edith is moving forward. The City is working through Washington County Community Corrections to obtain the restitution necessary to restore the vegetation to the greatest extent possible.

SAR

Blood Drive

Memorial Lutheran Church of Afton is hosting a Blood Drive on Tuesday, February 28th from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Register at: redcrossblood.org
Or call 1-800-733-2767

Memorial Lutheran Church
15730 So Afton Blvd
Afton, MN 55001



**American
Red Cross**

The City Office is Closed

Monday, February 20
In observance of Presidents Day

CITY MEETINGS

February 6, 2023

Planning Commission Meeting
7:00 PM (In-Person)

February 7, 2023

Natural Resources & Groundwater
Committee
5:00 PM

February 21, 2023

City Council Meeting
7:00 PM (In-Person)

February 22, 2023

Parks Committee Meeting
6:00 PM (In-Person)

Public Participation Via Zoom Will Continue
to be Available for City Council and Planning
Commission Meetings.

Information on how to join the meetings will
be posted on the City website along with the
agenda and meeting
packet.

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor: Bill Palmquist 651-308-0569

Ward 1: Annie Perkins 651-592-3007

Ward 2: Lucia Wroblewski 651-436-3982

Ward 3: Stan Ross 612-720-6478

Ward 4: Randy Nelson 651-436-2479

CITY HALL

651-436-5090

CITY WEBSITE

www.ci.afton.mn.us

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Animal Control 715-220-1332

Building Inspector 651-436-6469

Burning Permits 651-248-5103

Environmental Center 651-275-7475

Highland Sanitation 651-458-0043

Otter Lake Animal Care 651-426-8871

Fire Dept 651-436-7033

Sheriff's Dept 651-439-9381

EMERGENCY 911

Notes from the Mayor

I have heard from several residents who have received mailers from companies that want to bottle spring water from their property. If you have received anything similar please let our staff know so these companies can be contacted. Extracting, hauling, and/or processing spring water for commercial use is not an allowed use in an agricultural or residential zone. We want to make sure everyone involved knows the ordinance restrictions before taking any action that could result in issues down the road.

At the January meeting the council appointed Marc Porupsky to the planning commission to fill a vacancy. Marc previously served on our High Speed Internet Committee when we partnered with CenturyLink to improve internet speeds several years ago. His work on that committee was invaluable. Thank you Marc for volunteering to serve again!

As you know, we continue to have a very snowy winter and that has presented many challenges for the crews out working to keep the roads cleared. Some of these events have lasted for days with our plow drivers out working around the clock. There have been longer waits at times to get our roads cleared, and we have had to deal with and learn from a number of issues as we have worked through some of these storm events. However, in looking around at other cities of our size I believe our public works staff and contractor are performing well under these conditions. Providing safe, passable roads as quickly as possible will always be a huge priority for the city and it is something the council and staff think about and work to improve each year. Having over 55 miles of city streets spread out over 25 square miles of land presents unique challenges for a city of our size, but I believe we have a good balance right now of capability, capacity, response, and cost. If you are having an issue, please continue to let city staff know so we can get it resolved and continue to improve our processes and planning. But also know our staff and contractor are out there working hard and with this much snow, everything becomes more difficult.

-Bill

Pet License Renewals Due

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.

Two year licenses for altered pets is \$5; unaltered is \$10. Current license period is January 1, 2023 — December 31, 2024. *(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.

Yellow Ribbon Alliance Lower St. Croix Valley



The Yellow Ribbon Alliance of the Lower St Croix Valley is looking for volunteers to represent the City of Afton. After being proclaimed a Yellow Ribbon network on August 23, 2011, the Yellow

Ribbon Alliance Lower St. Croix Valley continues its mission of supporting communities, servicemembers, veterans and military families. It is a network that prides itself in trust, follow through and commitment. The Yellow Ribbon Alliance Lower St. Croix Valley is comprised of five communities bordering the St. Croix River in Washington County, MN. The communities are Lakeland, Lakeland Shores, Lake St. Croix Beach, St. Mary's Point and Afton.

For more information or to volunteer please visit: <https://5cityyellowribbon.com>

Meeting Highlights

January 9, 2023 Planning Commission Meeting

The Commission:

- Reviewed draft zoning standards for two dwelling units in a commercial building in the VHS-C zone.

January 17, 2023 City Council Meeting

The Council:

- Appointed Marc Porupsky to serve on the Planning Commission.
- Reviewed draft zoning standards for two dwelling units in a commercial building in the VHS-C zone.
- Reviewed amendments to the Short Term Home Rental ordinance.
- Approved annual committee appointments for City Council members.
- Designated the official depository, newspaper, signatories, city engineer and city attorney.

MEETING PACKETS, VIDEOS AND APPROVED MEETING MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE AT:
www.ci.afton.mn.us

Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

Midwinter Family Fun

Saturday, February 4

5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Belwin Conservancy Hilltop Classroom and Joseph J. Casby Observatory, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S, Afton, MN 55001

Cost: Free

This night of outdoor family activities features hikes through the snow guided by Belwin naturalists, stargazing with volunteers from the Minnesota Astronomical Society, and s'mores around several campfires. Don't miss this opportunity to observe the stars and moon with one of the biggest refractive telescopes in the state! Warm drinks will be available for visitors indoors.

Event is free. No RSVP required.

Be a Better Birder – Winter Birds!

Saturday, February 11

9:30 am - 11:30 am

Belwin Conservancy Hilltop Classroom, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S, Afton, MN 55001

Cost: \$10 per family

Hone your bird identification skills and enjoy a winter hike! We will begin indoors looking at bird mounts and study skins and then head out to listen and look for our hardy winter birds! We will end our time around a campfire with hot beverages.

Come dressed in layers for any weather. Led by Lynette Anderson. RSVP required. To RSVP, visit belwin.org/events

Women Walking

Saturday, March 18

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Belwin Conservancy Hilltop Classroom, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S, Afton, MN 55001

Cost: \$20 per person

Come celebrate the seasonal changes in the natural world! Vernal Equinox, Summer Solstice, Autumnal Equinox, Winter Solstice. Each brings us to a new season, a new place in our annual trip around the sun. We will gather together indoors to share some seasonal refreshments and centering exercises. We will then move out to the woods and prairies for walking meditations and experiences in the natural world. Our time together will end with light refreshments around the fire.

Wear comfortable layers and be prepared for any weather. Ages 16 and up. Led by Lynette Anderson. RSVP required.

For details and to register for events contact:

Belwin Conservancy
1553 Stagecoach Trail South
Afton MN 55001
651-436-5189
www.belwin.org

DROP IT OFF: ELECTRONICS

Did you know that it is illegal to place electronics in household trash? They have components that are harmful to health and the environment. Electronics of all sizes can be brought to the Environmental Center for recycling. Electronics include:

- TVs, DVD players, and VCRs
- Items with rechargeable batteries
- Phones, cell phones, and fax machines
- Computers, monitors, and accessories
- Microwaves



Washington County Environmental Center

4039 Cottage Grove Drive
Woodbury, MN 55129

Hours

Tuesday: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.
 Thursday: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
 Friday: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
 Saturday: 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Phone: 651-275-7475



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

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AFTON MN 55001
PERMIT NO. 15

Valley Library Events & Important Dates

Closed: Monday, February 20 for Presidents Day

For Adults:

The Valley Library Book Club meets 5:00-6:00pm on the 4th Thursday of every month. This book club meets in person in the Valley Library conference room but a Zoom link can be provided for those who wish to join virtually.

Washington County Libraries celebrates **January and February** with our Winter Reads program

All Ages:

January-February Tiny Art Show – Take and Make (and Return)
Display your Tiny Art in the Valley Library Tiny Art Show – showing now!

For Kids:

Every Monday 10:30-11:00 am Family Story time

Monday, February 13 10:30-11:30 Super Storytime

Join us monthly for a special storytime and craft project. February's theme is V is for Valentine!

Thursday, February 16 3:00-6:00 Family Art Cart

Drop by Valley Library between 3 and 6 p.m. for a family craft activity. Crafts are designed for children ages 4 and up and their grownups. The crafts are self-guided and designed to allow children room for expanding upon their own design through creativity and imagination.

Saturday, February 18 STEM Saturday

Join us at the library for some fun, self-directed activities about magnets.

Ongoing:

Scavenger Hunt - Every month has a theme. Find 10 images throughout the library and win a sticker.

Valley Branch Library

384 St Croix Trail S
Lakeland, MN 55043
651-436-5882

www.washcolib.org

**PATRON
AFTON, MN 55001**

Online payments are now available for city permits & fees including Building Permits and Sewer Payments,
www.ci.afton.mn.us



Please recycle this newsletter after use.

Winter Snow Reminders

- ◆ The City's snow plow contractor hits the streets on a one-inch snowfall; however, if icy or slippery conditions exist, they may be sent out earlier to sand/salt hills and intersections.
- ◆ Keep garbage containers off the street until the plow has come through.
- ◆ Plowing snow onto or across a city street is illegal; violations are a misdemeanor and civil penalties may apply.
- ◆ Please slow down and drive for the conditions of the road, especially on Afton's curvy roads and hills.
- ◆ Be patient. We try to get around to all "Primary" routes within 24 hours; "Secondary" roads within 48 hours.
- ◆ The City will clean the main sidewalk in town along St. Croix Trail. The other sidewalks are to be cleared by the property or business owner.
- ◆ If your road has not been plowed or dangerous conditions exist, please call us at City Hall 651-436-5090 so we can get it the attention it deserves.

Sand/Salt Available for Residents

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 city garage located at 1675 Stagecoach Trail. The mixture is located inside of the yellow storage container on the right side of the building as marked.