



February 2025

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

City of Afton Dashboard
A Summary of Current Happenings

- ◆ **New Interim Animal Impound Facility**
In conjunction with our Animal Control Services Agreement with Companion Animal Control, Afton has been contracting with an animal care clinic in Hugo for animal impound services. However, due to staffing challenges and inadequate building space for housing impound animals, the clinic determined they were no longer able to provide animal impound services as of January 1st, 2025. This was an unanticipated change, so to ensure animals have a safe place to go, Companion Animal Control has secured impound space with Northwoods Humane Society (NHS) in Wyoming, MN. This is an interim solution; NHS will serve as the impound facility until construction of the Companion Animal Center in Oakdale is complete in May, 2025. The address for Northwoods Humane Society is 7153 Lake Blvd, Wyoming, MN 55092. Their phone number is 651-982-0240.
- ◆ **Outdoor Lighting Ordinance**
While Afton's natural, rural character involves open space and beautiful natural features, it also involves the ability to view the night sky unimpeded by artificial light, and to be free from bright light that spills across property lines. While Afton has a lighting ordinance that provides direction regarding outdoor lighting limitations, it does not provide sufficient detail to enable the ordinance to be easily and clearly understood and applied. The outdoor lighting ordinance is being updated to clarify the requirements of the ordinance with more detailed language and illustrations of types of lighting that are allowed and not allowed. The draft ordinance has been referred to the Planning Commission for its review and feedback.
- ◆ The Council authorized the formation of a Greenway Corridor/Trail Planning and Development Working Group. The focus of the working group is to proactively plan for greenway corridors to preserve open space and facilitate potential trails and trail connections, as well as to effectively participate in trail planning efforts by other jurisdictions that could involve a trail corridor through a portion of Afton.

Blood Drive

Memorial Lutheran Church of Afton is hosting a Blood Drive on Thursday, February 27th from 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

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

Memorial Lutheran Church
15730 S Afton Blvd
Afton, MN 55001



American Red Cross

CITY OFFICE CLOSED

Monday, February 17

In observance of Presidents Day

CITY MEETINGS

February 3, 2025

Planning Commission
7:00 PM

February 4, 2025

Natural Resources & Groundwater
Committee
5:00 PM

February 10, 2025

Parks Committee
6:00 PM

February 12, 2025

Heritage Preservation Committee
6:00 PM

February 18, 2025

City Council Meeting
7:00 PM

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
Northwoods Humane Society 651-982-0240
Fire Dept 651-436-7033
Sheriff's Dept 651-439-9381

Notes from the Mayor

At its January meeting, the council voted to create a greenway corridor working group that will work to develop a long-term plan for trails and open space preservation throughout the city. The working group will be comprised of members of some of our existing committees and partners from other agencies and stakeholders. Please see the dashboard for more information and look for updates as the working group gets up and running.

Also at its January meeting, the council appointed Kevin Johnson to serve on the Lower St. Croix Valley Fire District Board representing Afton. Kevin has decades of experience with the fire department and will be a valuable asset to the board as it develops its next long-term plan for the department. He joins former Mayor Richard Bend who will continue to serve as our other board representative. Kevin will replace Council Member Randy Nelson who has served on the board for 10 years. Randy will continue to serve as the alternate representative to bring his experience and knowledge to the issues that the board will be dealing with short and long-term. Thank you Randy, Richard and Kevin for volunteering for this important role.

Regarding the long-term planning for our fire department, the fire district board recently retained Fitch and Associates to help guide and craft a plan for the next ten years that will address staffing issues and changes to the industry that are impacting departments around the state. At the recent meeting of the five cities served by the fire department, the firm gave a presentation outlining the process and goals for this work. I am optimistic they will help craft a plan that allows us to maintain the excellent service our department has provided the community for decades, and do so in a manner that allows all five cities to plan for the future needs of the department in a fiscally responsible way.

Also at the five cities meeting, the new Metropolitan Council representative for our area, Dr. Gail Cederberg, came to introduce herself and share the goals and the vision she has for her new role. I was very happy to hear her thoughts and support for many of the issues we value here; water quality, preservation of natural areas and resources, and limiting expansion of urban services like municipal wastewater treatment to only those areas where it makes sense, to avoid disrupting the historical land-use patterns of rural communities with private wells and septic.

The council also appointed Alison Miller to the Planning Commission last month. Thank you Alison for volunteering to serve! Our Planning Commission does important work and Alison will be a great addition to that group.

-Bill

Electronics Recycling

Did you upgrade your computer or TV this holiday season? Bring old computers, TVs and other electronics to the Environmental Center for recycling.

All electronics received at the Environmental Center are shipped to Dynamic Lifestyle Innovations. Reusable items are sent to their recovery division for data sanitization, testing, refurbishment, and resale. No need to wipe or damage your hard drive.

Materials not suitable for any kind of reuse are fully recycled. After being fully and securely data sanitized, materials are completely demanufactured, dismantled, and separated into metals, glasses, and plastics so they can be used to make new products.

Washington County Environmental Center

4039 Cottage Grove Drive
Woodbury, MN 55129
Phone: 651-275-7475

Native Plant Grants Available for Afton Residents

Beautify your yard, provide pollinator habitat & protect water resources with native plantings. Best of all, there are native plant grants of up to \$500.00 available to Afton Residents!

To get started, request a site visit from the Washington Conservation District by scanning the QR code or visiting <https://www.mnwcd.org/site-visit-signup-form>.



Meeting Highlights

The **January 6, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting** was canceled due to lack of agenda items.

January 21, 2025 City Council Meeting

The Council:

- Recognized Mike Wotrang for his service as Post Master of the Afton Post Office.
- Discussed the Draft Outdoor Lighting Ordinance.
- Approved the formation of a Greenway Corridor working group.
- Appointed Alison Miller to serve on the Planning Commission.
- Appointed Kevin Johnson to serve on the Lower St Croix Valley Fire District Fire Board.

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

Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

Midwinter Family Fun Saturday, February 1

5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Belwin Education Site

Cost: Free

On Saturday, February 1st, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm, Belwin Conservancy will host Midwinter Family Fun. This night of free outdoor activities features hikes through the snow guided by Belwin naturalists, stargazing with Minnesota Astronomical Society, and s'mores around several campfires. The event is free and will take place at the Hilltop Classroom at the Education Site (1553 Stagecoach Trail South, Afton, MN, 55001).

Winter Wandering Sunday, February 2

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Belwin Education Site

Cost: Sliding Scale \$25, \$29 or \$33

Presented in partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools Community Education.

Join us for a morning of exploring the world of winter! We will look for signs of life and figure out how animals survive the cold. Dress in layers and come prepared to spend most of the time outside on the trail.

Women Walking Saturday, March 15

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Belwin Hilltop Classroom

Cost: Sliding Scale: \$20, \$35, or \$50

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 refreshments and some easy centering exercises. We will then move out to the woods and prairies for walking meditations and experiences in the natural world. We will end our time together with light refreshments around the fire.

For details and registration contact:

Belwin Conservancy
1553 Stagecoach Trail South
Afton MN 55001
651-436-5189

www.belwin.org

PER & POLYFLUOROALKYL Substances (PFAS) Well Testing

Private well water users should test their water for PFAS to ensure clean water. **CLEAR WATER DOES NOT MEAN CLEAN WATER.**

How to get your water tested:

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Minnesota Department of Health are offering well testing for PFAS for residents within the sampling area (THIS INCLUDES AFTON!) Visit the MPCA Interactive Map (<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air-water-land-climate/well-sampling-in-the-east-metro-area>) to see well testing data and request to have your well sampled here: <https://webapp.pca.state.mn.us/gw-sampling-req/pfas>





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AFTON, MN 55001

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
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PERMIT NO. 15

Valley Library Events & Important Dates

Library Closures:

February 17 for Presidents Day

For Adults:

The Valley Library Book Club meets **5:00-6:00pm** on the 4th Thursday of every month. The title selection for the **Thursday February 27th** meeting is "The Midnight Library" by Matt Haig.

Saturday February 8, 11:00am-12:00pm

Join us to learn all about the Washington County Food Scraps Pickup Program. Eligible attendees will receive free food scraps collection containers. Registration is not required but requested.

For Teens:

Join a teen writing workshop presented by the LOFT Literacy center on How to Write a Great College Application Essay at the RH Stafford Library in Woodbury. **Tuesday February 4 5:30-7:30pm**. Registration is required

Running through May 2025, Washington County Library is presenting a Life Skills for Young Adults series at the RH Stafford Library in Woodbury. Presented by UMN 4-H Extension - Life Skills: Healthy Relationships will be presented on **Thursday February 13 5:30-7:00pm** where youth, ages 14-18, will learn what to look for in a healthy, equitable relationship and the skills to use to be a better friend and partner in any relationship. Registration is required

For Kids:

Every Monday 10:30-11:00 am Storytime

Monday, February 10th 10:30-11:00

Music and Movement Storytime

Thursday, February 13th 3:45 pm

Card making for kids

Thursday, February 13th 6:00 pm

Pajama Storytime

Saturdays, February 1st and February

22nd 11:00-1:00 Kid Builders

For complete information and to register for programs contact:

Valley Library 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.

Lions Club Used Eyeglass & Hearing Aid Collection

Drop box at Afton City Hall

If you no longer need your used glasses or sunglasses, please consider donating them to the Lions. Minnesota Lions can accept prescription eyeglasses (frames with lenses intact), non-prescription sunglasses, and reading glasses. (No lenses without frames or frames without lenses, please.)

How Are the Lions Helping?

For 80 years, individual Lions clubs and districts have collected old, unwanted eyeglasses for redistribution to the poor in developing countries. Lions and other volunteers donate travel expenses, time, and talent to dispense recycled eyeglasses free of charge to individuals in developing nations. Some people walk 50 miles to receive free eyeglasses from the Lions. It costs fewer than 8 cents to provide glasses to a person in a developing nation.

Minnesota Lions members have now collected more than twelve million pairs of eyeglasses. The Wisconsin Lions Foundation operates a regional facility in Rosholt, Wisconsin where Lions volunteers clean, repair, and classify the glasses by prescription. Glasses are then made available for medical mission work.

Affordable hearing aid program

The Minnesota Lions Hearing Foundation also collects used hearing aids. These used hearing aids are then sold to hearing manufacturers who use them for their repair services. The funds generated, along with negotiated rates from manufacturers, audiologists, and hearing aid dispensers, are used to purchase hearing aids at greatly reduced prices.

The Drop Box is located inside the lobby at
Afton City Hall
Drop off Monday through Thursday 9:00 AM —2:00 PM

