



**March 2026**

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

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

- ◆ Beginning in 2026, state regulations allow the use of rifles in Afton for deer hunting, in addition to shotguns and archery. Afton has the option to amend its local firearms ordinance to prohibit the use of rifles for deer hunting. A public hearing will be held regarding this issue at the March 17<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting. Comments from the public are invited at the hearing or in writing via email prior to the hearing.
- ◆ The council approved plans for a new multi-tenant office and warehouse building at Manning and Hudson Road
- ◆ The council reviewed inspection reports for four of the bridges on local roads in Afton. Three of the bridges need various levels of maintenance and repair while one bridge will require complete replacement in the next few years. Due to the high cost of bridge replacement, the council directed the City Engineer to investigate the replacement of the bridge structure with a large culvert, which would be substantially less costly.
- ◆ The council discussed the planning process for 2026 road maintenance projects. The City Engineer and the Public Works Committee will review the condition of roads that were Micro-Surfaced last year to determine if this is an effective solution going forward.

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**City of Afton is Hiring**

**Seasonal Part-Time Public Works Maintenance**

**Starting pay rate:** \$17.50 – 18.50 per hour, depending on level of experience.

**Work Schedule:** Approximately 15-20 hours per week; Some weekend hours.

**Duties:** Responsible for general public works and parks maintenance, as well as cleaning and routine maintenance of City buildings.

**Qualifications:** Experience operating lawn tractors and weed whips. Must possess a valid driver's license with satisfactory driving record. Must be 17 years of age or older and able to frequently lift/move 50 pounds.

An application is available at the City Hall or online at [www.ci.afton.mn.us](http://www.ci.afton.mn.us)

**CITY MEETINGS**

**March 2, 2026**

Planning Commission Meeting  
7:00 PM

**March 3, 2026**

Natural Resources & Groundwater  
Committee  
5:00 PM

**March 9, 2026**

Parks Committee  
6:00 PM

**March 11, 2026**

Heritage Preservation Commission  
6:00 PM

**March 17, 2026**

City Council Meeting  
7:00 PM

Livestreaming is available for City Council and Planning Commission Meetings.

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

**City Council**

<u>Mayor:</u> Bill Palmquist	651-308-0569
<u>Ward 1:</u> Annie Perkins	651-592-3007
<u>Ward 2:</u> Lucia Wroblewski	651-436-3982
<u>Ward 3:</u> Stan Ross	612-720-6478
<u>Ward 4:</u> Randy Nelson	651-436-2479

**City Hall**

651-436-5090

**City Website**

[www.ci.afton.mn.us](http://www.ci.afton.mn.us)

**Important Numbers**

Animal Control	715-220-1332
Building Inspector	651-436-6469
Burning Permits	651-436-7033
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**

**4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade**

Afton's 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade is funded mostly through private donations. As the costs of the parade increase, more funding is needed. The non-profit Afton Parade Committee is in search of volunteers to help raise funds to cover the operating costs of the parade. If you can help with fundraising or volunteer for other parade related activities, please contact Stan Ross, President of the Afton Parade Committee, at [stan@aftonparade.com](mailto:stan@aftonparade.com).

## Notes from the Mayor

At its February meeting, the council approved plans for a new project at Manning and Hudson Road being built by Contour Development LLC. This will be a multi-tenant office and warehouse use in our industrial zone. The company met with our Design Review Commission prior to the council meeting and got some great feedback on the building's exterior design and landscaping plans. We hope this new project will encourage similar buildings in Afton's industrial zone. Construction will start in the spring and we look forward to continuing to work with the company as the project moves forward.

As has been mentioned before, the city is working with the Metro Bowhunters Resource Base (MBRB), a non-profit organization, to schedule 2-3 day deer hunts this fall on private properties in Afton. The lead time needed to organize these hunts is actually fairly long, so the group needs to hear from the city on interested property owners early in the year (March/April) to give them time to work out the scheduling details. If you would like to participate please reach out to city staff as soon as possible. Our goal was to identify a well-vetted group that residents could feel comfortable working with, and MBRB was one that repeatedly came up as a good option. City staff can go over more details on how the hunts work, so please reach out with any questions. We encourage residents with large acreage to consider this option, as well as residents with smaller lots where neighbors could work together to find opportunities as a group of contiguous properties.

-Bill

### Managing the Deer Population in Afton in 2026

The City is continuing to work with the DNR regarding plans and methods for substantially reducing the number of deer in Afton to reduce or prevent car-deer accidents, to prevent Chronic Wasting Disease, and to reduce the major damage to a broad range of vegetation occurring due to an overpopulation of deer. The DNR has advised that a key method of reducing the deer population is to encourage or require hunters to take multiple deer rather than only one "trophy" buck. This is generally known as the Earn-a-Buck requirement. An important key to a successful deer management effort is that a substantial number of residents allow hunters on their property only if they agree to take multiple deer.

The DNR has advised that the City strongly encourage private property owners who allow hunters on their property to mandate the Earn-a-Buck requirement. The City has heard from a number of residents who are very frustrated with the amount of damage the deer are doing, and have seen the number of deer increase exponentially. A key element of a solution is to require any hunters they allow on their property to take multiple deer.

The City is also working closely with the Metro Bowhunters Resource Base (MBRB), a non-profit organization whose purpose is to assist cities, counties, park districts, etc. in addressing the overpopulation of deer. The MBRB will schedule 2-3 day hunts on private properties in Afton. The MBRB is familiar with the Earn-a-Buck requirement and their hunters will take multiple deer. The MBRB has arrangements for the donation of the deer, so the disposal of the deer is not an obstacle to taking multiple deer.

The MBRB begins to schedule hunts for the 2026 season in April, so it is important that residents contact the City to get a hunt scheduled for the fall. Because the MBRB does not work directly with private property owners, the City will coordinate the scheduling of hunts between the MBRB and the residents. Here is the MBRB website address for information about the MBRB and the requirements and standards their hunters need to meet. <https://www.mbrb.org/>

**Don't forget Daylight Savings!**

**"Spring forward" one hour on March 8th**



The **Eastern Twin Cities Islamic Center (ETCIC)** invites all Afton residents to our **Annual Interfaith Iftar**, co-hosted with the **Minnesota Council of Churches** — an evening of community, connection, and shared learning during Ramadan. Enjoy a shared meal, learn about Ramadan, and connect with neighbors from diverse backgrounds.

**Free event – registration required:**  
<http://mnchurches.org/what-we-do/taking-heart>

**Date & Time:** Thursday, March 5, 2026 – 5 PM

**Location:** ETCIC, 12585 Hudson Rd S, Afton (New Expansion Gymnasium)

## Meeting Highlights

### February 2, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting

#### The Commission:

- Held a public hearing for a Conditional Use Permit for a private riding stable at 13750 15th St S.

### February 17, 2026 City Council Meeting

#### The Council:

- Approved the Final Plat, Vacation of Drainage and Utility Easements and Vacation of Street Right-of-Way for an office/warehouse building at 300 and 377 Maple Court.
- Approved the Conditional Use Permit for a private riding stable at 13750 15th St S.
- Scheduled a public hearing for March 17th for an amendment to the Firearms Use, Discharge Ordinance to prohibit the use of rifles for deer hunting.

MEETING PACKETS, VIDEOS AND APPROVED MEETING MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE AT:  
[www.ci.afton.mn.us](http://www.ci.afton.mn.us)

## Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

### Women Walking

March 21 2026 06:00pm - 09:00pm

### Saving Space for Wildness in your Yard – Part 3: Getting Ready for Spring

April 11 2026 09:00am - 12:00pm 1553 Stagecoach Trail S.

Cost: \$10, \$20 or \$35 / per person / per session

### Frog Walk

April 21 2026 07:30pm - 09:00pm 1553 Stagecoach Trail South

Sliding Scale of \$10, \$18 or \$25 / Person

For details and registration contact:

**Belwin Conservancy**  
1553 Stagecoach Trail South  
Afton MN 55001  
651-436-5189  
[www.belwin.org](http://www.belwin.org)

## Afton State Park Events March 2026

### SATURDAY, MARCH 7

#### 6:30-7:30 p.m. Creatures of the Night

Join us for a program about the animals that come out at night at Afton State Park! We will start inside and have a presentation about the animals that are active at night in the park, then go outside for a brief stroll near the visitor center to hopefully see some of the creatures that call Afton home. Bring a flashlight or something to light your way.

### SATURDAY, MARCH 14

#### 9:30-11:30 a.m. Track Tales

Ever wonder what animal made those tracks in the snow? Stop by the Naturalist Table in the Visitor Center to learn how to identify animals and what they were doing based on their tracks.

### SATURDAY, MARCH 14

#### 1-2 p.m. Skulls and Bones

Ever found a bone and wondered what kind of animal it came from? Learn what skeletons and skulls tell us about how animals once survived in their natural environment. There will be real bones and skulls for you to touch and see!

### SATURDAY, MARCH 21

#### 1-2 p.m. Fantastic Fossils

From brachiopods to mammoths, Minnesota has a fantastic, yet relatively unknown, cast of fossil characters. Take a trip through ancient Minnesota and learn about this amazing cast of critters that make up Minnesota's fossil record.

### SATURDAY, MARCH 28

#### 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. Motifs and Mascots; Minnesota's State Symbols

What do the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, Morel mushroom, Monarch butterfly, and the Ursa Minor Constellation have in common? They are all state symbols of Minnesota! Come learn about the state symbols of Minnesota, why we have them, what ones you can see here in Afton State Park, and come up with your own Minnesota state symbol.

### SATURDAY, MARCH 28

#### 1 – 3 p.m. Meet Minnesota's Mammals

Ever wonder about the mammals that call Minnesota home? Drop by the naturalist table in the Visitor Center to learn more about them, their adaptations, and how to identify them. Examine their fur and skulls to explore the wonderful world of mammals.

### ALL PROGRAMS MEET AT THE VISITOR CENTER

If you need an accommodation, please contact Carolyn at [Carolyn.kocken@state.mn.us](mailto:Carolyn.kocken@state.mn.us) or 651-242-4977, two weeks prior to the event.





CITY OF AFTON  
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PERMIT NO. 15

**Valley Library Events & Important Dates**

**Did you know** that it is easy to learn the latest Library News? Simply go to <https://washcolib.org/295/Subscribe-to-Library-News> and choose which themed Newsletters you would like to have delivered directly to your inbox.

**For Adults:**

The Valley Library Book Club meets **5:00-6:00pm** on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month. This book club meets in person in the Valley Library Conference Room. **Thursday March 26<sup>th</sup>** meeting is *True Biz* by Sara Nović.

Do you need help with a technology issue? Register for 30 minutes of dedicated one on one help with a Valley Library staff member. Technology help is offered on the **third Thursday** of every month. Registration is required.

AARP Free Tax Assistance will be offered by **appointment only** through April 13<sup>th</sup> at the Washington County Service Center in Cottage Grove. Register by calling the Park Grove Library at 651-459-2040.

**For Kids:**

**Mondays 10:30-11:00 am** Storytime

**Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup> 10:30-11:00** Music and Movement Storytime

**Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> 6:00 pm** Pajama Storytime

**Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup> 1:00 pm** Snake Discovery: Snake, Rattle and Roll

**Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup> 3:30-5:30 pm** Let's Clay: Galaxies and Space for Kids

**Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> 4:00-6:00 pm** Open Gaming (with snacks!)

**Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> 2:30-4:00 pm** After School Activity: Happy Pi Day

For complete information and to register for programs contact:

**Valley Library 651-436-5882  
[www.washcolib.org](http://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](http://www.ci.afton.mn.us)



*Please recycle this newsletter after use.*

**Getting Ready for Spring  
Rinta Community Garden**

Spring will be here soon; time for gardeners to get their hands dirty. The Rinta Community Garden has 25 plots available to residents of the Lower St. Croix Valley.

There is no charge for using a plot. Gardeners are asked not to use pesticides and to use organic fertilizers. There is no well water at the site, but 2 rain barrels collecting runoff from a small shed will hold 250 gallons of water for irrigation when necessary. The installation of a high fence has thwarted hungry deer.

If you are interested in a garden plot at Rinta, contact Afton City Hall or go to the Afton website for an application (Located under "Community—Parks, Park Reservations & Special Events"). Complete and return it to Afton City Hall, 3033 St. Croix Trail, P.O. Box 219, Afton, MN 55001.

**Application deadline is April 1, 2026**

If you have additional questions contact Deb Ringwelski, [dmring29@gmail.com](mailto:dmring29@gmail.com)

