



JANUARY 2018

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

Update on the Internet Project

Last week the City of Afton met with representatives from CenturyLink who indicated that the installation and testing of all new DSLAMs in Afton has been completed. I know that many residents have successfully been connected and are now running at substantially improved speeds. I'm also aware of some addresses that have not been able to connect. Those addresses have been turned over to CTL for their action. Also, there is a known issue with the area along Valley Creek Trail that is being discussed with CTL, the state of Minnesota and the FCC / CAF people.

If you want to connect to the new system please go to the web site link below and enter in your Afton street address. It is your responsibility to contact CenturyLink at their Woodbury office (651-770-2843) and arrange for your new service. (FYI - do not call their 800 customer service number.)

<http://www.centurylink.com/home/internet/>

If you are not served by Comcast and the CenturyLink web site indicates your address is qualified for less than 10Mbps (the contractual agreement with CenturyLink is a minimum of 10Mbps) email me with your name and address so I can pass your information along to CenturyLink.

Stan Ross – ward3@ci.afton.mn.us

Senate District 54 Special Election

The Governor has issued a Writ of Special Election to fill vacancies in Senate District 54. The District 54 vacancy was caused by the resignation of Senator Dan Schoen effective December 15, 2017. *This includes Washington County residents in Afton, Cottage Grove, Denmark Twp, Grey Cloud Island Twp, Hastings I-1, and St. Paul Park.*

January 8-11 Candidate Filing Period
January 29 Primary Election (If needed)
February 12 General Election

VOTE IN PERSON 7:00 A.M.—8:00 P.M. at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
14107 Hudson Road S, Afton, MN

VOTE ABSENTEE at the Washington County Service Centers

Absentee Voting Begins:

Primary Election – January 17, 2018 (If needed)
General Election – February 5, 2018

Hours: Monday – Friday 8AM-4:30PM
Saturday, January 27, 8AM-3PM
Saturday, February 10 8AM-3PM

- Woodbury Service Center – 2150 Radio Drive, Woodbury
- Cottage Grove Service Center – 13000 Ravine Parkway S, Cottage Grove
- Stillwater Government Center – 14949 62nd Street N, Stillwater

City Office Closed

Monday, January 1
Monday, January 15

*In observance of the New Year's Day
& Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Holidays*

CITY MEETINGS

January 8, 2018

Planning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

January 9, 2018

Natural Resources and Groundwater
Committee 5:00 P.M.

January 16, 2018

City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

January 24, 2018

Parks Committee
6:00 P.M.

January 31, 2018

Heritage Preservation Commission
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 Dept 439-9381

EMERGENCY 911

A Letter from the Mayor ~

The recent cold weather hasn't kept me inside. I've managed to get out almost every day cross country skiing with either my goats or dogs, however when not outside my thoughts have gravitated to warm weather and green plants. I heard a woodpecker's spring song today. Wishful thinking, I suppose. It did however get me thinking about the decreased numbers of birds I see year around and especially in winter. When I was a boy there were literally hundreds of birds at our feeders; not now.

This spring and summer, when our lawns, landscaping and properties are no longer white and gray but instead green there is something you can do that will help birds far more than feeding them in the winter: cut back on pesticides. Each of us has a pet plant to protect, lawns from grubs, roses from aphids, and many plants from Japanese beetles.

Many pesticides are dangerous to birds. Two in particular are lethal: Chlorpyrifos and Neonics. While federal bills have been introduced to ban both, neither are now banned and both are common ingredients in pesticides in common use.

Neonicotinoids are deadly to pollinators and other wildlife, including birds. A single seed coated with a neonicotinoid is enough to kill a bird. Exposure to one-tenth of a coated seed per day during the egg-laying season is enough to impair reproduction. Tiny doses can cause birds to lose coordination and the ability to fly.

The neurotoxic chlorpyrifos pesticides have been killing birds for the past half-century. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was on course to ban chlorpyrifos when EPA recently extended its registration for another five years—reversing the recommendation of the agency's own scientists.

Alarmingly, the concentration of neonics in products sold for residential use on ornamental plants are as much as 30 times what's allowed in the agricultural sector. To find out if the products you use on your property contain either of these dangerous classes of pesticides, and to avoid them when buying pesticides, check the following link: https://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/files/bee_toxic_fact-sheet_73518.pdf

That's it for today. Brave the weather... get outside.

Richard Bend

Campsite reservations open for Washington County Parks Jan. 9, 2018

Online reservations for Washington County Parks campsites for 2018 will open at 8 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 9.

Telephone and in-person reservations for campsites will be open at 8 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 16.

Pavilion reservations by telephone or in-person also open Jan. 9.

See the Washington County website at www.co.washington.mn.us, find Parks and Open Space, and then use the online reservation tool on the right side of the page.

Want to get involved in city decisions?

The Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee (NRGC) is in need of additional members. The NRGC focuses on issues of environmental stewardship. Committee members attend area and regional meetings, particularly concerning the quality and quantity of water and other resources important to Afton. These issues are brought back to City Council with recommendations on actions. The Committee meets the first Tuesday of every month. **Applications are available on the city website or at City Hall.**

December Meeting Highlights

December 4, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting Highlights

The Commission:

- Held a public hearing on an application by USS Rambo Solar LLC for a text amendment to the Zoning Code to allow solar farms as a conditional use in the Agricultural District.
- Recommended the City Council not change the ordinance to allow solar farms as a conditional use in the Agricultural District.
- Approved the meeting schedule for 2018.
- Looked at concept alternatives for the Afton Creek Preserve PLCD subdivision.

December 19, 2017 City Council Meeting Highlights

The Council:

- Was updated on upcoming activities at the Belwin Conservancy
- Held a public hearing on the 2018 Budget
- Adopted the Final 2018 Budget and Levy
- Authorized staff to research dimming or shielding lights in the old village which are disturbing residential properties
- Approved the 2018 rate schedule for Engineering Services from WSB
- Approved the 2018 Planning Commission meeting schedule
- Approved a request to allow horses on the cartway adjacent to 14933 Afton Blvd with the condition that any erosion that occurs be remediated through an agreement with two of the households adjacent
- Approved parking of public works vehicles at the city garage
- Tabled discussion of Preservation and Land Conservation Development (PLCD) and Planned Unit Development (PUD)
- Approved payment of Pay Voucher No.8 from Geislinger and Sons Inc. for the Downtown Improvement Project in the amount of \$1,371,963.61
- Approved payment of Pay Request No. 8 from Ellingson In for the Wastewater Treatment System Project in the amount of \$83,024.29
- Re-appointed 3 members of the Natural Resource and Groundwater Committee

Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

Friday, January 19

Owl Prowling: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Join us as we hike through the winter woods listening for owls and other nocturnal creatures. Come dressed to be outside. Ages 12 and up (under 18 must be accompanied by an adult). RSVP required by January 18, 2018. 651-436-5189, www.belwin.org. Belwin Outdoor Science Education Center, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S., Afton. Free for members, \$10 for non-members.

Saturday, January 20

**Open Third Saturday:
11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Participate in programs, meet Belwin staff, explore the trails and connect with nature. NEW! One-Hour Guided Experiences at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. departing from the Education Center. January topic: Winter Tracks. Learn to identify winter walkers, leapers and waddlers on a hike through the Belwin woods. Depart from the Education Center. 651-436-5189, www.belwin.org. Belwin Outdoor Science Education Center, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S., Afton. Free for members, \$10 for non-members.

Not a member? Join online prior to the event to support our programs and enjoy everything we have to offer.

www.belwin.org
651-436-5189

Downtown Improvement Project Update

The installation of the decorative street lights along St. Croix Trail has been completed, and the lights are operational. All work to upgrade the levee is complete, so that the levee and storm water lift station are ready in the case of high water in the spring. Seeding and erosion control blanket for the levee will be installed in late winter or early spring. The stop-log structure at the end of 33rd Street, to enable an opening in the levee during non-high-water periods, is planned to be constructed in the spring of 2018. The railings on the retaining walls in front of the Lumberyard Pub and north of 31st Street are to be installed in the next week or two, so that the orange safety fencing can be removed.





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



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

**Valley Library calendar of events
for January 2018**

LIBRARY CLOSED:

JANUARY 1 (New Years Day)
JANUARY 15 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

STEM Saturdays

Saturday, January 20, from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM.
Ages 7-14

STEAM Storytime

Monday, January 22 10:30AM—11:30 AM

DOG GONE READING with Legacy

Tuesday, January 23, from 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM.
Children in grades K-7.

Internet Genealogy Class Featuring Ancestry Library Edition

Thursday, January 25 1:00 PM—2:00 PM
Registration is required

Book Club

Thursday January 25, 5:00 PM—5:55 PM

Valley Branch Library
380 St. Croix Trail South
Lakeland, MN 55043
651-436-5882



**Enjoy the lighted ice skating
rink at Town Square Park**



**PATRON
AFTON, MN 55001**

You may view this newsletter

IN COLOR
on the city website.



*Please recycle this
newsletter after use.*

Snow Removal

The City of Afton contracts with a snow removal provider, Tri-County Services, Inc., to provide snow removal services on local streets and roadways. The City's snow removal policy requires the removal of snow from all local public streets, roads, cartways, and cul-de-sacs.

The Contractor will plow primary routes by 6:30 a.m. and make plow passes on secondary routes by 9:00 a.m., following an overnight snow event (after 10:00 p.m.). Several of these roads are also mainline routes, which will be plowed after any snow event (e.g. including snow accumulations less than 2 inches).

Please contact City Hall at 651-436-5090 if you have any questions, concerns or comments regarding our snow plowing service. or they may submit comments and/or service requests on-line at www.ci.afton.mn.us.

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.

