



**October 2022**

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

**2022 General Election Voting**

There are many ways to vote in the Nov. 8 General Election – via mail, in-person absentee, and on Election Day. Learn more on the Washington County website [www.co.washington.mn.us](http://www.co.washington.mn.us) by searching “voting.”

In-person absentee voting will begin Sept. 23 and run through Nov. 7 at five Vote Centers:

- Cottage Grove Service Center, 13000 Ravine Parkway, Cottage Grove
- Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Ave. N., Oakdale
- Headwaters Service Center, 19955 Forest Road N., Forest Lake
- Washington County Government Center, 14949 62nd St. N., Stillwater
- Woodbury Central Park/R.H. Stafford Library, Lower Level, 8595 Central Park Place, Woodbury.

Hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Additional in-person absentee voting hours will be 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 5, and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 7.

Absentee ballots may be dropped off with an election official at any of the Vote Centers during operating hours.

The Washington County Election Division may be reached at 651-430-6175 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**The polling location for Afton residents on November 8, 2022 is Shepherd of the Valley, 14107 Hudson Rd S. Polling hours are 7 am to 8 pm.**

**Candidates for Afton City Office**

City Council Ward 2— 4 year term

Lucia Wroblewski

City Council Ward 3 — 4 year term

Stan Ross

Mayor — 2 year term

Bill Palmquist



**City of Afton Dashboard**

**A Summary of Current Happenings**

- ◆ Belwin is having a soft opening of their new 40-acre hiking trail named Oxbow Trails this fall starting Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup>. The trails will be open weekends, dawn till dusk in October and November, or until the first major snowfall. The trails will open fully in 2023. Located just north of the Old Village at 2398 St. Croix Trail South, Oxbow Trails features a range of ecosystems including hardwood forests, wetlands, and a restored oak savanna. Be prepared with sturdy footwear as trails are currently roughed in. Belwin staff will continue to develop the trails over the months and years to come. There is no stream access from this or any other Belwin property. Please note that dogs are not allowed at this site, with heavy site work still underway.
- ◆ Theft of trailered high value equipment occurred last month and, according to the sheriff's office, this is happening throughout the St. Croix River valley. The thieves

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**CITY MEETINGS**

**October 3, 2022**

Planning Commission Meeting  
7:00 P.M. (In-Person)

**October 4, 2022**

Natural Resources & Groundwater  
Committee  
5:00 P.M. (via Zoom)

**October 18, 2022**

City Council Meeting  
7:00 P.M. (In-Person)

**October 26, 2022**

Parks Committee Meeting  
6:00 P.M. (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](http://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 was out of town and unable to attend Art in the Park this year, but I heard that despite the weather not being ideal, it was a great success. Thank you to all who helped organize and volunteered to make this event once again a fun celebration of art in the valley.

The Planning Commission continues its work to find ways our community can protect the groundwater we all rely on. This work will last into the fall. If you have ideas or have heard of measures other communities have taken, please share that with commission members, city staff, or any of us on the council. It is our goal to continue to set an example of ways smaller communities can safeguard our environment and natural resources.

Locally, there are many things we can do on this issue, however as groundwater is a regional resource we will need to work with other governmental entities to achieve real protections. It is the number one subject we bring up when the city has the ability to offer comments or concerns on pending development or policy changes that could impact Afton.

Early voting is open for the November election. It is a great way to make sure your voice is heard if you are gone on Election Day, or just need the flexibility it provides. You can get more information on how it works and where to go by visiting the Washington County website and searching for early voting.

We appointed two new members to our volunteer committees in September. I am thrilled with the response we received over these last few months when we had vacancies to fill. Both long-time residents and new members of the community have stepped forward to help. Nicholas Livingston was appointed to a three year term on the Park Committee and Susan Loomis was appointed to a three year term on the Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee. Both bring diverse and impressive backgrounds to our city. Thank you Nicholas and Susan!

I want to note one thing about our volunteers. It is the time and energy they each bring that we need and value most. So if you are interested in joining a committee but are unsure if you have the knowledge or experience to help, don't be. Our committees are great at helping to educate and get you up to speed on the issues. It is also a great way to meet your neighbors. Right now the Heritage Preservation Committee has vacancies as does the Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee.

-Bill

### Dashboard continued from page 1

simply pull up and connect to the trailer and drive away. The sheriff's office strongly recommends keeping equipment trailer hitches locked. Coupler locks are available online for under \$25.

- ◆ The sheriff's office also reported solicitors coming to homes selling roof repairs for hail damage. The city requires that all solicitors apply for a license from the city. If you are approached, ask for the city license before engaging these people.
- ◆ Comcast has been awarded grant funding to build out the four areas of Afton that are underserved for Internet connectivity. Comcast will be working on the design of the cable routing over the winter and expects to start work in the spring. In general, the areas to be served are:
  - Valley Creek Trail, east end
  - Trading Post Trail, north of 40<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>
  - Ozark Ave & Oxbow
  - Quadrant, 53<sup>rd</sup> Street and Swede Hill
- ◆ Council approved the preliminary budget for 2023. The final budget and tax levy will be adopted after the Budget and Tax hearing, which will be held at the December 20 council meeting.



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## Meeting Highlights

### August 29, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting

#### The Commission:

- Reviewed an application for a Minor Subdivision for a lot line rearrangement at 15901 Putnam Blvd.
- Discussed groundwater protection measures.

### September 20, 2022 City Council Meeting

#### The Council:

- Approved an application for a Minor Subdivision for a lot line rearrangement at 15901 Putnam Blvd.
- Approved the annual bridge inspection project.
- Approved the 2023 Proposed Budget and Tax Levies.
- Set the date for the Budget & Tax Hearing for December 20 at 7:00 PM.
- Passed a resolution proclaiming the week of September 17–23 Constitution Week.
- Appointed Susan Loomis to the Natural Resources & Groundwater Committee.
- Appointed Nicholas Livingston to the Parks Committee.

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

**Tom Bierlein: The Coming Soil Opening**  
 October 13, 2022  
 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM  
 Belwin Conservancy Savanna Center, 795 Indian Trail, Afton, MN 55001  
 Cost: \$20 RSVP Required.

**Celebrating Your Wild Voice!**  
**Saturday, October 15**  
 9:00 am - 3:00 pm  
 Belwin Conservancy Hilltop Classroom, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S, Afton, MN 55001  
 Cost: Sliding Scale of \$35, \$50, or \$70

**For details on all events contact:**

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

## Hunting Regulations

Hunters must be in compliance with all Minnesota Hunting regulations as published by the MN Department of Natural Resources. Hunters in Afton also must follow the City's firearms regulations related to hunting as provided below.

#### Sec. 14-1

- e) It is unlawful for any person to discharge a firearm in a city park, on any school property, or in any property located in an area zoned commercial or industrial with the exception of police officers acting in the scope of their lawful authority.
- f) It is unlawful to discharge a firearm across or within the right of way of any public road or highway.
- g) Firearms may not be discharged:
  1. Except by the landowner and his/her immediate family in residence on the property or in the presence of the landowner or lessee of the land, or with the written permission of the landowner or lessee of the land. The person authorized to hunt/shoot must have in their possession the written permission which must include the full name, address, phone number, and signature of the landowner or lessee as well as the full name of the person given permission to hunt or shoot.
  2. Within 500 feet of any residence or accessory building on a parcel under separate ownership from the parcel on which the firearm is discharged, unless the person has written permission from the land owner as required in paragraph (g) 1 above.

MN DNR Regulations can be found here:  
<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/regulations/hunting/index.html>

Afton's Firearms Ordinance can be found here:  
<https://www.ci.afton.mn.us/index.asp?SEC=B02D2951-308C-491D-9DF9-96156C1CCEAB>

## FOOD: TOO GOOD TO WASTE

Did you know that about 1/3 of all food in the U.S. never gets eaten, and most of that waste is produced at the household level? This issue may seem too big to tackle, but there are many ways to make the most of your groceries and save yourself money. Learn more about why reducing food waste matters, and how to keep your food fresh for as long as possible:  
<https://recyclingandenergy.org/food-waste-reduction/>.





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

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

### **Valley Library**

If you haven't been to the library in a while, now is a great time to stop by Lakeland Village (384 St Croix Trail S, Lakeland) to browse new materials, use a computer or meeting room, and participate in free library programs for all ages.

Check the library website for information on reading activities, library programs, and current hours.

#### **Valley Branch Library**

384 St Croix Trail S  
Lakeland, MN 55043  
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)

You may view this newsletter  
**IN COLOR**  
on the city website.



*Please recycle this  
newsletter after use.*

### **Recycling tips: No bagging recyclables**

Reminder to never bag your recyclables in a plastic bag.

Plastic bags cannot be recycled in single-stream recycling since they get tangled in sorting equipment and cause problems.

Workers must slowly cut bags open to release all of the items for sorting.

Just dump your recyclables into the bin loose and it will be good to go!

### **LOWER ST CROIX VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT Fire Prevention Week OPEN HOUSE**

We are excited to announce that on Tuesday, October 11th, the Lower St Croix Valley Fire Department will be hosting our first fire prevention OPEN HOUSE since the beginning of the pandemic. Please join us beginning at 6:30 pm thru 8:30 pm to meet our newest firefighters, reacquaint with our other firefighters and see our equipment and trucks. There will be an auto extrication demonstration, as well as other snacks and goodies.



### **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.