



October 2024

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

City of Afton Dashboard

A Summary of Current Happenings

It is that time when signs are popping up everywhere in Afton. So, a tutorial on placement rules and penalties:

- All signs must be placed on private property with the permission of the land owner.
- “Advertisement Signs” (political, business or personal) are not allowed on any public property or public right-of-way whether it be state, county or local. Also, advertisement signs may not be attached to any traffic control signs, structures or utility poles.
- The right-of-way along our roads includes the land immediately adjacent to all public

Continued on Page 2

General Election November 5, 2024

There are many ways to vote in the Nov. 5 General Election — voting early by mail, voting early in person, or voting in person on Election Day.

Vote early by mail

The absentee voting application is available now. To request a paper application be mailed to you, call Washington County Elections at 651-430-6790 or request online at: <https://mnvotes.sos.mn.gov/abrequest/index>

Vote early in-person

In-person absentee voting for the General Election runs through November 4 at Vote Centers:

- Cottage Grove Service Center: 13000 Ravine Parkway, Cottage Grove.
- Forest Lake Headwaters Service Center: 19955 Forest Road N, Forest Lake.
- Washington County Government Center: 14949 62nd Street. N., Stillwater.
- Woodbury City Hall: 8301 Valley Creek Road, Woodbury

And from October 18 through November 4 at:

- Oakdale City Hall: 1584 Hadley Avenue N., Oakdale.

Hours:

- Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Saturday, October 26th: 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 29th: 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- Saturday, November 2nd: 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Sunday, November 3rd: 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Monday, November 4th: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

The polling location for Afton residents on Election Day is Shepherd of the Valley, 14107 Hudson Rd S. from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Sample ballots

The sample ballot shows a list of the candidates and ballot questions you'll be voting on. This information is posted about 45 days before an election at: [Minnesota Secretary Of State - What's On My Ballot?](#)

Register to Vote or Check your Registration at: www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote

CITY MEETINGS

October 1, 2024

Natural Resources & Groundwater
Committee
5:00 PM

October 7, 2024

Planning Commission
7:00 PM

October 9, 2024

Heritage Preservation Commission
6:00 PM

October 14, 2024

Parks Committee
6:00 PM

October 15, 2024

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
- Otter Lake Animal Care 651-426-8871
- Fire Dept 651-436-7033
- Sheriff's Dept 651-439-9381

EMERGENCY 911

Notes from the Mayor

At the end of August, we had a storm pass through that downed many trees here. This was the same storm that hit Cottage Grove especially hard. Unfortunately, during that storm a lightning strike hit a home in Afton and started a fire. Several area fire departments responded to the call. During that initial time of response, neighbors around 22nd Street S. saw a firetruck and squad cars heading east down the street only to turn around and come back with their emergency lights still on. As this was odd, one neighbor, Joe Staloch, went to investigate. He saw a tree was completely blocking the road from ditch to ditch. Joe got a strap, attached it to his truck and the tree, and was able to get it moved off the road. Shortly after Joe moved the tree, Henry Kelzenberg had his chain saw out and was further clearing the tree. Joe let law enforcement know the road was passable, and the next emergency vehicles responding down 22nd St. S. were able to get through and get to the scene of the house fire more quickly. I know their quick actions got resources to the house much faster than would have been possible without their efforts.

These are the stories I hear about at times when people in our community need help. I wanted to share this one with all of you. These two neighbors are a great example of what makes our community such a great place to live. Thank you Joe and Henry!

At its September 17 meeting, the council passed a preliminary budget and tax levy for 2025. The preliminary tax levy can be lowered but not increased before the final budget and tax levy are adopted in December. As we are all aware, prices were up this year pretty much across the board. The council, and especially our city staff, worked to meet a fairly aggressive goal set by the council to minimize the impact on property taxes. In the end the preliminary budget has a tax levy increase of 1.94%. With many of our fixed costs increasing, our initial calculations appeared to call for a 4% increase. However, I am pleased we were able to find solutions to reduce the increase and to leverage new funding for small cities being provided by the State of Minnesota. Thank you to City Administrator Ron Moore and Leo Yurek, our new city accountant, for all your work.

-Bill

Dashboard Continued from page 1

roads and are best identified by the location of utility poles which are placed on or very near the boundary between public land and private property. On our local roads the right-of-way extends approximately eighteen (18) feet from the edge of the asphalt road.

- This rule applies to all 50 miles of Afton’s local roads, the three county roads Co. Rd. 18, Co. Rd. 21, Co. Rd. 71 and the one state road, MN Hwy 95 (Manning).
- In the Ag zone, any sign over 2 sq. ft. in size shall be setback at least 10 feet from the public right-of-way or lot lines. In the Rural Residential zone, all signs shall be setback 10 feet from any lot line or right-of-way.
- In the Old Village, all signs shall be setback at least 2 feet from any lot line or right-of-way. The county’s right-of-way includes St. Croix Trail, the boulevards and the sidewalks.
- The Washington County Public Works Dept. regularly collects all signs placed in their right of way.
- Penalties for stealing or vandalizing signs depend on the value of the sign and can range from a gross misdemeanor to a felony.

If you have specific questions about the county’s right-of-way location, or to report signs in the county right of way please call Washington County Public Works at 651-430-4313.

* Minnesota Statute 160.2715(a)(9)

Except for the actions of the road authorities, their agents, employees, contractors, and utilities in carrying out their duties imposed by law or contract, and except as herein provided, it shall be unlawful to place or maintain any advertisement within the limits of any highway.

SAR

City of Afton Election

The following candidates for Afton City Offices will be voted on at the **General Election on November 5, 2024**

Mayor: 2-year term
Bill Palmquist

City Council Ward 1: 4-year term
Annie Perkins

City Council Ward 4: 4-year term
Randy P Nelson



Meeting Highlights

The **August 26, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting** was canceled due to lack of agenda items.

September 17, 2024 City Council Meeting

The Council:

- Approved an ordinance extending the moratorium on short term home rental applications— Ordinance 10-2024.
- Denied a Conditional Use Permit application for a Nature Center Use at 15237 Afton Blvd S.
- Approved the 2025 Preliminary Budget & Tax Levy.
- Approved repairs to Mt. Hope road.
- Approved 2025 solid waste disposal rates for Highland Sanitation.
- Reviewed the Parks Committee concept plan for the Town Square Park basketball court.

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



Starting October 1st Afton Residents will be able to participate in Ramsey and Washington counties' Food Scraps Pickup Program—a new way to recycle food scraps from your home!

Did you know that food scraps make up about 20% of trash collected in the two counties? By recycling your food scraps, you can help turn this material into soil, rather than becoming waste

Here's how it works:

- ⇒ **Order your free annual supply of food scrap bags.**
- ⇒ **Collect your food scraps in the food scrap bags. Once a week or when the food scrap bag is full, tie a knot at the top to close the bag.**
- ⇒ **Place your food scrap bag inside your trash cart or dumpster for collection.**
- ⇒ **Done! Your trash is collected as usual, and the food scrap bags are sorted from the trash and composted.**

To learn more:

FoodScrapsPickup.com and 24/7 customer service line at **651-661-9393**

Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

Take Me to the River: Art At Belwin Sunday, October 6th 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Savanna Center, Savanna Hills, and Tallgrass Trails

Explore the intersection between art and land restoration at Belwin.

Donor & Volunteer Appreciation Open Hiking October 12, 2024 9:00am - 2:00pm
Belwin Education Site 1553 Stagecoach Trail S.

The Joy of Fall October 13, 2024 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Savanna Center 795 Indian Tr S

Cost: \$10, \$18, or \$25 (sliding scale)
Please join us for a delightful afternoon fall hike at our restored savanna. Dress for the weather and bring your binoculars.

Pentimento: Helen Allison Savanna Gallery

October 17 - November 17

Gallery Hours: Thursday, Friday and Sunday
12 pm - 4 pm

The show Pentimento: Helen Allison Savanna will be on view at the Savanna Center at 795 Indian Trail S. Afton.

Women Walking

October 19, 2024 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm
Hilltop Classroom

Cost: \$26, \$30, or \$34 (sliding scale)
This is a class for adults aimed to empower attendees with the skills, tips, and information necessary to find and identify mushrooms. This class will also include a short hike, weather permitting.

For details and registration contact:

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

www.belwin.org





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

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

Valley Library Events & Important Dates

The Library will be closed
Wednesday October 9th for Staff Training

Did you know that Washington County Library celebrates our teen patrons throughout the entire month of October with special TeenTober programming and events? Go to <https://www.washcolib.org/255/TeenTober> for more information.

For Adults:

Tuesday October 8th 3:00-5:00 at Valley Library. Join us for an *Introduction to Oil Painting with Landscapes* presented by eHolt Art. All materials are provided - simply bring an interest in oil painting and a creative spirit. Registration is required

The Washington County Library Fall Series *Organize Your Life* continues in October. On **Saturday October 12th 11:00-12:30** at Valley Library join us for Organizing Important Documents for Emergencies. Registration is required.

Washington County Library Small Business online Series begins **October 14th 6:00-7:30** with Social Media Strategy – Content and Conversation. Register online.

The Valley Library Book Club meets 5:00-6:00pm on the 4th Thursday of every month. The title selection for the **Thursday October 24th** meeting is “*Cry, the Beloved Country*” by Alan Paton. Copies are available to borrow at the Valley branch.

For Kids:

Every Monday 10:30-11:00 am Storytime Join us at 10:30 a.m. on Mondays for Storytime at Valley Library.

Monday, October 21st 10:30-11:00 Music and Movement Storytime

Saturday, October 19th 11:00-1:00 Kid Builders

Thursday, October 17th 4:00 Raptors of Minnesota

Week of October 14-19th Monthly STEM Challenge

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.

Free Curbside Mattress Recycling

We are partnering with Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy and several cities to provide free curbside mattress and box spring collection in October 2024.

Your residence must be within the city limits of Afton.

You must book a date online. Mattress collection will be available until all slots are reserved.

When you book a date simply have the mattresses and box springs outside by **8:00am** where Second Chance drivers can see them for collection. Please note: if the day you select is your regular trash day please do not put the mattresses and box springs on the curb by your waste container to avoid any risk of the hauler taking them and billing you.

Weather does not impact the recycling process so don't worry if it's raining on your collection date.

There is no cost to you for the collection or recycling of your mattresses and box springs. If you need to change or cancel your collection, simply return to the link and reschedule. All bookings are attached to your address so they will see the change.

Thank you for making a significant impact on our environment by diverting as many mattresses and box springs from our landfills as possible.

<https://www.secondchancerecyclingmn.com/curbside-collection-program/>