



**December 2022**

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

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

- ◆ You may have noticed your mail delivery occurring later in the day than normal. This is due to a change in Amazon’s package delivery policy, resulting in the Afton Post Office being tasked with delivering between 300 – 500 Amazon packages per day! This is a big change from this time last year when the Post Office handled a few dozen packages per day from Amazon. Please be patient with the later delivery schedule during the holiday season.
- ◆ After a two year absence of the skating rink from Town Square Park, the Council approved the recommendation of the Park’s Committee to purchase materials for the construction of a rink and to proceed with the installation of a skating rink using volunteer labor. The rink will be available for the 2022/2023 winter season.
- ◆ An update to the Solar Energy ordinance to allow residential solar arrays that are fully screened from the street and neighboring properties to be larger if necessary to meet the actual residential energy usage of the property has been forwarded to the Planning Commission for a public hearing to be held on December 5<sup>th</sup>.
- ◆ The Council approved an ordinance amendment regarding the definition of a Nature Center, which was heard at a public hearing at the October 3rd Planning Commission meeting.
- ◆ A Comprehensive Plan amendment to allow two dwelling units in a commercial building in the Old Village, rather than the currently allowed one dwelling unit, has been forwarded to the Planning Commission for a public hearing to be held on December 5<sup>th</sup>.
- ◆ To protect and preserve the natural beauty of the St. Croix Riverway, Afton residents in the Lower St. Croix River Bluffland District need to complete the following three steps before doing any vegetative cutting:
  1. Obtain an inspection by the City’s forester of the trees/vegetation planned to be cut. (Call the City office at 651-436-5090 to schedule an inspection)
  2. Obtain a vegetative cutting permit if the cutting is approved.
  3. Ensure their tree service contractor has a tree service license from Afton.

SAR



**The City Office is Closed**  
**Friday, December 23**  
**Monday, December 26**  
**Monday, January 2**  
*In observance of the Holidays*

**CITY MEETINGS**  
**December 5, 2022**  
 Planning Commission Meeting  
 7:00 PM (In-Person)

**December 6, 2022**  
 Natural Resources & Groundwater  
 Committee 5:00 PM (Via Zoom)

**December 20, 2022**  
 City Council Meeting  
 7:00 PM (In-Person)

**December 28, 2022**  
 Parks Committee Meeting  
 6:00 PM (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

## Notes from the Mayor

I am happy to report the skating rink will be back in Town Square Park this winter. We have not been able to have one for the last two years due to the pandemic and also changes that were made to the grading of the area to enhance the t-ball field. In November, the council voted to purchase a liner and the materials to construct the rink edges that should allow it to be back for good. A group of volunteers came forward and will construct and install the rink. Thank you to everyone who offered to help, and for all the people who contacted us and those who came to speak at the meeting to express how much they enjoy having this rink! It will be great to see the kids back out on the ice this winter.

I posted this on Facebook, but wanted to share it here as well. As was noted on the front of the newsletter, our local post office is experiencing very high volumes that are causing some delays in when you get your mail delivered on any given day. You might have seen a postal vehicle out on their route much later than normal as they put in some pretty long hours to get your mail delivered. Please be patient and know they are working hard! The reasons for this are in the newsletter Dashboard section, but I know we all feel fortunate to have our local post office, and appreciate all their work as they adjust to this incredible increase in their workload.

Thank you to all our election judges and city staff for their work once again making our election run smoothly and professionally during another good voter turnout. It can be a long day for them, and their work is very much appreciated.

The League of Minnesota Cities “Mayor for a Day” student Essay Contest deadline for submissions is Dec. 12. I will happily take a day off, and leave it to our future leaders, so I hope some Afton school children will enter and win. Details are available at the League’s website LMC.org.

-Bill

### Illegal Dumping

In response to multiple complaints regarding illegal dumping (trash, furniture, appliances) along rural roadsides in Afton, the Sheriff has requested that Afton residents watch for illegal dumping, try to get a license plate number, and call 9-1-1 to report the illegal dumping.

### **Budget and Tax Hearing**

*All are Invited to Attend Afton’s 2023 Budget and  
Tax Hearing*

**7:00 pm, Tuesday, December 20, 2022**

The hearing is an opportunity for the public to ask questions and provide feedback regarding the proposed budget.

**The 2023 Proposed Budget is available at  
City Hall or on the City’s website at:**

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

(Click the top tab: “Government—City Finance Information”)

## Meeting Highlights

### November 7, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting

#### The Commission:

- Held a public hearing for an application for a Variance at 14648 57th St S to add an addition to the existing house.
- Held a public hearing for an application for a minor subdivision at 1217 Indian Trail S for a lot line rearrangement.
- Reviewed draft language for an amendment to the solar energy system ordinance regarding the maximum size of a ground mounted residential solar array.
- Reviewed draft language for a Comprehensive Plan amendment regarding dwelling units in commercial buildings in the VHS-C zone.

### November 15, 2022 City Council Meeting

#### The Council:

- Approved an application for a minor subdivision at 1217 Indian Trail S for a lot line rearrangement.
- Approved an application for a Variance at 14648 57th St S to add an addition to the existing house.
- Reviewed draft language for a Comprehensive Plan amendment regarding dwelling units in commercial buildings in the VHS-C zone.
- Reviewed draft language for an amendment to the solar energy system ordinance regarding the maximum size of a ground mounted residential solar array.
- Approved an ordinance amendment regarding the definition of Nature Center.
- Canvassed the 2022 City election results.
- Approved funding to purchase materials for a skating rink in Town Square Park.
- Approved the 2023 meeting schedule.
- Approved the 2023 liquor licenses for Afton House and Lumberyard Pub.

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

### Hiking into the Night Friday, December 9

6:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Presented in partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools Community Education  
 Belwin Conservancy Hilltop Classroom, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S, Afton, MN 55001  
 Cost: \$25

### Women Walking Saturday, December 17

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Belwin Conservancy Hilltop Classroom, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S, Afton, MN 55001  
 Cost: \$20

### Winter Solstice Bonfire Tuesday, December 20, 2022

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Join us at Lucy Winton Bell Athletic Fields (15601 Hudson Road N., Lakeland, MN 55082) for cookies, hot cider, and some great company.  
 Cost: \$10 per car

**For details and to register for events contact:**

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

## Afton Village Holiday 2022

The charming St. Croix river town of Afton, MN. will be transformed into a winter wonderland with Horse & Wagon rides, Strolling Carolers, Christmas Tree lighting, Artist Gift Market, Children's Crafts, festive food & drinks and more.

**FRI. Dec 2nd 5-8:30pm**

**SAT. Dec 3rd 11-3pm**

**For more information visit:**

<https://exploreafton.com/afton-village-holiday>





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

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 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.*

### **Winter Snow Reminders**

- ◆ The City's snow plow contractor hits the streets on a one-inch snowfall; however, if icy or slippery conditions exist, they may be sent out to also sand/salt hills and intersections.
- ◆ Keep garbage containers off the street until the plow has come through.
- ◆ Plowing snow onto or across a city street is illegal; violations are a misdemeanor and civil penalties may apply.
- ◆ Please slow down and drive for the conditions of the road, especially on Afton's curvy roads and hills.
- ◆ Be patient. We try to get around to all "Primary" routes within 24 hours; "Secondary" roads within 48 hours.
- ◆ The City will clean the main sidewalk in town along St. Croix Trail. The other sidewalks are to be cleared by the property or business owner.
- ◆ If your road has not been plowed or dangerous conditions exist, please call us at City Hall 651-436-5090 so we can get it the attention it deserves.

### **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.

