



March 2016

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

Hunting in Afton

A Message from Mayor Bend

Minnesota's spring Turkey hunting season is approaching. Last fall I received complaints from a number of landowners regarding unauthorized hunting on their property. In one case the complaint came from a hunter, concerned with poaching of particular deer he did not want shot, in another case from a non-hunter, concerned about trespassers. If we are to preserve the privilege of hunting in Afton, a privilege I among many cherish, it is necessary that both hunters and non-hunters understand and act sensitively and responsibly toward each other.



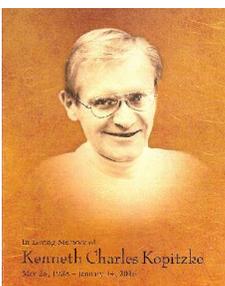
Hunters must observe all requirements of state law and Afton's ordinances. Afton residents who allow hunting should make sure those hunting on their land have in their possession, as required by Afton ordinance, signed written permission from the landowner or tenant to carry a firearm on the property. They should also make sure that the hunters know the parcel boundaries. If you as a landowner are not willing to walk the boundaries with those having your permission to hunt, either don't give permission, or make sure they use a GPS app like "onXmaps Hunt" (www.huntinggpsmaps.com), a mapping system for cell phones showing the hunter clearly where they are within a parcel.

Those of you who do not want hunters on your property, keep in mind that both Afton and Minnesota are looking out for your interests. If you see someone that shouldn't be on your property, call the Washington County Sheriff's office and notify them that there is someone hunting on your property without permission. You can maximize the consequences to hunting lawbreakers by posting your land in conformance with Minnesota Statutes Section 97B.001 (Trespass section).

(Hunting—Continued on page 2)

Afton Historical Museum Display Honors Kenn Kopitzke

The Afton Museum presents a Sleigh and Cutter Exhibit in honor of long-time Afton resident and former Afton mayor, Kenn Kopitzke. His favorite hobby was creating in his "Wacky Workshop" restoring antique sleighs and cutters, and other items, such as building scale models of children's historic "push sleighs" and Civil War cannons, to name a few. This exhibit will be displayed until the end of March. Kenn spearheaded the Cutter Exhibit and was so excited that things were falling into place. Sadly, he passed away in January, the month before final arrangements were made.



Included in the Sleigh/Cutter Exhibit will be the restoration by Manes and Tails Harness Club member, Carol Gross, of a hand-carved, scale model Budweiser Clydesdale Six-Horse Hitch and Beer Wagon. Check out pictures and an article about the restoration at: www.manesandtailsharness.org.

Stop by the Museum on Wednesdays and Thursdays before April to share in the love of carriages and carriage driving and to honor our friend, Kenn Kopitzke. **We miss you Kenn!!**

CITY MEETINGS

Precinct Caucuses

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

(Info at: www.sos.state.mn.us)

NO MEETINGS MAY BE HELD AFTER 6:00 P.M.

March 7, 2016

Planning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

March 9, 2016

Heritage Preservation Commission
5:00 P.M.

March 15, 2016

City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

March 16, 2016

Natural Resources & Groundwater
6:30 P.M.

All meetings are held at City Hall unless otherwise noted.

CITY COUNCIL

<u>Mayor:</u>	Richard Bend	436-7684
<u>Ward 1:</u>	Bill Palmquist	308-0569
<u>Ward 2:</u>	Joe Richter	436-1819
<u>Ward 3:</u>	Stan Ross	436-1346
<u>Ward 4:</u>	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 Office	439-9381

EMERGENCY 911

(Hunting—Continued from page 1)

Both hunters and landowners remember: violating Minnesota’s trespassing laws or Afton’s firearms ordinance can result in civil or criminal penalties. All of us who hunt, and all who do not, should encourage Afton’s landowners to rigorously report any violations. Lawbreakers are not tolerated in Afton; they hurt both hunters and non-hunters.



Absentee Voting puts pressure on County



Washington County will purchase a vote counting machine that will make absentee vote counting more efficient. The County Board approved the \$110,000 purchase February 9.

Effective for the 2014 election, the MN Legislature made changes in state law to allow any eligible voter to vote by absentee ballot before Election Day. Washington County serves as the absentee ballot board for all absentee ballots cast in all of the cities and townships of the county. In the past, voters were only eligible to vote by absentee ballot if they met specific criteria, but with the change in law, absentee voting in 2014 increased by 50 percent from previous elections.

With the replacement of county election equipment in 2014, the county purchased a central count machine that allows ballots to be fed automatically at a rate of up to 300 ballots per minute. Though this equipment is a vast improvement over previously-used manual feed optical scan machines, having only one central count machine creates a bottleneck and does not provide a backup high-speed processing solution in the event of machine failure.

During the 2016 election season, the county is expecting to process and tabulate more than twice the number of absentee ballots processed in 2014. To accommodate this volume, the county will have additional ballot tabulation staff, and has also refined ballot formatting and scoring to allow the central count machine to process ballots more quickly.



Historically, the county receives 60 percent of all absentee ballots the last week before the election, and, despite staffing measures, there are always ballot tears, markings, and voter errors that slow processing and create a bottleneck on the central count machine. The new machine will help meet voter expectations related to election night reporting and to provide backup in the case of equipment failure.

For additional information about Voting Absentee and more, go to the MN Secretary of State website, at:

www.sos.state.mn.us.

Click on “Elections & Voting” then “Voters” — there you will find a number of helpful links.

Gardening Season Is Coming!!

Spring will be here soon; time for gardeners to get their hands dirty. The Rinta Community Garden has 22 plots available to residents of the Lower St. Croix Valley. In 2016 there will be a few open plots.



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 110 gallons of water for irrigation when necessary. The installation of a high fence in 2014 has thwarted hungry deer.

If you are interested in a garden plot at Rinta for 2016, please read the Gardener Information (which includes rules for Rinta gardeners) and complete the Application Form available on the City website, under “Parks, Park Reservations...” and then click on “Rinta Park Community Gardens.”

Complete and return the application form to the City of Afton. You may:

- **drop it off:** City Hall, 3033 St. Croix Trail S, Afton;
- **mail it:** City of Afton, P.O. Box 219, Afton, MN 55001;
- **email it:** deputyclerk@ci.afton.mn.us.

If you have additional questions, contact Barbara Ronningen at bjronningen@yahoo.com.

2016 City Elections

In 2016, in addition to voting for U.S. President, U.S. Representative, MN State Senator and MN State Representative, other offices on the ballot may include County Commissioners, Judges and School Board members.

City of Afton residents will also vote for the following:

- Mayor** **2-Year Term (2017-2018)**
- Ward 1 Council Member** **4-Year Term (2017-2020)**
- Ward 4 Council Member** **4-Year Term (2017-2020)**

Let your voice be heard & your vote count!

Planning Commission, February 1

- **Held** a Public Hearing for an amendment to the zoning code to allow a commercial wedding venue as a Conditional Use in the Rural Residential zoning district on lots 20 acres or greater as an accessory use to a principal structure. Parking, traffic, noise and frequency of events, and the use being located in a Residential zone were the concerns.
- **Extended** the application for the ordinance amendment to allow a Commercial Wedding Venue as an accessory use in the Rural Residential zoning district to the March 7, 2016 meeting, in order for staff to ascertain if this would be broadly applicable in the city.
- **Held** a Public Hearing for driveway variances for Danielle and Charlie Wamstad to relocate their access from Manning Ave to the eastern portion of their property onto 22nd Street S, due to the MNDOT improvement project for Valley Creek Trail, and reduce the separation to 55 feet to the adjacent driveway, instead of the required 300 feet.
- **Recommended** approval to the City Council for the driveway variance requests.
- **Held** a Public Hearing to adopt Washington County's updated Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) Ordinance by reference for the City of Afton.
- **Recommended** City Council adopt Washington County SSTS Ordinance #196.
- **Discussed** the Comprehensive Plan Process, to review of the Met Council info and to invite the Met Council Sector Rep to a joint PC/CC meeting.

City Council Meeting, February 16

- **Approved** variances for Danielle and Charlie Wamstad at 1987 Manning Ave, to relocate their driveway to the eastern portion of their parcel accessing onto 22nd Street S and to locate the driveway 55 feet from the adjacent driveway, instead of the 300 feet required.
- **Adopted** the updated Washington County Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) Ordinance #196, as part of the Afton City Code by reference.
- **Authorized** WSB and Associates to prepare easement documentation from the south property owner on 33rd Street S, in the amount of \$3,800.00.
- **Authorized** ordering the Project, Approving Plans and Specifications and Authorizing Advertisement for Bids for the Downtown Village Improvement Project.
- **Authorized** engineers to include "placeholders" for aesthetic items such as benches, lighting and marina signing on the levee submittal to USACE, per their approval process.
- **Authorized** American Engineering Testing, Inc. to perform inspection and testing services for levee improvement construction, in an amount not to exceed \$23,655.
- **Authorized** American Engineering Testing, Inc. to prepare a geotechnical report for slope stabilization at Pennington Avenue in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.
- **Adopted** Ordinance 02-2016 setting the number of on-sale liquor licenses in Afton at five (5) and requiring a food sales to liquor sales to be at least 50%.
- **Approved** the liquor license application by BJS Restaurants, LLC, dba the Lumberyard Pub at 3121 St. Croix Trail, for the pro-rated Liquor License fee of \$1,522.50.
- **Approved** revised exterior building design & landscape plans for Nature's Trees, dba St. Croix SavATree.
- **Approved** creating an Afton Branding Committee and advertising for community volunteers to serve and to appoint Council Member Ross as the Council Liaison.
- **Directed** the City Attorney to investigate the City-owned cemeteries and draft regulations setting out maintenance and operation for City-owned cemeteries.
- **Approved** a design proposal for a facility to house the Deputies and provide Public Works storage at City Hall, for a total cost not to exceed \$2,500.
- **Authorized** Mantyla Well Drilling to determine whether well depth on the Wastewater Treatment Site property is greater or less than 50 feet deep, at a cost not to exceed \$1,800.
- **Directed** the City Attorney to review and comment on the draft agreement for the Afton Historical Museum taking over maintenance and preservation of Mount Hope Cemetery.
- **Approved** the flooring replacement price quote from Erskine in the amount of \$5,098.12.
- **Approved** the expanded scope of services proposed by Blondo Consulting for additional work required by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to assist the City in completing the 106 Process, at a cost not to exceed \$4,000.

Downtown Improvement Projects Update

- The City has received bids for the wastewater treatment system that will serve the downtown area. The low bid came in under the Engineer's cost estimate. The bids will be placed on the March 15 City Council meeting for a bid award.
- A site visit and consultation meeting with a number of tribal government representatives regarding how the City's downtown improvement projects relate to an effigy mound located roughly parallel to the flood levee is scheduled for Friday, February 19. This will be an opportunity to address questions and concerns of the tribal representatives regarding how the City's improvement projects relate to the mound and how the City is planning to avoid impacts to the mound.

Rabies — Proof

This is an example of why the City requires dogs (and outdoor cats) to be licensed and show proof of rabies vaccinations:

JAN. 12 — Police Blotter

Animal complaint. A sick raccoon was reported in the driveway of a home in the 2000 block of Stagecoach Trail. A deputy contacted the complainant, who did not want the animal destroyed. The deputy then contacted a wildlife organization and was advised not to move the animal because it might have rabies. The deputy ended up destroying the raccoon.

*If your beloved pet is not licensed...
please come in to City Hall with
your Rabies Vaccination Certificate
and get your pet protected!*



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 Branch Library

February Events

Library Closed March 27

Featured Events

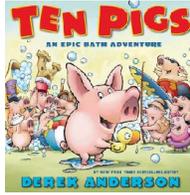
Ten Pigs: An Epic Scavenger Hunt

Ongoing throughout the month of March. Ten pigs have scattered and hidden in the library, are you able to find them? Turn in your completed scavenger hunt for a sticker!

Piggy Palooza Storytime

Monday, March 14, from 10:30 to 11 a.m.

Join us for a special Piggy Palooza storytime celebrating the Once Upon a Reader book selection "Ten Pigs: An Epic Bath Adventure" by Derek Anderson. Every family will go home with a free copy of the book!



Preschool Storytime

Mondays, March 7, 14, 21, 28, 10:30 a.m.

Pre-K & caregivers. Stories, songs and fingerplays help develop early literacy skills. No registration required.



Book Club

Thursday, March 24, 5:00—6:00 p.m.

This month's book is "Of Mice and Men" by John Steinbeck. Visit Valley Library to pick up a copy. Read the book, come, and discuss. Open to all.



PATRON AFTON, MN 55001

View this newsletter
IN COLOR
on the city website.



Please recycle this
newsletter after use.

Afton "Branding" Project — Calling for Committee Volunteers

City Council is asking for community volunteers to help in "branding" Afton; to create a clear image and expression of Afton's characteristics, values and attributes that identify and differentiate it as a unique community.

The branding committee will be made up of a broad range of community members. Interested persons should complete an "Application for Committee" available at City Hall or on the City website.



The Afton Museum

**Is Calling all Artists
and Sponsors to...**

**Start Thinking
Adirondack Chairs!**

The Museum will hold its **Silent Auction** again this year as part of Art in the Park (September 2016) and they want to give this years artists plenty of time to do their thing, so they're putting out the call now!

Artists interested in creating a chair "work of art" or those preferring to generously sponsor a chair (*just \$50.00*), please email info@aftonhistoricalmuseum.com or call Pam at 651-436-3500.



Adirondack Creations

from
past
years



**Be a part of
Something Great!!**