



MARCH 2018

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

Getting Ready for Spring: Rinta Community Garden

Spring will be here soon; time for gardeners to get their hands dirty. The Rinta Community Garden has 20 plots available to residents of the Lower St. Croix Valley.

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 has thwarted hungry deer.

If you are interested in a garden plot at Rinta, contact Afton City Hall or go to the Afton website for an application. Complete and return it to Afton City Hall, 3033 St. Croix Trail, P.O. Box 219, Afton, MN 55001.

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

CITY MEETINGS

March 5, 2018

Planning Commission Meeting
7:00 P.M.

March 6, 2018

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

March 20, 2018

City Council Meeting
7:00 P.M.

March 21, 2018

Heritage Preservation Commission
5:00 P.M.

March 28, 2018

Parks 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



Don't forget Daylight Savings!
"Spring forward" one hour on March 11th

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT PFC'S AND YOUR WATER?

The City of Afton will hold a public information meeting on water quality and PFCs in the Afton area. Hydrologists from the MN Department of Health will provide information and answer questions relating to groundwater contamination in Washington County.

**Wednesday, March 28, 2018
7:00 PM**



A Letter from the Mayor ~

Each year I schedule a few get-togethers with the Mayor. In the past I've had walks with the Mayor in Belwin and coffees at the former Sail Away, now The Lumberyard Pub.

Each created a small, intimate chance to listen to a handful of residents, to share local challenges, our joys of life in Afton, our dreams for ways to preserve those joys for future generations and to get to know each other personally.

This year I'm going to add another venue, provided the snow lasts. For cross-country skiers and snowshoers I'm holding a ski with the Mayor event on Saturday, March 10th at 10 am. We'll meet at the Belwin public parking area on the east side of Stagecoach north of 11th street (not the parking area off 11th street) to ski and snowshoe around the prairies and through the woods. If you plan on coming and if the snow looks doubtful, call me at 612-865-0262 for a status report.

Then, on April 14th, lets get together at the Lumberyard Pub at 11am for coffee or more and lots of talk about your life in Afton and anything related. These are always very enjoyable events for me; I'm looking forward to both and anything else that we plan at these get-togethers.

Richard Bend

City Seeks Election Judges



Election judges are the people that serve the community by staffing the local polling places. In Afton we have been blessed with many excellent and dedicated election judges serving for many years. Even though we have been very lucky to get new recruits trained to keep our election duty stations staffed, the time has come to issue a request for election judges.

Serving as an Election Judge

Election judges are trained and certified for a two-year period as set forth by the Secretary of State and Washington County. Election judges serve on Primary Election Day, August 14, 2018, General Election Day, November 6, 2018, and any special elections in the odd year, per availability.

Election judges are usually asked to serve in the precinct where they live but may be needed elsewhere in the county.

In Afton, two Head Election Judges serve all day from 6:00 a.m. until the election process is completed; all other election judges serve a partial day, either from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m.; or from 2:00 p.m. until the election process is completed.

Election Judge Eligibility

To be an election judge:

- ✓ you must be eligible to vote in Minnesota;
- ✓ you must be able to read, write, and speak English;
- ✓ you cannot be a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of any election judge serving in the same Ward or duty station;
- ✓ you cannot be a candidate or the spouse, parent, child, or sibling of any candidate on the ballot in that precinct.

Becoming an Election Judge

If you are interested in becoming an election judge please contact City Hall at 651-436-5090 or email jyoho@ci.afton.mn.us. Each election judge must complete an application every two-year period. Each person must pass the training, become certified for the two-year period and be willing, if able, to serve for the elections or special elections in that time period.

All appointments are made by City Council and occur at the May or June Council meeting. If appointed, you must attend training in July (for the August 14 Primary) and in October (for those missing certification in July and as an additional training "brush-up" in readiness for the November 6 General Election).

Planning Commission

The City is seeking residents with an interest in land use planning to fill a vacant position on the Cities Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission studies and makes recommendations to the city council concerning the Comprehensive Plan for land use in the city; applications for conditional use permits, rezoning, variances and subdivision applications; holds public hearings as required by state statute. Members serve 3-year terms. Each ward is represented by at least two commission members. Meets the first Monday of each month. At 7:00 pm.

To apply please fill out the application form found at www.afton.ci.mn.us or call city hall to obtain the form

February Meeting Highlights

February 5, 2018 Planning Commission Meeting

The Commission:

- Held a public hearing for the Updated Comprehensive Plan.
- Recommended to the City Council that a PLCD (Preservation and Land Conservation Development) be considered as Afton's idea of a APUD (Planned Unit Development).
- Recommended to the City Council that the preliminary plat application for a PLCD for Afton Creek Preserve be denied.
- Chair Ronnigen indicated she will resign from the Planning Commission and not seek another term.

February 20, 2018 City Council Meeting

The Council:

- Denied an application by USS Rambo Solar LLC for a text amendment to the Zoning Code to allow solar farms as a conditional use or interim use in the Agricultural District.
- Determined that a PLCD (Preservation and Land Conservation Development) is not a PUD (Planned Unit Development).
- Discussed a proposal to dedicate 5550 Odell parcel as parkland.
- Recognized Barbara Ronnigen's dedicated service to the city.
- Awarded landscaping bid for the downtown village improvement project to Great Northern Landscapes, with work to begin in the spring.
- Requested bids be collected for work on the 30th Street culvert replacement project.
- Approved expansion of Peterson Management Company maintenance contract to include downtown lift stations.
- Approved contract with Malley's Sunshine Kennels for Animal impound services.
- Approved payment of Pay Voucher No. 10 from Geislinger and Sons Inc. for the Downtown Improvement Project.
- Appointed David Husebye to the Natural Resources and Groundwater Committee.
- Approved Position reclassifications and pay adjustments for City Staff.

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

Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

Saturday, March 17

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

Participate in programs, meet Belwin staff, explore the trails and connect with nature. One-Hour Guided Experiences at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. departing from the Education Center. March topic: Signs of Spring. Free and open for everyone.

Programs take place at the Belwin Outdoor Science Education Center, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S., Afton.

651-436-5189

www.belwin.org

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

Guided morning bird hikes continue with March 10 hike at Big Marine Park Reserve

A rotating schedule of bird hikes throughout Washington County Parks will continue with a hike 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Saturday, March 10, at Big Marine Park Reserve.

Learn to identify the birds that call the St. Croix Valley home and contribute to citizen science data collection by completing bird count surveys with the guide. The surveys collected will assist the county's Natural Resources team and related work in conjunction with the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund grant.

It is a one-hour guided hike. Meet at the playground, with parking in the playground parking lot.

For Washington County park locations, see www.co.washington.mn.us/parks. Under park locations, find a county map with park contact information; search "guided bird hikes" on the county website for more information.

The hikes will traverse turf, gravel, and paved trail depending on trail conditions. Participants should bring binoculars and dress for hiking and the weather. This program is free with a parks vehicle permit (\$7/daily or \$30/annually) and is open to people of all ages and abilities. ADA accommodations can be made as needed. All minors must be accompanied by an adult.

For questions, call 651-430-8370 or email at parks@co.washington.mn.us.

For more Washington County Parks programs and events, see www.co.washington.mn.us/parks.

Follow Washington County Parks on social media at @WashCountyParks.



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



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

**Valley Library Building Project
Community Engagement Event
Monday, March 12, 6:30 PM—8:00
PM**

Washington County Library invites residents, patrons, and other members of the public to share their thoughts and opinions about Valley Library as part of the study that will result in recommended changes for the library. **The first community engagement event planned for the spring will take place on Monday, March 12 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Afton-Lakeland Elementary School in the Media Center.** Afton-Lakeland Elementary School is located at 475 St. Croix Trail South, in Lakeland. Prior to the March 12 kick-off event, members of the public are encouraged to share their thoughts through a brief, five question survey, which is posted at www.WashCoLib.org/Future through March 8.

Family Storytime

Mondays, March 5, 12 & 19 10:30AM—11:00 AM

Color My World with the Story Man from England

Saturday, March 10 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

STEM Saturdays

Saturday, March 17, from 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Ages 5-13

Book Club

Thursday, March 22, 5:00 PM—5:55 PM

Full Calendar of Events:
www.washcolib.org

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

**PATRON
AFTON, MN 55001**

You may view this newsletter

IN COLOR
on the city website.



*Please recycle this
newsletter after use.*

PUBLIC WELCOME - FIRE DEPARTMENT RETIREMENT OPEN HOUSE

You are cordially invited to attend a public open house to honor the service of Firefighter/EMT Laura Sobiech (Lakeland) on Tuesday, March 13, 2018 from 6pm to 7pm. Laura recently retired from service and will be greatly missed. Please join us as we would like to thank Laura and her husband, Rob, and their entire family for the 14 years of dedication and commitment to serving the residents and communities in the Lower St Croix Valley area.

Fire Chief Jim Stanley