



**July 2020**

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

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) City Hall Procedures**

Due to Coronavirus (COVID-19) City Hall remains closed to the public; essential city services will continue. City Hall staff are working remotely and will check voicemail and email regularly. Please use the drop box outside of City Hall to deliver any permit applications, payments and documents. These can also be mailed.

Staff Contact Information:

Ron Moorse, City Administrator: 651-436-8957  
administrator@ci.afton.mn.us

Ken Johnson, Public Works: 651-436-5090, ext #102  
publicworks@ci.afton.mn.us

Duane Stensland, Building Inspector: 651-436-6469  
dstensland@comcast.net

Julie Yoho, City Clerk: 651-436-5090, ext #101  
jyoho@ci.afton.mn.us

### **COVID-19 City Council Meeting Process Changes**

The City Council meetings are being held virtually. This means that rather than Council members, staff and the public meeting in the Council Chambers, each of these groups participate via phone and/or on-line via the internet. Our priority remains to make the City Council meetings and the Council's actions as transparent as possible and provide residents the means to provide comments and input regarding all items on the meeting agendas, while protecting public health. Information on how to join the meeting will be posted on the City website along with the agenda and meeting packet.

### **Residents may apply for Absentee Voting for statewide Primary & General Elections**

Voters may request ballots now for both the state primary and general election. Voting by mail is safe, easy, and convenient. All voters may vote early in Minnesota, with no reason required.

To receive a ballot, a voter must complete an application. The application is found on the Minnesota Secretary of State's website at [www.mnvotes.org](http://www.mnvotes.org). This site serves as a voter information portal and provides information on how and where to vote in any upcoming election. It is also where to update voter registration information, such as address or name changes. These changes must be made before July 21 to be pre-registered, or can be made on the day voters go to the polls with proof of residency documentation.

In-person absentee voting is available to Washington County eligible voters at the Government Center in Stillwater 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday beginning June 26 through Aug. 10.

The below locations will be open only for direct absentee voting Aug. 4 through Aug. 10:

- Cottage Grove Service Center, 13000 Ravine Parkway in Cottage Grove;
- Headwaters Service Center, 19955 Forest Road N., Forest Lake;
- Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Ave. N., Oakdale;
- R.H. Stafford Library, Lower Level, 8595 Central Park Place, Woodbury.

If voters intend to participate in person prior to or on Election Day, they are encouraged to wear a mask and bring their own pen. Additional information on absentee voting and the planned statewide elections may be found at: [www.co.washington.mn.us/Elections](http://www.co.washington.mn.us/Elections)

### **CITY MEETINGS**

The regular meetings of Volunteer Commissions and Committees are canceled for July unless otherwise noted below. Remote meetings of these committees may be held if timely action is needed and if properly noticed.

#### **July 6, 2020**

Planning Commission Meeting  
7:00 P.M.

**(To be held remotely)**

#### **July 21, 2020**

City Council Meeting  
7:00 P.M.

**(To be held remotely)**

Please see the adjacent article regarding COVID-19 City Council Meeting Process Changes, and watch for more information on the City website and the City Facebook.

### **CITY COUNCIL**

<u>Mayor:</u> Bill Palmquist	651-308-0569
<u>Ward 1:</u> Annie Perkins	651-592-3007
<u>Ward 2:</u> Lucia Wroblewski	651-436-3982
<u>Ward 3:</u> Stan Ross	651-436-1346
<u>Ward 4:</u> 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

We are having more and more issues all over the city with excessive vehicle speed and noise. This is a serious safety and quality of life concern for residents. I think most of us can recall times we have had to pause conversations to wait for loud vehicles to pass while outside during the summer. This is usually associated with speed and/or rapid acceleration. Our wildlife is also suffering as the number of animals killed on our main roads appears to be exponentially higher. The issue of speeding and noise is the single biggest complaint most of us on the council get each year. It is just not OK that a small percentage of people are having such a negative impact on so many other people in our community. However, trying to get a handle on this has proven to be a challenge.

Over the last few years we have budgeted \$5,000 for extra patrols over several weekends each summer to try to curb this problem. That strategy has not been effective. It feels like we are now at a tipping point. The problem is growing every year and if we don't get a handle on it soon, it will be much harder to deal with in a few years. To address this issue, the council recently voted to hire extra patrols for 4 hours a day on every summer weekend to focus on speed and noise issues. The cost to take this action increased the cost of the extra patrols to \$10,000. All members of the Council will be involved in directing the location and activities of the deputies, because the speed and noise problems are being experienced in all areas of the city. At an upcoming Special Council meeting, the Council will have additional discussion about the areas around the city that are experiencing the problem of excessive speed and noise. Part of this discussion will be related to whether the 4 hours per weekend day is sufficient to address the problem on a city-wide basis. One option for discussion at the meeting is to increase patrolling on Saturday and Sunday from 4 hours to 8 hours. This would provide adequate extra patrol time to make sure we are dealing with all areas of our community experiencing this issue. Regardless of the final number of extra patrol hours to be provided, we will evaluate the impact of the additional patrols in the fall as we plan for next year.

In other news, don't forget July 1 is the Dr. Joel Jensen Healthcare Provider Appreciation Day in Afton. Make sure and thank the many health care providers and first responders in our community working hard to keep us safe and healthy.

Also, I have had several conversations about fireworks lately. I think most of us enjoy them on the 4th, but we seem to be having issues with them for several weeks before and after. Please be respectful of neighbors with small children and pets who can be impacted by this, as well as our neighbors who have had traumatic events where this can be a serious issue. We can help by making sure we follow the law, and limit it to the 4th when all of us are celebrating and expecting and planning for it.

Unfortunately we will not be having the 4th of July Parade this year, but I hope everyone has a safe and enjoyable Independence Day holiday.

**-Bill**



Dr. Joel Jensen, MD has lived in Afton since the 1980's, raising his family here. He is retiring on July 1, after a long career in the medical field. Dr. Jensen was honored by the Afton City Council with the proclamation of July 1, 2020 as the Dr. Joel Jensen, MD Healthcare Provider Appreciation Day to recognize Dr. Jensen and all health care providers and first responders for their selfless service.

## June Meeting Highlights

The June 1, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting was canceled

### June 16, 2020 City Council Meeting

#### The Council:

- Extended the declaration of local emergency.
- Approved payment to Geislinger and Sons and to Capra Utilities for the River Road Sanitary Sewer project.
- Received an update on Afton Creek Preserve construction.
- Approved culvert replacement on 30th Street.
- Approved extra patrols for speed enforcement.
- Approved the joint powers agreement for use of the State Criminal Justice Data Communications Network system.

MEETING PACKETS, VIDEOS AND APPROVED MEETING MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE AT:  
[www.ci.afton.mn.us](http://www.ci.afton.mn.us)

## LSCVFD Food Drive

On Saturday July 18th from 9am to Noon, the Lower St Croix Valley Fire Department will be hosting a community food drive to help replenish our local food shelves. Food or cash donations will be accepted and 100% of the proceeds will be donated directly to our local food shelves in Washington County. The members of the fire department will match up to \$500 for all donations received during this food drive.

Items/Cash donations may be dropped off by driving into the front of the fire department parking lot (1560 St Croix Trail South in Lake St Croix Beach) on Saturday, July 18th between the hours of 9am to Noon. Residents should remain in their vehicles and firefighters and EMT's will unload your donations to maintain proper social distancing. For those residents wishing to make a cash donation, checks should be made out to LSCVFD and mark FOOD DRIVE in the memo area. Checks can either be dropped off on Sat July 18th or mailed to LSCVFD; PO Box 234; Lakeland, MN 55043.

In the years past, during our pancake breakfasts, you have been every generous with your food donations. Due to the current pandemic events and high unemployment rate your generosity is needed now more than ever. This is a great opportunity to continue to keep these valued resources, in our community, stocked.

## 2020 Afton Elections

### City Council seats up for November 3, 2020 General Election will be:

- Ward 1 — 4-year term (must reside in Ward 1)
- Ward 4 — 4-year term (must reside in Ward 4)
- Mayor — 2-year term (at-large; Afton resident)

### Candidate filing period for open City Council seats:

July 28 through August 11 at 5:00 p.m.

The city website tab "Election and Voting Information" has the Ward Boundary map. City Council candidates must file for candidacy during the filing period. If you'd like to file by mail, contact the office and we will send you the forms. You also may schedule an appointment to come to City Hall and file in person. The filing fee is \$2.00. All City Council seats are non-partisan.

## Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

### Education Center Summer Saturdays: May 23 - September 5

Every Saturday this summer, Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend, the Education Center trails are free and open to everyone for walking!

Explore Belwin Education Center's miles of rolling woodlands, prairie and wetlands trails every Saturday through Labor Day weekend.

#### Rules:

No dogs or bicycles allowed.

Please respect our neighbors' lands by staying on Belwin Conservancy trails and staying within our boundaries. Thank you.

**Please note: The Education Center building will not be open. There is no restroom access on the site.**

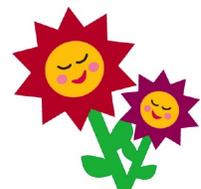
**Belwin Conservancy**  
**1553 Stagecoach Trail South**  
**Afton MN 55001**  
**651-436-5189**  
[www.belwin.org](http://www.belwin.org)

## Free Meals & Food Shelf Items

The Eastern Twin Cities Islamic Center (ETCIC) will be providing FREE curbside Meal and Food shelf items on Wednesday's from 5:30 - 6:30 PM. This will be in partnership with Loaves and Fishes.

Based on the demand, there may be an increase the number of days and/or timing. This service will be provided entirely outside of the facility in a safe manner based on social distancing guidelines.

Details on this program are at <https://www.facebook.com/etcic>. The FREE service is open to all - irrespective of faith and religious beliefs. <http://www.etcic.org>





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



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### Valley Library July 2020

Washington County Library branches will reopen on **Monday, June 29**. At that time, you can enter our buildings to pick up holds, browse materials, and use computers without an appointment. Our meeting rooms will remain closed.

To follow social distancing guidelines, a limited number of people will be able enter the library at one time. This means you may be asked to wait outside the building for a short time until it is safe to enter.

We ask that visitors wear a mask, practice social distancing, and keep your visits to an hour or less to ensure that everyone who needs to come to the library will be able to visit.

Visit the website, [WashCoLib.org](http://WashCoLib.org), for the latest library information.

[www.washcolib.org](http://www.washcolib.org)  
Valley Branch Library, 384 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.*

### **Aggregate Industries Brush Days 2020**

DUE TO THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS (COVID 19) ALL BRUSH DAYS AT THE LAKELAND PLANT HAVE BEEN CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

### **Consider Serving as an Election Judge in 2020**

Afton is always seeking citizens to serve as election judges. Election judges are temporary, paid employees of local election officials trained to handle all aspects of voting at the polling place. Serving as an election judge is a chance to learn about elections, and is a great service to our community. Judges will be paid an hourly wage of \$10.00 per hour in 2020, which will include your training time as well.

Training: You will complete an on-line training module, approximately two hours in length. A link to the on-line training module will be emailed to interested judges.

Election Days: You have an opportunity to work one or all of the 2020 elections: Primary Election August 11, General Election November 3. Afton Elections are held at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, 14107 Hudson Road South.

Workday Schedule: A typical schedule on Election Day is from 6:00 a.m. to around 10:00 p.m. In most cases, you will be asked to work a 8-hour shift or half-day. Food is provided for each shift.

Time Off from Work to Serve: Your employer is required to give you time off from work to be an election judge without a reduction in pay. To qualify, you must notify your employer in writing at least 20 days in advance of Election Day.

Eligibility: You must be eligible to vote in Minnesota; be at least 18 years old on Election Day; able to read, write, and speak English. You cannot be a spouse, parent, child, step, or sibling of any Election Judge serving in the same precinct. You cannot be a candidate or the spouse, parent, child, step or sibling of any candidate on the ballot in that precinct.

Contact: Call City Hall: 651-436-5090 or email: [jyoho@ci.afton.mn.us](mailto: jyoho@ci.afton.mn.us)

