



**November 2024**

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

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

- ◆ The Council approved reconstituting the 2017 high speed Internet citizen task force to research ideas on improving high speed internet connectivity and addressing existing phone and internet service issues and general communications challenges in Afton. Anyone interested in joining the task force is encouraged to please contact the city at 651-436-5090 or by email to officeasst@ci.afton.mn.us.
- ◆ The Council approved a reduction in the speed limit on Trading Post Trail between 40<sup>th</sup> Street and 50<sup>th</sup> Street from 45mph to 35mph.
- ◆ The Council approved a minor subdivision to create three lots on the 40 acre parcel located directly east of 12431 22nd Street.

SAR

**General Election November 5, 2024**

**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
- 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 at: [Minnesota Secretary Of State - What's On My Ballot?](https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote)

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

**CITY OFFICE CLOSED**

Thursday, November 11

Thursday, November 28

Friday, November 29

**CITY MEETINGS**

**November 4, 2024**

Planning Commission  
7:00 PM

**November 12, 2024**

Natural Resources & Groundwater  
Committee  
5:00 PM

**November 13, 2024**

Heritage Preservation Commission  
6:00 PM

**November 18, 2024**

Parks Committee  
6:00 PM

**November 19, 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](https://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

The League of Minnesota Cities is once again sponsoring the “Mayor for a Day” essay contest. Fourth, fifth, and sixth graders can share ideas about how they would make cities better. Each winning student will receive \$100 and will have their essay published in a future issue of Minnesota Cities magazine. Contest information can be found at [www.lmc.org/mayorforaday](http://www.lmc.org/mayorforaday). Entries can be emailed, submitted online, or postmarked by Dec. 13. This year’s essay question is:

*“Cities provide a variety of services and programs that make our lives better, including parks & rec, street maintenance, water and sewer, libraries, police, fire, and more! If you were mayor for a day, what would you do to make one of the services that your city provides even better?”*

At the October meeting the council adopted a resolution authorizing Washington County to be the authorized agency for registration and compliance of any cannabis shop that may open here. We also limited the number of cannabis retail establishments in the city to one. The statute allows this limit, but does not allow a complete prohibition. As this may be of concern for some in the community the council felt enacting that limit would be prudent as the new cannabis law allows retail establishments effective January 1, 2025.

-Bill

SHOP SMALL  
 CANDY CANE TRAIL  
 Nov 29-1st

WRAP IT UP  
 FESTIVE GIVING  
 Dec. 13-15th

COMFORT & JOY  
 WINTER SOLSTICE  
 Dec. 20th

CELEBRATE  
 MERRY & BRIGHT  
 Dec. 6-8th

### Ring in the Holidays

*An Old-Fashioned Holiday Celebration*

**AFTON**  
 Minnesota  
*Village Holiday*

DOWNTOWN AFTON, MN  
 ST. CROIX TRAIL S.  
[www.ExploreAfton.com](http://www.ExploreAfton.com)  
 Hosted by  
 AFTON AREA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

## St. Thomas Students Help Restore Native Plant Habitat Along the Levee

In September, 20 students from St. Thomas University volunteered to help restore a section of the downtown levee by planting nearly 800 native plant plugs. The Afton Parks Committee initiated the project, which is a collaborative effort with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and local landscape contractor Edge Ecosystems. The goal is to support butterflies, pollinators, and other wildlife along the levee trail's southernmost, currently unpaved path.

The students, who are in a class taught by Jane Tar, a member of the Afton Parks Committee and professor at St. Thomas, worked diligently to plant native species that will play a crucial role in increasing biodiversity. While some blooms are expected next year, the full establishment of the habitat will take around three years.

This initiative highlights the impact of local efforts in restoring native ecosystems. A big thanks to Jane Tar, her students, and all partners involved for their hard work and dedication to this important project!



## Meeting Highlights

### October 7, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting

- Held a public hearing for a Minor Subdivision application to create 3 lots on a 40 acre parcel directly east of 12431 22nd St.
- Held a public hearing for an amended Conditional Use Permit at the Rise property in the industrial zone.
- Discussed the Short Term Home Rental Ordinance.

### October 15, 2024 City Council Meeting

#### The Council:

- Held a public hearing for renewal of the CenterPoint Energy Franchise agreement and approved ordinances renewing the agreement and updating the franchise fee schedule.
- Held a public hearing for a request to vacate a portion of the city right-of-way at 3411 St Croix Tr S.
- Approved a Minor Subdivision application to create 3 lots on a 40 acre parcel directly east of 12431 22nd St.
- Approved an amended Conditional Use Permit at the Rise property in the industrial zone.
- Discussed the Short Term Home Rental Ordinance.
- Approved a resolution to allow a maximum of one cannabis retail establishment in the city, and a resolution to delegate the responsibility for registration and compliance of a cannabis retail establishment to Washington County.

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

### Winter Twilight Hike

December 7, 2024 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm

Hilltop Classroom

Cost: \$25, \$29, or \$33 (sliding scale)

Take a winter walk in the magical hours of twilight when day is ending and night is just beginning. Begin inside for a short introduction and then head out on the trail to witness the wonder of this special time. End around a campfire with hot beverages.

### Women Walking

December 14, 2024 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Hilltop Classroom

Cost: \$20, \$35, or \$50 (sliding scale)

Come and help us celebrate the seasonal changes in the natural world. Vernal Equinox, Summer Solstice, Autumnal Equinox, Winter Solstice, each brings us to a new season, a new place in our annual trip around the sun. We will gather together indoors to share easy, yogic centering exercises and a brief conversation about our theme. We will then move out to the woods and prairies for walking meditations and experiences in the natural world. We will end our time together with light refreshments around the fire.

### Winter Solstice Bonfire

Friday, December 20 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Lucy Winton Bell Athletic Fields

Cost: \$10, \$20, or \$35 per car (sliding scale)

Join us for our annual Winter Solstice Bonfire! Enjoy a roaring bonfire, guided night hikes, live music, and a prairie labyrinth. Cookies and hot cider will be available inside a warming tent.

For details and registration contact:

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

## Drop-off Your Pumpkins for Composting

Don't trash your pumpkins after Halloween! Instead, bring them to a drop-off site in Washington County. **Drop-off sites will be open to residents through November 12.** Pumpkins must be free of glitter, paint, wax, and candles.

Afton City Hall 3033 Saint Croix Trl.  
 Open 24/7. Southeast corner of parking lot.

**Pumpkin Drop-off**  
 at Afton City Hall



## 2024 Water Sampling Program

In June 2024 Afton residents were given the opportunity to have their well water tested for nitrates and Coliform bacteria. A summary of testing results can be viewed on the City of Afton's website:  
<https://www.ci.afton.mn.us/index.asp?SEC=AFCE252C-CAE0-42C8-9869-10208D16930C>

## Calling all Bakers & Farm Stands.



Please support the Afton Museum's annual bake sale for the Holiday in the Village event.

Drop off your festively wrapped baked goods at the museum on Thursday, December 5th.

Questions: email "info@aftonhistoricalmuseum.com" or call 651-436-3500



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

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

**Valley Library Events & Important Dates**

*The Library will be closed*

**Monday November 11th** for Veterans Day  
**Thursday November 28th** and **Friday November 29th** in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday

**Did you know** that the Washington County Libraries has designated Valley Library as a pilot for our new Extended Access program? This pilot program will grant a limited number of Washington County Library card holders access to the Valley Library 7 days a week from 6:00am to 10:00pm. You can learn more about the Extended Access pilot program, including how to apply to participate, at <https://www.washcolib.org/551/Extended-Access>

**For Adults:**

The Washington County Library is offering online classes in setting up a small business website, improving email, and many others. Visit the website for more information and to register.

**The Valley Library Book Club** meets 5:00-6:00pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month. **PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE TO ACCOMMODATE FOR THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY.** This book club meets in person in the Valley Library Conference Room. The title selection for the **Thursday December 5th** meeting is "Under the Wide and Starry Sky" by Nancy Horan.

**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, November 18th 10:30-11:00**  
Music and Movement Storytime

**Saturday, November 9th & 30th 11:00-1:00** Kid Builders

**Thursday, November 14th 3:45-4:45 pm** Fall Crafts

**Thursday, November 14th 6:00 pm** Pajama Storytime

**Week of November 19-23<sup>rd</sup>** Monthly STEM Challenge

For complete information and to register for programs contact:

**Valley Library 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)



*Please recycle this newsletter after use.*

*Veterans Recognition Dinner*



**Friday, November 8, 2024**

**5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.**

**At The Church of St. Francis of Assisi**

**Lake Saint Croix Beach**

**FREE** Dinner for Lower St. Croix Valley Veterans, Service Members and their Families

**Thank you for your service**

\* A limited number of to-go meals will be available.

