



**June 2021**

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

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

- ◆ The 2021 Road Project is on schedule and should be completed on or before June 1<sup>st</sup>. A few roads have been a challenge due to substandard base materials. This issue is not uncommon with our older roads since road standards and inspections were significantly less strict than today. All roads renovated or installed from 2017 and newer have been built to a higher standard under close supervision by our engineering company.
- ◆ The 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade has again been cancelled for this year. The Afton Parade Committee is looking forward to next year's parade.
- ◆ Organizers for Art in the Park are moving full steam ahead on plans for this event on September 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of this year.
- ◆ Public works has found several occurrences where residents have created berms along or near public roads to prevent storm water from running onto their property. This is a poor practice which causes water to pond on the road leading to water seeping under the asphalt damaging the gravel base by causing "soft" spots. This results in the collapse of the shoulder. If you see storm water runoff issues along our roads please report this to City Hall ASAP so Public Works can be contacted to initiate the repairs. Remember, the City's right-of-way extends approximately 18 feet beyond the edge of the road.
- ◆ Our roads are the number one expense in the City's budget. Nearly 20% of our property taxes goes to road repair. This year, one mile of road renovation costs \$365,000. Please help out by reporting pot holes, standing water, serious cracking or any obvious road damage so Public Works can resolve the issue quickly and get in front of the cost curve.
- ◆ The City Council has approved the purchase of a "Speed Trailer". This device will be used around the City to educate drivers of the posted speed limits. The Speed Trailer displays the approaching vehicle's speed as well as logging the speed, time, date, location and other important information. You will see it in action around the City in a few weeks. Please slow down!
- ◆ The Planning Commission has heard from three companies requesting installation of solar arrays in the new Afton Business Park at Hudson and Manning. The request was tabled waiting for more information to be presented at the June PC meeting

- SAR

**CITY MEETINGS**

The regular meetings of the Planning Commission, Parks Committee and City Council are being held remotely. Other Volunteer Commissions and Committees are canceled unless otherwise noted. Remote meetings of those committees may be held if timely action is needed and if properly noticed.

**June 7, 2021**

Planning Commission Meeting  
7:00 P.M.

**(To be held remotely)**

**June 15, 2021**

City Council Meeting  
7:00 P.M.

**(To be held remotely)**

**June 28, 2021**

Planning Commission Meeting  
7:00 P.M.

**(To be held remotely)**

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

**EMERGENCY 911**

## Notes from the Mayor

This spring I have been noticing the power of volunteers in our community. It is something that I do not think gets enough attention, and it has such a positive impact on the quality of life we all enjoy. One of the best parts of my job is knowing about all of these small (and not so small) commitments people are making: from Holly and Scott planting and maintaining the medians in town, Brad prepping the ball field for the spring T-Ball season, Joan and Rick working on ways to donate more plantings for the pollinator garden near city hall, to Ann and her family working to remove an incredible amount of garlic mustard from the public right-of-way along St. Croix Trail. There are so many more stories I could share.

There is also all of the good environmental work that is happening on private property across the city. This goes unnoticed and unrecognized far too often as well. I am fortunate to hear about some of that work getting done: residents removing invasive plants, creating wildlife habitat, restoring prairies, and making investments to improve water quality. That labor and those investments benefit all of us. Without all of you, our city would not be the place it is today. Thank you!

By the time this goes out, much of the spring road work will be nearing completion. We had a few hiccups along the way, but by and large it went well, and the new roads look good. Thank you to the public works committee, and to our public works director Ken Johnson for helping us find solutions to some of the challenges we uncovered in ways that saved a great amount of tax dollars in the process.

Last month, we said farewell to our long-time accountant Tom Niedzwiecki. We had a lunch for him at city hall and shared stories about his 20+ years of service to our city. Tom and his vast knowledge and experience will be missed, but he is leaving us in good hands and helping make a smooth transition to the new firm. On behalf of everyone I want to wish him a relaxing and well-deserved retirement, and thank him for everything he has done for the city.

I was sad to learn of the passing this month of a person who loved Afton and this whole river valley. Randall "Bud" Nelson has been a part of this city and its farming community throughout his 91 years of life. As was stated in his obituary, "God must have needed a man with big thick callused hands and a kind, gentle, loving heart so he called Bud home to help on the farm." I know he will be missed by all who knew him and whose lives he touched in such a positive way.

-Bill

### Afton Bayport Lakeland Lions Fundraiser Yard Sale

Friday, June 4 from 8am - 5pm  
Saturday, June 5 from 9am - 1pm  
Lakeland Plaza

There will be a hot dog stand and FREE vision screening for kids 6 months - 16 years. Bring your old eyeglasses for us to recycle for reuse.

We will be taking your donated items on Wed, June 2 from 5-8 pm at the Lakeland Plaza. *We cannot accept cleaners, chemicals, hazardous materials, mattresses, clothing, weapons, cribs and car seats.*

100% of the proceeds go to Stillwater Area High School scholarships and other community needs.

[AftonBayportLakelandLions@gmail.com](mailto:AftonBayportLakelandLions@gmail.com) or Cheryl Kelly at 651-337-2976

### Save the Date!

The Yellow Ribbon Alliance of the Lower St. Croix Valley is hosting the annual Field of Bands at the Washington County fairgrounds September 18, 2021. This fundraiser is to help support military families and veterans in our area.

**Randy Kopesky Field of Bands**  
**09/18/2021**  
**at the**  
**Washington County Fairgrounds**



**Yellow Ribbon Alliance**  
Lower St Croix Valley

## Meeting Highlights

### May 3, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting

#### **The Commission:**

- Held public hearings for a three Conditional Use Permits for solar farms located at Lot 6 of the Afton Business Park Subdivision at Hudson Road and Manning Avenue.
- Held a public hearing for a minor subdivision at 13681 15th St.
- Held a public hearing for an ordinance amendment regarding landscape buffer requirements in the Industrial Zone.

### May 18, 2021 City Council Meeting

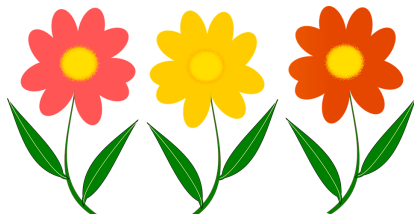
#### **The Council:**

- Extended the declaration of local emergency.
- Approved the minor subdivision application at 13681 15th St.
- Approved the ordinance amendment regarding landscape buffer requirements in the Industrial Zone.
- Approved the purchase of a speed trailer from Traffic Calm for use at varying locations.
- Denied a request for a reduction in the letter of credit for Afton Creek Preserve.
- Approved funding to improve the ball field surface at Town Square Park.

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

## PFAS Research Study Article Follow-up

The May City Newsletter included an article regarding a PFAS research project being done by Indiana University (IU). The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is aware of and supportive of the research project. However, it is important to avoid any confusion about this research project and the ongoing water testing being done by the state and the 3M settlement process. The MDH wants people to understand that participating in the IU study doesn't affect their eligibility for water testing by the state or for state-provided remedies (bottled water and installation of water filtration systems). Also, regardless of any sample results property owners may get from IU, the MDH does not issue drinking water advisories or provide the remedies listed above based on 3<sup>rd</sup> party testing. If someone's IU results exceed the MDH's guidance values, the MDH would have to re-sample before the state would provide a remedy.



## Belwin Conservancy Upcoming Events

### **Bison Herd**

We are pleased to announce the arrival of the 2021 NorthStar Bison herd to Belwin! Each spring since 2008, NorthStar (Cameron, Wis.) has released a group of juvenile males onto Belwin's prairie. This year's herd will reside at Belwin through early autumn. The public are welcome to observe the herd from Belwin's Bison Platform and viewing area, which is located at 15551 Division St., Afton, MN

### **Saturday June 5 & 12, 2021**

Saturdays on the Savana  
8:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Belwin's donors and volunteers helped us persevere—and even thrive—through a very challenging year. To say thanks to our members, we're opening Belwin's Creative Center for two Saturdays of hiking. Members and their guests will experience late spring/early summer on the sloping trails of this beautifully restored 160-acre parcel. Watch your mail for an invite soon! Not a member? Contact Angie Eckel at 651-435-0687 to learn more.

### **Saturdays June 5, 12, 19, 26, 2021**

Summer Saturdays at the Education Center  
8:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Venture through woodland, prairie and wetlands on 4 miles of trails at the Belwin Education Center. Face masks are required to enter the building, which will be open for check in, directions and restrooms.

### **Tuesday, June 22, 2021**

Landscaping with Birds in Mind  
6:00—8:00 p.m.

In partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools Community Education, see a "work in progress" bird sanctuary at Belwin's Education Center. Find details and register online at <https://stpaul.ce.eleyo.com/course/11380/summer-2021-adult/landscaping-with-birds-in-mind>

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



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



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### Valley Library

Beginning June 1, all Washington County Library branches will be returning to pre-pandemic hours, launching summer reading activities, and offering multiple ways to participate in library programs.

While this will look a little different at each branch, it generally means an increase from modified COVID-19 hours that have been in place over the past year. Visitors are encouraged to check hours on the library's website before visiting, or to download the library's mobile app by searching for "WashCoLib" in an app store.

Contact the library for 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**

You may view this newsletter

**IN COLOR**  
on the city website.



*Please recycle this  
newsletter after use.*

## Washington County Vaccine Clinic Now Offering Pfizer Vaccine to Age 12+

**The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is now approved for adolescents 12 to 15 years old.** At this time, the Pfizer vaccine is the only COVID-19 vaccine that has been authorized for use by people ages 12 to 18 years old. The Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and Johnson and Johnson vaccines are all authorized for use by people 18 years and older.

**Parent or guardian consent is required for COVID-19 vaccination for people younger than 18.** We encourage a parent or guardian to go to the vaccine appointment with their 12 to 17 year old to learn about the COVID-19 vaccine and provide consent for the child to receive the vaccine.

### Find a Pfizer Vaccine

[Washington County Vaccine Clinic](#): Pfizer vaccine appointments are available in Stillwater for individuals 12 years and older. Flyers are available in [Amharic](#), [Chinese](#), [English](#), [Hmong](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#), and [Vietnamese](#).

[VaccineConnector.mn.gov](http://VaccineConnector.mn.gov): Pfizer vaccine appointments are available at many of the state's community vaccination sites, including Oakdale, Lino Lakes, Bloomington, and St. Paul. Walk-ins are also accepted.

[Vaccine Locator Map](#): Many hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies are offering the Pfizer vaccine. Find and connect with local vaccine providers.

[VaccineFinder.org](http://VaccineFinder.org) and [VaccineSpotter.org/MN](http://VaccineSpotter.org/MN): Search for Pfizer vaccine appointments by zip code.

### Free transportation for Washington County Residents

Washington County residents can access free transportation to a vaccine appointment or to get tested for COVID-19. For more information, call 651-430-6655. (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)