

CITY OF SAINT PETER HOT SHEET



All the City news you need to know and a little bit more.

City Info Line 507-934-0675 TDD #711

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The following information is a publication of the City of Saint Peter, City Administrator's Office, 934-0663, 227 South Front Street. To request an email subscription to this newsletter, or for more information, please contact us at barbaral@saintpetermn.gov www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter



09/13/17

CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS – Action taken by the City Council on September 11, 2017 included adoption of the 2018 preliminary tax levy; approving City assistance for the high school homecoming parade (see attached story); directing staff to divest through attrition any City investments with Wells Fargo and Company; approval of a revolving loan request for Azure Skye, LLC (Tamika Bertram); authorization to execute a detour agreement with MnDOT for the 2018 Highway 169 project; approval for execution of a renewal safety program contract with the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association; and approval of a contract with Nicollet County Public Health to perform health assessments related to the PALS program. Action to modify the City Code to allow the keeping of honey bees on private property under certain conditions did NOT get adopted and keeping of bees is still prohibited in Saint Peter.

The next City Council meeting is September 25, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Governors' Room of the Community Center. For more information on City Council meetings, please contact the City Administrator's office at 507-934-0663. Copies of the Council packet are also available on the City's website at www.saintpetermn.gov/city.



MAKES ME WONDER (BY CITY ADMINISTRATOR TODD PRAFKE) – Taxes and Budgets (the series) ☺

The following is the first in a series of four columns about the General Fund

budget; that is to say the part of the City operations that your tax dollars go to support. Much of this is taken from the "budget memo" that the Council is provided as part of the Council meeting. You can find the budget memo, along with pages and pages of numbers, on our website at www.saintpetermn.gov.

The Council approved a proposed budget that suggests a Levy that will increase the projected tax rate from 49.09 (2017 year) to 51.64 (2018 year) based on a gross levy increase of \$208,318 or 8.35%. Previous tax rates look like this:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rate</u>
2012	49
2013	50.67
2014	51.13
2015	46.79
2016	47.27
2017	49.09
2018	51.64 (estimated)

For 2018, we will use the same philosophy we have over the past years. We do not look at the total levy and then make cuts or additions. We look at the divisional budgets line by line and think about needs and priorities the Council has set, then make changes, and then look at how that would influence the total.

The philosophy in the past was to bring the Council budgets based on the programs and service standards we have had in place without puffing it up needlessly, simply to be cut later in October or November to show how great a job we can do budget cutting. That is to say, we bring a budget that will provide for the operation the Council told us they want. Reserves are used for emergencies or efforts that are unknown to us at this time. In some past years we have used reserves for a deal that is too good to pass up or to pay an unexpected cost.

We do not believe that additional information about costs projected in a month or two will substantially impact our thoughts on needs and/or priorities so we don't plan to come back to the Council multiple times between now and December and modify the budget. It may be important to note that once the legislative session starts in 2018 there is always the potential for a change in the ground rules.

We also believe the results from past budgets speak for themselves and that our budgeting philosophy has shown very positive results both from a financial and a service perspective. The positive results are measured by the deviation from budget at the end of each year. That deviation has been very, very small, except for the projected building inspections in 2016, as reported by the City's auditors. Further, the Council does not see a flurry of purchases at the end of each year based on the theory of, "if we don't spend it we won't get it next year." We just don't do that.

Lastly, based on State funding changes over the past eleven years, local property taxes are more heavily depended upon to make the operations go. The Local Government Aid (LGA) increase of \$76,000 doesn't cover the annual cost of business in the General Fund. There is no commitment from the State to identify any increases in the 2019 LGA amount.

Next week I will write about some of the specific changes in expenditures from 2017 to 2018.

Will you check it out? Makes me wonder...

HOMEcomings PARADE ROUTE – The City Council has authorized City assistance for the homecoming parade on Friday, September 22nd beginning at 4:30 p.m. With the new location of the school, the parade route is changing from prior years. The new route will be as follows:

- Staging along the 100 and 200 blocks of North Third Street beginning at 3:30 p.m.
- Parade begins at the intersection of South Third Street and Broadway Avenue traveling south to Grace Street, then turning up Grace Street and ending at Lincoln Drive (the old high school).



ABSENTEE BALLOTS AVAILABLE - Absentee ballots for all voters living within School District #508 will be available beginning Friday, September 22nd.

The ballots are for the November 7th general election. The absentee voting process is done through the Nicollet County Property and Public Services Department at the Government Center (501 South Minnesota Avenue).

WATER TOWER PROJECTS - The City's contractor, Osseo Construction, planned to start painting the City logo on the Broadway Water Tower on Tuesday if the weather (wind) cooperated. The work will continue for two days. After the logo is painted, the four day paint curing process will begin and water can be re-introduced into the tower (the tower was emptied before the work began) and the tower can be put back online by the middle of next week pending completion of bacteria testing.

Shortly after completion of the work on the Broadway Water Tower, Osseo Construction will begin work on the Sunrise Water Tower which needs some touchup.

Residents should not notice any difference in water pressure or water quality while the water towers are being worked on.

For more information on these projects, please contact the Public Works Department at 934-0670.

MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING MATRIX - The multi-family development in Welco West Subdivision on Meridian Street has been completed and apartments are beginning to be occupied. The addition of forty multi-family housing units should be readily absorbed into the market. The most recent City of Saint Peter Housing Study, which was conducted by Community Partners Research, Inc. in 2012, indicated a multi-family rental vacancy rate of only 0.7%.

Since 2003, there have been 291 new rental units constructed within Multi-Family Housing in Saint Peter. Within those multi-family structures, 197 apartments, or 68% of the total, are being rented at market rates.

The other 94 apartment units were constructed to provide housing opportunities for families with low to moderate income levels. These housing units typically provide some type of subsidy to the developer to maintain the affordability of the apartment.

Subsidies can be provided to the developer in the form of tax credits. In exchange for credits on their passive federal income, the rent levels that the developer can charge are capped at a level below the market rates charged in the immediate area. As an example, the local housing market may garner \$900/month for a two bedroom unit. However, in exchange for the tax credits, the

property owner agrees to charge only \$750 for the two bedroom apartment.

Other subsidies are provided directly to the tenant. Often times this assistance is provided in the form of a Section 8 voucher. Under this program, the tenant pays 30% of their household income towards their monthly rent payment. The balance of the rent is then paid by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide the necessary affordability.

In the past, Section 8 housing units would usually be constructed within large multi-family developments. This outdated practice would result in areas with high densities of low/moderate income housing. Now, utilizing the Section 8 “voucher” system, the tenant has portability and can utilize the voucher to reside in any number of apartments or even single family homes that meet the standards adopted by HUD.

The following table represents the multi-family housing construction between 2003 and 2016 in Saint Peter.

<u>Development</u>	<u>Market Rate</u>	<u>Subsidy</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Alpine Meadows	44	0	44
Rock Ridge	36	0	36
Apple Tree Village	21	0	21
Nicollet Meadows	9	11	20
Central Square	12	43	55
303 S. Minnesota Ave.	2	0	2
204 S. Minnesota Ave.	2	0	2
Park Row Crossing	0	40	40
309 S. Minnesota Ave.	2	0	2
Orchard Ridge Twins	16	0	16
Bunker Lane	24	0	24
Welco West	<u>40</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>40</u>
TOTAL:	208	94	302

FALL YARD WASTE PICKUP – The City will be collecting branches/brush and garden waste such as tomato plants, flowers, etc. at curbside the week of September 25th. Please place branches/brush and garden waste parallel (one big pile is better than spread out along the curb line) and adjacent to the curb (not on the street). Brush or garden waste will not be collected after the week of September 25th but can be brought to the City’s drop-off site.

Leaves and grass clippings will be collected later in the fall. This work is done using a vacuum hose. Collection for properties north of Broadway Avenue will be starting at 7:00 A.M. Monday, October 23rd.

Collection for properties located south of Broadway Avenue will begin at 7:00 A.M. Monday, November 6th.

To help speed up the collection process (which saves money for all of us), please keep the following tips in mind:

- Leaves must be placed within six feet (6') of the curb line and should be parallel to the curb. Please do not put the materials in the street or in bags and do not include animal wastes with the leaves. Do not place brush and grass clippings by trees, posts, etc. and please do not park in front of the yard waste until pick-up is complete.
- The collection process takes a long time to complete, (it took five weeks in 2015), and in order to complete the process before it snows, crews sometimes have to start before all the leaves have fallen. To be fair to all, the crews rotate which end of the community they start on each year.
- For those living on a corner lot, please note that it is possible that one side of your property will be picked up before the other as the trucks run north to south and then east to west to be more efficient in the collection process. If you want your materials collected on the same day, make sure to place the materials on the same side.
- Crews only go through an area once; so if your yard waste is not out by the dates and times mentioned above it will not be picked up but can be taken to the City’s yard waste drop-off site located at the intersection of North Swift Street and West St. Julien Street.

The collection process is quite lengthy, (it took five 5 weeks in 2016), and in order to complete the process before it snows, crews sometimes have to start the collection before all the leaves have fallen. Collection dates for the areas north and south of Broadway are rotated each year.

Should you miss the collection dates, yard waste can be taken to the City’s yard waste drop-off site. (See more information on the drop off site in the next article.)

And finally, please note.....Snowfall may end the process prematurely but leaves, brush, and garden waste can still be taken to the drop-off site.

This service, along with the drop-off site, is provided and funded by the Environmental Services fee on City utility customer bills.

DROP-OFF SITE OPEN 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK - The brush and soft yard waste drop-off sites located at 1128 West Swift Street, (southwest intersection of St. Julien and Swift Streets) with access off West Swift Street are open year around

for your convenience in dropping off brush and soft yard waste. Brush and tree trimmings need to be cut shorter than 6 feet. Separate bunker now provided for dropping off fill (rocks, dirt, etc.).

GOT JUNK? - Tri-County Solid Waste has organized a tire, appliance and electronics collection for residents of Nicollet, Sibley and Le Sueur Counties. If you have junk to get rid of, this is a great opportunity right in our own backyard (the Fairgrounds)!

Tire, Appliance, & Electronics Collection For Nicollet, Sibley & LeSueur County Residents

In St Peter - at the Nicollet County Fairgrounds
400 W. Union Street, St Peter, MN
Saturday, October 7th, 2017 9 am - 1 pm

This is a collection for Nicollet, Sibley & LeSueur County Residents only. Proof of county residency maybe requested.

NEW ITEMS
MATTRESSES
BOX SPRINGS
& KIDS CAR SEATS



Kids Car seats will be FREE Disposal
Mattress & Box springs will be \$10 per item
Mattresses & Box Springs WILL NOT be accepted if wet from being outside OR is deemed infested



Disposal cost for each appliance is \$10.00

The following appliances will be accepted: *clothes washers & dryers *dishwashers *hot water heaters *furnaces *garbage disposals *trash compactors *microwave ovens *ranges & stoves *dehumidifiers *freezers *refrigerators *air conditioners

The contractor has the right to reject any and all appliances that do not conform to their state permit requirements.
Extra fees will be charged for appliances that are not empty.

Car/ light truck tires \$2.00 each
Semi/ small implement tires . . \$5.00 each
Large Implement tires \$10.00 each



Tires on rims will be charged double

Electronics accepted: TV, computer equipment, stereo, VCR/ CD/ DVD player, copier, cell phone, boombox, fax machine, etc.



Electronics and TV's 19" and larger \$10.00
Items smaller than a 19" TV \$5.00
Computer hard drives w/ mouse & keyboard \$5.00

For more information, call the Tri-County Solid Waste Office at 507-381-9196
www.co.nicollet.mn.us/180/Tri-County-Solid-Waste



RECREATIONAL FIRE STANDARDS - Are you getting ready for a backyard recreational fire? Unfortunately we are getting more and more calls from Saint Peter residents concerned about the amount of smoke being generated from some recreational fires. Whether that is caused by burning materials that aren't allowed, having too big a fire, or whatever, it's important to make sure that everyone is playing by the same rules which should help but down on the complaints generated when a neighbor has a recreational fire. Please review the standards and guidelines for having a recreational fire.

- Recreational fires must be at least 25 feet from all buildings or combustible materials.

Combustible materials are things such as wood, paper, and plastics.

- Conditions which could cause a fire to spread within 25 feet of a structure shall be eliminated prior to ignition.
- Recreational fires must be constantly attended until the fire burns out completely or is extinguished.
- A minimum of one portable fire extinguisher complying with MSFC (07) Section 906 with a minimum 4-A rating or other approved on-site fire extinguishing equipment, such as dirt, sand, or garden hose shall be readily available at all times until the fire is extinguished. Examples of other approved fire extinguishing equipment would be a charged garden hose, dirt, or sand (and a means of applying it).
- The only materials permitted in a recreational fire are wood from trees, small branches, brush, or charcoal. Treated lumber materials, construction debris, garbage, plastic materials, or waste materials are not allowed to be burned in recreational fires.
- Recreational fires must be immediately extinguished if they pose a fire safety risk, if they are not in compliance with the above, or when directed to do so by a Police Officer, Firefighter, Fire Warden, or DNR Officer.
- The MSFC (07) does not contain any regulations for immediate extinguishment if the smoke from a recreational fire is a nuisance to an adjoining property.



Also please note that Minnesota Statutes define a campfire as: "Campfire" means a fire set for cooking, warming, or ceremonial purposes, which is not more than three feet in diameter by three feet high, and has had the ground five feet from the base of the fire cleared of all combustible material."

And finally, please help stop the spread of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) by only using firewood that is from the local area. As required by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, residents are not allowed to import materials to Minnesota that could harbor EAB such as ash firewood. Residents are not supposed to move firewood unless it's MDA Certified firewood (look for the MDA Certified Seal shown here) and are asked to remember that it is illegal to move all hardwood firewood outside of EAB quarantine areas. Let's work together to protect our urban forests from Emerald Ash Borer.

HOME BUYER EDUCATION CLASSES – Are you interested in buying a lot or a speculative home in the City’s Traverse Green Subdivision? To qualify for the many financial benefits available to new buyers in this subdivision, you must first complete a “Home Stretch Workshop” training session. Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership is offering one of these training sessions this Saturday, September 16th from 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 pm at the Community Center.

The class is taught by HUD certified counselors to prepare home buyers for successful home ownership. Participants will learn budgeting and money management techniques as well as terminology used for mortgages and loan program options.

Completion of the class may qualify you for special mortgages, down payment assistance or other financing to make home ownership affordable.

For online registration go to www.stpetercommunityonline.com or for more information, please contact the St. Peter Community and Family Education office at 934-3048.

HELP WANTED– The City of Saint Peter is currently accepting applications for the following part-time positions:

- **BUS DRIVERS** - for the Minnesota River Valley Transit System. **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:** High school diploma or equivalent; possession of, or ability to obtain within 30 days of

employment, a valid State of Minnesota CDL minimum of Class C Driver’s License with passenger endorsement.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS: Previous experience working with the public; training in vehicle mechanics; experience operating a two-way radio/phone; and prior bus driving experience. Starting wage \$15.38 per hour. Applicants are required to complete City application form available in the City Administrator’s office at 227 South Front Street or by calling (507) 934-0663. **Completed applications must be received by the City Administrator’s office by 5:00 p.m. September 14, 2017.** Faxed and/or late applications will not be accepted.

****NOTE:** The successful candidates for this position will be required to successfully complete and pass a pre-employment drug test. The position is also subject to post-accident, random, reasonable suspicion, return to duty, and follow-up drug and alcohol testing as required by USDOT 49 CFR Part 655 (Federal Transit Administration) and USDOT 49 CFR Part 40. In addition, successful candidates for this position must have a vehicle driving record which is clear of revocations, suspensions and cancellations for the past three (3) years. Applicants may be required to submit to a criminal background check and be clear of convictions for crimes or anticipatory crimes (as defined in M.S. 609.17 and 609.175) within the previous fifteen (15) years. AA/EEO

CITY MEETING CALENDAR - This calendar is subject to change. Should you have a question on a meeting date/time, please contact the City Administrator’s Office at 934-0663.

Thursday	September 7	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	September 11	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	September 11	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	September 12	5:30 p.m.	Library Board
Monday	September 18	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	September 18	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Thursday	September 21	2:00-5:00 p.m.	Senior Expo at Community Center
Monday	September 25	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	September 26	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission
Wednesday	September 27	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission

Thursday	September 28	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	September 29*	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
	*Rescheduled from September 22nd		
Monday	October 2	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	October 2	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Thursday	October 5	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	October 9	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Monday	October 16	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	October 16	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Tuesday	October 17	until 1:30 p.m.	CITY OFFICES CLOSED FOR STAFF TRAINING
Monday	October 23	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Wednesday	October 25	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	October 26	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	October 27	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	October 30	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Tuesday	October 31	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission

*** Please contact the City Administrator's office (507-934-0663) for up-to-date meeting information.***