

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
The City of Saint Peter is an equal opportunity provider.



The following information is a publication of the City of Saint Peter, City Administrator's Office, 934-0663, 227 South Front Street. Please contact us at barbaral@saintpetermn.gov www.facebook.com/cityofsaintpeter



04/27/16

CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS – Action taken by the City Council on April 25, 2016 included authorizing David Drown Associates to receive bids for the sale of housing Tax Increment Financing bonds for Traverse Green Subdivision; approval of the 2016 electric fund budget and an increase to electric rates; authorization to issue a “request for proposals” for lease of space in the Community Center that is expected to become vacant during summer 2017; approval for execution of a memorandum of understanding with School District #508 for City operation of certain School District programs; approval for receipt of bids for the 2016 equipment certificate; and approval of sales plans and policies and restrictive covenants for Traverse Green Subdivision.

The next City Council meeting is May 9, 2016 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) – *Let the sun shine in.....*In the last week or so I have had the fortune to go to a meeting sponsored by a local

group of folks who are interested in solar energy. Nice group of local folks who care about their community, our planet and they are letting their faith be their guide. There were about 40 people at the meeting and I was surprised at how many were from out of town. It was nice to visit with a number of the organizers after the meeting.

Anyway, the issue of solar energy and what should the City do about it as the electrical provider here is a great question. The word “balance” was used in the discussion and those that came to the meeting to gather more information and better understand likely went away with both information and better understanding. There are a number of things to balance and as the discussion moved forward it was clear, to me anyway, that this issue is very challenging in a number of ways.

Balance might mean different things to different people, but all seemed to agree it was needed and on this issue it is a bit more complicated than trying to balance the two ends of a see saw. Here it is more like balancing a fifty cent piece on the tip of a pencil. Hard doesn't mean it cannot be done. It just means it may take a bit more work and a bit more patience.

On the solar issue the Council has set some goals that were shared at the meeting that I think can point the way to finding some balance. Those goals are:

- No financial subsidies over the long term
- Ease City operations
- Reduce costs to customer and the City
- Positively impact cost of energy supply
- Community based opportunity
- Sustainability

Now these should not be interpreted to be the “end all” of goals. They might need some word smithing and a couple could be combined, but these goals seem like a pretty good place to start....a great set of criteria that can be used and by which any solar discussion or project can be measured against.

Is this the end of the discussion? I am sure it is not, but it is a great, very positive, place to start to work on finding balance together. Are you

interested in balance and solar? It makes me wonder.....

ELECTRIC RATES - Electric rates will be changing starting May 1st for bills that are due in July. The table below illustrates changes within our four largest rate classes. Those classes are Residential, Small Commercial, Large Commercial and Industrial.

The table shows the impact of the users in each class that uses the lowest (LOW) amount of power and the highest (HIGH). So, as an example... the impact for residential customers will be between \$.94 per month up to \$11.88 per month depending on your usage.

RES 1	current monthly	after increase	DIFF
LOW	\$ 25.89	\$ 26.83	\$ 0.94
HIGH	\$ 327.07	\$ 338.95	\$ 11.88
SM COMM 3 4 41			
LOW	\$ 29.30	\$ 30.35	\$ 1.05
HIGH	\$ 392.82	\$ 406.86	\$ 14.04
LG COMM 5 6 17			
LOW	\$ 58.15	\$ 60.76	\$ 2.61
HIGH	\$ 11,487.20	\$ 12,002.25	\$ 515.05
INDUSTRIAL 7			
LOW	\$ 14,455.10	\$ 15,130.46	\$ 675.36
HIGH	\$ 93,120.52	\$ 97,471.25	\$ 4,350.73

No one, including the City Council, is happy about rate changes and, in fact, this year the Council chose to use some reserve funds to moderate increases. However, that is not sustainable given that we are likely to see energy costs continue to go up in the 2017 year and 2018 year. While it may be no consolation, the system that provides power to your home or business is very, very dependable. In an upcoming Hot Sheet article we will explain the data behind that claim.

If you want to know about the “Why” of a rate increase and “How” it works and “Who” it will impact, please look at the Council packet that is found on the City of Saint Peter’s website at <http://www.saintpetermn.gov/sites/default/files/meetings-agendas-packets/CITY%20COUNCIL%20MEETING%20OF%20APRIL%2025%2C%202016.pdf> starting on page 43.

Based on the proposed budget, we anticipate that the City’s unrestricted cash position will decrease from a projected \$965,540 at the end of 2015, to an estimate of \$682,576 at the end of 2016. The expenditures (without capital) for 2016 are \$11,168,530; which puts the reserve at 6.1% of the current year budget.

The 2016 projected unrestricted reserve of \$682,576 does not meet our targeted amount of \$1,200,000. The reserve target has been set based on a risk analysis and projections in an effort to cover emergency repairs and to make capital purchases as you see planned via use of cash when possible.

If you have additional questions please give us a call at 934-0663 (Administrator’s Office) or 934-0664 (Finance Department).

ADOPT A PARK PROGRAM - Have you or a group you belong to ever thought about contributing back to the community? How about adopting a City park?

The City has an “Adopt a Park” program and two of our parks (the 5 acre Dog Park and the 80 acre Riverside Park Extension) remain orphans with no one to adopt them.



Groups interested in the program need to make a commitment to clean the park twice a year (spring and fall). The City provides garbage bags and gloves and then picks up the bags of trash that are collected by the group for disposal.



If you are interested in adopting one of these two parks, please contact the Public Works Department at (507)934-0670 to sign up or for more information.

WATERING TIPS FOR YOUR LAWN AND GARDEN – (This information is provided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency) - Household water use swells in the summer due to irrigation of lawns and gardens, but according to the U.S. EPA as much as 50% of the water we use outdoors is wasted from inefficient watering methods and systems.

Quell the swell! Conserve Minnesota's limited freshwater resources by using efficient watering methods this summer. Before you even turn on the hose, determine if you even need to water.

Trees and native plants do quite well with only rainwater. Except in times of drought, you don't need to irrigate these areas. Consider adding more of these plants to your yard. Find plant suggestions at www.BlueThumb.org.

Grass also does quite well with only rainwater. According to Minnesota Extension, lawn irrigation is optional in Minnesota's climate. If you choose not to



irrigate your lawn, it may be brown for several months. But when the temperature cools in the late summer, the grass will

green up and grow again.

Garden beds with non-native flowers or vegetables usually need some water in the driest months. Though plants vary, a rule of thumb is to water one inch a week (minus rainfall). Keep track of rain and watering using a rain gauge placed in the garden. Also apply a layer of mulch around plants to reduce evaporation.

In the spring, look for leaks. Check the hose for leaks at its connection to the spigot. If it leaks, replace the nylon or rubber washer and ensure a tight connection to the spigot using pipe tape and a wrench. To check for leaks in an in-ground irrigation system, contact a certified irrigation professional.

Water in the early morning. The wee hours of 4-8 a.m. are best for watering. Set up your sprinkler or irrigation system before you go to bed. In the morning, turn on the water while you get ready for the day. If the morning is too busy to add watering to the list, try a hose timer.

When hand watering, use a spray nozzle. A hose can waste 6 gallons per minute if you leave it running. A nozzle will stop the water until you are ready to use it.

Install micro irrigation along garden beds, shrubs, and trees. Micro irrigation—such as a soaker hose or drip tape—delivers low volumes of water directly to plants' roots, minimizing the water lost to wind, runoff, and evaporation. Simply run the irrigation hose along a row of plants and leave it there all season. Connect your main hose when you need to water. More complicated systems are available for larger areas.

Use a timer. It's easy to forget that you've turned on the water. A kitchen timer or hose timer can help you.

Don't sprinkle the driveway and sidewalk. It helps to select a sprinkler that matches your garden shape and size. Also choose a sprinkler that throws large drops, instead of a misty spray. This will

ensure more water reaches plants and less is lost to evaporation and wind.

Consider an irrigation system. If maintained and properly set with a WaterSense labeled irrigation controller, an irrigation system—including in-ground sprinklers and/or micro irrigation—will water at the ideal time of day, adjust the amount of water according to the soil moisture, and will not keep running if you forget that it is on. An irrigation controller uses local weather and landscape conditions to tailor watering schedules to actual conditions on the site. These can also be added to older, existing systems.

Catch the rain. When the rain does come, saving rain water in rain barrels or cisterns is a great way to harvest rain water for irrigation. If the barrel is next to a garden, you can attach a soaker hose to the barrel and simply turn it on to let the water run.

*The information above was provided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

RAIN BARREL PROGRAM CONTINUED - And just in time to put the MPCA's water conservation advice into action, the City Council has re-authorized the City's rain barrel program for the period May 15, 2016 through July 15, 2016 with the following terms:

- The rain barrels must be purchased from either Arrow Ace Hardware in Saint Peter or Traverse des Sioux Garden Center in Saint Peter.
- Up to \$1,000 in rebates offered on a first-come/first-served basis.
- Limited to two rebates per utility address
- Rebate shall be \$25 for a barrel or \$10 for a barrel kit.
- Rebate purchased must be from one of two selected type or with a sale price greater than \$80.
- The rain barrels must be utilized within the corporate limits of Saint Peter.

PREVENTING RUNOFF - Keep the rain in your yard by using permeable pavers let rain flow straight into the soil. When it rains, water can't soak into impervious surfaces like rooftops, driveways, and roads. Instead, it runs off into streets and storm sewers creating stormwater. From our streets to our streams, stormwater picks up nutrients, dirt, salt, fertilizers, pesticides, oil, bacteria, and garbage.

Reducing runoff is critical to minimizing the impact our yards and gardens have on the surrounding lakes and streams. There are many ways to encourage rainwater to soak into the ground. Or you can capture rainwater for use in

your yard. Either way, stormwater is reduced and our lakes and rivers stay clean.

Rain will soak in to ground where there are gardens and other vegetation. These surfaces are permeable, meaning they let the water through. Rain will not soak through your roof, most driveways, or roads. These surfaces are impermeable.

When you are planning changes to your house or lot, think about reducing the size of hard surfaces. For areas where hard surfaces are necessary, consider pavers or pavement that lets water through. There are now a variety of permeable pavements on the market that are specifically designed to increase infiltration into the ground. Ask your contractor or home and garden supply store for water-friendly pavers, or porous pavement or asphalt.

Rain gardens and native plants are beautiful solutions to water pollution. A rain garden is a popular landscaping choice that prevents water pollution by allowing stormwater to soak into the ground before it runs off. Rain gardens and native plants also:

- Prevent erosion by holding soil in place with their deep roots.
- Attract birds and butterflies.
- Require little watering and maintenance once established.

Rain gardens are concave gardens that collect runoff from downspouts or driveways. Plants that tolerate "wet feet" should be planted in the bottom, while plants that need less water are planted on the edges. For information about rain gardens, check out the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources websites.

They take a little work to install, but a do-it-yourselfer can do it.

**This information was borrowed from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency website.



TRAFFIC SAFETY WEEK - April 25th – April 29th is traffic safety week. Beginning Monday, April 25th through April 29th, the Police Department is presenting several reminders of traffic safety to students at the Saint Peter School District. Our

hope is to remind students that poor decisions have the chance to have terrible consequences. The following traffic related events are planned:

- Monday, April 25th – The Police Department set up a AAA PROMise kit table at the High School. This



table will be set up at the High School all week long. The pledge board is asking students to pledge: "I promise not to drink alcohol or take drugs, I promise not to drive impaired, I promise not to let my friends drive impaired, I promise my parents I will get home safely." Included on the table are pledge cards, assorted highlighters, mobile pocket packs, and phone stand cord organizers. Thank you to AAA for your involvement with this program.

- Also on Monday, Officer Arpin and Officer Hughes, handed out incentives at the Saint Peter High School to students who were wearing their seat belts as they left one of the school lots. This is the AAA "I got caught" teen seat belt initiative.



Our goal is to reward good behavior. This was a huge success and well received by the students, who received coupons to fast food restaurants. Officers found that while compliance was high, we did see a few people put their seat belts on after seeing us. For a 30 second video on the "I Got Caught" program, please click here.... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69bLRFaUYL0>.

- Thursday, April 28th - On Thursday, April 27th, 2016, we are proud to announce that we will be hosting Peggy Garber, RN, from Mayo Clinic Health Systems, who will be offering the "distracted driving" simulator to students at their lunch breaks. This will hopefully give students a realistic representation of how distracted driving can impact driving.



- Friday, April 29th - On Friday, April 29th, 2016 at approximately 1:30 PM, the Police

Department, along with several other participating agencies, will be performing a DWI Mock Crash at the Saint Peter High School. The mock crash is intended to be extremely realistic and to provide students with a first-hand glimpse that poor decisions have negative consequences. In conjunction with this event, we will be having law enforcement, firefighters, and EMT personnel responding. Also, weather permitting, Mayo One Air Ambulance will assist with the demonstration. In addition to the DWI Mock Crash, we will be welcoming Sandy Melville, who will provide a presentation to the students in honor of Austin Melville. Agencies

assisting with the mock crash include: MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers), Saint Peter Fire Department, River's Edge Ambulance, Von Essen's Towing, Nicollet County Sheriff's Office, Saint Peter Funeral Home, South Central EMS, and Mayo One Air Ambulance.

- RECAP: In addition to these planned events,



we will conduct other events throughout the week such as use of the fatal vision goggles, another unannounced incentive seat belt handout, and other traffic related events throughout the week. The traffic safety week is in conjunction with our T.Z.D. program (Towards Zero Death), which is an initiative with the intent to educate and change inappropriate driving behavior with the ultimate goal of zero traffic related fatalities. This is an excellent opportunity for a collaboration of several different agencies and organizations to visually represent the consequences of negative decisions. Thank you to all who are involved to make this week a success.



CALL BEFORE YOU DIG! – If you are doing any kind of digging on your property it's really important to find out where underground utility lines are on the property **BEFORE YOU DIG!** In fact, it's the law in Minnesota that you

contact Gopher State One Call 48 hours before you begin your project. Gopher State will ask lots of questions such as the location of your property and the area you would like to dig in and then they will notify all utility operators in our area of your locate request. The utility operators will come out to your property and mark the area to let you know where utility lines are that might impact your project. (If you are contracting for the work to be completed, the contractor is responsible for calling Gopher State.) Call 811 or 800-252-1166 before you dig for this free service! (**Please note....underground irrigation systems are not located as part of this service!)

STORMWATER WATCH

- An illicit discharge is defined as "any discharge into a municipal storm sewer system that is not composed entirely of stormwater".



These are pollutants that end up, untreated, in the Minnesota River. Some of these pollutants are car wash wastewater, gas or motor oil, grass clippings, household cleaners, paints, pesticides, pet waste, solvents, and weed killer. Sometimes these pollutants are carried through the storm drainage system by rain, wind, or by improper disposal from area residents. This can result in serious health and water quality problems and eventually wildlife and the overall appearance of the river are adversely affected by the illegal dumping.

To help combat this illegal activity, City staff relies strongly on participation from the public. Residents who observe illegal dumping or observe pollutants within waterways or storm sewers are asked to contact the Public Works Department by phone at 934-0670 or use the City's website (http://www.saintpetermn.gov/sites/default/files/documents/public-works/ComplaintForm_Stormwater2.pdf) to complete a stormwater violation form. This program cannot succeed without strong public participation. With your help, we can continue work to clean up the Minnesota River.

Thank you for your cooperation.



CAT LICENSES DUE BY APRIL 30TH!

– Don't miss the April 30th deadline to license your cat. There are just a few days left to license your pet without paying a penalty or

getting cited by the Police Department. You'll need an updated rabies certificate signed by a licensed Veterinarian before you can get the license. If you have not yet licensed your cat, please stop down at the Community Development Department at City Hall today and get your pet licensed.

And, in the unfortunate situation where the cat has died, please call the Community Development Department at 934-0661 and let staff know.

TRAVERSE GREEN LOT SALES – When news of the City Council approving the development of Traverse Green Subdivision broke, folks began calling City Hall asking how they can buy a lot.

Lots are not ready for sale yet, but for those who are interested, please watch the City's website, Facebook page, the Hot Sheet, and public access Channel 8 for more information. The City will provide lots of publicity about the process and when it will begin so if you are interested, check back often.

When lots are available for purchase, interested individuals will need to contact the Community Development Department at City Hall (507-934-0661 or 227 South Front Street) for information. At that time the Community Development Department will have a map of the development, individual lot prices, information on restrictive covenants that will be implemented in the subdivision, and maybe most importantly, information on financing assistance programs for qualified buyers.



PICK UP AFTER YOUR POOCH – Dog owners are reminded of the need to pick up after their pooch when the dog is off their property. Since the weather has turned nice, more and more pet

owners are walking or exercising their pets at the Mill Pond. Unfortunately many are not following the rules as dogs are running off leash and poop is not being picked up by the owners.

To ensure the continued ability to utilize the Mill Pond area with your dogs, pet owners are asked to be responsible and to leash your dog, license the dog with the City, and pick up the pet's waste. It's not only a polite thing to do, it's also the law!

Help us ensure a safe and beautiful outdoors for everyone.

COMMUNITY CENTER HOURS - Community Center hours will be changing for the month of May and throughout the summer months based on the season and reduced levels of activity in the building.

During the month of May, the Community Center closes early on Fridays at 8 p.m. Hours on Saturday will be 9am to 4pm. From May throughout the summer, the building will be closed on Sundays except by special arrangement. Please note that the Community Center will also be closed over the Memorial Day weekend, (May 24-26, 2016).

In June summer hours begin and run through Labor Day weekend. Monday through Friday hours will be 6am to 8pm; Saturdays 9am – 4 pm and the building will be closed on Sundays except for approved reservations.

If you have any questions, or would like to inquire about room rentals, please contact the Recreation and Leisure Services Department, Suite 200 of the Saint Peter Community Center by calling 934-0667 or emailing jenh@saintpetermn.gov. Hours are also listed on the City website at www.saintpetermn.gov/communitycenter.

COMMUNITY CENTER GYM CLOSURE – The Community Center gym will be closed for annual maintenance from May 16-21, 2016. The gym will re-open on May 23rd. We apologize for the inconvenience.



SPRING YARD WASTE COLLECTION - Brush, tree trimmings, and grass clippings will be collected curbside beginning Monday, May 2nd. The City will only be collecting brush, garden waste, and grass clippings. (Leaves will not be picked up but can be taken to the brush drop-off site.) Brush and garden waste must be separated and placed parallel and adjacent to the curb (do not put it on the street or in bags) by 7:00 A.M. Monday, May 2nd. Brush and tree trimmings should be cut to lengths no longer than eight feet. Please note: it does take more than one day to pick up but we will only go through an area once; therefore, if your yard waste is not out by 7:00 A.M. Monday, May 2nd, it will not be picked up, but can be taken to the brush drop-off site. There will be no alley pick up.

Please help us serve you better by not placing brush and grass clippings by trees, posts, etc. and please do not park in front of the yard waste until pick-up is complete.

Also, please do not put animal waste (dog, cat, rabbit, etc.) in soft yard waste piles as it will NOT be picked up.

This service is provided and funded by the environmental services fee on City utility bills.

BRUSH DROP OFF-SITE – The City's brush and garden waste drop-off site is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week for use by City utility customers. The drop-off site is located across the street from the Department of Public Works facility, 405 West St. Julien Street, at the southwest intersection of West St. Julien and North Swift Streets and is open year round for City utility customers. A separate bunker is now provided for dropping off fill (rocks, dirt, etc.).

WOODCHIPS AND COMPOST AVAILABLE - FREE woodchips and sifted compost material, when available, will be at the brush and yard waste drop off site for use by City utility customers. The material is free to utility customers (utility fees pay for this service), but you will have to bring your own shovels, bags or containers. Please refrain from placing foreign material in this area.

Please call the Department of Public Works at 934-0670 if you have any questions.

FLUORESCENT BULB RECYCLING 2016- City residential or small business utility customers (defined as organized for profit and less than 20 full-time employees), can recycle fluorescent bulbs on Wednesday, May 4th at the City's Wastewater Treatment Facility, east entrance, located at 400 West Saint Julien Street. Collection hours will be 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

A recycling info form will be included in the May 1st utility bills. The form should be completed and returned with the bulbs when they are dropped off.

The first 10 bulbs are free, but there will be a small fee for recycling of bulbs in excess of 10. Please place the bulbs in the original containers if possible, but refrain from taping the bulbs together.

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 or visit the City's website at www.saintpetermn.gov.

Friday	April 22	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	April 25	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	April 26	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission
Wednesday	April 27	12:20 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	April 28	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Monday	May 2	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	May 2	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Thursday	May 5	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	May 9	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	May 10	5:30 p.m.	Library Board
Monday	May 16	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	May 16	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Monday	May 23	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Wednesday	May 25	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	May 26	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	May 27	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	May 30		MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY – City offices closed
Tuesday	May 31	3:00 p.m.	City Council Goal Session