

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.
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2/5/2020

CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS – Action at the City Council meeting held on January 27, 2020 included support for a request to the Minnesota Legislature for a one-half cent sales tax to help fund construction of a new Fire Hall; authorization to execute a contract for the City to provide library services for rural Nicollet County; approval for purchase of a replacement pool heater for the outdoor pool complex to be funded by the 2020 Equipment Certificate; approval for two equipment purchases (Cisco identify services software and Omnicell anesthesia workstations) for River's Edge Hospital; and a closed session to discussion sale of the former wastewater treatment ponds site in Le Sueur county.

The next regular City Council meeting will be Monday, February 10th beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Governors' Room of the Community Center.

MAKES ME WONDER (BY CITY ADMINISTRATOR TODD PRAFKE)

We do that... so a few weeks back I had my annual J-term visit with Gustavus Professor Kate Knutson and her Intro To Government class. It's mostly second and third year students and I'm invited to talk about what I do, what local government looks like in Saint Peter, and to answer questions.



I take the opportunity to talk about serving others, what a great place Saint Peter is, and to promote job opportunities in local government because, like most industries, we are starting to face the baby boomer retirement replacement issue.

What is fun about visiting with these young people is that much of their view of government is based on what they know from the media. Frankly the media, at least the media they use, doesn't really cover local government that much and that makes it fun to talk about what we do here in Saint Peter.

We have a chance to go through the list of things we do for each other as a community like providing electricity to power their cell phone chargers, like plowing the streets, like teaching kids to play T-Ball, like assisting with elder meals, like housing for low income seniors, like crime prevent and response by the Police Department, like trails and, well you get the picture, the list goes on.

You know, when you are 19 or 20 years old you don't really think about who does some of those things. You just know you need them, especially that cell phone charging thing, and you want them to work. You don't need to think about what goes into it, who makes the decisions and how it all works. I think one of the goals that Kate has for her students is to get them ready to go out into the world and know that they can make a difference in their local communities. It's fun to be a part of that so thanks to her and to the class for letting me come and visit.

I discovered a series of videos about what local government does called "A day in the life of...". Each video focuses on a different City job like Wastewater Operator, Police Officer, Accountant, etc..... We didn't make any of the videos but I have watched a few and I think they all share some pretty interesting insight in to what happens when you work for a local government. Have you seen the sitcom "Parks and Recreation"? If so, you might think you understand what being a City employee is like, but trust me, being part of your local City government is nothing like the sitcom. Check it out the videos at <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=A+day+in+the+life+of+a+city+governemnt&qpv=A+day+in+the+life+of+a+city+governemnt&FORM=VDRE>

Do you see all the things that local government does to make life work for you? It makes me wonder.....

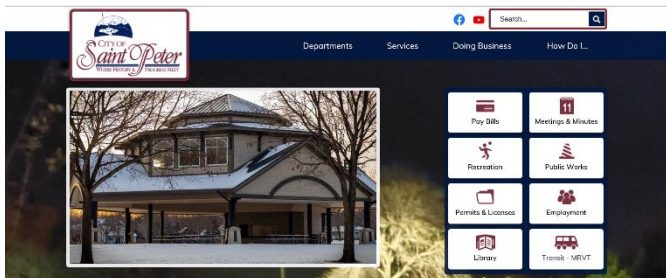
BOULEVARD TREE REMOVAL - Public Works will begin removal of approximately thirty-five boulevard trees located in various parts of the community on Tuesday, February 11th. The targeted trees are either dead in poor condition or causing other various issues in their location.

“No parking” signs and traffic control signage will be in place in and around the work sites and residents are asked to follow all signage and to use caution in and around work areas.

Owners of property adjacent to where the trees will be removed will be notified a day or two in advance. For questions on this work, please contact the Public Works Department at 507-934-0670.

STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION PLAN MEETING - The City of Saint Peter Stormwater Utility will conduct a public meeting regarding the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) on Wednesday, March 4, 2020, from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. in the Senior Center at the Community Center at 600 South Fifth Street. At the meeting Stormwater Utility staff will provide the public with an opportunity to review the SWPPP, ask questions, and receive some additional literature on stormwater prevention.

CITY WEBSITE RE-DESIGN - It's been 20 years since the City website



was originally created and a lot has been added to the site in that time. While we might think the site was perfect, in reality it was time for a facelift and the newly redesigned site is now live. Check it out for yourself and let us know what you think. There is still a lot of archived meeting minutes, agendas and packets to transfer over, but the new site is mobile friendly and provides a lot of options the old site didn't. Find the website at www.saintpetermn.gov.

SALES TAX – If you read the earlier article about the City Council approving the request for a one-half cent sales tax you might think it's a done deal. However, that's far from the truth.

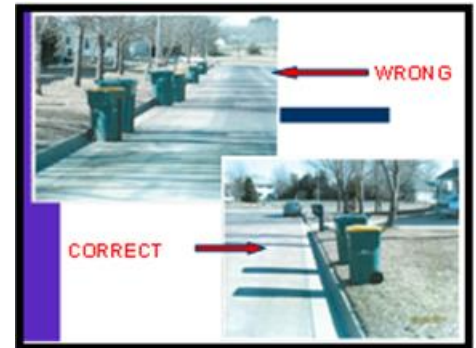
Previously the process for adoption of a sales tax was to put the question to voters and then, depending on the result, take the request to the State. That all changed last year and now it is reversed. The Council action must first be presented as a formal request to the Minnesota Legislature. If they give the City the go-ahead, the voters are next to decide. The question of whether or not to initiate

a one-half cent sales tax in Saint Peter would be included on the November 3, 2020 general election ballot and if approved by the voters, then and only then, the sales tax would become effective sometime thereafter.

More information on the possible sales tax will be provided in the Hot Sheet once the Legislature makes a decision.

CURBIE PLACEMENT – Please help us help the refuse drivers and others who use the roadways by correctly placing your refuse and recycling curbies on collection day.

Curbies are to be placed **ON the boulevard (not in the street)**. In the winter that means some shoveling needs to be done so that there is a clear spot on the boulevard. Please don't wheel the curbies up a hill of snow for collection. Instead,



shovel out a nice spot where both the refuse and recycling curbies can be placed and still be three feet apart. This allows the drivers to have a safe spot to collect the materials without posing a hazard to others on the road.

And finally, please don't park vehicles in front of your curbies until the materials have been collected. This will allow the garbage truck to safely pull to the curb to collect the materials without creating a hazardous condition for others on the roadway.

Thank you for your cooperation.

PARK RESERVATIONS: Do you have a family reunion planned for this summer? How about an outdoor wedding? Maybe a company picnic? The shelters in Minnesota Square Park, Gault Park, the Mill Pond area of Riverside Park, and Gorman Park can be reserved for your event by contacting the Recreation and Leisure Services Department. A word of caution....the newly constructed pavilion in Minnesota Square is expected to be a big draw this summer so if you are interested in reserving this particular shelter, don't delay.



Fees vary depending on the shelter you choose and whether you are a City resident or not and there may be additional fees if alcohol is involved in your

event. For more information please contact the Recreation and Leisure Services Department at 934-0667 or www.saintpetermn.gov/recreation.

POLLING PLACE CHANGE - Voters in Ward I (the north ward), will face another change of polling place in 2020 beginning with the March 3rd Presidential Nominating Primary. For the last two elections Ward I voters have cast their ballots at Johnson Hall at the Nicollet County Fairgrounds. This was necessary as the National Guard Armory underwent a lengthy renovation project. That project is now completed and the National Guard folks are ready to welcome voters back to their building on Election Day.

Official notice of this change in polling place will be sent by the Secretary of State's (SOS) Office to all Ward I households with at least one registered voter. The SOS website that helps people find their polling place, already reflects this change in location.

For questions about voting, please feel free to contact the City Administrator's office at 507-934-0663.

WATER SERVICE LINE INSURANCE - It's been going on for a number of years now....homeowners getting notices from companies offering insurance policies for water service line repairs. The most recent mailing was received just last week by many Saint Peter residents prompting the question from suddenly scared homeowners. "Do I have to do this?"

The answer is....it's up to you. The company's we have looked into in the past offered a valid insurance; however, the number of water service lines that fail each year is very, very low and while the cost of the repairs could be over \$10,000 in some cases, the City has a program that may be available that would allow the costs to be assessed to the property and paid over a number of years.

If you feel the need to insure yourself against these possible costs, the City would recommend contacting your local insurance agent to see if they offer such a policy and what the costs might be.

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT! – Every so often City staff receives phone calls from folks asking questions about what they can and cannot do in Saint Peter. Here's a few of the recent ones:

- *Can I use a metal detector in the parks?* It **is** legal to use a metal detector on City owned land including in the parks; however.....it won't be much fun because if you do get a hit on something, it is **illegal to dig** on the City owned land to uncover it.



- *Can I burn garbage in my back yard?* As tempting as it may be to cut down on your refuse bill using this old fashioned way to get rid of garbage, burning these materials is not allowed. And if you have a recreational fire ring in your yard, the only thing that can be burned is regular, untreated wood.
- *My dog/cat is missing, can I put up flyers?* What a sad thing to go through, but unfortunately it is against the law to post anything on City owned street signs, utility poles or utility boxes. Not only is that illegal in the City of Saint Peter, but it could also violate State and Federal laws. We recommend utilizing the various lost/found social media sites that are prevalent in our area. Also be sure and contact local veterinarians and the Police Department (931-1550) to see if the animal has been brought in for care or impounded.
- *So, if I can't put up a sign about my pooch being missing, why can candidates for political office put up signs everywhere?* Good point, but there is a law for that. State law allows candidates for political office to post signs on private property during the period 46 days before an election until 10 days following the election even if the City has different laws about signs. But there still are rules regulating campaign signs including that the signs must be on private (not public) property. As this year's elections draw closer, the Hot Sheet will have some more reminders about the rules relating to campaign signs.



- *I think there is a skunk under my porch. What should I do?* Our first recommendation is always to call one of the professional wildlife removal companies in the area. If you want to solve it yourself, the Police Department has live traps available for the public to use so you can try and trap the animal yourself. (And if neither of those options works for you, we recommend stocking up on tomato juice!)
- *I'm thinking of getting a serval. Do I need a license?* For those of you who don't know, servals are like cats....really big, really wild cats that aren't meant to be household pets. The short answer to this one is you don't need the license because it's a wild animal and not allowed in town.
- *My daughter just got a horse. We can ride in town right?* Wrong. Horses are considered farm animals and only allowed in town under certain conditions like parades with prior approval.
- *The lilac bushes in the park are beautiful. It's okay if I cut a few branches off right?* Beautiful

or not, parks and everything in them are to be enjoyed by us all and cutting flowers or branches in any of the City parks is not allowed. Same thing for those who want to fill up their kids' backyard sandbox by appropriating sand from the sand volleyball court. Don't do it!

Those are just a few examples of some of the questions we get. If you have a rather unusual question, please feel free to give us a call at City Hall (934-0663) or send an email to barbaral@saintpetermn.gov. We are happy to help and if it is something really unusual, we might feature it here in a future edition of the *Hot Sheet*.


WINTERFEST MEDALLION HUNT – The Chamber of Commerce's annual winter celebration called "Winterfest" will get underway on January 31st. One of the most popular activities during Winterfest is the search for the elusive medallion.

As the medallion is usually hidden on City owned property, we would like to extend our annual words of caution to protect City property.

- The medallion will only be located in an area that is entirely accessible by the public. It won't be behind locked doors, gates, or fences.
- No digging is allowed. The medallion is hidden above ground and no digging anywhere on City property is allowed or necessary. Likewise, you won't have to climb a tree to get it.
- Be respectful of public property and be careful not to damage any facilities or structures as you search for the medallion.

The medallion hunt is a fun event for everyone so please be careful as you search and good luck!

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	February 6	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	February 10	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Monday	February 17		LEGAL HOLIDAY – President's Day City Offices Closed
Tuesday	February 18	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Tuesday	February 18	7:00 p.m.	Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Monday	February 24	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	February 25	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission
Wednesday	February 26	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	February 27	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	February 28	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	March 2	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
Monday	March 2	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Tuesday	March 3		ELECTION DAY
Thursday	March 5	5:30 p.m.	Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday	March 9	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Tuesday	March 10	2:30 p.m.	Minnesota River Valley Transit Board

Tuesday	March 10	5:30 p.m.	Library Board
Monday	March 16	5:30 p.m.	City Council Workshop
Monday	March 23	7:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
Wednesday	March 25	12:30 p.m.	Hospital Commission
Thursday	March 26	12:00 noon	Economic Development Authority
Friday	March 27	8:00 a.m.	Tourism and Visitors Bureau
Monday	March 30	3:00 p.m.	City Council Goal Session
Tuesday	March 31	5:30 p.m.	Heritage Preservation Commission

