

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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01/29/2020

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 are a different government than you see on national TV. In fact, often what you see on TV is not government at all, it is politics. For me, in Saint Peter, government is about the things that we can get done together that can help and impact the community and our neighbors. We tend to think about what we do and what we should do, rather than what someone else didn't do.

I know that may sound pretty nuanced, but I think it is a very important distinction. A month or so back I was visiting about a number of topics with Gustavus students and their instructor Richard Leitch (one of the really great Profs on the hill). As I often do, I try to get in a plug for working in government at the local level where we need police officers, wastewater operators, accountants, building inspectors and more. All of those jobs come with skills that are not government specific. While not many young people



realize it, many private sector jobs translate really well into work at the local government level.

When I talk about opportunities as the baby boomers continue to retire, I sometimes hear young people say "working in government seems too ugly". When I drill down on that and ask some clarifying questions, it is most often not about government and the work that gets done to help people and communities. Rather it's often about the "politics" of things - the yelling, lack of goals other than to beat up someone else, and even the name calling that sometimes we see all around us. That usually gives me the chance to explain the difference between government and politics. And while that difference may be nuanced, it doesn't mean the difference is unimportant.

Do you see the difference I see? It makes me wonder....

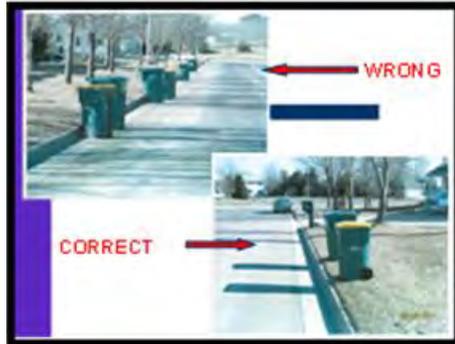
SALES TAX – If you read the earlier article about the City Council approving the request for a one-half cent sales tax you might think it's a done deal. However, that's far from the truth.

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.

SOBER RIDES FOR SUPER BOWL SUNDAY - Football fans planning to drink on Super Bowl Sunday (February 2nd) are reminded to plan ahead for a sober ride home or call a last-second audible before getting behind the wheel. Minnesota is attempting to have another year without a drunken driving death on Super Bowl Sunday.



Here's some keys to having a safe Super Bowl Sunday:

- Plan for a safe ride — designate a sober driver, use a cab/public transportation, or stay at the location of the celebration. Let family/friends know you are available to offer a safe ride home if you have NOT been drinking.
- Buckle up — the best defense against a drunk driver.
- Report drunk driving — call 911 when witnessing impaired driving behavior. Be prepared to provide location, license plate number and observed dangerous behavior.

Each year, about 28,000 people are arrested for DWI and one in seven Minnesota drivers has a DWI on record. Those DWI's have big consequences.

A DWI offense can result in loss of license for up to a year, thousands in costs and possible jail time.

Repeat DWI offenders, as well as first-time offenders arrested at 0.16 and above alcohol-concentration level, must use ignition interlock in order to regain legal driving privileges, or face at least one year without a driver's license. Offenders with three or more offenses are required to use interlock for three to six years, or they will never regain driving privileges.

DWI enforcement and education is a component of the state's core traffic safety initiative, Toward Zero Deaths (TZD). A primary vision of the TZD program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes — education, enforcement, engineering and emergency trauma response.

So enjoy the game (or the commercials), and take a safe and sober ride home!

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. 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*.



SNOW DAY IN THE PARK -
It's time for some free family fun in the snow at Veteran's Park! Join the City's Recreation and Leisure Services Department at the park

on Saturday, February 1st from 1-3 p.m. for ice skating, music, a bonfire, s'mores, snowshoeing and other snow day activities. Please provide your own skates.

As you can see from the photos, last year's Snow Day in the Park was kind of a sloppy affair, but by all accounts great fun for everyone involved.



This great event is happening on conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce's Winterfest celebration. For more information about Winterfest activities, check out the Chamber's website at <https://www.stpeterchamber.com/>

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.

Monday	February 3	3:30 p.m.	Housing and Redevelopment Authority
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

