PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATING PRIMARY — March 3rd is the date of the brand new Presidential Nominating Primary in Minnesota. In 2016 the Legislature took action to create this primary that will replace, in part, the party precinct caucuses. 

Voters who have participated in the August primary will recognize that this Presidential Nominating Primary, which will only occur in March of years the Office of President is on the ballot, is very different than what they are used to. During this primary election, each voter will be required to select a major political party ballot. This is done when the voter signs the roster book. They will need to check a box asking for either a Republican or Democrat ballot. For this particular election those are the only two options. **It is important to note that voters who refuse to check a box/select a party, will not be allowed to vote.**

Once the voter has signed the roster and checked the box, they will be given a ballot receipt showing their selection. That receipt will be handed to the Ballot Judge who will provide only the ballot indicated on the receipt. The ballot will only include the Presidential candidate(s) for that specific party.

With their ballot choice in hand, the voters will continue through the process the same as always with the ballot being marked and then put into the DS200 tabulator by the voter.

Another change to this election actually occurs once the primary is over. As provided for in the legislation authorizing this primary election, information on the ballot choice of each voter will be provided to all four of the major political parties. Under State law the “major political parties” this year include Democrat, Republican, Legal Marijuana Now, and Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis. While all four of these political parties will be provided with each voter’s ballot selection, they will not be provided any information concerning which candidate the voter selected. **One final change for this election….. Voters in Ward I (the north ward), will cast their ballots once again at the National Guard Armory. For the last two elections Ward I voters went to Johnson Hall at the Nicollet County Fairgrounds. This was necessary as the National Guard 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.**

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

**MAKES ME WONDER (BY CITY ADMINISTRATOR TODD PRAFKE)**

- **A new fire station…..** Lately I have had a number of folks ask me about a new Fire Station. So here’s what is going on with that. It is clear that the current Fire Station will not long support the people, equipment, training and safety space that is needed for this important core service within our community and the surrounding area. It is also clear that the current location, while serviceable, is not the place for the community to make a major investment in a new Fire Station due to firefighter response time (both getting to the Fire Station by our volunteers and for them to then get to the scene of the emergency). Size does matter and the size of additional space that could be acquired near the existing station just doesn’t make it work in the long term either.
The Council has wanted to find other non-property tax ways to pay for the development of a new Fire Station. Sales tax is a way that gets others to help us pay. Last year (2019) the State Legislature changed the rules about how instituting a sales tax works and legislative approval is required before a local vote on the matter. The first step in potentially getting a new Fire Station built in 2021 is making that request to the Legislature. The legislative process is underway and just this week the House Tax Committee held a hearing on the City's request. The Senate Tax Committee hearing should happen in the next few weeks. If approved, the next step would be putting the question to the voters on the November 3, 2020 general election ballot.

There are still lots of things to be worked out including the design of a new facility, the building size, and the budget and how much of that cost could be paid by sales tax. But we do know a few things for sure:

- We know we have a location at the northwest corner of the Broadway Avenue and Sunrise Drive intersection (a pretty darn good spot based on the response time study).
- We have a Council appointed Building Committee made up of Councilmembers, Volunteer Firefighters, Architects, Engineers and Construction Managers to determine what we need and what it takes to build a new station.
- We know that no one likes new taxes. We know that there will be a new Fire Station in the near future and I think we know that we are either using property taxes to pay the whole cost or we are getting others to help pay through the use of a sales tax.

Projects like this come around every 50 to 75 years in the life of a community and we need to make sure we plan ahead for that life span and spend your resources for the future without being stuck in the past.

This spring there will be an open house at the current Fire Station to give folks a chance to see what we have today and see some images and costs related to what the City Council is planning.

Will you follow along as the project becomes more clearly defined, as budgets are set and the look of the building is finalized? It makes me wonder.....

*A special note.....We still don't have a winner for last week's "Make Me Wonder" column contest. What is your "and"? The sixth person to respond to barbaral@saintpetermn.gov will win a prize!

**CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS** – Action at the City Council meeting held on February 24, 2020 included approval for purchase of materials (fencing) for construction of the first phase of the second dog park at 1125 North Swift Street; adoption of an ADA transition plan identifying accessibility issues in City owned right-of-ways; approval to increase the deductible for the City's property/casualty insurance policy; and approval of a Tree Worker license. Council consideration of a name for the new dog park was removed from the agenda and will be discussed at a later date.

The next regular City Council meeting will be Monday, March 9th beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Governors' Room of the Community Center.

**DADDY-DAUGHTER DANCE** - The Recreation Department’s Annual Daddy Daughter Dance is Saturday, March 7th at the Community Center from 6-8p.m. This year’s theme is "Over the Moon". Interested families are encouraged to pre-register for the event at a cost of $25 per couple ($5 for each additional guest), or you can buy tickets at the door for $30 per couple and $5 for each additional guest.

**WE COUNT MINNESOTA** – The U.S. Census will officially begin on April 1st. As mandated in the constitution, a census is held every 10 years to count every living person in the United States. The results are used for representational apportionment in congress and by the State and Federal governments to distribute all kinds of funding to communities like Saint Peter. That makes it crucial to Minnesota that every resident is counted in this year’s census.

Saint Peter has had a good participation rate in past census years, but not good enough. There are still groups of residents (snowbirds, immigrants, and surprisingly even infants) that are historically undercounted in the census and those folks are important.

The Census Bureau is concerned enough about the children that are missed during the census that they recently sent out the following article....

"Counting every person in the United States in a census every 10 years is a challenge. But counting every infant and toddler in the country may be one of the most challenging parts of the job.

Parents and adults with young children often don’t realize they need to include all children who live with them fulltime or at least most of the time. The Census Bureau is working to educate the public that young children should be counted if they live and sleep in a home most of the time. A newborn should be counted if he or she was born on or before April 1, 2020.

In the 2010 Census, nearly 1 million children (4.6% of children under the age of 5) were not counted, according to the U.S. Census Bureau."
In fact, children under age 5 are one of the largest groups of undercounted people in the United States. Counting young children will be vitally important in the 2020 Census because population statistics are used by local, state, and federal lawmakers to determine how to spend billions of dollars in federal and state funds annually over the next 10 years. Much of that money funds programs that directly affect children. They include nutrition assistance, Head Start, special education, foster care, Medicaid, and the Children’s Health Insurance Program and housing assistance to help a child’s family.

Knowing how many children live in a community is the foundation of many important municipal decisions. For example, should a community build a new library? A new school? A new hospital? Should Head Start for pre-K children be expanded? These local decisions are driven by changes in population, and often by the growth in the number of children. A new school may be needed because of increased births in one area but the school might not be built if all newborns and toddlers — future schoolchildren — are not counted.

Karen Deaver, program manager for the 2020 Census undercount of young children effort and chair of the Census Bureau’s Undercount of Young Children Task Force, said the Census Bureau is working in coordination with public and private partners and educators to ensure all children are counted in 2020.

“We recognize that this is a persistent problem and it’s a growing problem,” she said.

The Census Bureau is working to educate the public that young children should be counted if they live and sleep in a home most of the time. A newborn should be counted if he or she was born on or before April 1, 2020.

As part of this effort, the Census Bureau has integrated messaging into its advertising and communications efforts, partnered with national and local organizations that focus on young children and published materials online including a dedicated web page on counting young children. It also expanded the Statistics in Schools materials and outreach to include pre-schools.

Why Are Young Children Missed? Sometimes children are missed simply because adults in their households don’t return the census questionnaire. Most often, people who do return the forms just forget to count everyone under their roof. They may leave off young children who live with them or may be staying with them temporarily.

This most often occurs in so-called “complex households” — for example, those with multiple generations of a family, unrelated families living together, and blended or foster families.

In the 2010 Census, about 40% of all young children fell under the complex household category, according to the Census Bureau.

People who move on or around Census Day are also at higher risk. This transience makes it hard to count children.

“It may be a situation where mom and the kids are living with grandma for a little while until mom gets back on her feet,” Deaver said.

But then the grandmother doesn’t think to count the children when a census questionnaire hits her mailbox. According to the Census Bureau, children living in homes where the adults have limited English-speaking skills or are living in poverty are also more likely to be missed.

If families live in subsidized housing that limits how many can live in each unit, people may be reluctant to report everyone who lives there and may be afraid to include all the children on the census questionnaire.

“Maybe there is a family [that the householders] aren’t telling the landlord about,” said Ashley Austin, the Census Bureau’s Communications Lead for Counting Young Children in the 2020 Census. “If the family isn’t supposed to be there, or they are just couch surfing,” the householder may not think to count them. But they should.

Responses to the 2020 Census are confidential and protected by law. They cannot be shared with any law enforcement or immigration agency such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). And responses, of course, are never shared with landlords or any other individual. The information collected is used only to produce statistics.

Not Counting Young Children Can Affect Them for Years - Because census results help determine where federal funds are distributed for programs that are important for children, an accurate count can shape a child’s future for the next decade and beyond.

It’s important to count young children now so that they have the resources they need as they grow up. It all begins with responding to the 2020 Census.

“Missing children in the census affects the community for the next 10 years. We want the
programs that help support the foundations children need to be available during their formative years," Austin said."

So you can see why every person counts and why it's important to get the word out before April 1st. What will be Saint Peter's response rate to this census? We're aiming for 100% participation and that's where you, our residents come in. Talk to friends, neighbors and family members about the importance of the census and if you have someone who may struggle to complete the forms, offer to help. In the end, Saint Peter will be better for it for at least the next ten years.

**NOTE...we still don't have a winner in our Census question from last week's Hot Sheet. If you are the first person to email barbaral@saintpetermn.gov and correctly answer this question..."What was Saint Peter's census participation rate in both the 2000 and 2010 census?"... you will win a "We Count Minnesota" census 2020 t-shirt! And here's a hint...the answer is somewhere between 50% and 100%!

CITY PHONE ISSUES – Yup we know, some Hot Sheet readers won't understand what this graphic is, but nonetheless it's important to know the City's phone system will be upgraded to a Windows 10 compatible system on March 5th.

It is possible that on this day, sporadic outages of the City's phone service may make it difficult for callers to get through. If you experience issues getting through on the phone on March 5th, please contact us through email.

Emails for each City department are listed on the City of Saint Peter website at https://www.saintpetermn.gov/Directory.aspx.

We apologize for the inconvenience.

HELP WANTED – The City is now accepting applications for the following positions:

- **BUILDING INSPECTOR** - The City of Saint Peter is currently accepting applications for the position of Building Inspector in the Building Department. **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:** Any combination of education and experience equivalent to a high school degree; Possession of State of Minnesota Building Inspector Limited Certification or ability to obtain within one year of date of employment; Demonstrated ability to perform plan review for residential, commercial, and industrial building construction and alterations; Possession of a valid drivers' license. **DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS:** Two years of post-high school course work in building inspection or construction oriented, architectural, or engineering courses and experience in any of the skilled construction trades, architectural design, or engineering, and experience as a municipal building inspector; Demonstrated knowledge of Minnesota State Building Code, current International Building Code, current Minnesota Plumbing Code, current Uniform Housing Code, and the Minnesota Uniform Fire Code, and other laws regulating building construction; demonstrated knowledge of building construction methods and materials; knowledge of the principles and practices of plumbing and heating code enforcement; Demonstrated knowledge of the principles and procedures of rental code enforcement; Demonstrated ability to read and interpret building and plumbing plans and specifications; Demonstrated knowledge of OSHA regulations.

$21.50-$24.00 per hour depending on qualifications. Applicants are required to complete a City application form available in the City Administrator's office at 227 South Front Street between the hours of 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon and 1-5 p.m. or by calling (507)934-0663. Completed applications must be received by the City Administrator's office by 5:00 p.m. March 28, 2020. Interviews will be scheduled April 2, 2020. Faxed, emailed, and/or late applications will not be accepted.

- **SEASONAL POSITIONS** --for the 2020 summer season. **Applications are available on the City's website at www.saintpetermn.gov or at the City Administrator's office, 227 S. Front Street, or by calling 507-934-0663.** Completed applications must be received by the City Administrator's office by 5:00 pm on Friday, March 20, 2020. Faxed and/or late applications will not be accepted. A condition of employment shall be successful completion of a background investigation, and successful completion of pre-employment drug test. Employees will be subject to post-accident, random, reasonable suspicion, return to duty, and follow-up drug and alcohol testing. Must be at least 16 years of age for Recreation and Leisure Services positions; 15 years of age for aquatics positions and 18 years of age for Public Works positions. The following seasonal positions are available:

- **PUBLIC WORKS SEASONAL LABORER:** Duties include a variety of manual labor tasks associated with the care, maintenance, and cleaning of City facilities and equipment including, but not limited to, painting,
washing, mowing, weeding, digging, cleaning and organizing; planting, trimming, and removal of trees and shrubs and mowing and trimming facilities. 40 hours/week. Applicants must possess a minimum valid Class C or D driver's license. Must pass pre-employment drug test; subject to post-accident, random, reasonable suspicion, return to duty, and follow-up drug and alcohol testing required by federal regulations. Starting wage $10.25/hour. Minimum age: 18.

- RECREATION COORDINATOR: Train and supervise staff, organize and implement summer programs. Leadership and supervisory experience with recreation activities required. Need strong organizational, motivational, planning and leadership skills. 35–40 hours/week. Mid May–End of August. Starting wage: $11.25/hour.

- VOLUNTEER IN THE PARK COORDINATOR: Recruit, train, assign and supervise youth volunteers. Strong organizational skills and previous work with youth required. Assist organization and implementation of Exploration Recreation Program. Flexible hours. 30–40 hours/week. May–August. Starting wage: $11.25/hour

- RECREATION LEADERS: Responsibilities include implementing youth summer recreation and sports programs and special events. Previous experience working with youth desired. Strong leadership and organizational skills required. Mid May–mid/mid-August. 35–40 hours/week. Starting wage: $10.00/hour.


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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meeting Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>February 26</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
<td>February 28</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
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