LAST MINUTE ELECTION REMINDERS – The general election is less than two weeks away. For those who still have election questions here’s some info that may help:

- Absentee Voting - Don’t feel like going to the polls on Election Day but still want to vote? Voters in Minnesota have the option of voting by absentee without having to give a reason. Absentee ballots are available from the Nicollet County Public Services Department (501 South Minnesota Avenue) during regular business hours and on Saturday, October 30th from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Absentee voting will continue until 5:00 p.m. on Monday, November 1st. Voters will need to fill out an absentee ballot application which can be obtained either from the Public Services Office or online at [https://www.sos.state.mn.us/media/2444/english-regular-absentee-ballot-application.pdf](https://www.sos.state.mn.us/media/2444/english-regular-absentee-ballot-application.pdf). All absentee ballots must be received by the Public Services Office by 3:00 p.m. on Election Day or the ballots won’t be counted. (Note....Election Judges are not allowed to accept absentee ballots at the polling place. To be counted all absentee ballots must be returned to Nicollet County by the deadline.

- Where do I vote? - If you are unsure where your polling place is, check out the Secretary of State’s polling place finder at [https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/](https://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/). Not only will it provide info on the ward and precinct a voter resides in, but it provides maps to the polling place as well as information on what is on your particular ballot.

- Voting Hours – Polls open at 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 2nd and voting will continue until 8:00 p.m.

- Campaign Materials – Campaign materials like buttons, flyers, t-shirts and the like are not allowed in the polling place on Election Day. Under State law, the parking lots of the two City polling places (Community Center and Armory), are considered part of the polling place and anyone with visible campaign materials on or in their vehicles are not allowed to park in the parking lot. Feel free to park on the street however.

- How do I register to vote? In Minnesota voters are allowed to register at the polls on Election Day. You will be required to provide one or more of the acceptable proofs of residence. To find out what types of proof is acceptable, check out the Secretary of State’s website at [https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote/register-on-election-day/](https://www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/register-to-vote/register-on-election-day/). Election Judges will be standing by in each polling place to help you register.

If you still have questions about the voting process, please contact the City Administrator’s Office at 934-0663.

FIRE STATION/LOCAL OPTIONS SALES TAX – The City Council continues to move forward with construction of a new Fire Station. The land has been purchased and the City’s Architect and Construction Management team are well into final plan design. The remaining question is how the station will be funded – by property taxes or by implementation of a local option sales tax. The answer will be provided after the
November 2nd general election when eligible Saint Peter voters will cast their ballot on this question...

"Shall the City of Saint Peter, Minnesota (the "City"), be authorized to impose a sales and use tax of one-half of one percent to pay the costs of collecting and administering the tax and paying up to $9,121,000 for the construction of a new fire station in the City plus an amount needed for securing and paying debt service on bonds issued to finance the project?"

That's the language, but it doesn't tell the whole story so here are some frequently asked questions, that will help you as a voter make a decision.

- If approved by voters how much of a sales tax increase can I expect?
  - The current sales tax in Saint Peter is 7.375%. If approved, that amount would increase to 7.875%.
- What would the money be used for?
  - All money generated by the sales tax, if approved, can only be used for repayment of the debt on the new Fire Station.
- Will sales tax cover all of the debt or will I have to pay more in property tax also?
  - Current data indicates sales tax proceeds should cover the entire debt and there should be no use of property tax dollars.
- What will the new Fire Station cost and how long will I need to pay sales tax?
  - The project budget, based on a needs study, is $9.4 million with approximately $358,000 in annual debt service.
- Why is the City building a new fire station?
  - The current building, which was built in the late 1920's, has a square footage of 8,100. Modern fire trucks won't fit in the building and there is no space for needed equipment, Firefighter training, and decontamination facilities that are needed to address firefighter health and safety needs. The proposed building is approximately 27,000 square feet.
- Where is the new fire station being constructed?
  - The new location - at the northwest corner of Sunrise Drive/Broadway Avenue - encompasses approximately 4.5 acres.
- What's the timeline for the project?
  - Bidding will occur in February/March 2022 and construction is expected to be completed in late 2022 or early 2023.
- What will happen to the current Fire Hall built in 1929?
  - The tentative plan is to sell it. It would likely be available for sale in later 2022.

**P.A.W.S. Walk Changes** – Regular PAWS walk participants have most likely wondered why they have heard nothing about this year’s fundraising event. Hang on to your leashes folks because we have some big news!

After the 20th annual walk last year, the Police Department has decided to change things up. While there will be an online costume contest (more on that later in this article), the new fundraiser for PAWS will be a spring PAWS Carnival at the Thompson Dog Park. The event will take place in April or May and will feature fun for the whole family and your pets with pet related vendors, demonstrations, live music, food, and even a walk to honor our PAWS Walk tradition!

The PAWS Walk was a wonderful fall tradition that often was scheduled around any number of other equally fun fall traditions. Moving the event to a new location and a new time of year will hopefully attract more families and raise even more money to help lost, abandoned and injured animals.

Now back to that costume contest. One of the best parts about the twenty years of PAWS walks is seeing the amazing Halloween costumes for pets and people alike so we’ll be having an online costume contest. Submit a photo of your pet in costume by email to janett@saintpetermn.gov and make sure to include your pet's name. All photos will be posted on the P.A.W.S. Facebook page with the winner announced online at 12:00 noon on October 29th. The winner will also receive a prize!

Donations for PAWS are welcome any time of the year and can be dropped off at the Police Department (207 South Front Street). Thanks for your past participation in the PAWS Walk and we’ll see you in the spring!

**Fall Leaf Collection Has Officially Begun** – Curbside leaf and grass collection for properties north of Broadway Avenue has begun. Collection will begin for properties south of Broadway Avenue on Monday, November 1st. All materials must be out by 7:00 a.m. that Monday morning to be collected.

This process takes a very long time and to help our crews collection materials more efficiently (which saves all of us money), please follow the tips below.
1. Place leaves parallel and adjacent to the curb on the lawn within six-feet (6') of the curb line.
2. Don’t put leaves in the street, on a tarp, in bags or cover with tarps or branches.
3. Do not include animal waste with the leaves. If you do, the materials may not be collected.
4. Place your piles away from refuse curbies, light poles, mailboxes, signs, trees, posts, utility boxes/pedestals, etc. If crews can’t get to it they may have to leave it.
5. Do not park on the street in front of the yard waste until pick-up is complete. If possible, allow fifty feet (50') on either side of the pile so the equipment, a tractor pulling a trailer with vacuum hose, has enough room to collect the materials.
6. If you live on a dead-end street, place materials on the curb in front of the house, not on the dead-end.
7. If you live on a corner lot it is possible that one side 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 all of your leaves picked up at the same time, make sure your piles are on the same side of your property.
8. If you have a lawn service that rakes leaves or mows your lawn, please make them aware of the dates and these tips.

This is a great service that people take full advantage of, but the process takes several weeks (five in 2020) and that means crews must start before all trees have dropped their leaves and, depending on when the first snowfall arrives, sometimes must end prematurely. In order to be fair to all property owners, crews rotate which end of the community they begin with. This year the north end is the starting point.

If you miss the collection date in your area, yard waste can be taken to the City’s yard waste drop-off site at 1128 North Swift Street, (southwest intersection of St. Julien and Swift Streets) with access off West Swift Street. Remember you must have the orange pass to utilize the site which is open all day year round. Please make sure the branches are no more than six feet in length. There is also a separate bunker for dropping off fill (rocks, dirt, etc.).

The curbside collection and the drop-off site are both funded by the Environmental Service Fee on City utility bills.

FALL STREET SWEEPING – The semi-annual rite of street sweeping has begun.

The City’s Street crews sweep the streets twice a year, in the spring and fall, to prevent sand, leaves and dirt from entering the storm sewer system.

The work has already begun in areas north of Broadway Avenue and once completed, the crews will move to streets south of Broadway.

The process works better if those parked on the street can move the car until sweeping is completed. This allows crews to sweep the entire street width including the gutter.

One final note. If you see the street sweeper ahead of you, please take extra caution. Not only will the sweeper be working, but dump trucks will also occasionally be in the area as the materials collected are transferred from the sweeper to the truck for disposal.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and if you have more questions about this process, please contact the Public Works Department at 507-934-0670.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY – In the next couple of weeks Saint Peter children will engage in one of the most treasured traditions of childhood - Trick of Treating! This wholesome family activity brings back memories of our own childhoods, but things have gotten a bit more risky for kids these days. Children need to be wiser and more aware of their surroundings to be safe on Halloween. Here are some McGruff safety tips everyone in the family should be reminded of:

• Never, ever go into a stranger’s house while trick or treating.
• Only ring the door of homes with lights on.
• Only cross streets at designated intersections. Never cross from between two parked cars. Drivers can’t see little ones when they dart out from between a car.
• Covid may put lots of kids in masks this year, but even if they aren’t wearing protective masks, children should wear makeup instead of bigger bulkier costume masks which can obstruct a child’s vision. That will make it easier for the children to cross intersections and go up and down stairs.
• Keep costumes short to prevent trips, falls and other bumps in the night.
• Have your child carry a flashlight or glow-stick to help prevent the little ones from tripping over unseen obstacles in lawns. It also allows drivers a chance to see everyone from further away.
• Costumes may be highly flammable. Make sure to keep dresses or capes far away from any lit jack-o-lanterns on the steps of the homes you visit.
• Teach children not to sample their treats until they are home and mom and dad can look through the candy first. Unopened candies or other treats that are in original wrappers are the best bet.
• Older children who may be going out with friends should let parents know where they are going and who they are going with.

Homeowners can prepare for trick or treaters by turning on exterior lights, removing objects from yards that might present a hazard and making sure that pumpkins are lit with glow sticks or other non-flammable sources. Using a little common sense on Halloween night will help make the evening fun for all.

CITY MEETING CALENDAR

**PLEASE NOTE...** Until further notice, City meetings may be conducted electronically as authorized under Minnesota Statutes 13D.021. Log-in information for meetings being held either virtually or as a hybrid virtual/in-person will be included at the bottom of the agenda page. Agendas are all posted on the City’s website at www.saintpetermn.gov.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meeting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>October 22</td>
<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
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<td>Monday</td>
<td>October 25</td>
<td>7:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>October 26</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>October 27</td>
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<td>October 28</td>
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<td>November 8</td>
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