Message from your Mayor

Well it’s finally time for the spring newsletter. Even though we still have some winter to go, the days are getting longer and that is a good sign. As in the past newsletters, I will bring you up to date on what is going on in our city.

By now I hope you have seen our new website and like how it looks along with how easy it is to find what you are looking for. If there is information you can’t find, please call city hall for support.

As you have probably seen, the old gas station and car wash on Highway 47 have been demolished. I know there is a sign on the property that says “available,” but I can assure you that Kwik Trip does own the property. City staff is reaching out to Kwik Trip to see if they will remove the sign so there will be no further confusion. The plan is for construction in 2019 but there is a possibility it could be sooner; we will wait and see. In the meantime the unsafe structures that were there, for a long time, are gone and that is a good start.

I know everyone is waiting for the results of the rate study. We should get them in March. Once staff and city council has reviewed them, we will put it out for public discussion. I have mentioned before that a rate study should have been done before the water treatment plant was built then updated prior to the wastewater treatment facility being built. It always makes good sense to know how much the city can afford before starting a major construction project.

Our community development director and staff are busy working on some new proposed developments that will hopefully be starting this spring and summer. The best way for us to reduce our water rates is going to be through new development. The city receives some portion of property taxes, a one-time sewer applied charge (sac) and a one-time water applied charge (wac) along with utility user fees on new development. The more users we have will help lower the rates. Last year the city had over 70 new residential building permits, up 37 from the year before.

I would like to mention that this spring the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) is going to do a study at Pederson Drive and Highway 47 in order to see how many children and pedestrians cross that intersection. Anoka County will also be doing a traffic study at 235th Avenue NW and Rum River Boulevard NW (there has never been a study done at this intersection before).

I would like to mention to all of you if you have an issue or concern please call city hall or come to a council meeting. There are two times available during council meetings for the public to speak. This council is approachable and is willing to listen, but you have to bring your concern to our attention in order for us to address it. We will look into it and let you know what can be done. It may not be the result you want to hear, but you will know that we did the research and due diligence that you deserve. We will not leave a question you have unanswered!

When the weather starts warming up and everyone starts coming out, please remember to watch out for pedestrians.

Regards, Mayor Feldman
City Election — filing for office

Qualifications for Office
Candidates must be an eligible voter in Minnesota and at least 21 years old when assuming office. They must have resided in their district for at least 30 days prior to the general election and have no other affidavit on file for any other election office.

Filing Period
Notice is hereby given pursuant to Minnesota Statute 205.13 S 1A that a primary election will be held on August 14, 2018 and the general election will be held in the City of St. Francis on Tuesday, November 6 for the purpose of electing candidates for the offices listed below. The filing period for these offices begins at 7:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 22 and ends at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 5. City hall is closed on Fridays and holidays. Candidates will file with the clerk of the City of St. Francis at 23340 Cree Street NW.

Mayor Two-year term
Two - Council Members Four-year term
Filing cost $5.00

Polling locations for St. Francis residents have changed

In December 2017, the City of St. Francis changed polling locations for Precincts 1, 2 and 3. Precinct 1 and 2 will now vote at the St. Francis Area Schools Central Service Center, 4115 Ambassador Boulevard NW. Precinct 3 will do mail balloting. This spring you will be receiving notification from Anoka County Election Department of the change in polling location. Election dates in 2018 are: primary election - August 14 and general election - November 6.

Election judges needed

Serving as an election judge is an excellent way to get involved within your community. You will learn election procedures and ensure that elections are administered in a fair manner. Election judges are an essential part of our democracy and are needed more than ever.

To qualify to be an election judge, you must:
- Be at least 18 years old on Election Day and be a U.S. citizen
- Be a Minnesota resident
- Not have your voting rights revoked
- Be able to read, write and speak English
- Be able to attend a two-hour training session

You cannot be:
- The spouse, parent, child or sibling of an election judge serving in the same precinct
- The candidate or spouse, parent, child or sibling of any candidate on the ballot in the same precinct

If you are interested in learning more about being an election judge, contact City Clerk Barb Held, 763-235-2302 or bheld@stfrancismn.org. Application and job description can be found on the city’s website at www.stfrancismn.org/cityclerk/page/election-judge-job-description-and-application.

Recycling dates to remember

Spring Recycling Day!
Saturday, April 28
8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
St. Francis Police & Public Works Facility
4020 St. Francis Blvd. NW

LePage Recycle Days (3 Events)
Saturday
August 18, September 15, October 20
9:00 a.m.-Noon
LePage & Sons
23602 University Ave NW
Bethel, MN 55005

FREE Paper Shredding and Leaf Drop-Off Event
Saturday, October 27
8:00 a.m.-Noon
St. Francis Police & Public Works Facility
4020 St. Francis Blvd. NW

Leaf Drop-off Event – LEAVES ONLY
Saturday, November 10
8:00 a.m.-Noon
St. Francis Police & Public Works Facility
4020 St. Francis Blvd. NW

Recycling reminders

Drop off your old holiday lights and cell phones year-round at the St. Francis Police & Public Works Facility in the main lobby during regular business hours.

If you live in an apartment, you may pick up a free recycling tote at the St. Francis Police & Public Works Facility during regular business hours.

Have questions on recycling? Call Public Works at 763-233-5200 or visit www.stfrancismn.org/publicworks/page/recycling.
What is Neighborhood Watch?

Started in 1972 by the National Sheriff’s Organization, Neighborhood Watch is the cornerstone of all crime prevention programs. It enlists the active participation of residents, in cooperation with police, to reduce crimes in the community. Neighborhood Watch is a critical communications tool for our community and will educate you about local crime trends and criminals. The more you know about crime, the better you will be able to recognize suspicious activity in your neighborhood and report it by calling 911. This gives police the opportunity to check out what may or may not be a crime and perhaps prevent someone from becoming another victim in our community. Neighborhood Watch also gives the St. Francis Police Department the opportunity to answer your questions and learn about your concerns so we may serve you better.

The St. Francis Police Department believes in a strong police and community partnership. We encourage participation in the community and are looking for people who are willing to be block captains.

- Block captains are responsible for relaying information to the members on their block, keeping up-to-date information on residents, making special efforts to involve the elderly, working parents and young people.
- Block captains also serve as liaisons between neighborhoods and the police and will communicate information about meetings and crime incidents to all residents.

For those interested in being a block leader, sign up is available by calling the Community Event Line at 763-627-6195.

April 9-13 is Severe Weather Awareness Week

Severe Weather Awareness Week is a perfect time for you and your family to practice your severe weather emergency plan. Outdoor sirens will sound on Thursday, April 12 at 1:45 p.m. and 6:45 p.m. For more information on how to stay safe during a severe weather event, go to www.ready.gov.

Crime prevention tips for the home

- Lock windows and doors, including the garage door. Unlocked doors are open invitations to intruders.
- Secure sliding glass doors with commercially available bars or locks, or put a wooden dowel or broom handle in the door track.
- Remove valuables from vehicles and lock vehicle doors.
- Use deadbolt locks on exterior doors.
- Don’t hide a spare key outside such as under a bush or flowerpot.
- Remove obstructions in your yard that could conceal a burglar.
- Don’t put your box for your new TV or other valuable item next to the trash can. It lets everyone know what you have inside your home.
- Leave lights on when leaving or have them on a timer to make it appear someone is home.
- When gone for an extended period of time, have a family member, close neighbor or friend pick up mail, newspapers and remove the trash can from the curb.
- Get to know your neighbors and help one another maintain a crime free neighborhood.

National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day

Goodrich Pharmacy and the St. Francis Police Department will be taking back old or unused medications for safe disposal on Saturday, April 28, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Two drop off locations:

Goodrich Pharmacy (inside County Market)
23122 St. Francis Blvd. NW
St. Francis, MN 55070

St. Francis Police Department
4058 St. Francis Blvd. NW
St. Francis, MN 55070

Can’t make it to either location on April 28? The St. Francis Police Department always has a drop box for safe disposal of prescription drugs available in our front lobby during normal business hours, Monday-Friday, 6:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Stormwater — simple steps for better water quality

You can make simple changes to reduce stormwater pollution and improve the quality of your local lake or river by following these tips:

- Fertilize established lawns with phosphorous-free fertilizer and do not overspray fertilizer into the street.
- Rake leaves and sweep grass clippings away from curbs. Clean curbs mean clean water.
- When you wash your car or truck, direct water onto your lawn to soak up soap.
- Find attractive alternatives to large, impervious driveways and sidewalks.
- Direct your home’s gutters onto your lawn. Water that does not make it to the curb cannot carry pollutants to lakes and streams.

According to the 1996 National Water Quality Inventory, stormwater runoff is a leading source of water pollution and can harm surface waters such as lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands. Common pollutants in stormwater runoff include pesticides, fertilizers, oils, metals, pathogens, salt, sediment, litter and other debris. These pollutants are transported via stormwater from a variety of sources including construction projects, industries and urbanized areas.

Management of stormwater runoff from urbanized areas is very important for restoring or protecting surface waters. Urbanized areas are associated with activities that contribute pollutants to stormwater runoff, such as application of anti/deicing compounds, vehicle fueling, spills, landscaping and lawn maintenance, and application of pesticides and fertilizers. Additionally, urbanized areas are characterized by large amounts of impervious surfaces, such as streets, driveways, roof tops, parking lots and sidewalks. Stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces travels faster and in larger quantities, which results in damage to rivers, streams and wetlands, destruction of aquatic habitats and elevated pollutant levels reaching surface waters. Impervious surfaces also inhibit infiltration and subsequent groundwater recharge. Local public entities that own or operate a municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) in urbanized areas play a key role in preventing or reducing the negative impacts stormwater runoff may have on Minnesota’s valuable water resources.

Source: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). For more information, please visit the MPCA stormwater program website at www.pca.state.mn.us/stormwater.

Septic maintenance

Do you have the greenest grass in the neighborhood over your septic tank? That could be the sign of a leak and a health concern. The city has a process to watch for systems that raise concerns. City Code requires maintenance records to be submitted every three years. This April property owners that have a septic system and have not submitted maintenance records within the last three years will receive notice. The city needs your maintenance records, by a state licensed company that shows the tank pumping and condition. If you have maintenance records, you can submit them to the city today.

Well and septic system repairs can be costly and septic systems can be complicated. If issues have been identified there are several resources available. Financial resources are available through the Anoka County AgBMP program which offers low interest loans, www.anokacounty.us/2023/Well-and-Septic-Repair-Low-Interest-Loan or 763-324-4605. Other resources are available through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the University of Minnesota Extension Services www.extension.umn.edu/environment/water/property-owners/septic-systems. Submit your maintained records today!

Water softener tip — chlorides in wastewater

Just a friendly reminder to make sure your water softener is operating efficiently. The main cause of high chlorides in wastewater is from water softeners. This is where we need your assistance. High chloride levels can have a negative effect on the ecosystem of our streams, rivers and lakes. As many of you know, when the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency renewed our wastewater permit in 2015, we were given a chloride limit. When a water softener goes into regeneration mode, the salt water (chlorides) used to regenerate the softener is discharged into the city’s wastewater system. The drinking water in St. Francis is around 13 grains per gallon. Adjusting your softeners accordingly will help in keeping chloride levels down.

Did you know?

When reporting a street light out or a street light that is stuck on, you can do so through Connexus Energy at 763-323-2650 (regular hours) or 763-323-2608 (after hours).

They will ask you for the following information:

- The intersection of where the light pole is; even better if you can give Connexus Energy the closest address to the light pole.
- They will ask you if you can give them a pole number. This is typically a four-digit number on a silver tag about five to six feet off the ground.

Reporting lights that are out, broken or stuck on is an important public safety practice and can be very helpful to all those who live in or drive through our beautiful city.
Grilling safety

With spring drawing near and warmer weather just around the corner, we will all soon be out of our winter slumber to enjoy a little bit more of the great outdoors. The St. Francis Fire Department hopes that all of you enjoy the spring time as much as we do. We would like to remind you that when we change our clocks in March to also check the batteries on your smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors. The number one way you can keep you and your family safe from fires is to ensure your smoke alarms and CO alarms are in good working condition.

As the snow and ice begin to melt we all look forward to putting those crock pots away and firing up the grills and smokers. The National Fire Protection Association and St. Francis Fire Department would like to remind you to grill safe. Here are tips to follow this grilling season:

Safety Tips

➢-Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors
➢-The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches
➢-Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area
➢-Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill
➢-Never leave your grill unattended
➢-Always make sure your gas grill lid is open before lighting

Charcoal Grills

There are several ways to get charcoal ready to use. Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as a fuel. If you use a starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire. Keep charcoal fluid out of the reach of children and away from heat sources. There are also electric charcoal starters, which do not use fire. Be sure to use an extension cord for outdoor use. When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container.

Propane Grills

Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year.

Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose. A propane leak will release bubbles. If your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test and there is no flame, turn off both the gas tank and the grill. If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department. If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not move the grill. If the flame goes out, turn the grill and gas off and wait at least five minutes before re-lighting it.

Source: NFPA Public Education Division
AARP free income tax assistance

This free income tax assistance is for taxpayers with low and middle income and persons with disabilities, with special attention to those 60 years and older. E-Filing is between February 1 and April 17. Filing deadline is Tuesday, April 17.

Anoka Senior Center
1500 South Sixth Avenue, Anoka
Mondays, 8:30-11:30 a.m. Open April 16

Anoka County Historical Society
2135 3rd Avenue N, Anoka
Saturdays, 10:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Anoka County Northtown Library
711 County Road 10 NE, Blaine
Sundays, 1:00-4:00 p.m., closed Easter April 1

Blaine Human Services Building
1201 89th Avenue NE, Blaine
Fridays, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Blaine Mary Ann Young Senior Center
9150 Central Ave NE, Blaine
Mondays Appointments only, call 763-786-9375, open April 16

Columbia Heights Senior Center
Murzyn Hall, 530 Mill Street
Columbia Heights
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00 a.m.-Noon open April 17

Coon Rapids Senior Center
11155 Robinson Drive NW, Coon Rapids,
Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 8:30 a.m.-Noon Appointments only, call 763-767-6473

Fridley Senior Center
6085 7th Street NE, Fridley
Wednesday 9:00 a.m.-Noon, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Fridley Unitarian Church
6565 Oakley Drive NE, Fridley

Property Tax & Rent Credit Refunds

Available to senior citizens and people with disabilities. Forms are prepared by trained Anoka County RSVP Volunteers, Retired Senior and Volunteer Program.

Wednesday, May 9 • 1:00-3:00 p.m.
St. Francis City Hall, 23340 Cree Street
You will need to provide the following information:
2017 Federal Form 1040 (if you filed one)
OR records showing your 2017 total household income, such as:
• Nontaxable Social Security
• Deduction for payments made to an IRA, Keogh, SEP
• Total Welfare received MFIP, MSA, SSI, GA and GRH
• Additional income; 401(k) deferred compensation
• Homeowners: Copy of your 2018 real estate tax statement. Homeowners to receive by end of March
• Renters: Certificate of Rent Paid (CRP) Renters to receive form by January 31
The State of Minnesota will mail tax credit refund checks to renters in mid-August and to homeowners in late September.
You may also prepare the form yourself online for free at www.revenue.state.mn.us

Attend a property and mobile home tax training session

Thursday, March 22 or April 19
12:30-4:00 p.m. at The Northtown Library

Volunteers are needed to prepare property tax returns for seniors and low income and disadvantaged people in Anoka County. The Tax Aide program, sponsored by AARP Foundation, the IRS and the Minnesota Department of Revenue, helps prepare rent credit and property tax returns beginning mid-April through July.
Morning and afternoon shifts of three to four hours are available.

Volunteers are needed at various locations throughout Anoka County. A volunteer leader will staff each event to offer you support and assistance as needed. Equipment and materials are provided and mileage is reimbursed. No previous tax experience is necessary but training is required. Volunteers must also pass a background check. To register for one of the sessions above, call Tricia at 763-324-1661.

Anoka County RSVP
Human Service Center – Rum River Building #9, 3300 4th Avenue N, Anoka
www.anokacounty.us/725/Retired-Senior- Volunteer-Program

Hosting an event?

Are you hosting a family event? Do you need a gathering space for a club meeting? What about starting an annual kickball tournament? The City of St. Francis has many options for hosting your upcoming events!

The city’s Community Park has a large picnic shelter with many picnic tables and amenities nearby. We also have two baseball fields that come with bases or you can bring your own if you choose. At our Community Center, we have tables with chairs for your business or club meetings. We have a warming house that has been used in the past for club meetings and garage sales. The rental also includes a parking lot. Do I hear wedding bells? In Woodbury Park, the gazebo is a beautiful setting for an intimate wedding with a flowing fountain nearby and flowers blooming all around.

St. Francis has many options for your next event. We like to encourage residents to recycle at all events. Call our Recycling Coordinator about how to obtain organics recycling containers, if you’re interested, at your upcoming event. Call city hall for pricing and availability at 763-753-2630.
Thank You to All Annual Dinner Sponsors and Contributors

These donors and ALL who attended this year's Annual Dinner helped make the event a great success. Proceeds will go toward activities and projects that support the Chamber’s mission of creating a growing, healthy business environment and community as a whole.

Anoka Ramsey Comm. College
Casey’s General Store
Connexus Energy
Dairy Queen / Orange Julius
Emagine Theatres - East Bethel
Goldstar Kennels
Grand Casino
Highland Money Management
Isanti Subway

Ace Solid Waste, Inc.
Advanced Automotive Care
Advanced Roofing & Siding, Inc.
American Family Insurance - Mary Dresch
Anoka Hennepin Credit Union
Anoka Ramsey Community College
Anytime Fitness
Barra, Guzy & Steffan, LTD
Beef ’O’ Brady’s
Bolton and Menk, Inc.
BTO Signs
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Casey’s General Store
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Dairy Queen/Orange Julius
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ECM Publishers, Inc.
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Nicholas Builders LLC
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North Anoka Plumbing, Inc.
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Nowthen Plumbing
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Re/Max Results - Larry D. Anderson
Re/Max Results - Michelle Anderson
Rum River Tree Farm
Sara Sauer C.P.A., LLC
Skyline Graphics
St. Francis Bottle Shop
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St. Francis Dental Care, P.A.
St. Francis Fire Department
St. Francis Insurance Agency, Inc.
St. Francis Lions
St. Francis Physical Therapy
St. Francis True Value Hardware
St. Francis United Methodist Church
St. Francis Veterinary Clinic
Steve’s Collision
Subway - Oak Grove
Subway - St. Francis
T & W Adventures
T. Bryce & Associates, Inc.
TC Net-Works, Inc.
That Other Thrift Store
The Bridge
The Oaks of Lake George
The Ponds Golf Course & Restaurant
The Refuge Golf Club & Restaurant
Trinity Lutheran Church & School
Village Bank
Virtual Reality Arcade

Monthly Board Meetings
3rd Wednesday each month
11:00am at the St. Francis Community Center

Monthly Networking Breakfa...
City Council Meetings
First and third Monday each month at 6:00 p.m. (If a holiday, the meeting will be Tuesday.)

Planning Commission Meetings
Third Wednesday each month at 7:00 p.m.

St. Francis Area Schools
Central Services Center
4115 Ambassador Blvd NW
Agendas and minutes online: www.stfrancismn.org

Events Calendar

March 17  St. Francis Lions Club Easter Bingo at St. Francis American Legion, 6:30 p.m.
March 24  St. Francis Lions & Lioness Easter Egg Hunt at Community Park, 10:00 a.m.
April 12  Severe Weather Awareness—sirens will sound at 1:45 p.m. & 6:45 p.m.
April 28  National Prescription Drug Take Back Day 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at Goodrich Pharmacy and always at the St. Francis Police Department
April 28  Spring Recycling Day at 4020 St. Francis Blvd. NW, 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
May 5    Pet Clinic at new location, St. Francis Police Department, 9:00 a.m.-Noon
May 9    Property Tax Refund Preparation at St. Francis Community Center, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
May 22-June 5  Filing period for St. Francis mayor and council members (2)
  May 28  Memorial Day — City Offices Closed
  May 29  St. Francis Police Department 2nd Annual Bike Rodeo at 4058 St. Francis Blvd. NW, 5:00-7:00 p.m.
       June 1  St. Francis Area Schools Last Day of School
       June 8-10  Pioneer Days

For a full list of events—visit the city’s website www.stfrancismn.org

City Council Meetings
First and third Monday each month at 6:00 p.m. (If a holiday, the meeting will be Tuesday.)

Planning Commission Meetings
Third Wednesday each month at 7:00 p.m.

St. Francis Area Schools Central Services Center
4115 Ambassador Blvd NW

Agendas and minutes online: www.stfrancismn.org

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!
Gopher State One Call
Local: 651-454-0002
Toll Free: 1-800-252-1166