



City of
St. Francis

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2021 | VOL. 6, NO. 1

Did you know?

It is illegal to place “free” items on the side of the road in hopes that someone else will take ownership of it.

In these strange times of dealing with life during COVID-19, people think it is very important to share what we can and with whom we can. Life has taken its twists and turns in the last year, but we are still ultimately responsible for our items, stuff, collectibles, and treasures that are now not usable. The City knows residents are trying to help others by leaving free things on the side of a road for others to utilize, but have you thought about who remains responsible for those items if no one takes them? What tends to happen is that the closest landowner will end up being accountable for the items or have to themselves pay to have them removed. Please think twice before leaving things for free on the side of the road.

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Message from your Mayor

This winter has not been too bad compared to others, but it’s nice to see it staying light out later and getting closer to the end.

The city hall continues to be on lockdown, but you can still drop off any bills, permit applications, etc., in our dropbox on the south side of the building. If you have any questions or concerns, you can call city hall and leave a message. A staff member will return your phone call in a timely fashion.

If you haven’t already, check out the city’s website as there have been some upgrades to it. You will see the seven tabs on the right side of the page have been reduced to five at the bottom of the page. The background pictures are now set to the four seasons, i.e., seasonal adjusted. Also, you will see a spotlight window to the left of the page. This window is for highlighting events and issues the city wants you to be aware of, just click on the item to get more information.

The city administrator is setting up a meeting with the Minnesota Department of Transportation commissioner, deputy commissioner, and city council to discuss changes that will make Highway 47 safer and benefit our commercial businesses. The meeting will be held on Zoom due to the pandemic. As an in-person meeting would not occur until June or July at the earliest, the council and staff thought that would be too late and opted for an earlier date. I have stated before the city would rather see four stoplights on Highway 47 versus four roundabouts. But a compromise of two roundabouts and two stoplights would be acceptable. We hope that MnDOT will be flexible and compromise on this important highway in our city. We will keep you updated.

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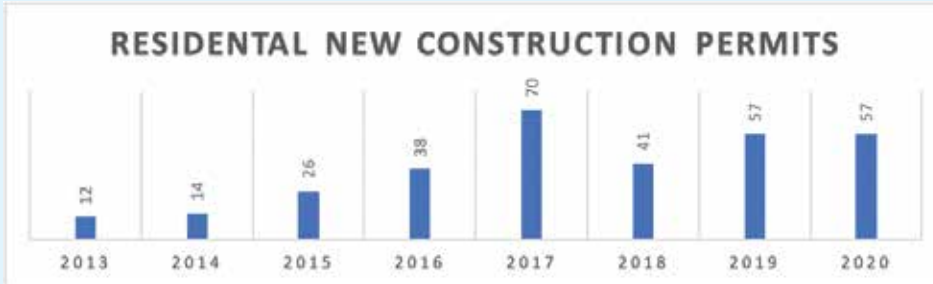
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | PAGE 7

Visit us on social media!



A Great Place to Call Home

St. Francis continues to welcome new families building homes on urban and rural residential properties. New construction continues to be strong in the City. According to the Saint Paul Areas Association of Realtors St. Francis, is identified as one of the top areas for new construction in the market. Below is a look at the history of new single-family homes in St. Francis.



Code Change in 2021

St. Francis adopted new Zoning and Subdivision codes in an effort to make the process of using the codes user-friendly and welcoming new uses into the area. Changes in Zoning codes included updating the sections and basic layout to make codes easier to understand. Updates to base districts were done to eliminate duplication and reflect the approved Comprehensive Plan. New uses were also added to reflect trends such as a rural event center, short-term rentals, and district standards to support the residents' request to make Bridge Street the downtown center of our City.

Planning Commission Opportunity

Are you interested in leading the City through its vision and goals? Do you want to be part of the city growth, land use, and future projects? Planning Commission members are needed for a term ending June 1 and December 31. The Commission meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings generally last one to two hours, and members are compensated \$20 a meeting. Be part of the future planning of the City. For more information, visit the City website www.stfrancismn.org for an application or email kthunstrom@stfrancismn.org.

Charter Commission Members

The City of St. Francis is looking for residents who are interested in participating in the governance of their community by serving on the Charter Commission. The City of St. Francis operates as a Home Rule Charter City. A Home Rule Charter is similar to a local constitution, which studies the local charter and government in order to propose amendments to the City Charter.

Terms of the Charter Commission are four years in length as established by Minnesota Statutes 410.05 subd.2. Meetings are held on an as needed basis; however, state law requires at least one meeting per year. If you are interested in participating on the Charter Commission, visit our website at www.stfrancismn.org/bc-cc for an application.

Did you know?

Continued from page 1

A friendly reminder, here is what St. Francis City Code 7-2-2. - Obstructions in Streets is:

- A. **Obstructions.** It is a misdemeanor for any person to place, deposit, display or offer for sale, any fence, goods or other obstructions upon, over, across or under any street without first having obtained a written permit from the Council, and then only in compliance in all respects with the terms and conditions of such permit, and taking precautionary measures for the protection of the public. An electrical cord or device of any kind is hereby included, but not by way of limitation, within the definition of an obstruction.
- C. **Dumping in Streets.** It is a misdemeanor for any person to throw or deposit in any street any nails, dirt, glass or glassware, cans, discarded cloth or clothing, metal scraps, garbage, leaves, grass or tree limbs, paper or paper products, shreds or rubbish, oil, grease or other petroleum products, or to empty any water containing salt or other petroleum products, or to empty any water containing any other injurious chemical thereon. It is a violation of this Section to haul any such material, inadequately enclosed or covered, thereby permitting the same to fall upon streets. It is also a violation of this Section to place or store any building materials or waste resulting from building construction or demolition on any street without first having obtained a written permit from the City.

Outdoor Recreation and Rental Facility Opportunities

Spring is finally here, and that brings outdoor recreation opportunities within our City Parks. Are you in charge of organizing your family's reunion and need ample outdoor space to accommodate them? Do you have a sports team that needs a baseball/softball field to rent for the summer? Are you thinking about getting married this year? We have many parks with various amenities to meet your needs.



On Sunday, March 14, we change our clocks and spring ahead one hour. I know it's silly, and more importantly, we all lose a precious hour of sleep. But all is not lost. We would like to remind you that it is a great time to check your smoke detectors when you change your clocks in the spring and fall—functioning smoke detectors in your home may be the single most important life safety tool for you and your family in the event of a fire.

Mayor

Continued from page 1

As I mentioned in the previous newsletter, the city plans to contract more food trucks throughout the summer. Stay tuned to the new spotlight window on the city website and the city Facebook page for dates, times, and places.

I am sure that everyone is tired of wearing masks and social distancing, but it is essential to continue to do so until the vaccines become readily available. Once this disease is finally managed, we will be able to get back to some normalcy in our daily lives.

Enjoy the spring. Stay safe!
Regards,
Mayor Feldman



For example, Community Park has a large outdoor shelter with many picnic tables, flushable toilets, and other amenities nearby to complement this rental. We also

have two baseball/softball fields equipped with bases, or if you prefer, you can bring your own. The City's warming house has been used for club meetings and garage sales in the past; the rental also includes a parking lot. All COVID-19 safety protocols will be in place; there may be some restrictions in closed-in spaces. Woodbury Park's gazebo is a spectacular setting for an intimate wedding with blooming flowers all around it and a beautiful flowing fountain nearby to set the perfect atmosphere for your special day. The City of St. Francis has many options for your next event.

For questions and/or to make reservations for parks, please call 763-233-5200. To reserve our Community Center, contact City Hall at 763-753-2630.

Recycling Corner

Recycling – Holiday Lights and Used Cell Phone Collection

St. Francis Public Works collects your old, used, broken, or worn-out cell phones and holiday lights for proper recycling every year. These items are not recycled through your curbside recycling carts. Instead, they are usually thrown in the trash. Public Works will collect your used lights and cell phones and properly recycle them at a local recycling facility. You can drop off your holiday lights and cell phones at the Police and Public Works Facility during our regular hours 6:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you have any recycling questions or concerns, please call Public Works at 763-233-5200.

Recycling Dates to Remember!

Spring Recycle Event

April 24

8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

4020 St. Francis Boulevard NW
St. Francis, MN 55070

Lepage and Sons Events

July 17, September 18

and **November 20**

8:00 a.m.-Noon

23602 University Avenue NW
Bethel, MN 55005

Free Leaf and Paper Shredding

October 30

8:00 a.m.-Noon

4020 St. Francis Boulevard NW
St. Francis MN 55070

Rain Gardens

Your Personal Contribution to Cleaner Water

In many parts of the country, homeowners are catching on to rain gardens – landscaped areas planted to wildflowers and other native vegetation that soak up rainwater, mainly from the roof of a house or other building. The rain garden fills with a few inches of water after a storm, and the water slowly filters into the ground rather than running off to a storm drain. Compared to a conventional patch of lawn, a rain garden allows about 30 percent more water to soak into the ground.



Why are rain gardens important? As cities and suburbs grow and replace forests and agricultural land, increased stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces becomes a problem. Stormwater runoff from developed areas increases flooding, carries pollutants from streets, parking lots, and even lawns into local streams and lakes; and leads to costly municipal improvements in stormwater treatment structures.

By reducing stormwater runoff, rain gardens can be a valuable part of changing these trends. While an individual rain garden may seem like a small thing, collectively, they produce substantial neighborhood and community environmental benefits. Rain gardens work for us in several ways:

- Increasing the amount of water that filters into the ground, which recharges local and regional aquifers;
- Helping protect communities from flooding and drainage problems;
- Helping protect streams and lakes from pollutants carried by urban stormwater – lawn fertilizers and pesticides, oil and other fluids leak from cars, and numerous harmful substances that wash off roofs and

paved areas;

- Enhancing the beauty of yards and neighborhoods;
- By providing valuable habitat for birds, butterflies, and many beneficial insects.

Rain garden frequently asked questions:

Does a rain garden form a pond? – No. The rainwater will soak in, so the rain garden is dry between rainfalls. (Note: some rain gardens can be designed to include a permanent pond, but that type of rain garden is

not addressed in this publication).

Are they breeding grounds for mosquitoes? – No. Mosquitoes need seven to 12 days to lay and hatch eggs, and standing water in the rain garden will last for a few hours after most storms. Mosquitoes are more likely to lay eggs in birdbaths, storm sewers, and lawns than in a sunny rain garden. Also, rain gardens attract dragonflies, which eat mosquitoes!

Do they require a lot of maintenance? – Rain gardens can be maintained with little effort after the plants are established. Some weeding and watering will be needed in the first two years, and perhaps some thinning in later years as the plants mature.

Is a rain garden expensive? – It doesn't have to be. A family and a few friends can provide the labor. The main cost will be purchasing the plants, and even this cost can be minimized by using some native plants that might already exist in the yard or a neighbor's yard.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Rain Gardens. A How-to Manual for Homeowners. Source: https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/shoreland/raingardenmanual.pdf

Chlorides in Wastewater

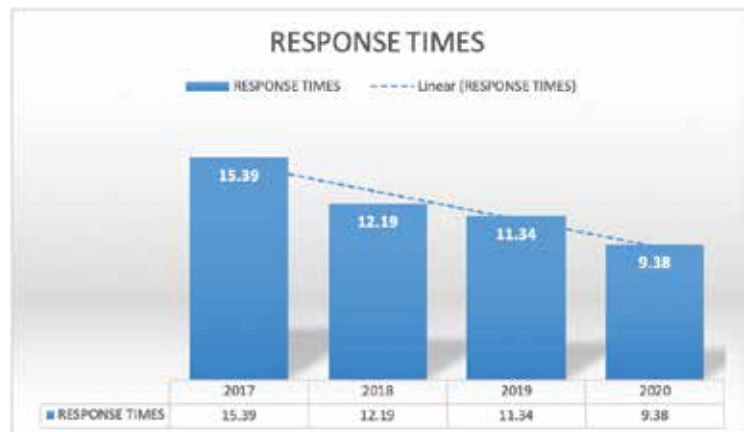
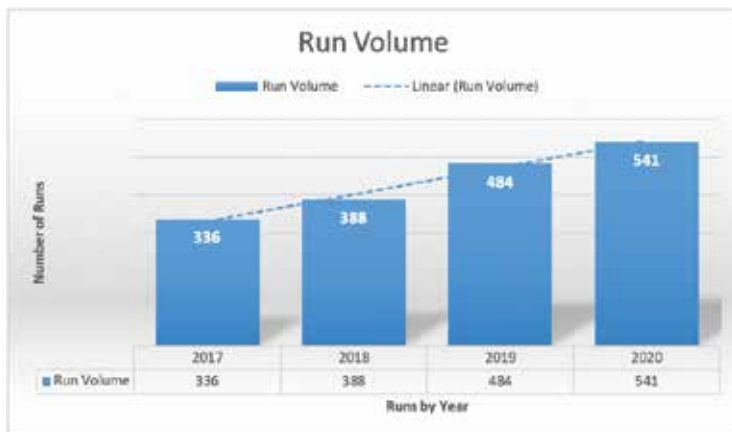
Public Works staff would like to remind residents to make sure their water softeners are operating efficiently. As many of you know, when the MPCA renewed our wastewater permit in 2015 and will be finalizing it again here in 2021, we were given a chloride limit; this is where we need your assistance. The leading cause of high chlorides in wastewater is from water softeners. When a water softener goes into regeneration mode, the saltwater (chlorides) used to regenerate the softener is discharged into the City's wastewater system. High chloride levels can harm the ecosystem of streams, rivers, and lakes. The drinking water in St. Francis is around 13 grains per gallon. Adjusting your softeners accordingly will help keep chloride levels down.

St. Francis Fire Department call volume and response time

As the City of St. Francis continues to grow and thrive, we see the demand for fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) grow in kind. Several factors influence the pattern of run volume growth. The first is as the city's population grows, demand for all services grows. Secondly, with increasing demand for service across the county, the impact of ambulance response times increases as well. The fire department is trained to Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) level and provides several advanced level interventions. When an ambulance is delayed due to its dispatch location, first responders are added to a call to offset an ambulance's response delay. Lastly, during the pandemic, the fire department implemented a new response protocol, where the fire department was dispatched to all medical calls within the city. This response model is by far the most appropriate in today's

environment, specifically when it comes to cost and effectiveness, which we anticipate continuing into the future.

Over the past four years, the fire department has put in specific measures to reduce our response times for emergencies within the city. We have built-in standards for a response (each member must make 20 percent of the calls within a quarter). The department provided more structure to the duty officer program and hired a full-time fire chief. Additionally, we have added staff from 18 active firefighters in 2017 to 22 active firefighters in 2020. Lastly, the addition of Quick Response Vehicles (two Dodge Journeys and a Chevrolet Tahoe) have enabled command staff to respond to the scene quickly and initiate patient care, interventions or develop an effective fire ground strategy for responding firefighters.



Tree Trimming Tips

The late dormant season is best for most pruning. Pruning in late winter leaves fresh wounds exposed for only a short length of time. It's easier to make pruning decisions without leaves obscuring plant branch structure. Pruning at the proper time can avoid certain diseases and physical problems.

Ash Trees

Avoid trimming ash trees from **May 1 to August 31**.

Elm Trees

Avoid trimming elm trees from **early April to late July**.

Maple Trees

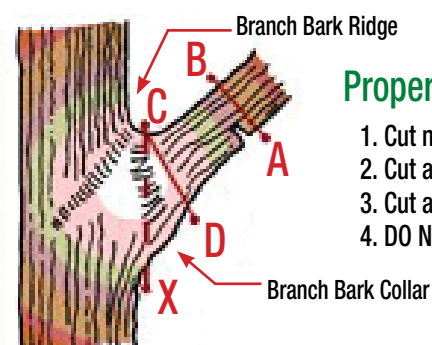
Maple trees can be cut anytime. Be sure to remember maple trees will "bleed," but it is not a harmful effect on the tree. They can bleed onto parked cars and be cosmetically unpleasant to look at. To avoid bleeding, trim during mid-summer or late fall.

Oak Trees

Do not prune oak trees during April, May, or June.

Not pruning will prevent the spread of Oak Wilt. If you need to prune during these times, apply wound dressing to mask the scent of fresh-cut wood that attracts the disease-carrying beetles.

Trim dead or diseased branches on all trees at any time of the year. Trimming will not harm the tree but will help the tree give nutrients to its growing branches. It is not necessary to spray the cuts of dead branches with wound dressing. Remember to trim just outside the "collar" of the tree as it will heal and close the wound faster.



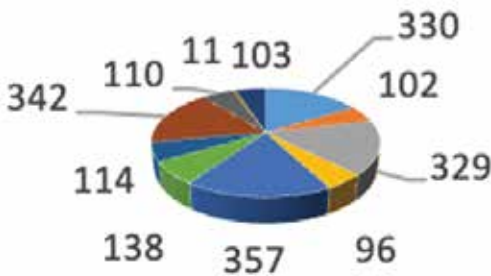
Proper Pruning Principles

1. Cut notch A
2. Cut along line A-B
3. Cut along line C-D
4. DO NOT cut along C-X

2020 Total Calls for Service for the St. Francis Police Department: 6,246

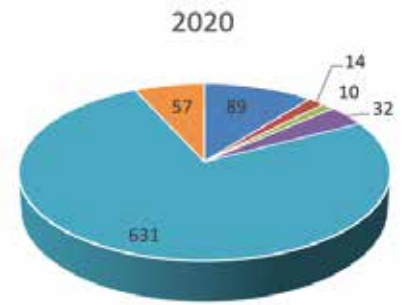
The year 2020 was unique, and with it came the day-to-day challenges that tested society and the police department. With the COVID-19 pandemic, civil unrest, and times of uncertainty, the police department faced challenges that were new to everyone. Fortunately, the police department has a resilient staff who met all challenges head-on. Despite the occasional setback, the team pressed on and continued to serve the St. Francis community without hesitation. St. Francis residents can be confident that their police department will be there in a time of need and will continue to focus on the department's core values of integrity, respect, courage, and trust.

In 2020, self-initiated activities such as traffic enforcement and responding to calls for service, officers generated 6,246 incidents. Proactive policing, community service, and theft prevention remain a top priority for patrol staff. Officers continue to focus on theft prevention through various methods, including alerting residents to open garage doors during overnight hours. Officers contacted 102 residents who left their garage doors open during the overnight hours to prevent theft opportunities.



2020

- Suspicious Activity
- Medicals
- Domestic Situations
- Open Door
- Alarms
- Juvenile Activity
- House Checks
- Vehicle Accidents
- Civil Issues
- Vehicle Lockouts
- Agency Assists



2020

- Thefts
- Burglaries
- Assaults
- DWI's
- Citations
- Fraud
- Part 1 & 2
- Part 3,4 & 5
- Traffic Stops
- Investigations
- Citations

St. Francis Police Department 2021 Spring Events

Winning with Cops Drive-In Movie Night

Watch the Winning with Cops Facebook page for more details as they become available.

Citizens Academy

Check the City of St. Francis webpage and the Police Department's Facebook page for further details. April 14, 21, 28, May 5, 12, 19, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

April 12-16

Severe Weather Awareness Week

Statewide Severe Weather Awareness Week is an opportunity to increase awareness and response to severe weather hazards. It is also an opportunity to test your household communication methods as if it were an actual situation.

During Severe Weather Awareness Week, there will be a statewide tornado drill on Thursday, April 15. Emergency sirens will sound at 1:45 p.m. and 6:45 p.m.



Saturday, April 24 – Drug Take Back Day

The St. Francis Police Department always has a dropbox for safe disposal of prescription drugs available in the lobby during regular lobby hours, Monday-Friday, 6:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. In 2020, 220 pounds of unwanted drugs were collected.



Saturday, May 1 • 9:00 a.m. – Dog Clinic

This is a tentative date and time, please check with City's website and Police Department's Facebook page for updated information. The clinic will be held at the St. Francis Police Department, 4058 St. Francis Boulevard NW.

Tuesday, June 1 – Bike Rodeo

The St. Francis Police Department's 5th Annual Bike Rodeo held in the department's parking lot. Highlights are safety skills course and bicycle inspections. Check the department's Facebook page for more details.



St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce

PO Box 655
St. Francis, MN 55070

763-438-5163
chamber@stfrancischamber.org
www.stfrancischamber.org

The St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce serves the needs of its membership in working toward the common goal of a growing, healthy business environment and community as a whole.

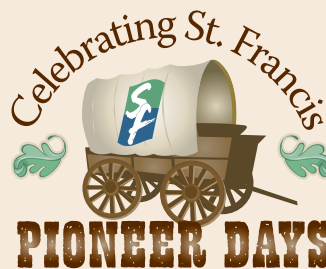
Chamber Members

Ace Solid Waste, Inc.
Advanced Automotive Care, Inc.
Anoka Hennepin Credit Union
Anoka Ramsey Community College
Barna, Guzy & Steffen, LTD
BTO Signs
Casey's General Store
City of St. Francis
Collision 2000
Connexus Energy
King's County Market
Dairy Queen Orange Julius
Dawn Tschumper – American Family Insurance
ECM Publishers, Inc.
Edward Jones Investments
Elaine M. Mustari, CPA, LLC
Freedom Strategy Group
G and H Auto LLC
Gold Star Kennels
Goodrich Pharmacy
Hakanson Anderson
Hidden Haven Golf Club
Highland Money Management, Inc.
Kwik Trip
Lakeside Cabinets and Woodworking
Lee Carlson Center for Mental Health & Well-Being
Mansettis Pizza and Pasta
McDonald's Minuteman Press
Ham Lake
North Anoka County Emergency Foodshelf

North Central Insurance Agency
Northland Screw Products, Inc.
Northstar Outdoors
Opp Family Chiropractic, P.A.
Patriot Lanes Bar & Grill
RE/MAX Results Michelle Anderson
Rum River Construction Consultants
Rum River Tree Farm
Sara Sauer, CPA, LLC
St. Francis Area Schools
St. Francis Collision & Glass
St. Francis Dental Care
St. Francis Lions Club
St. Francis Physical Therapy

St. Francis True Value Hardware
St. Francis United Methodist Church
St. Francis Veterinary Clinic
Steve's Collision
Subway – St. Francis
T. Bryce & Associates, Inc.
TC Net-Works, Inc.
The Bridge Church
The Oaks of Lake George
The Ponds Golf Course & Restaurant
The Refuge Golf Club & Restaurant
Trinity Lutheran Church & School
Village Bank

We support and encourage you to shop all of our local businesses.



Facebook: St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce
Pioneer Days also has a page that will be shared.

The St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce continues to monitor the restrictions relative to COVID-19 and gatherings within our state. With this, we have not yet made any final decision as to Pioneer Days 2021.

Please watch the Chamber Facebook page for the latest update, as that is where news will be posted as soon as we know. We appreciate your patience and diligence in supporting our local business community during these trying times.

#inthistgether



23340 Cree Street NW
St. Francis, MN 55070

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 8
St. Francis, MN
55070

ECRWSS POSTAL PATRON

Events Calendar

Visit the City's website www.stfrancismn.org for calendar updates during COVID-19 restrictions.



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THE FLOW!**

www.knowtheflow.us



**CALL BEFORE
YOU DIG!**

Gopher State One Call
Local: 651-454-0002
Toll Free: 1-800-252-1166
www.gopherstateonecall.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.
Meetings are held at

St. Francis Area Schools District Office
4115 Ambassador Boulevard NW

Agendas and minutes online: www.stfrancismn.org

City Hall Location

23340 Cree Street NW
St. Francis, MN 55070

Hours Monday-Thursday 7:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Contact Us city@stfrancismn.org 763-753-2630
Website www.stfrancismn.org

City Council

Mayor Steve Feldman 763-235-2310
Councilmember Sarah Udvig 763-235-2311
Councilmember Robert Bauer 763-235-2312
Councilmember Kevin Robinson 763-235-2313
Councilmember Joe Muehlbauer 763-235-2314