

Woodbury City Update

January 2007 • Volume 8, No. 1

Council appoints 12 citizens to advisory boards

Twelve residents were appointed to Woodbury advisory commissions by the City Council in December. Those appointed serve on a volunteer basis. Commission terms are for three years, unless noted otherwise.

Twenty-nine citizens applied for the advisory board vacancies this fall, and Council members interviewed candidates on Nov. 29 and Dec. 2. According to Mayor Bill Hargis, the Council once again was impressed with the number of applicants and their qualifications.

"Woodbury has been very fortunate in attracting candidates who have professional or personal experience relevant to the various advisory boards," Hargis said. "In addition, our residents are committed to serving their community."

The advisory groups and those appointed include:

Economic Development Authority: Erik Knutson. The EDA studies and analyzes economic development needs of the city and implements programs to attract business. The EDA also administers several financial incentive programs. EDA members serve six-year terms.

Economic Development Commission: Russ Plunkett, Jeff Schlageter, and Matthew Wohlman. The commission acts as a coordinating body and resource agency for economic development matters. Commission meetings

are held quarterly; committee work is conducted between meetings.

Environmental Advisory Commission: Jacqueline Hoffsten and Karen Sauro (reappointed) and Howard Markus. This commission advises the City Council on matters relevant to sustainability in Woodbury. Areas of focus include solid waste and recycling, air quality, water quality, energy, and preservation of natural resources.

Parks and Recreation Commission: Sunday Olayinka (reappointed), Dave Peterson and Lilly Riordan. The commission works to protect natural resources, studies park site planning, and reviews recreation programs. It makes recommendations relating to the location of parks and the layout of amenities within city parks.

Planning Commission: Jerry Anderson and Frederick Gillespie. The Planning Commission is responsible for all questions relating to planning, zoning and sign regulations. It reviews all applications for development and recommends approval or denial based on conformance with the comprehensive plan and zoning regulations.

In addition to the commission appointments, Council members also named five to subcommittees. They are: Richard Anderson,

continued page 2

City Council workshops changing to Wednesdays

Beginning in 2007, City Council workshop meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. The new schedule is a change from the long-standing practice of holding workshops on the Tuesday following the second Wednesday of the month.

"The Council discussed several options regarding the workshop schedule and determined that moving the workshop to Wednesday would bring more consistency with the regular Council meetings, which take place on the second and fourth Wednesdays," said City Administrator Clint Gridley. "This change will establish Wednesday as the regular day for Council meetings and workshops."

Workshop meetings are for discussion only and no official City Council action is taken unless the meeting is also called as a special meeting. Workshops are public meetings and those interested in agenda items are invited to attend. Workshops are held in the Council Chambers at City Hall, and agendas are posted on the Woodbury Web site at www.ci.woodbury.mn.us.

continued page 2

Inside this Issue



Follow the rules for snowmobiles

Snowmobile operators need to be aware of the regulations that govern snowmobile use in Woodbury. *Page 3.*



Get caught recycling

Eleven lucky residents won \$50 because they got caught recycling in 2006. Maybe you're next? *Page 3.*



Snow plow season

Snow plow operators need help from residents to expedite the snow removal process. *Page 4.*

Council Perspective

by Mayor Bill Hargis

Community survey influences Council decisions

In February, some Woodbury residents will be contacted by Decision Resources, a Minneapolis polling firm, and asked to participate in our 2007 community survey. Through the survey, 400 randomly-selected residents will rate city services and the quality of life in Woodbury. They also will give their opinions about some specific issues and potential projects.

The telephone poll will closely follow the format and content of surveys taken every two years since 1993. As a result, the survey provides valuable feedback to the City Council about ongoing services. We use the data collected to determine whether we're meeting citizens' expectations and where we need to make improvements.

Because we gain so much helpful information from the survey, the Council decided a few years ago to set aside the funds to conduct community surveys on a biennial basis. This has allowed us to track our performance over time and make adjustments in some areas.

For example, back in 1997 about a fourth of survey respondents were critical of the city's snow plowing efforts, and 21 percent rated plowing of trails as "only fair" or "poor." After reviewing the survey results, the City Council authorized the purchase of a tractor, snow blower and snow blade that are designed specifically for removing large accumulations of snow from trails.

The Council also uses the survey as a planning tool. After discussing the survey results in March, the City Council will hold strategic planning sessions to identify issues that deserve a more detailed approach than our day-to-day business operations generally allow. As part of identifying these strategic issues, we look at how well the community is doing in a number of areas that are deemed vital to the success of the city. Many of the measures used to track the city's performance in these areas are based on the citizen opinions expressed in the survey.

The City Council recognizes that participating in the survey requires a time commitment from citizens. The 2005 survey, for example, contained 138 questions. But we hope that those receiving a call from Decision Resources in February will be willing to take the time and participate. Your input is valued and it truly does impact the City Council's decisions.

Comprehensive plan update

In addition to the Council's strategic planning early in 2007, another important and longer-term planning effort that will get under way this year is the update to Woodbury's comprehensive plan. The updated plan, which will guide development of our city through the year 2030, must be submitted to the Metropolitan Council by the end of 2008.

The City Council will be appointing a citizens task force, led by former Economic Development Commission chair Mike Barrett, to work with city staff and consultants on this important project. The update will contain all the essential components of a comprehensive plan, such as a land use plan that incorporates growth management and phasing; parks, trails and open space chapter; transportation, water, sanitary sewer, and storm water plans.

In addition, the Council has asked staff to add specific elements to address sustainability in our community. Simply put, sustainability involves policies that encourage conservation and preservation of air, water, land, energy, and other natural resources to ensure that future generations will have the resources to meet their needs. In addition, we want to craft a plan that addresses healthy aging, providing senior friendly features in Woodbury as our population ages.

As the comprehensive plan update proceeds, there will be opportunities for public input and involvement, and I hope citizens take advantage of these and become engaged in creating a vision for our future community.

New Council members

With the community survey, strategic planning, and kick-off of the comprehensive plan update, 2007 is shaping up to be a busy, productive year. Our two new City Council members, Julie Ohs and Mary Giuliani Stephens, have been participating in meetings and workshops since the November election, and they have been receiving agendas with the related background materials that explain agenda issues.

They will be sworn into office at the first meeting in January, joining Paul Rebholz, Amy Scoggins, and me as Woodbury's elected policy-making body. I believe the community has elected a good team. I look forward to serving with our 2007 City Council and expect a great year for our city.

Workshops... from page 1

Because the workshops are not official business meetings, no minutes are prepared. However, a synopsis of the workshop discussions is posted along with the agendas on the city's Web site. Questions about the Council meeting schedule can be directed to the Administration Department at (651) 714-3523.

Citizens...from page 1

EDC Subcommittee, and Laurie Gustafson, Darvia Herold, Jill Hillyer, and Colleen Cooley Schmitz to the Sustainability Subcommittee of the Environmental Advisory Commission.

The Council also selected chairpersons for the commissions. They are: Roger Green, Economic Development Commission; Brett Anderson, Environmental Advisory Commission; Sunday Olayinka, Parks and Recreation Commission; and John Moore, Planning Commission. The Economic Development Authority elects its own chair.

As new appointees are named, the City Council wishes to acknowledge those who have completed their service on city boards and commissions. They include David Bartlett, Larry Mohr, and Julie Ohs, Economic Development Commission; Bill Pieper, Economic Development Authority; Mary Scholz and Nancy Whiting, Parks and Recreation Commission; Jennifer Levitt and Michael McKenzie, Planning Commission; and Adam Stone, Environmental Advisory Commission.

Citizens interested in serving on any of the city's advisory boards may apply for openings annually. Applications generally are accepted in October or early November; commissioners' terms begin in January.

For more information, contact the Administration Department at (651) 714-3523.

Follow the rules for snowmobiles in the city

Snowmobile operators, preparing to hit the trails after a fresh snowfall, need to be aware of the regulations that govern snowmobile use in Woodbury.

“While snowmobiles are permitted in the city, local ordinances restrict their use,” said Public Safety Director William Hering. “Our goal is to protect everyone’s safety and to reduce the number of complaints we receive about snowmobiles.”

In particular, snowmobiles are prohibited in city parks including Bielenberg Sports Center and the Eagle Valley Golf Course. They also are not allowed on walking paths, bike paths, and on school sites.

Snowmobile regulations

In a nutshell, city ordinances stipulate that:

- You may operate a snowmobile only between the hours of 7 a.m. and 11 p.m.
- In residential areas, you may operate a snowmobile on the right hand side of the road while obeying all traffic laws. Snowmobiles are prohibited on sidewalks and boulevards.
- Snowmobiles also are prohibited in parks, on walking paths, bike paths and trails unless specifically designated as a snowmobile trail.
- In Woodbury, snowmobiles generally are ridden in the ditches along county roads and trunk highways. After dark, be sure to ride on the same side of the road and in the same direction as traffic is flowing.
- When using the snowmobile trail maintained by the Washington County Star Trail Association, you must stay within the marked and groomed trail area. For a printable trail map, go to the Star Trail Web site at www.startrail.org. The speed limit for all trail systems in Minnesota is 50 miles per hour.
- Snowmobiles may be operated on any public waterway for which there is public access. (There is no access for snowmobiles on Powers, Colby, Wilmes and Carver Lakes, which are surrounded by city park land.) Please use extreme caution if you ride on frozen lakes.
- You may operate a snowmobile on your own property or on other private property if you have the written and dated permission of the landowner.
- You must be 18 years of age or older to operate a snowmobile on public roads and/or public property. Persons under 18 must



follow Department of Natural Resources restrictions regarding snowmobile use.

- Snowmobile riders born after Dec. 31, 1976, need a snowmobile safety certificate or driver’s license with a snowmobile qualification indicator.

Registration required

All snowmobiles must be registered with the state, even if they are operated only on private property. The Washington County License Bureau, located at 2150 Radio Drive, can assist you with registration. The bureau is open Mondays and Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon.

Questions about snowmobile ordinances in Woodbury may be directed to the Public Safety Department, (651) 714-3600.

Beware of thin ice on Battle Creek Lake

Thin ice and areas of open water may be found all winter on Battle Creek Lake in the northwest part of Woodbury due to an aeration system operated by the city. The aeration system circulates the water in the lake to oxygenate it, keeping the fish alive through the winter.

All neighboring residents and recreational users of Battle Creek Lake should note the location of the aeration system and stay clear of the area posted for thin ice. The system is operated near the end of Edgewood Avenue, adjacent to the public access area in Shawnee Park. The perimeter will be posted with orange and white reflective signs that warn: “Danger – Thin Ice.”

The aeration system was scheduled for start-up the week of Jan. 2. It will remain in operation until the ice is out. For more information, call the Parks Division at (651) 714-3720.



‘Get Caught Recycling’ and get some cash!

Eleven lucky residents won \$50 because they got caught recycling in 2006. City staff checked randomly-selected addresses and verified the residents

had their recyclables on the curb for pickup at 7 a.m. on trash collection day. Prize money was awarded every month except April, when the Tuesday trash/recycling area failed to produce a winner.

“This was a new promotional program for 2006, designed to create some excitement around recycling,” said Brett Anderson, chair of Woodbury’s Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC). “The commission has been pleased with the results and will continue the program in 2007.”

Here’s how “Get Caught Recycling” works:

Each month an address in one of the city’s four trash hauling/recycling districts is randomly selected through a computer sort. City staff checks to see if residents of that address have

recyclables out by 7 a.m. that morning. If they do, they win \$50.

With four trash and recycling pickup days in Woodbury, residents in each area are eligible to win three times during the year. Only one prize is awarded each month, for a potential total of \$600 over the course of the year. The money for the program comes from recycling grant funds distributed by Washington County.

“A few of the 2006 winners were home and found out they had won when staff was out checking. But most learned of their good luck later in the day when they found the ‘Get Caught’ award flyer posted on their home or garage,” said Julie Lehr, environmental education coordinator. “There were winners at single family residences and townhomes.”

Winning addresses for 2006 are listed on the city’s Web site at www.ci.woodbury.mn.us, and 2007 winners will be posted each month. More information on materials you can recycle curbside also is available on the Web site.

Snow plow crews need your help to clear streets efficiently

When Public Works crews hit the streets during winter storms they have a mission: To complete plowing and sanding of all city roads and cul-de-sacs at least once within eight hours.

But snow plow operators encounter many obstacles on their routes. They need help from residents to expedite the snow removal process.

Here's a list of things you should do to minimize plowing-related problems and to assure that city crews do the most effective job possible:

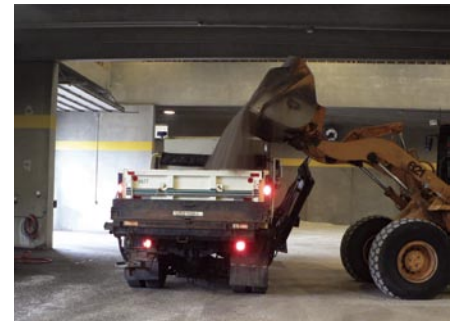
1. Observe Woodbury's winter parking regulations. Don't park your car on the street between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m., or after a two-inch snowfall. This not only ensures more effective plowing, but also helps you avoid a citation.
2. If trash/recycling pickup day coincides with plowing activities, make sure your trash can and recycling bin are well behind the curb or in the driveway so the plow will not hit them.
3. Wait until the plow trucks have completed your street before cleaning the end of your driveway. Snow from the bottom of the driveway should be shoveled to the right as you're facing the street, if possible. This will reduce the amount of snow being placed back into the driveway during the next plowing.
4. If you hire a contractor to plow your driveway, you should remind the contractor about state and local laws that prohibit pushing or placing snow back into or across the street. Doing so creates hazards for drivers and could lead to a citation; it also makes it difficult for the city to keep the streets clean.
5. Mailboxes should be installed and maintained to withstand snow coming off the end of the plow.
6. Clear snow from the mailbox area after each snow plowing. Snow that remains in front of mailboxes will get compacted by post office vehicles and make subsequent plowing less effective. This could cause the postal carriers to refuse to deliver mail.
7. Mark your yard line with flexible stakes or lathe. This will help the plow operators avoid damage to sod near the street.
8. Don't allow children to build snow forts and tunnels in the snow banks adjacent to the curb, or to play near the curbs. It can be difficult for the plow operators to see children.
9. Keep sleds and toys away from the street.
10. "Adopt" a fire hydrant near your home and keep snow shoveled away from it. This will ensure the hydrants are accessible in case of an emergency.

In the average winter, Public Works crews plow city streets about 25 times. Each time they are called out, plow operators clear the equivalent of 597 miles of one-lane roadway. That's about the same as driving from St. Paul to St. Louis! And it doesn't include the 472 cul-de-sacs that also must be cleared.

Questions about plowing procedures should be directed to the Public Works Department at (651) 714-3720.



Mick Peterfeso (wearing vest), public service worker-streets, and Tim Thurmes, assistant streets supervisor, help load one of the city's 17 snow plow trucks at the city's salt/sand storage facility Dec. 20 in preparation for the first snow storm of the season.



A loader is used to weigh the salt/sand mixture before filling the snow plow trucks at the city's salt/sand storage facility prior to a snow storm. The city also uses calcium chloride under certain conditions to help speed up the process of melting snow and ice on high volume roadways such as Tamarack Road and Bielenberg Drive.

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The Woodbury Newsletter is published 10 times per year by the City of Woodbury and mailed to all residents and businesses. Comments are welcomed. Send to: Woodbury City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road, Woodbury, MN 55125-3330. Phone: (651) 714-3500. email: jlehr@ci.woodbury.mn.us

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