



The Bridge—Volume 118

CITY OF ROCKFORD

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

It's been a very busy time at City Hall and Public Works with the mall purchase, bonding for the water and wastewater project in Maplewood Manor and County Road 33, revising our water and sewer rates and moving forward on updating our wastewater treatment plant. This is all in line with our long term goals to maintain our current infrastructure and support development opportunities.

A difficult task we are facing is restructuring our water and sewer rates to align with increasing operating costs and future projects. After hearing the feedback from residents, I am confident our current plan will move us in the right direction. It's important for staff, council and residents to work together in finding a long term solution which is fair for everyone and will pay for operating expenses, reduce future bond debt and keep tax increases as low as possible.

The next step in the rate restructure is to review the current averaging calculation. It must be revised to more accurately reflect sewer usage for those

residents who are not being charged for their actual use. As we plan for a revised averaging calculation and future rate changes, we will discuss various proposals at a future rate workshop with council, staff and residents.

Another project happening is the replacement of the Lion's building at Riverside Park with a picnic shelter, kitchen and restrooms. There will not be any inside seating like our existing building. I am pleased to tell you the city received approval for a DNR grant this week to fund 50% of this project.

There is a lot of activity up at the Rockford Mall since we tore down the old post office building and a new façade is being put in place. This project will be done by year end and is expected to attract even more prospective businesses to the west side of town.

I wish all of you a safe and long Fall!

Renee Hafften

COMPOST SITE

The compost site on Elm Street/CR 33 is scheduled to close on November 3rd until about April 15th, depending on the weather. **You do not need to check out a key at city hall.**

Hours of operation:

Monday—Friday 7:30am-3pm
Wednesday Evenings 4:30pm-dusk
Saturday 8am-noon

Items accepted: grass clippings, leaves and brush no larger than 3" in diameter. All bags used to transport composting must be removed.

NO OTHER DUMPING IS ALLOWED.

**Charter Communication Subscribers:
Channel 12 for the City of Rockford has
been changed to Channel 180**

ROCKFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Prevention Week—October 5-11, 2014



On Halloween **October 31st** beginning at dusk, the Rockford Volunteer Fire Fighters will be driving through Rockford to hand out free glow sticks to the Trick and Treaters.

Rockford Fire Fighter Explorers Post 3053. **Fire & Emergency Service Career Exploring** is open to young men and women ages 14 (and completed the 8th grade) and not yet 21 years old with an interest in learning more about careers in the field of Fire & Emergency Services. For more information contact Ron Harkins at (612) 965-0850 or fill out an application, available at City Hall or on-line (same as the Fire Department Application.)

The Rockford Fire Department Women's Auxiliary is looking for members. If you are interested in joining or helping their organization, please contact Deb Buoy at (612) 760-8755.

2014 GENERAL ELECTION

The local elections in Rockford this year include two council members with each of these positions serving a 4 year term.

If you are a new resident to the City of Rockford, recently turned 18 or have not voted in the last four years, we encourage you to stop by City Hall or go online to www.sos.state.mn.us and complete a Voter Registration Application. You may also register to vote on Election Day, but make sure you have ID such as a current driver's license or MN ID card with your correct address. If you have not changed your driver's license you must have a current utility bill and your license. Last day to register before the General Election is **October 14, 2014.**

Absentee Voting will NOT be available at City Hall to vote in person. Absentee voting begins September 19, 2014 for the General Election. Absentee Ballot Applications are available at City Hall, 6031 Main Street, Rockford or on the City website. Mail the application to the county where you live OR you can vote in person at:

Hennepin County Elections
 Government Center, PSL
 300 South 6th Street
 Minneapolis, MN 55487
 Fax: 612-348-2151 / Phone: 612-348-5151

Wright County Government Center
 Elections Division
 10 2nd Street NW, Room 230
 Buffalo, MN 55313
 Fax: 763-682-7873 / Phone: 763-682-7578

All Rockford residents in Hennepin County and Wright County vote at the Rockford Community Center, 7600 County Road 50 (Rebecca Park Trail), Rockford. The polls will be open at 7:00 am until 8:00 pm.

General Election, Tuesday—November 4, 2014

The **Rockford Senior Citizens** meet the *2nd Monday of each month* at different locations. The cost is \$10 per year. Attend a meeting and find out more about the group. For more information, call Bonnie Pool at (763) 477-4468. Their 2014 schedule:

- October 13th at the Delano Senior Center
- November 10th at Huikko's Bowling Ctr-Buffalo
- December 8th at Walnut Place-Rockford

RIVERWORKS UPDATE

RiverWorks—Community Helping Community!

RiverWorks is looking for volunteers to help at the food shelf and the thrift store. If you are interested, complete a volunteer application: www.riverworksonline.org

Annual Steak Fry & Auction—**Friday, October 24, 2014.**
 100% of the proceeds benefit RiverWorks Community Development.

For more information contact Denise Kesanen (763) 477-9803 or dkesanen@riverworksonline.org



S N O W S E A S O N P A R K I N G

During the period from **November 1st to April 1st** it shall be unlawful for any person to **park a vehicle** on or **within six feet of the roadway** between the hours of **2 a.m. to 6 a.m.** and anytime after there has been ice accumulation, continuous or intermittent snow fall during which there has been **accumulation of two inches or more** of snow on any street until plowed or removed the whole width of the roadway. Vehicles parked in violation of this ordinance will be towed and stored at the owner's expense. **At NO TIME shall a vehicle be parked on ANY street for more than twelve (12) hours.**

SNOW PLOWING—It is unlawful to deposit snow onto **ANY city, township, county or state road.** Doing so is a violation of state statute and you will be fined.



S I D E W A L K S N O W

In the interest of public safety, the City of Rockford reminds you of the importance of keeping your walkways cleared of snow and ice. City Ordinance 901.04 states that all snow and ice must be removed from public sidewalks 24 hours after the snow or other precipitation causing the conditions has ceased to fall.

The throwing or placing of snow or other material in the streets, sidewalks and other public ways is a public nuisance and an ordinance violation.

Call the Sheriff's Department to report vandalism!

ROCKFORD LIBRARY

Located at: **8220 Cedar Street**
(763) 477-4216

Library Hours: Mon 2pm-8pm,
Tues 2pm-8pm, Wed 10am-6pm,
Thurs 3pm-8pm, Fri 3pm-6pm, &
Sat 10am-1pm



HAPPENINGS:

Preschool Story Time on Wednesdays 11:15am-noon
NO Story time on 11/26, 12/25 or 12/31/2014
MHS presents Beer & Brewing in the Land of Sky Blue Waters 10/07 6:30pm-8:00pm
Read to a Dog 10/25 11am-noon
Friends of the Library Book and Bake Sale:
October 13th to October 18th during library hours.
Donations accepted year round!
Holiday Music with Chris Ward 11/22 11am-noon
Library closed: 11/11 for Veteran's Day, 11/26 at 5pm
Eve of Thanksgiving and 11/27 for Thanksgiving Day.
For more happenings—check out their website:
www.griver.org

STORK HOUSE

The Ames-Florida-Stork House is located at:
8131 Bridge Street
763-477-5383 Email: storkhouse@cityofrockford.org
www.rockfordmnhistory.org

Winter Hours: Tuesdays (11am-4pm), Wednesdays &
Thursdays (10am-4pm) and by appointment.

PROGRAMS/EVENTS:

Harvest Celebration 10/11/14 1-4pm Stork House
Ornament Making 11/22/14 10am-1pm Rockford Library
Book Club Dates 10/1, 11/5 and 12/3 at 7pm—for more
information, contact Sara Dahl at 651-503-9706.

Rockford Area Historical Society

MANUFACTURER'S WEEK

The manufacturing sector is the backbone of Minnesota's economy, thanks to its strength, versatility and innovation. It represents one in seven jobs and has the largest total payroll of any business sector. Manufacture's week is celebrated October 20th to October 26th. The City of Rockford will be hosting a breakfast to celebrate **Manufacturer's Week on Thursday, October 23rd** at Shark Industries—6700 Bleck Drive starting at 7:30am.



To receive the newsletter and city updates via email, send your email address to:
audrae@cityofrockford.org

Join the group to keep up-to-date on news and events in the city.

The City of Rockford is on Facebook.



R&G Rockford-Greenfield Area Chamber of Commerce

The R-G Area Chamber of Commerce Morning Gathering is **Thursday, October 9, 2014** (7am) at BANKWEST.

The next R-G Area Chamber of Commerce meeting is **Thursday, November 13, 2014** (registration starts at 11:45pm) 12pm to 1:30 pm at Wright Hennepin Electric—6800 Electric Drive.

RSVP: inquire@rgchamer.org or call Joel at 612-791-1404

Open to ALL businesses!

ROCKFORD COMMUNITY MARKET

Fridays at the Rockford City Center Mall Parking Lot:
8900 Walnut Street
3pm-6:30pm

For more information contact Nancy at 763-202-0024 or check out their website: www.rockfordmarket.weebly.com

Shop Local—Until October 17th

REVISED UTILITY RATES APPROVED

The City Council approved and enacted new utility rates for water and wastewater after receiving and reviewing comments from our community. The revised Water and Wastewater utility rates were approved at the September 9, 2014 Council Meeting as follows:

Property owners have the ability to choose between having wastewater bills averaged based upon winter water use and being billed wastewater based upon their monthly water gallons used. Property owners may contact City Hall to change their billing method during the month of December every year moving forward.

There is a base fee of \$4.95 each for the Water and Wastewater Utilities. The previous base fee was \$4.25 for the Wastewater Utility, and the Water Utility did not have a base fee prior to this rate change.

The Water rate has been set at \$4.54 per 1,000 gallons and the wastewater rate has been set at \$5.40 per 1,000 gallons used. The water rate has increased from the old rate of \$3.34 per 1,000 gallons used, but the wastewater rate remains the same.

As of January 1, 2015, the wastewater rate will increase to \$6.45 per 1,000 gallons used which is an increase from the current rate of \$5.40 per 1,000 gallons used.

The city is expecting to receive a completed utility rate study from David Drown and Associates. This study will look at the city's utility budgets and capital improvement projects and provide recommendations for utility rates moving forward. The City Council will hold a workshop once this rate study is received and will begin the process of review and discussion of the findings in the report.

Deduct/Irrigation Meters are available for purchase at City Hall. The price is \$150 (plus permit) until 12/31/2014, after this date the price will return to \$300 (plus permit).

6031 Main Street
Rockford, MN 55373
763-477-6565 office
763-477-4393 FAX
www.cityofrockford.org



Upcoming Events

- October 1st to December 17th—Preschool Story Time at the Library 11:15am on Wednesdays**
October 5th to October 11th—Fire Prevention Week
October 9th—R-G Area Chamber of Commerce Meeting 7:30am at BANKWEST
October 11th—Stork House Harvest Celebration 1pm-4pm
October 13th—Rockford Senior Citizens 11:30am at Delano Senior Center
October 13th to October 18th—Friend's of the Library Book and Bake Sale during library hours
October 20th to October 26th—Manufacturer's Week
October 23rd—Manufacturer's Breakfast 7:30am at Shark Industries
October 24th—5th Annual Steak Fry & Auction for RiverWorks Community Development
October 25th—Rockford Library Read to a Dog 11am-noon
October 30th—Wellness on Wheels 2pm-6pm at BANKWEST (last stop until 2015)
October 31st—Halloween (Fire Department will hand out glow sticks)
November 4th—General Election 7am-8pm
November 10th—Rockford Senior Citizens 11:30am at Huikko's Bowling Center (Buffalo)
November 11th—Veteran's Day: City Hall & Library Closed
November 13th—R-G Area Chamber of Commerce Meeting noon at Wright-Hennepin Electric
November 22nd—Ornament Making 10am-1pm at the Library
November 27th and November 28th—Thanksgiving: City Hall Closed (see Library for their hours)
December 6th—Crow River Christmas (more details to follow)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPOTLIGHT:

The Rockford City Center Mall façade improvement project is underway and should be completed by mid-December of this year. The mall has an improved appearance since the brush in the drainage easement has been cleaned out and the old Post Office was removed. The city continues to pursue commercial opportunities in our community and redevelopment of the blighted mall location will help support those efforts. We continue to meet with businesses interested in renting space at the mall or in purchasing out lots for development at the mall location. This can be a very slow moving process, but plans are moving forward to increase our commercial business community and to retain the businesses we currently have.



The Lion's Building in Riverside Park is also being rebuilt. The old building has fallen into disrepair and has become a safety hazard for public use. The city is finalizing plans for a new park shelter building and has received a grant from the Department of Natural Resources to help with construction costs. The new park shelter is scheduled to be built in the spring of 2015. A temporary space is being renovated in the Rockford City Center Mall that will be available for rent beginning later this fall. The space will be located adjacent to the public restrooms and is approximately 750 square feet in size. Please contact City Hall if you or your group would like more information on the space or to check availability.

The City has been working with developers interested in purchasing housing developments that have sat undeveloped since the collapse of the residential housing market several years ago. This year, the Meadows Development and the Boulder Ridge Development have both been purchased by new housing development companies who anticipate building new housing units this fall and in the spring of next year. We continue to meet with developers interested in other development opportunities in our city.

Finally, the City Council will begin discussing and reviewing the merits of an Economic Development Authority and how that relates to our current Housing Redevelopment Authority. Generally, Economic Development Authorities have broader powers and abilities to support commercial and industrial businesses, where Housing Redevelopment Authorities are more limited in those areas and typically address residential developments and related redevelopments. The Council and Housing Redevelopment Authority will discuss the benefits and limitations of these types of authorities at upcoming workshops, Housing Redevelopment Authority meetings and City Council meetings if this process moves forward.