



Winter 2010

CITY OF INDEPENDENCE NEWS

A letter from the Mayor

Happy New Year!

It's hard to believe it is 2010 already. It seems like it was just a couple of years ago we began year 2000. I rode with the police chief that New Year's Eve because many people thought the computers would quite working, airplanes would crash, electricity would not be available, etc., so we were on ready alert. Nothing happened! Hope 2010 will be a good year for all of us.



The last newsletter article I wrote was in late September. I commented about the beautiful weather we were having. By the time the newsletter arrived in your mail boxes we were having the terrible unusually cold October wet weather. I thought to myself, "I'll bet everyone thinks I'm crazy." Oh the dangers of time sensitive comments! Now it is cold and plenty of snow!

Thanks to everyone that took the time to vote. We had a 43 percent voter turnout (1,033) which is somewhat disappointing, but the measuring stick was high because of the extremely high turnout in 2008. Brad Spencer and Lynn Betts (incumbent) fill the two council seats for a four-year term. Orono School Board will see two new board members and Mound School Board will see one new member.

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Planning Commission

Chair Mario Crespo
Greg Gardella
Robert Gardner
Carl Phillips
Keith Triplett

City Council

Mayor Marvin Johnson
Lynn Betts
Brad Spencer
Lindsay Wallace
Norm Wenck

Parks Commission

Chair Carole Peter
Leroy Kowalke
Lisa Phillips
James Rick

COMMUNITY CORNER

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Thanks to the generosity of the community several toys were brought to City Hall for the Toys For Toys Program. Also, Western Communities Action Network (WeCan), Interfaith Outreach (Wayzata), Maple Plain Food Bank and Love INC, Heartland (Delano) appreciated all the support they were given during the past couple of months. The needs are great and when you are able to give more it would be very welcome.

We are still waiting for final comments from Metropolitan Council on our Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Depending on those comments and what further negotiations need to be followed up on, will determine when our City Council will have its final hearing and vote on the Plan. I hope it is soon!

The Council did approve a final tax levy and budget at its December meeting, which was down from the 2009 levy. We do intend to review the budget further. The City staffs' salary was frozen in 2009 along with shorter working hours and the public safety staffs' salary is frozen this year. The City is also fortunate that we paid off a sewer bond last year and this year our public works facility bond will be paid off. We are also anticipating 2009 expenses to be less than what was budgeted.

The hope for the City Council in 2010 is that we can finally get a sewer project completed on Lindgren Lane on the west side of Lake Independence. Our biggest hurdle has been approval from Metropolitan Council to hook up to our present system. We think we are making progress. We have a pipe under Lindgren Lane that was put in during the blacktop construction of that road and the City needs to recapture that investment.

The major project in the City this summer will be the railroad bridge and road construction on Highway 12. The detour will again be on County Road 6 - all summer. There is some attempt being made to try to convince MDOT that they should work longer hours and weekends to shorten the time frame. That project has been delayed for years so it will be nice to get it done.

Until the next newsletter, try to enjoy the winter weather and anticipate spring!!

Your Mayor,

Marvin D. Johnson

Make Sure You Count in the 2010 Census

Every ten years, the number of elected representatives we send to Congress is recalculated using the results of the Census. Your Census questionnaire will be sent out in mid-March and is due by April 1. Snowbirds vacationing in another state should fill out their Minnesota Census.



Current projections indicate that Minnesota could lose a seat in the US House of Representatives if our population is too low.

In addition, approximately \$300 billion in federal dollars are distributed to the states annually based on the results of the Census. Over a decade, this means our state loses \$10,000 per person missed in the 2010 Census. If just 100 people aren't counted, our state misses out on \$1 Million in federal funding - money needed for things like roads, healthcare, transit, and housing.

COMMUNITY CORNER

Free DVD Available to Residents



Ever wonder what you can do to improve water quality in Lake Independence, Lake Sarah and other area lakes? We'll send you a free DVD that explains the problems these lakes face and offers solutions.

The DVD is titled *Minnesota's Lakes at Risk*. It's fast-paced, includes great photography and is very informative. This free DVD is a fantastic educational tool for young and old. If you love nature and the outdoors, you will enjoy it! The DVD is 28 minutes long.

To get your free DVD, e-mail your mailing address with the subject line MN LAKES AT RISK to: cscipioni@ci.independence.mn.us.

The DVD was produced by Minnesota Waters and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. The DVD and shipping are being administered and paid for by the Lake Independence Citizens Association (LICA) and the Lake Sarah Improvement Association (LSIA).

Do Not Plow Snow On or Across Roadways

Public Works reminds residents that pushing snow on or across public roadways is against State Law.

When snow from driveways is pushed on or across roads it can create hazards for drivers. It also often increases the cost of snowplowing because Public Works staff have to spend more time tidying up the road.

Plowing snow into the road can also cause damage to mailboxes. When a large pile of snow being pushed by a plow hits a mailbox, damage often occurs. Residents are responsible for mailbox damage caused by snow.



Water Quality Projects on Lake Independence

Projects completed on Lake Independence in 2009 include the following. These projects will help improve the quality of the lake.

- One shoreline stabilization project, resulting in a 9-pound per year phosphorus reduction
- One rain garden project, resulting in a 1-pound per year phosphorus reduction
- Two bank restoration projects, resulting in a 14.8-pound per year phosphorus reduction
- One compost bin project, resulting in a 12-pound per year phosphorus reduction
- One rain gutter installation, resulting in a .5-pound phosphorus reduction
- 550 feet of channel protection, resulting in a 3.1-pound per year phosphorus reduction

These projects were funded in part by grants and through lake owners' contributions. In total, the projects have led to a 40.4-pound per year reduction in the amount of phosphorus in our lake.

ENVIRONMENT

New Law on Yard and Organic Waste Collection



Non-compostable bags are no longer allowed for yard waste pickup.

Residents in the Twin Cities area who bag their yard and organic waste are now required to put their waste out for pickup in compostable bags – either paper bags or compostable plastic bags. This affects residents in the following counties: Anoka, Carver, Hennepin (excluding the City of Minneapolis), Ramsey, Scott and Washington.

Yard waste carts and paper bags have been around for years, and the technology of compostable plastic bags isn't new -- just this rule is (except for Dakota County, which has been requiring compostable bags for years). Using paper and compostable plastic bags rather than traditional black plastic bags will greatly reduce the amount of plastic being sent to local composting facilities. Because local composters will have less plastic to screen out of their finished compost, processing costs will be reduced and the quality of the finished compost will be enhanced.

Compostable plastic bags are distinct from regular plastic bags because they are usually clear or a green-tinted opaque color. Most home improvement, grocery and hardware stores now carry them. If you don't see them at your local store, ask an employee; many store owners are just learning of this requirement also and may appreciate the customer request.



So, if you need new bags for your yard work this spring, why not get a head start and buy the compostable ones? Your yard waste pick-up service should no longer take the non-compostable plastic bags that you worked so hard to fill – and it's illegal to place yard waste in the trash.

Compostable bags and paper (kraft) bags are available at your local convenience, grocery and hardware stores. Ask your garbage hauler about the availability of yard waste carts.

For more information on the new compostable plastic bag requirements and how they will affect you, visit www.RethinkRecycling.com.

2010 RECYCLING CALENDAR

2010 Curbside Recycling Schedule

Curbside recycling is available to all Independence residents. Recycling bins are available at City Hall. The first recycling bin is free and any additional bins are \$3 each.

Recycling is picked up every other Friday. Residents must have their recycling to the curb by 7 a.m. on recycling day. Missed pick-ups should be reported to Waste Management, 1-800-777-8408.

The 2010 Independence recycling schedule is:



January 2, 15, 29
February 12, 26
March 12, 26
April 9, 23
May 7, 21J
June 5, 18
July 2, 16, 30
August 13, 27
September 11, 24
October 8, 22
November 5, 19
December 3, 17

Paper items: All newspaper, magazines, shiny paper catalogues, mixed paper & junk mail, soft-cover books and shredded paper can be mixed in bags or in a bin or container. Phone books should be set in bins as a separate item.

Cardboard: Needs to be tied in 3'x3'x16" bundles. Pizza boxes, wax & coated cardboard is not accepted.

Containers: All glass or metal food & beverage containers, and plastic bottles with a neck (juice, milk, pop, shampoo, soap, water bottles) may be mixed in the bin or container. Be sure to rinse out items and remove any caps or pumps. Labels may be left on.

PUBLIC SAFETY

West Hennepin Public Safety Celebrates 29 Years of Viewing Santa

On Saturday, Dec. 5 the West Hennepin Public Safety Police Reserves held their 29th annual View Santa Program. The Police Reserves walk about 9 miles through parts of Maple Plain and Independence, handing out holiday greeting bags with candy and treats to children along the route. The first stop was at the Independence City Hall to give the kids a chance for a photo opportunity with Santa on his sleigh. Later in the day they stopped at the Maple Plain City Hall.

For the past several years, the Police Reserves have been collecting food as they travel along their route through town for the food shelf at the Maple Plain Community Church, which serves the surrounding communities. This year, over 1,400 pounds of food was collected and \$318 in donations were given to the local food shelf. Thank you to the community for your support of the Police Reserve's View Santa Program.

"The WHPS Police Reserves would like to thank all of the people along the route that donated food and money, and all the little kids that came to see Santa," said Reserve Coordinator Officer Stephanie Heupel. "Also, special thanks to Randy O'Brien, a long time friend of the Police Reserves, for helping out this year playing the part of Santa Claus. He did a wonderful job."



Every year, the Police Reserves take a group photo before departing on the View Santa parade. This year, one of the West Hennepin Public Safety Officers, Ben Raskin, wasn't able to attend the festivities because he is serving our country as a member of the Minnesota National Guard in Iraq. A banner was made up with a special message to wish Ben a Merry Christmas.

EDUCATION

Whose Got Talent

Calling all singers, musicians, dancers, actors and performers

Share your talent with the community and win cash prizes!

The Orono, Delano and Rockford school districts, along with 4Community Theatre, are hosting a community talent contest beginning this February. Youth and adults are encouraged to sign up for a chance to win a grand prize of up to \$500. Contestants will perform live for an audience and judges. The cost to participate is \$10 for individuals and \$20 for groups.

Preliminary audition round:

Rockford High School	Feb. 1
Orono Middle School	Feb. 2
Delano Middle School	Feb. 8

Final performance:

Delano High School	Feb. 20
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Tickets for the preliminary rounds are \$3 and for the final performance are \$5. Times of the performances will be announced at a later date.

To register, visit www.4CommunityTheatre.org. All performers must be registered by Jan. 20.

The talent competition is sponsored by 4 Community Theatre and the Rockford, Delano and Orono community education departments.



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Independence, MN 55359

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Apply to Serve on a City Commission

The City will soon be accepting applications for its Parks and Planning Commissions.

The Parks Commission meets the first Thursday of the month and the Planning Commission meets the second Monday of the month.

If you are interested in applying to serve on a commission, call City Hall, 763-479-0527.



CITY OF INDEPENDENCE

1920 County Road 90
Independence, MN 55359
Phone: 763-479-0527
Fax: 763-479-0528
<http://Independence.GovOffice.com>

City Hall Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Friday 8 a.m. - Noon

City Calendar

January

7 Parks Commission - 7 p.m.
12 City Council - 7:30 p.m.
18 City Hall Closed
26 City Council - 7:30 p.m.

February

4 Parks Commission - 7 p.m.
8 Planning Commission - 7:30 p.m.
9 City Council - 7:30 p.m.
15 City Hall Closed
23 City Council - 7:30 p.m.

March

4 Parks Commission - 7 p.m.
8 Planning Commission - 7:30 p.m.
9 City Council - 7:30 p.m.
23 City Council - 7:30 p.m.