



City of
St. Francis

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2023 | VOL. 8, NO. 1

Adopt-A-Park Program

The City of St. Francis' Adopt-A-Park Program encourages volunteers, with the assistance of the Public Works Department, to adopt a park or City trail in St. Francis for regular maintenance and cleanup, including picking up litter, debris, and/or planting flowers. Another important option, as we already have most of our parks with helpers, would be our stormwater ponds. They can collect trash and random debris from the local neighborhoods. These need to be cleaned out—we have quite a few that could use the public's assistance. Public Works will provide trash pickers, gloves, and trash bags.

The program aims to beautify city parks/lands and promote neighborhood and community involvement. This program is a great opportunity for individuals, families, organizations, churches, service clubs, youth groups, schools, and businesses to get involved in the community. Depending upon volunteer activity, duration, and location, a specific minimum schedule will be set up for each volunteer opportunity.

Please contact the Public Works Department at 763-233-5200 if you are interested in volunteering.



Message from your Mayor

I've been told that this is the most snow we've had in St. Francis since 2014. That was the year my wife, and I moved here. I remember snow blowing my driveway with snow higher than my snowblower. I can't wait for spring, there are signs out there as the days are getting longer, and I see advertisements for the Masters Golf Tournament in April, hoorah!

Finally, after four years Minnesota

Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has agreed to two roundabouts and two stop lights on Highway 47. One roundabout will be at the intersection of Ambassador Blvd. and Highway 47, and the other will be at the intersection of 227th and Highway 47 or 229th and Highway 47. That location is still to be determined. The stop lights will be at the intersection of Pederson

Continued on page 2

Inside This Issue



FARMER'S MARKET

| PAGE 2



REQUEST BROADBAND

| PAGE 4

CHARTER COMMISSION

| PAGE 2

RECYCLING DATES

| PAGE 4

GRILLING TIPS

| PAGE 4

TREE TRIMMING TIPS

| PAGE 5

SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS | PAGE 6

DRUG TAKE BACK DAY

| PAGE 6

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

| PAGE 7

Visit us on social media!



Mayor

Continued from page 1

Drive and 233rd Avenue. At this point in time, MnDOT is acting in conjunction with WSB (the City’s consulting firm) to seek out and apply for infrastructure grant dollars to reconstruct Highway 47.

At our council meeting on December 5, the City Council proposed a 19.1 percent increase in our tax levy, which came to \$888,100. The tax levy rate was proposed at 51.146 percent. After hearing from the public, the City Council scheduled a work session on December 12 to take another look at the numbers.

After a two-plus hour meeting and discussion, the City Council reduced the tax levy amount to \$438,100 (a reduction of \$450,000). This reduced the 19.1 percent levy amount increase down to 9.38 percent. We also reduced the tax levy rate to 44.657 percent from 51.146 percent. The City also redirected the federal

ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds to the city hall/fire station project.

In the last 20 years, the City has leased six buildings for its City Hall instead of purchasing one or even constructing a new space in the same area and time as the Police/ Public Works building built in 2011. In fact, the present City Hall was purchased for \$500,000 when the identical building on the same block sold for \$286,000. I still, to this day, don’t understand that logic!

The fire station was never built to be used as a fire station, and it was added to an existing building dating as far back as 1960. In 2017 the city council put in a maintenance program to keep the facilities in working order, which had never been done before. But the age and conditions of the building are becoming a problem. The longer we go forward in the same facilities, the more costly it will become. Examples include new roofs, mechanical systems, and asphalt

parking lot overlays. It would be a waste of tax dollars to proceed in this direction.

As we go forward with the new building project and get the real, not proposed, bid numbers in July and August, the City will put the project on hold if the numbers come in too high.

FYI: Minnesota changed how it calculates its homestead property tax exclusion, previously known as the property tax refund for homesteading your home. It works like this; if your property value goes up, your exclusion goes down; therefore, your property tax amount goes up. I don’t particularly like this. As I remember, when buying our home, making sure that we homesteaded it right away to get the refund check in the fall.

As spring comes and the melt begins, please be careful and safe outdoors.

Respectfully,
Mayor Feldman

City Of St. Francis 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.



St. Francis Farmer’s Market Committee

Coming soon! In the summer of 2023, the City of St. Francis plans to host a Farmers’ Market in Community Park. The Farmers’ Market will take place on Wednesdays from 3:00-7:00 p.m. from June 7 until mid-September. To help the market get started on strong footing, we are looking for volunteers to help with the planning, coordination, and setup. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Colette Baumgardner, Community Development Director, at cbaumgardner@stfrancismn.org or 763-235-2301.

Mission Statement: The St. Francis Farmers’ Market serves as a community gathering place for consumers to purchase locally grown and crafted products that support a healthy and sustainable local economy. The market strives to build and strengthen community connections and support local entrepreneurs.

Request Broadband Line Extension

The State of Minnesota has created a new program for residents and businesses to communicate areas unserved by broadband infrastructure. Unserved locations do not have wired broadband service of at least 25Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload. Once the state's Office of Broadband Development has received enough applications in the area, they will send the addresses to service providers to bid on extending service to that area. Many households in St. Francis would meet these criteria, and you are encouraged to complete the application with the state.

The application can be found using the QR code or at the following website: <https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband/extension/>. If you are unable to complete the application due to a lack of access to broadband, you can call the Office of Broadband at 651-259-7610 to request a paper application or complete it over the phone.



What is Chloride Discharge?

Why do municipal wastewater plants have chloride in their discharge?

The answer starts with water hardness. People soften their water to make soaps lather more and prevent calcium buildup on appliances and fixtures. Point-of-entry ion exchange water softeners are widely used to treat water hardness in Minnesota. In order to ensure the continued operation of a point-of-entry ion exchange softener, it must be periodically regenerated with high salt brine that contains chloride. This brine eventually drains into a municipal wastewater system. The cumulative loading from all the point-of-entry softeners in the sewer shed contributes significantly to the high chloride concentrations in the wastewater plant discharge.

Where in Minnesota is chloride in wastewater a problem?

Chloride in wastewater discharge is a problem in about 100 Minnesota communities, most of them in southern and western areas of the state. Chloride flows into wastewater treatment facilities from homes and businesses that use water softeners. Treatment facilities are designed to remove particles, like grit and sand, and to biologically degrade organic waste, such as food and human waste. Once chloride is dissolved in water, it cannot be removed by settling or biologically degraded by standard treatment processes. The technology to remove chloride is available but is costly. It would involve microfiltration and reverse osmosis (RO), which are the same treatment processes used to produce pure water used in laboratories.

Now Enrolling for the 2023-24!

The Anoka/Washington County Head Start-Early Head Start program is accepting applications for the 2023-24 program year. Programs are free for eligible families with children from birth to age five and pregnant women. Our Head Start center-based preschool option offers students a 6.5-hour day, four days per week.



Anoka/Washington County's Head Start-Early Head Start program provides education, nutrition, mental health, school readiness and parent engagement services to children and families from income eligible households. Our approach is to provide high-quality educational curriculum while connecting families with growth and learning opportunities. To learn more or apply, visit our website at www.accap.org/head-start/enrollment-4 or call our enrollment hotline at 763-783-4314.

Recycling Dates to Remember!

April 29 | 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

July 15 | 8 a.m.-Noon

September 16 | 8 a.m.-Noon

November 18 | 8 a.m.-Noon

All events are on a Saturday and located at St. Francis Public Works
4020 St Francis Blvd NW

For more information about these events, call 763-233-5200.



CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!

Gopher State One Call

Local: 651-454-0002

Toll Free: 1-800-252-1166

www.gopherstateonecall.org

KNOW THE FLOW!

www.knowtheflow.us



St. Francis Fire Department *NEWS*

With spring drawing near and warmer weather just around the corner. We will soon be out of our winter slumber to enjoy a little more of the great outdoors. The St. Francis Fire Department hopes that all of you enjoy the springtime as much as we do. We would like to remind you that when we change our clocks in March, check the batteries on your smoke and CO detectors. The number one way to keep yourself and your family safe from fires is to ensure your smoke 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 the St. Francis Fire Department would like to remind you to "Grill Safe." Below are some statistics from grilling season.

GRILLING STATISTICS from NFPA

10,600 home fires are started by grills each year, on average

July is the peak month for grill fires, followed by June, May, and August

19,700

patients went to the ER per year because of injuries involving grills, including

9,500 thermal burns

64% of U.S. households own at least one outdoor BBQ, grill or smoker

Gas grills contribute to a higher numbers of fires than charcoal grills.

61% of households own a gas grill



Sources:
NFPA Research, Data & Analytics
Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association
Consumer Product Safety Commission's National Electronic Injury Surveillance System

Tree Trimming Tips to Remember

The late dormant season is best for most pruning. Pruning in late winter leaves fresh wounds exposed for a short 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.

Oak Trees

Do not prune oak trees during April, May, or June. This 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 attract the disease-carrying beetles.

Elm Trees

Avoid trimming elm trees from early April until late July.

Ash Trees

Avoid trimming ash trees from May 1 until August 31.

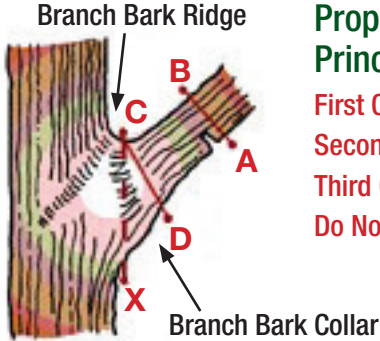
Maple Trees

Maple trees can be cut anytime. Be sure to remember maple trees will "bleed" but it is not harmful to 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.

You can trim dead or diseased branches on all trees at any time of the year. This 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.

Emergency Decal Program

The St. Francis Police Department has established an Emergency Response Decal Program. The program is to assist police in responding to specific calls for service. These decals will help in knowing who we could be dealing with and assisting them with the correct treatment or care. This will also help officers pass along helpful information obtained from the decals to the responding paramedics and fire departments. The decals are free and can be picked up at the St. Francis Police Department lobby.



Proper Pruning Principles

- First Cut notch A
- Second Cut along line A-B
- Third Cut along line C-D
- Do Not Cut along C-X

**ST FRANCIS FIRE DEPT
PRESENTS:**

Spring Into Action!

HANDS-ON SAFETY EVENT

SUN, APRIL 30TH, 10AM - 2PM

Bystander CPR & AED Training
Learn hands-only CPR and how to use an AED. Sessions start at 11 am and 1 pm.

Kitchen Fire Safety Live Demonstration Unit
Do you know what to do if your cooking catches fire? We will demonstrate multiple ways to get a stovetop fire under control.

Fire Extinguisher PASS Training
Want to know how to use a fire extinguisher to put out fire?

Fire Hose Challenge
Option to compete in timed event to win prizes.

And More...
Tour the station, meet the firefighters and see the trucks.

BE AWARE AND
STAY SAFE!

3740 BRIDGE STREET

QUESTIONS: 763-753-2334



St. Francis Police Department 2023 Spring Events

Winning with Cops Activity Night

Winning with Cops aids Developmentally Disabled children and adults in overcoming life's obstacles through exercise, team sports, and positive interaction with all of us at the St. Francis Police Department.



We plan on getting back together sometime this winter or spring to do some activity with everyone!

This event will take place on March 23. Please follow our Facebook page for updates on location.

Bike Safety — I Got Caught!

When Officers are out patrolling and catch young children wearing their helmets, they will stop and give you a coupon for a free small cone from Dairy Queen!



St. Francis Police Department Third Annual Citizens Academy

This program will offer citizens an inside look at the St. Francis Police Department's operations. There will be a wide spectrum of topics covered. This program will start on April 11, and is every Tuesday and ends on May 16. For more information, please contact the St. Francis Police Department at 763-753-1264.

April 17-21 Severe Weather Awareness Week

Statewide Severe Weather Awareness Week is an opportunity to increase awareness of and response to severe weather hazards. This is an opportunity to test your communication methods as if it were real.

During Severe Weather Awareness Week, there will be a statewide tornado drill on Thursday, April 20 sirens will sound at 1:45 p.m. and 6:45 p.m.



Saturday, April 29 | 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Drug Take Back Day

National Take Back Day is a safe, convenient and responsible way to dispose of unused or expired prescription drugs.

The event will take place at the St. Francis Police Department, 4058 St. Francis Boulevard NW.

The St. Francis Police Department has a drop box for safe disposal of prescription drugs available in the lobby during normal lobby hours, Monday-Friday, 6:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Bike Rodeo - June date TBD

The St. Francis Police Department's 7th Annual Bike Rodeo will be held in the department's parking lot. Highlights are safety skills course and bicycle inspections. Check the department's Facebook page for more details.

Water-Saving Strategies for Home Lawns

If you own an irrigation system or water your lawn with portable sprinklers, reduce water use using these water-saving tips.

Pay Attention to the Weather

Homeowners with lawns should adjust irrigation practices according to the weather. This means no longer relying on the "set it and forget it" irrigation schedule that is often programmed into systems.

One way to solve this issue is to operate irrigation controllers in manual mode: turn the controller on only when your lawn shows signs of drought.

Adjust Irrigation to Conserve Water

To encourage rooting and drought tolerance, you should irrigate your lawn infrequently (once or less per week) with sufficient water to wet soils to a depth of six inches, assuming no rainfall has occurred. Depending on your soil type, your lawn may only need as little as a half-inch of water.

Set irrigation programs to water during the morning hours. Watering during the heat of the day reduces the amount of water absorbed by the soil.

Improve Soils and Lawn Quality Through Good Maintenance

High mowing heights (three inches or greater) and proper fertilizer use will improve lawn quality and reduce irrigation requirements.

Change Expectations

Consider changing your lawn expectations to allow for temporary discoloration during drought periods. It is very rare to have extended droughts that ultimately compromise the integrity of a lawn.

Design Landscapes for Water Conservation/ Recycle Water

Choose plants that are well-suited to your site, including drought-tolerant plants for dry areas. Mulch garden beds retain soil moisture and reduce weeds. Retain water on-site using rain barrels, rain gardens, and planted slopes.

The University of Minnesota Extension.
<https://extension.umn.edu/lawn-care/water-saving-strategies-home-lawns>



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.

St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce *Update*

Thank you to those who attended or supported our St. Francis Chamber Annual Dinner held on January 28 at The Refuge Golf Club. Over 80 local business owners and residents came out to celebrate the thriving business community in the St. Francis area.

The evening consisted of a prime rib dinner catered by The Refuge, casino games, and raffles. In the casino games where participants used “funny money” could try their hand at poker, black jack, or other casino games in a fun environment. We had a variety of raffles, with a grand prize of a smoker grill and \$400 worth of meat donated by King’s County Market.



For regular updates from the Chamber, please sign up for the St. Francis Chamber eNews. Chamber eNews is sent one to two times per month. It is the best way to stay updated on Chamber news and events, such as Pioneer Days.

To sign up for eNews, please send an email to Chamber@StFrancisChamber.org.

St. Francis Pioneer Days

presented by the

St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce

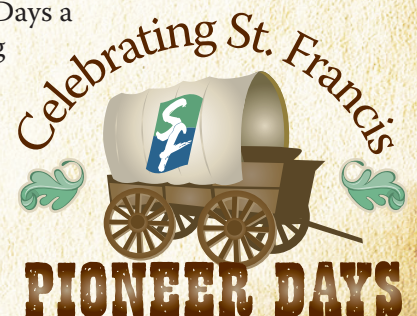
Mark your calendars! Pioneer Days will be Friday, June 2 through Sunday, June 4. It will be filled with all your favorite traditions including the carnival, petting zoo, fireworks, and parade! Due to public safety concerns, the parade has moved to the neighborhood streets by St. Francis High School. This will help provide more parking options and reduce traffic impacts on Highway 47 and Bridge Street.

The Walk of Fame to honor graduating high school seniors will also return! A customized flag with a picture of your graduating senior will be available for purchase and placed in Community Park. At the end of Pioneer Days, families can take the flag as a memento and use it as décor at a future graduation party.

New this year, Pioneer Days will include a community talent show on Saturday night. All ages are welcome to participate. Registration and auditions will be held ahead of the event to ensure all content is family-friendly. St. Francis is full of amazingly talented individuals, and we are excited to celebrate you!

More information on the Pioneer Days events, the parade route, and flag purchasing will be shared on the St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce website and Facebook page as it becomes available. Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/sfacoc.

We *need* your help to make Pioneer Days a great community event! We are looking for Vendors and Local Non-Profit Groups wishing to have a booth at Pioneer Days. Volunteers are also needed throughout the weekend, especially for the parade. Contact us at Chamber@StFrancisChamber.org to get information on how you can help make Pioneer Days great!





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.



Saturday, May 6 | 9:00 a.m.- Noon

Free Dog License Day

Please check with City's website and Police Department's Facebook page for updated information. The event will be held at the St. Francis Police Department, 4058 St. Francis Boulevard NW.



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