



City of Lafayette

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2021-2022 Council

Mayor: Sandie Peterson 507-276-4583

Council Members: Dave Reed 507-228-8264

Scott Portner 507-380-7463

Tom Polich 507-766-1874

Curt Tauber 507-276-7803

January 2022

3 – Fire Meeting – Fire Hall – 7:30pm

6 – Bookmobile – 10:15 to 10:45 – Esther Avenue

10 – City Council – 7 pm – 791 Main Avenue

11 – Lions Meeting – 6:45pm – Community Center

11 – LCS School Board – 5:30pm – Tech. Rm

16 – Lion's Waffles Breakfast – LCS Gym

17 – Martin Luther King Day – Office Closed

18 – Legion Post 300 – Community Center

20 – Bookmobile – 10:15 to 10:45 – Esther Avenue

25 – All Utility Payments Due!

31 – Ambulance meeting – Fire Hall

February 2022

3 – Bookmobile – 10:15 to 10:45 – Esther Avenue

7 – Fire Meeting – Fire Hall – 7:30pm

8 – Lions Meeting – 6:45pm – Community Center

8 – LCS School Board – 5:30pm – Tech. Rm

14 – City Council – 7 pm – 791 Main Avenue

15 – Legion Post 300 – Community Center

17 – Bookmobile – 10:15 to 10:45 – Esther Avenue

21 – Presidents' Day – Office Closed

25 – All Utility Payments Due!

28 – Ambulance meeting – Fire Hall

Garbage & Recycling info:

Recycling Dates: January 6, 20 February 3, 17

Holiday Lights: Recycling of holiday lights and extension cords is ongoing; just drop them at the office during open hours.

Energy Assistance Program:

Now includes water and sewer utilities along with heating. Contact MN Valley Action Council (MVAC) Get help now, if you qualify.

Note from Sandie Peterson, Mayor:

Happy New Year to everyone! Boy, my first year of mayor has flown by and looking back there are some good memories.

I would like to thank everyone who helped with Santa Day. It was a fun night!

Thank you to the Lions, Lafayette Charter School, Citizens Bank, Fields of Grace, Tom and Mike with the Clydesdales; that was a big treat, Terry and Al Fox and Brennen for decorating and donating the supplies for the band stand. Also, to JoAnn Gieseke for the beautiful tree, to everyone else who donated decorations. I am hoping we can grow from here. If you would be interested in volunteering to be on next year's committee, please contact me.

With winter now upon us and the holidays past us, please watch for area functions that you can support. There will be a Dad's Belgian waffle feed on January 16th for Aaron Thedens family, come and support the Lions and our neighbors and have some good food!

As always hoping winter isn't too hard on us, but this is Minnesota where the weather changes every minute. Stay warm!

Sandie

2022 Pet tags:

LAST CHANCE to get your 2022 pet tags for only \$2! Monday, January 31st is the last day and then the price returns to \$8. Bring your updated vaccination records when you apply, or let us know when they have an appointment and drop off the form after the appointment. If you pay your utility by check, you can add the pet tag fee to your check amount, just make note of it on your payment stub and pet application form.

Polar Plunge 2022!

The Polar Plunge is back in St. Peter for the 16th year in a row! The St. Peter Plunge at Hallett's Pond has raised over \$1,141,699 in its 15-year history and in 2021, 216 Plungers raised \$49,044.

Our Fire & Ambulance has had a team since the start, and many of those years the Boy Scouts and other community members have joined them. Watch for details on social media or contact Nick Klingler, Marti Uhde, or Mark Dick for details on how to join them or donate to this wonderful cause!

The Polar Plunge is the biggest fundraiser for Special Olympics Minnesota. All funds raised by Plungers help Special Olympics Minnesota provide year-round training and services to thousands of athletes with intellectual disabilities across the state.

Lafayette Area Lions:

January 16 – Dad's Belgian Waffle Breakfast at LCS - this is a Fundraiser for the Thedens family. This is a local rural Lafayette family who lost Aaron, their husband, father, grandfather, earlier this year. There will also be silent auction items and a Lion's cash raffle for the family.

Lafayette Charter School:

1/11 – School Board meeting 5:30 pm

1/14 – End of 2nd Qtr. Early out 1pm

1/17 – No School MLK Day

1/23 through 1/29 National School Choice Day

1/26 – Community Coffee @ 2:15pm

1/28 – Student Council Day

For more information contact 507-228-8943 or www.lafayettecharter.k12.mn.us.

The Local Food Shelf – It Serves all who need it!

The New Ulm Area Emergency Food Shelf brings food packages to Lafayette each month. If you would like to receive a package to help with food insecurities for your family, submit a request for the box by the 20th of the month prior to the collection date. There are forms in the city office, or for more information call 354-7668, or search the website. <https://newulmfoodshelf.com/mobile-food-shelf/> The food drops are monthly at the 1st Lutheran Church.

DNR Snowmobile Safety Class:

The snowmobile field day will be held Saturday, February 12 - click on the link below or Contact Steve Rykhus 507-216-3521 or email rykhussteven@gmail.com for details. https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/events/safety_training.html

SERVLIN Water and Sewer leak protection!

The Servline Protection Plan adds Leak Protection to all of our residential accounts for house water and sewer leaks up to \$2500, per occurrence, for a low cost of \$2.05 per month and is included on your utility bill. **To decline protection and accept full responsibility for all excess water charges caused by a water leak call 1-888-977-7405; you can opt out at any time.** This insurance is not service line issues, from curb to house; that insurance may be offered to you at a later date.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB):

The MDA has enacted a quarantine for the entire Nicollet County to limit the movement of firewood and Ash material out of the county. Check out the MDA information at

<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/eab>

Council Briefs: 12/7/2021:

12/7/2021: Council held its 1st Truth in Taxation Public Hearing, with no public in attendance, the council and staff worked through the budget to lower the preliminary levy amount, which was at \$19,580 or a 12/2% increase.

12/13/2021: Council held its second Truth in Taxation Public hearing, but with no public in attendance moved onto the regular council meeting.

Approved the consent agenda, which included the minutes from 11/8, 12/7 meetings, bills totaling \$100,485.88 and one (1) sump pump waiver.

State Representative Susan Akland was in attendance, she is the representative for District 19A. She was on hand to introduce herself and meet council and staff. She is on the Environmental and Natural Resources committee.

Reports: Fox: Flag pole is up. Removed all equipment from the pop shack for renovation. Nicollet County is in quarantine due to Emerald Ash Borer sightings. **Peterson:** Nothing to report, but shared her excitement of the Santa Day activities and invited all to attend. **Burger:** Website will no longer be supported after March, she shared a few examples, council asked her to bring more information to the January meeting. **Polich:** Completed online council training. **Portner:** P&R continues to work on paperwork

Unfinished Business:

Waste water Permit: Due to Representative Akland visiting, Fox walked through the process, so far, for the WWTF Permit limits for Chloride. Currently we are at 800, with new permit limits at 230 – we will never meet that. The main cause is due to the hard water and everyone having water softeners. There is no way to treat it chemically to reduce these levels. The city is looking at options, one of which is to update the water filtration process by installing an RO system to the water supply before distribution and removing the need for individual water softeners. He pointed out to her that it is a very costly fix to a mandated permit limit.

Approved 2022 Fees: The second reading and adoption of Ord. 137 amending the fee schedule for 2022, fee changes include: sewer base for residential will be \$32, commercial \$33, flow \$6.70 per 1,000, new hook up \$1,000. Water base, \$34 and \$35 commercial, flow \$5.85 per 1,000, new hook up \$700. Added the words ‘plus professional fees’ to rezoning fee. Added a community group activity fee of \$15 w/examples of a senior group or sewing group gathering. Late fees will be split between Water and Sewer Funds. Raised the non-profit fundraiser to \$50, non-profit meetings and band concert nights stayed at no charge. Fire calls to \$1,000 and document search fees and NSF Check fee to \$30. It will be published in the 12/31/2021 Ledger.

Utility Certify: with no reply from the resident, council approved to certify the unpaid utilities to the tax roll.

Council Briefs: 12/13/2021 continued:

New Business:

Approved: December donations in value of about \$100 each from T Fox, D Burger, L Gieseke for the tree and decorations for the tree lighting. Accepting the redistribution of the ARPA fund of \$854.18, this is in addition to the original amount and will be matched next summer. Years of Service to the fire relief to \$2500, Approved the 2022 fire officers: Chief, N Klingler, Asst M Voges, Secretary S Clemon, Trainers L Van Deest and D Marengo, Truck runners W Portner and K Liebl with L VanDeest helping until Liebl is able to return Marschall S Portner.

Elections: Mail-in voting was a discussion at the budget workshop 12/7, Polich had asked for clarification to the mail-in voting process, with a main concern of the flux in when the final date votes were accepted in the 2020 election. Nicollet County’s election official, Jaci Kopet, explained to Burger that it was due to the pandemic. The 2022 election and any elections to follow will only accept ballots which arrive in the mail on election day, or any ballot dropped off by 8 pm at the county government building election area; no ballots would be accepted after the polls close. She also shared that going to mail-in voting historically, in the county, there is an increase in voter participation. A big concern state-wide is finding election judges. The county will mail ballot packets to registered voters only in the City of Lafayette precinct, approximately a month in advance of the primary or general election. If a voter wishes to vote in-person, they can bring the ballot packet to the courthouse on election day or up to a week prior, where they can vote and put their ballot into the machine. Voting by mail can happen at any time after the ballots are mailed. The County election officials will work in teams, starting no sooner than 14 days prior to the election, to begin opening the mail ballots, then verify and feed them into the machine – there is no tabulation until the close of election night.

There were concerns shared by a few council members that people want to vote in person. Peterson pointed out that during the last election’s mail-in voting due to the pandemic, we did not see a decrease in voters, people who want to vote will. **Mail-in voting was approved by a 3/2 vote, roll: ayes: Peterson/Reed/Polich and nays: Portner/Tauber.**

Budget/Levy: Council approved the 2022 budget and adopting the 2022 Property Tax Levy:

General Fund \$144,949.00

Debt Service – RS Fiber \$35,488.00

Ambulance \$6,600

Total \$187,037.00, which was an increase of \$11,723 or a 6.69% increase, which is lower than the preliminary levy that was at 12.3% or a \$19,580 increase.

End of Year Moves:

2021 Ambulance assessments received to General fund - \$6,768.06 (this fund was set up to repay the general fund the \$33,000 borrowed to the Ambulance fund to purchase the new ambulance and then, once repaid will continue to save for the next ambulance)
Streets to Street Savings \$25,000 future sealing
Streets to Street Savings \$5,000 future vehicle
Revolving Local Funds to Culture \$10,232 (this is the amount of expenses minus the donation from Citizens and the Legion rounded to the nearest \$)
Fire to General Savings \$5,000 restricted for saving for a city pumper, \$2,200 towards new equipment
Water to WWTF \$16,500 to make a payment on the \$80,000 loan
Ambulance to ARPA – \$3,715.57 – Washer Extractor
Fire to ARPA – \$3,715.57 – Washer Extractor
Culture to ARAP – \$1460 – cost of porta potties for the city park
Waste Water to ARPA – \$17845 – the cost of the generator purchase
Council also accepted the resignation of J Wenninger and the 2021 Audit engagement letter.

The next council meetings: The next council meeting will be held on Monday, January 10, 2022 at the Lafayette City Council Chambers at 791 Main Avenue, Lafayette at 7:00 pm.