

CITY OF LAKE ELMO

NEWSLETTER December 2011

THE NEW LAKE ELMO PUBLIC LIBRARY

A Quick Overview:

- Earlier this year, Washington County planned to close the Rosalie E. Wahl Library in 2012. This County library is closing on December 31, 2011.
- In response, the City of Lake Elmo has taken back its statutory authority for a library and appointed a Library Board. The City intends to reclaim and enhance a community-based library while continuing to provide residents with access to an inter-library loan program.

The City Council decided that continued participation in the Washington County Library system does not provide Lake Elmo residents with sufficient value for the taxes they pay. With this change, your taxes for library services will not increase. This action is "tax neutral", in that the \$260,000 tax levy collected from Lake Elmo residents and businesses will simply now be directed to and controlled by the City rather than the County.

- The City Council and Library Board understand that providing residents with continued access to other libraries and use of their resources and services is critically important.
- Residents will continue to be able to use the Washington County Library system. After January 1, 2012, **every household will have the opportunity to be reimbursed \$60 by Lake Elmo after you purchase a library card at a Washington County library.** Possession of a Washington County Library card or using the number on it will be sufficient for all household members to have library access.
- When the new Lake Elmo Library gains "affiliation" status, a Lake Elmo library card will ensure this access and not require purchase of a Washington County library card.



A More In-depth Look

SOME HISTORY:

Last spring, with no reassurance that Washington County would keep the Rosalie E. Wahl library open, the Lake Elmo City Council began to explore, for the second time, withdrawing from the County library system. In an effort to preserve the library, the Council first considered withdrawing from the system in 2010 but did not pursue the matter further when the County changed course and did not close any library branches in 2010. When the possible closure of the Rosalie E. Wahl library reemerged this past spring, the City Council resumed its exploration of withdrawing from the County system. In July 2011 the City Council passed a resolution establishing a city public library, authorizing a library levy, and establishing a public Library Board for the City of Lake Elmo. The City Council made this decision with the belief that staying with the County library system simply would not provide Lake Elmo residents and businesses with sufficient value for taxes paid. The library levy collected from Lake Elmo is a significant amount: \$260,000.

On November 9, members of the Lake Elmo Library Board were sworn in and conducted their first meeting. Washington County is closing the Rosalie E. Wahl branch library by December 31, 2011. The Board has been working diligently, meeting weekly in an effort to provide the community with an enhanced community-based library as soon as possible. It has also spent considerable time and effort exploring intergovernmental opportunities for uninterrupted access to library services throughout the state for all Lake Elmo residents, for now and the future. The City Council and Library Board understand that providing residents with continued access to inter-library services is critically important.

Continued page 2

SOUTH OF 10TH STREET PLANNING CONTINUES



The task of examining future land uses for developable areas south of 10th Street in Lake Elmo kicked off in 2011 and is well underway. The process

began with City staff hosting a number of stakeholder meetings to establish an overall set of visions and goals for the area. Included in these discussions were a project workgroup, gatherings of area landowners, representatives from other agencies such as the DNR, along with the City's Commissions and Council. The end result of this initial step was a framework of land use, housing, transportation and environmental goals that will guide all parties as we move forward.

The second step of this four-phased planning effort, specifically the examination of how developable land south of 10th Street should be used, is now underway. An introductory open house was held on November 16th and was well attended by the public. Staff utilized the opportunity to explain the overall planning process, and to get initial feedback from citizens on what land uses they felt were appropriate south of 10th Street. Also discussed was the likely need for an east/west collector roadway and greenbelt somewhere between Hudson Boulevard and 10th Street to alleviate the need for major improvements and additional traffic lanes on the City's existing east/west roadways. In general, staff has received strong support for maintaining low density residential development in areas near 10th Street, with higher density residential and commercial opportunities arising as development gets closer to the Interstate. One important outcome of the open house was the discovery that some existing residential developments

felt under-represented in the process. As a result, staff has amended the make-up of the project work group to include a representative from the Stonegate development, and is actively seeking representatives from both The Forest and Midland Meadows. If you are a property owner in either of these two developments and have interest in participating on the project workgroup, please contact City Hall.

Following completion of a new land use plan for the area, the planning process will then transition into establishing a new staging plan to dictate when and how much land can develop at any one time. Important considerations that will come into play include the location and capacities of current infrastructure, the likelihood of development occurring in various areas given market conditions, and how development south of 10th Street can complement and support the planned development in the Old Village. Once the staging plan is complete, the fourth and final planning task will be the creation of new zoning districts to govern future development.

Staff is doing everything possible to make sure this process is inclusive and open to all who wish to participate. Meeting materials are available for examination and download on the City's website (www.lakeelmo.org), multiple meetings of stakeholder groups will continue to be held, and an email distribution list has been established which will allow the City to send out periodic updates and meeting reminders as we move forward. If you have any questions about this process or would like to get involved, feel free to contact either Kyle Klatt (651-233-5402) or Ben Gozola (763-746-1650) for more information.

THE NEW LAKE ELMO PUBLIC LIBRARY

Progress on the New Library

Lake Elmo residents and other communities have responded overwhelmingly to the request for donations of books. "Operation Bookstrap" has been a huge success. It is estimated that approximately 10,000 books have been donated to date, more books than in the existing library collection. Most of the donated books are of high quality and excellent condition. Some unique donations include a large dictionary with a stand, a complete collection of Zane Grey books, a wonderful garden book collection, and 18 new audio books on CD, courtesy of the publisher. Donations are still being accepted with a particular need for newspapers and magazine subscriptions.

In an effort to provide Lake Elmo residents with a high quality library, the Library Board has spent considerable time goal-setting and identifying priorities. It has also discussed the hiring of a library consultant; evaluating potential library locations; selecting library management software; and developing short- and long-range plans, policies, and procedures.

How is the new Lake Elmo Library funded?

Your taxes will not increase as result of this change. This action is "tax neutral" in that the \$260,000 tax levy collected from Lake Elmo residents and businesses will simply now be assessed and controlled by the City rather than the County. The library levy, which is included in property taxes, is by law prohibited from being used for anything other than the library. Because the City will now control the levy, residents will see

Continued from page 1

a decrease in their County taxes equal to an increase in their City property tax. The Lake Elmo City Council "holds the purse strings" for the library and sets the library levy, while the Council-appointed five-member library board is responsible establishing and implementing a library budget.

Where will the new library be located and when will it open?

The Washington County Rosalie E. Wahl Library branch on Lake Elmo Avenue North will close by December 31, 2011. The Library Board is hopeful that the new library will be open in early spring. The board is currently in the midst of evaluating available locations for the new Lake Elmo Public Library, including the space where the existing library is located. The Board hopes to make a decide on a location for the new library soon

What's next and how can you help?

With an anticipated opening early in the New Year, there is much work to be done and volunteer help is needed. Help will be needed to transport, catalogue, and shelve books prior to opening and an abundance of volunteer opportunities will be available once the library is open. Volunteer opportunities will soon be posted on the City's website. Members of the community are also welcome at Library Board meetings and encouraged to share their concerns, hopes and dreams for their Lake Elmo Public Library! Meeting dates and board member contact information are available on the City's website, www.lakeelmo.org.



GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Proposed Gateway Corridor Transit Stations Mean More Conveniences and Opportunities for Lake Elmo Businesses and Residents

After a year of working with various local, state and federal agencies, as well as community advocacy groups and area businesses, the Gateway (I-94) Corridor transit way study is nearly 75 percent complete. Emphasis is now shifting toward answering the questions, "Where will it stop and how many people are going to ride it?"

The transit study is looking at express bus, bus rapid transit (BRT), light rail transit (LRT) and commuter rail options that will provide service from Minneapolis/St. Paul to Eau Clair. In the Lake Elmo area, the express bus, BRT and LRT options include a combination of proposed transit stations at The Oaks Business Park in Oakdale, Radio Drive, Woodbury Drive and Manning Avenue. The commuter rail option includes stations at Ideal and Manning Avenues in Lake Elmo.

The study team has worked closely with the City of Lake Elmo and community groups to locate proposed transit options that meet the needs of residents and businesses. Local businesses and community leaders have highlighted that this corridor is not just about getting Lake Elmo residents to work in the downtowns; it is also about connecting the community to employment, shopping and entertainment hubs along the entire corridor. The proposed transit stations could also spark redevelopment along I-94 in Lake Elmo, drawing more residents and businesses to the area.

Over the next few months, the study team will begin to dig deeper into ridership, cost and environmental impacts of all the alternatives. The analysis will be completed in early 2012 and will be used to compare the eight alternatives in order to determine the preferred transit option for the corridor. The results of the analysis will be presented at open houses in the spring of 2012. For more information, please visit www.thegatewaycorridor.com

PFC Bio-monitoring Study Yields Good News

A Minnesota State Department of Health study has found that the amount of perfluorochlorals (PFCs) in the bodies of some Washington County residents has dropped between 13 and 26 percent. In 2008 the department's bio-monitoring program measured the amount of PFCs in 164 people residing in Oakdale, Lake Elmo and Cottage Grove, then checked the same individuals last year. Bio-monitoring program coordinator Dr. Jessica Nelson calls the results "good news".

3M manufactured PFCs for use in household products and dumped PFC waste in area landfills until 1970's. Drinking water in the three east metro communities contains traces of PFCs. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is in the final stages of a re mediation project at the Washington County Landfill, one of the sources of PFCs of the contaminated water. The project involved constructing a triple liner at the existing location and moving waste onto the new liner.

The latest news and information on PFCs and drinking water is available at lakeelmo.org/environmental.

FIRESIDE CHAT

Q&A Answers to some of the most frequently asked questions

Q- "How is the Lake Elmo Fire Department staffed?"

A- Lake Elmo FD is considered a "combination" dept., meaning that we have full-time, part time and "Paid on Call" personnel. Your Fire Chief is full time while your Firefighter/Administrative Assistant is part-time. These two positions handle the majority of the administrative responsibilities associated with managing a fire department, including personnel, vehicles, training, reporting, etc. These two daytime positions also guarantee at least a minimal daytime response to emergencies.

Paid on Call personnel make up the rest of the department. Previously called *Volunteers*, they are now compensated and considered city employees, hence the name change. Our *Paid on Call* staff consists of two District Chiefs (1 for each station), four Captains (2 at each station), two Safety Officers (1 at each station) and fifteen firefighters. These individuals provide an invaluable service to the community 24/7/365. In addition to working their "regular" jobs and meeting the demands of family life, they also maintain firefighter skills through training and drills as required by the department.



PLEASE HELP

Keep hydrants clear of snow.

2011 July - October Emergency Call Summary

- 117 Calls for service
- 47 Medical type responses
- 50 Confirmed fires or fire related incidents
- 20 Rescue type incidents



FIRE HELP NEEDED

Become a proud member of the Lake Elmo Fire Department and firefighter profession. We offer a second income, sharp uniforms, free training, retirement and you get to drive big red fire trucks. Call the Station at 651-770-5006.



City of Lake Elmo
 3800 Laverne Ave. N.
 Lake Elmo, MN 55042

PRSTD STD
 US POSTAGE
PAID
 PERMIT NO. 19
 LAKE ELMO, MN



POSTAL PATRON
LAKE ELMO MN 55042

Winter Reminder

SNOWPLOWING / WINTER PARKING REGULATIONS

Residents are reminded that following a 3" snowfall, no parking is allowed on city streets until they have been plowed. In addition, clearing snow from driveways and sidewalks onto or across City streets is prohibited. Your cooperation assists crews in removing snow from streets efficiently and safely. Vehicles in violation will be ticketed and/or towed. The City's snow plowing policy and winter parking regulations are available on the web at www.lakeelmo.org.

Happy Holidays!

The Lake Elmo City Council and staff wish you a safe and happy holiday season.

Retirement Congratulations

Best wishes and many thanks to long time employees Tom Bouthilet and Sharon Lumby!

Welcome

Welcome Interim City Administrator
 Craig Dawson

CITY CONTACTS & MEETINGS

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor

Dean Johnston

Council Members

Brett Emmons

Nicole Park

Mike Pearson

Anne Smith



MEETINGS

Unless rescheduled, the usual meeting times are as follows:

City Council Meetings

7:00 p.m.,

1st and 3rd Tuesdays

City Council Workshops

6:30 p.m.,

2nd Tuesday

Planning Commission

7:00 p.m.,

2nd Monday

Parks Commission

7:00 p.m.,

3rd Monday

MEETING REPLAYS

10 a.m. & 7 p.m.

Tuesdays and Thursdays
 Saturdays Noon and 7 p.m.

PHONE NUMBERS

Administration 777-5510

Building Department 233-5409

Fire Station - Old Village 770-5006

Fire Station - Station 2 779-8882

Public Works 233-5414

Sheriff's Office 439-9381

Washington County 430-6000

Lake Elmo Park Reserve 430-8368