

Otsego VIEW



NEWSLETTER • SPRING 2013

Address Display

To aid fire, police and medical responders, residents are reminded that all properties in the City are required by the City Code to display address numbers on the principal building. Address numbers must be at least four inches high and be a contrasting or preferably reflective material and color.



Save the date!
SEPTEMBER 14, 2013

FIRE SAFETY UPDATE

Otsego contracts with established fire departments to provide fire protection services to the community. Albertville, Elk River and Rogers Fire Departments each serve a designated area of Otsego (a map of which is available on the City's website).

Contracting for services has been the most cost effective way for the City to obtain comprehensive fire protection in the community. With continued growth and development, the City Council recognizes the need plan for expanded services and to reduce response times as part of its strategic planning goals. The City has identified sites as part of its Comprehensive Plan for future fire station locations and addresses the cost of a fire department within the Capital Improvement Plan. Additionally, the most recent fire service contract with the City of Albertville provides for establishment of a Joint Fire Advisory Subcommittee consisting of City officials, City staff and Fire Department staff in part to plan for future joint fire and emergency response services.

The Monticello Fire Department also served an area in northwestern Otsego but this area has been incorporated as part of the Albertville service area as of January 1, 2013. The fire services provided by the three departments serving Otsego is strengthened by in place mutual aid agreements by which area fire departments will provide assistance in the event of multiple fire calls.

SATURDAY, MARCH 23

The annual **Easter Egg Hunt** is planned for **Saturday, March 23 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Prairie Park, 8899 Nashua Avenue (behind Prairie Center)**. This free event is sponsored by the Otsego Parks and Recreation Commission. Kids are invited to hunt for hidden Easter Eggs as well as visit with the Easter Bunny. A bike giveaway, face painting, stickers and tattoos are also planned. For more information, visit the City's website or call City Hall.



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Spring Clean Up
- Assessing Updates
- Winter Reminders
- Pride in our Parks and Adopt-a-Street

Otsego Facts

There were **142 BUILDING PERMITS** issued for new residential dwellings in Otsego in 2012, a **145 PERCENT INCREASE OVER 2011** indicating improving economic conditions as community growth continues.



WINTER REMINDERS

1. There is no parking on any public street between 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. between **November 1 and April 30**. Vehicles parked on public streets during these hours are subject to immediate ticketing and/or towing.
2. There is no parking on any public street after a snowfall of 2.5 inches or more until after the street has been plowed to its full width. Vehicles parked on public streets during a snow emergency are subject to immediate ticketing and/or towing.
3. Snow from private property may not be pushed across or deposited on the traveled portion of any public street, sidewalk or trail.
4. Property owners are responsible for removal of snow, ice and other debris from concrete sidewalks adjacent to their property within 12 hours after the snowfall has stopped.
5. Drivers need to slow down and stay behind the snowplows. Drivers should allow at least five car lengths between their vehicles and snowplows keeping the mirrors of the snowplow in view.

SPRING CLEAN UP

The City will again partner with Metro Appliance Recycling to provide residents an opportunity to do some spring cleaning of their yard and home with **Clean Up Week between Monday, May 6 and Friday, May 10**. Clean Up Week with Metro Appliance Recycling offers City residents discounted rates for disposal of unwanted goods for recycling that cannot be handled in the regular trash. People will need to present identification to verify residency and **drop items off at Metro Appliance Recycling at 16403 60th Street in Otsego between the hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday-Thursday and 9 a.m. to Noon on Friday**.

The following is a list of items accepted and the cost for residents:

- Residential Appliances:** \$10.00/each
- CRT Televisions/Monitors:** \$0.30/lbs.
- Electronics and computers:** \$0.25/lbs.
- Scrap metal:** Free
- Stuffed chair/couch:** \$15.00/each
- Wood furniture:** \$5.00/each
- Batteries:** Free
- Light car/truck tires:** \$5.00/each
- Tractor/heavy truck tires:** \$25.00/each
- Fluorescent bulbs:** \$0.60/each
- Cell phone:** Free

Items **not accepted** include: paint, oil, antifreeze, gas ammonia refrigerators, yard waste and general garbage.

ASSESSING UPDATE

The Wright County Assessors Office will be inspecting properties in the area of Otsego between 85th Street, CSAH 42, CSAH 39 and Nashua Avenue in 2013 to evaluate the estimated market value and tax classification of each property as required Minnesota State Statutes. The Assessors' determination of market value represents a reasonable estimate of what your property may sell for based on market conditions and information relating to your specific property. The estimated market value is the basis for calculating property taxes. More information is available about the property assessment process on the Assessors page at the Wright County website: www.co.wright.mn.us or by calling **763.682.7367**.

OTSEGO TOWN HALL REUSE IDEAS SOUGHT

The Heritage Preservation Commission is soliciting ideas from the community for reuse and financing to repurpose the Otsego Town Hall/District 10 school house building located at the intersection of Nashua Avenue and CSAH 39.

The building is the only significant public historical site within the City within the area that was the original Otsego townsite established in the 1850s. The building was also prominent in the lives of many, many children and adults in Otsego.

Anyone who has ideas as to the potential reuse of the building that would allow for rehabilitation and ensure its long-term viability are encouraged to contact Heritage Preservation Commissioners Toni Seroshek or Gail Anderson at 763 295 5426.



Greetings Neighbors!

The City Council wanted to provide an update regarding the City's on-going efforts to eliminate the property tax burden to Otsego property owners related to the New River Medical Center.

The New River Medical Center operates as a public Hospital District formed in 1961 to include the City of Monticello, City of Big Lake, Becker Township, Big Lake Township, Monticello Township, Silver Creek Township and Otsego Township and exists as a separate government entity. The Hospital District is governed by an eight member Board of Directors with one representative from each community and one member elected at large.

The Hospital District has authority to issue bonds and to levy property taxes for the operation and development of the hospital. The Board of Directors in 2009 adopted a five-year plan to eliminate the property tax levy by 2014. However, the ability to levy a property tax remains until such time as Otsego is either detached from the Hospital District or the Hospital District itself is dissolved.

In 2008, the City Council petitioned the Board of Directors to detach Otsego from the Hospital District on the basis that the taxes levied on Otsego property owners were excessive related the extent to which Hospital District records showed Otsego residents used the facility. The Board of Directors denied the City's petition and their decision was upheld in an appeal by the City to the Minnesota Court of Appeals. The City has reserved its rights to resubmit its petition to detach at any time and has appointed a subcommittee of myself, Council Member Doug Schroeder and City staff to address Hospital District related issues.

The Hospital District also started an investigation into forming an alliance with a larger health system in order to ensure the hospital remains viable and competitive in the changing health care market. After an education process followed by a series of public meetings and interviews, the Board of Directors selected CentraCare Health System of St. Cloud as its alliance partner. CentraCare

has assumed day-to-day management of the hospital and a committee made up two Hospital District Directors and members of the public negotiated a long-term lease of the hospital facility that provides for:

- The lease transfers use of all hospital facilities and existing financial assets to CentraCare except those monies the Hospital District is required to maintain as reserves for its outstanding debt.
- CentraCare will pay rent to the Hospital District equal to the Hospital District's debt payments and any expenses incurred by the Hospital District.
- The Hospital District has the ability to repay its outstanding bonds in advance in 2016 and the lease as two provisions related to this date:
 - CentraCare has an annual option starting in 2016 to purchase the hospital by paying the Hospital District the amount of the outstanding debt plus \$2 Million Dollars. The \$2 Million dollars is required to be used for health care purposes within the Hospital District.
 - The Hospital District has the option to require CentraCare to purchase the hospital under the same terms starting in 2020.
- The lease agreement prohibits use of property tax funds or the issuance of additional bonds by the Hospital District for the operation of the hospital.

The Board of Directors voted at their meeting on February 14, 2013 to approve the lease agreement. The lease agreement is in effect a sale agreement that will more than likely result in the transfer of the hospital facility to CentraCare and disolvement of the Hospital District sometime between 2016 and 2020. Although the City desired to see a maximum return to the taxpayers of the Hospital District for the value of the hospital facility and its assets, the lease agreement will provide for the elimination of the property tax levy in 2014.



City Hall Hours

City Hall hours will change on April 1 to
Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
and **Friday: 8:00 a.m. to Noon.**

The change is made possible by the availability of information on the City website and the ability to pay bills, obtain permits, etc. electronically and will allow for more efficient utilization of existing City staff resources.

SHELTER RESERVATIONS

The shelter at Prairie Park may be reserved by families, organizations or other groups during the weekends throughout the summer. The shelter has picnic tables, charcoal grills and electric service available.

Three hour reservation periods are available each day of the week. There is a fee to reserve the shelter of **\$10.00 for weekdays** and **\$20.00 for weekend** (plus State sales tax) for each three hour reservation period.

CITY HALL:
13400 90th Street NE
Otsego, MN 55330

PHONE NUMBERS
Main: 763-441-4414
Building Dept.: 763-441-2593
Utility Billing: 763-441-2310
Fax: 763-441-9163

RECREATION INFO LINE:
763-235-3150

OFFICE HOURS: *(Until March 29)*
Monday–Thursday
8 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Friday
8 a.m. – Noon

CITY COUNCIL:
Jessica Stockamp (Mayor)
Tom Darkenwald
Vern Heidner
Doug Schroeder
Jason Warehime

CITY WEBSITE
www.ci.otsego.mn.us



HYDRANT FLUSHING

The Utility Operations Department will be flushing fire hydrants throughout the City in April. Flushing the hydrants removes sediment and mineral build up within the City's water lines to maintain water quality and also tests the system for adequate flows. Note that the cap may be left off of some hydrants after the water is turned off to allow the fixture to drain completely but City staff will return to replace the cap. The schedule for flushing is as follows:

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- Riverwood National: April 4**
 - East Otsego: April 8-12**
 - West Otsego: April 15-18**

OTSEGO VOLUNTEERS

Help extend City resources through community volunteerism. You may choose from a variety of volunteer opportunities and time commitments, including one-day only special events, a short term project or an ongoing position.

Pride in our Parks and Adopt-a-Street

The City encourages people of all ages, including residents, community groups and businesses, to help keep Otsego clean, safe and more attractive through two community programs:

Pride in Our Parks volunteers assist in picking up debris, raking leaves, planting and maintaining vegetation, special projects and to help identify needed repairs in our parks.

Adopt-A-Street is a partnership between volunteers and the City Public Works Department whereby participants assist in picking up debris, planting and maintaining boulevard vegetation, special projects and to make visual inspections roadway areas to identify maintenance issues.

Pride in Our Park and Adopt-Street volunteers make a two year commitment for activities. Otsego Public Works staff provides basic oversight, safety vests, tools and materials as may be needed. The City also places a sign within the park or at the approaches to the adopted street crediting the individual, group or organization for their efforts.

More information about Pride in Our Parks and the Adopt-A-Street programs or other volunteer opportunities is available on the City's website or by calling City Hall.