

The Arlington Report

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Jim Kreft -- Mayor
Curt Reetz -- Council Member
Mike Vrklan -- Council Member
Galen Wills -- Council Member
John Griep -- Council Member
Gregg Borchert -- Council Member

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Matt Jaunich -- City Administrator
Dennis Schultz -- EDA Director
Lisa Tesch -- Deputy Clerk
Vicki Pomplun -- Admin. Ass't
Lana Woehler -- Community Center Coordinator
Dan Thomes -- Streets/Parks Supt.
Keith Doetkott -- Maint. Worker
Bruce Rovinsky -- Chief of Police
Scott Bennett -- Police Officer

CONTRACTED SERVICES

Ross Arneson -- City Attorney
Cynthia Smith-Strack -- Planning & Zoning Consultant
Darin Haslip -- Building Inspector
People Service -- Water/Wastewater
Joel Hawbaker (Bolton & Menk) -- City Engineer

PHONE NUMBERS

City Hall: 964-2378
Fax Line: 964-5973
After-Hours On-Call:
507-327-6601
Fire Garage: 964-2279
Police Dept: 964-5200
Library: 964-2490
Hospital: 964-2271
S.E. School: 964-2292
Post Office: 964-5503

OTHER SERVICES

Water/Sewer/Electric Services
City of Arlington (964-2378)
Gas Service
CenterPoint Energy (800-245-2377)
Cable Service
Mediacom (800-332-0245)
Internet/Phone Service
Frontier (800-435-1504)
Garbage Services
Waste Management (800-422-5785)
Tidy Disposal (952-873-2636)
Evergreen Sanitation (877-601-4467)

MAYOR KREFT IDENTIFIES FIVE GOALS FOR THE CITY IN 2008

In an effort to help guide the City in 2008 and beyond, Mayor Kreft recently released his Mayoral Goals for 2008. A list of those goals and a brief summary are listed below. Please visit the City's web site for a complete copy of the 2008 Mayoral Goals.

Goal 1 - Complete our Comprehensive Plan and initiate a Capital Improvement Plan -- The Comprehensive Plan invites us to envision our community in 2030 and establishes a roadmap with hypothetical timelines for completion or implementation of projects identified in the comp. plan process. The Capital Improvement Plan is a capital budgeting device that will help us transform ideas outlined in the comp plan into tangible reality.

Goal 2 - Update the City Charter -- The City Charter was last updated in 1982. Recent review by the city council has preliminarily identified sections within the Charter that are somewhat antiquated and may be in need of simple updates. Other sections may need to be completely revised.

Goal 3 - Attain "Tree City USA" status, as defined by the National Arbor Day Foundation -- To preserve one of our most precious natural resources - our urban forest, the City will be looking to obtain "Tree City USA" status. To obtain this goal, the City will be looking to adopt a community tree ordinance, establish a city forester program with an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita, create a standing tree board or department, and take part in an annual Arbor Day observance & proclamation.

Goal 4 - Co-operate with Sibley Medical Center to enhance our Ambulance Department -- The City Council has become increasingly aware of the diminishing number of options available for covering day-calls, as well as staffing and training an adequate number of volunteers for our ambulance service. To help fill these gaps, the City Council will explore an agreement with our municipal hospital to enhance our overall ambulance service.

Goal 5 - Create a Geographic Information System (GIS) -- To make our city departments more efficient and technologically up-to-date, the establishment of a GIS is essential.

OLD FIRE HALL UPDATE

The Arlington Historical Society (AHS) is ready to complete Phase 3 on the restoration of the Old Fire Hall. Phase 3 consists of the construction of the bell tower and placing the replica of a fireman on

the tower roof. Weather permitting, construction hopefully will begin in early March. Local contractors will perform most of the work. Through grants and monetary gifts, nearly all of the money needed for this project has been secured. However, approximately \$1,000 is still required to pay for unforeseen expenses. Monetary gifts to assist in this project can be sent to the Arlington Historical Society, PO Box 28, Arlington, MN 55307. The AHS would like to thank the business community and area individuals for their monetary support of this historical project.

PARTY CAUCUSES TO START IN FEBRUARY

Precinct caucuses are the first step used by Minnesota's major political parties to select the candidates and issues they will support in the 2008 elections. The Republican, DFL and Independence parties are scheduled to meet for their respective caucuses on February 5th or "Super Tuesday". The DFL and Republican Parties will also hold "straw polls" at their caucuses for presidential candidates. The Constitution Party will caucus on February 2nd and the Green Party will caucus on March 4th. The Independence Party will continue to meet online in a virtual caucus through March 4th. Precinct caucuses are free and open to the public. To participate at a caucus, a person must be eligible to vote in the November 4, 2008 general election and likely to support the candidates of that political party. Residents interested in attending a precinct caucus should go to the City's web site or the Secretary of State web site at www.sos.state.mn.us and click on the Precinct Caucus Finder link.

WHEN DO THEY MEET?

Are you interested in participating in public meetings, but do not know when and where they meet? If so, below is a list of meeting dates and times. All meetings are held in the council chambers at the community center unless noted. All meetings are subject to change. Please call City Hall to verify meeting times.

City Council:	1st & 3rd Monday at 6:30 pm
Planning & Zoning:	1st Thursday at 7 pm
Hospital Board:	Last Monday at 5 pm
Comp. Plan:	2nd Monday at 7 pm (Tech Center)
Historical Society:	1st Monday at 10 am
Police Committee:	4th Monday at 1 pm (Tech Center)
Cemetery Committee:	Last Monday at 8:30 am
EDA:	2nd Tuesday (Quarterly) at 7 am (Tech Center)
Park Board:	3rd Wednesday (Quarterly) at 7 pm
Library Board:	3rd Wednesday (Quarterly) at 6:30 pm (Library)

City Offices will be closed on Monday, February 18th for President's Day.

City of Arlington, Sibley County

Contact us at:
204 Shamrock Drive
Arlington, MN 55307

Phone: 507-964-2378
Fax: 507-964-5973
E-mail: cityhall@arlingtonmn.com



A Beautiful City Growing in Unity



THE MAYOR'S CORNER

Over the last several months, many of the topics of conversations between our city staff, committees, and Council have been directly or peripherally associated with the future geographic growth of our city, and how surrounding areas are to be made part of our city.

Annexation is the mechanism of incorporating land into city limits. The process of annexation is somewhat complex, and the respective powers of the city, the surrounding township, and property owners may be misunderstood. A common misperception is that the city can act unilaterally to quickly and rather arbitrarily commandeer property on the margins of the city limits and beyond.

Orderly annexation is annexation that takes place in the framework of an orderly annexation agreement (OAA). An OAA is a predetermined, mutually-established arrangement between a city and the adjacent township(s), which outlines the conditions for incorporation of a rural parcel into the city.

With extraordinary foresight, the Arlington City Council and the Arlington Township Board jointly created an OAA. According to our OAA, a property owner, or a majority of the property owners in a neighborhood within the area and adjacent to city limits, must petition for annexation before the City Council can consider it. The council then has the discretion to approve or deny the petition. If approved, adjustments in property tax assessments would take place incrementally over six years.

Approved by the state in 1998, with a term of 20 years, our OAA delineates an orderly annexation area—an area in which only orderly annexation can occur. The orderly annexation area is rectangular shaped, extending roughly 1 ¾ miles east to west and 1 ½ miles north to south, and centered on the high school. To read the OAA in its entirety, please access our city web site.

Last summer, a few of the residents of the Highland View Addition queried the City about the possibilities of extension of city services and annexation. Since, the City Council has authorized research into the potential costs, and using our recently adopted assessment policy, calculated the proportional cost burden to each home owner and the City. At next Monday's (February 4th) regular City Council meeting, the number of official petitions will be summed, and there may be action on their acceptance or rejection.

Early last year, our City Council was excited to learn that our electrical co-operative, with federal monies, is planning on assisting each of its member cities in erecting a wind generator. Most of the details of our possible generator have yet to be decided, but identifying a viable location is the current salient issue. It is likely that the generator would have to be built in city limits; this may require us to search outside existing municipal boundaries.

As we continue our comprehensive planning process, we will identify potential growth areas for our city, evaluate their most desirable and logical use, and, with the township, review and assess our current OAA. -- Mayor Jim Kreft

IS THAT PUBLIC DATA?

Everyday, people walk into city halls across Minnesota requesting, and expecting access to data collected and maintained by the City. At the same time, people across the state expect that data collected and maintained by those same cities receives the privacy required by law. The law in question is the Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statute Chapter 13, which governs what data the public is entitled to access and what data can remain from public view. So, what is legally available to you, the public?

Public Information -- For the most part, unless otherwise classified by state or federal law, all government data that is collected, created, stored or maintained by a city is public data and should be accessible (within a reasonable time frame) for both inspection and copying. This includes more than just official records. Items like personal notes during a meeting, emails and items on a computer, audio and videotapes, computer disks, and notes of meeting times and places made in a personal calendar are considered public data. Many residents may not know this, but data on customers of a municipal utility are public with the exception of electric utility data. However, social security numbers that may be required for public utilities are not public information. The existence and status of any complaints regarding an employee are public regardless of whether the complaint resulted in disciplinary action. Disciplinary actions and buyout agreements settling any dispute are also public.

Non-Public Information -- Access to private personnel data is limited. Personnel data is defined as data that is collected because an individual is, or was, an employee or applicant for employment. It also includes volunteers, independent contractors and members/applicants of advisory boards

of commissions. Personal data information on Elected Officials, however, have been deemed public and are not considered private. Information like medical history/condition of an employee and social security numbers are private data. However, information like actual gross salary, employer paid benefits, complaints against an employee, disciplinary actions, and employee application data is all public. Active police investigative data collected or created is confidential or protected nonpublic data. However, a law enforcement agency may withhold public information on an individual if they feel the information would threaten the safety of that individual. The identity of a person making a complaint about a violation of law or ordinance concerning the use of real property including noise complaints is confidential data.

Requesting Information -- Upon request, the City must allow a person to inspect and copy public government data at reasonable times and places, and upon request, must be informed of the data's meaning. If a person requests copies of data, the City may charge a reasonable fee for the actual costs of searching for, retrieving, compiling, certifying and coping the data. This includes the cost for employee time involved in doing those things. The City cannot assess a fee for a person requesting access for the purpose of inspection only. Please remember that the amount of data collected by the City of Arlington is quite large. Anyone interested in obtain public data should contact City Hall in advance so we can be properly prepared. (Source: *League of MN Cities, MN State Statute Chapter 13*)