

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 -- Administrative Assistant
Lana Woehler -- Community Center Coordinator
Dan Thomes -- Streets/Parks Superintendent
Keith Doetkott -- Maintenance 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
Fire Garage: 964-2279
Police Dept: 964-5200
Library: 964-2490
Hospital: 964-2271
School: 964-2292
Post Office: 964-5503
After Hours: 507-327-6601

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)

WHAT'S THIS?

Welcome to the first addition of the city-wide newsletter known as the "Arlington Report". The City plans on using this newsletter to update the community and its residents on what is going on throughout town and with city government. This newsletter will be included in your monthly utility bill. Non-profit fundraisers and community wide events will be allowed to be placed in the newsletter if space is available. The city hopes to address questions and concerns on daily living within the community by making you aware of city rules and regulations on a monthly basis through this newsletter. Comments, Questions, ideas for the newsletter should be directed to the City Administrator.

CITY COUNCIL APPROVES 3% TAX LEVY INCREASE; ADOPTS 2008 BUDGET

At their December 17th meeting, the City Council moved to increase the tax levy by 3% from \$659,263 in 2007 to \$679,280 for next year. The 3% increase was significantly lower than the preliminary levy that was set in September. The preliminary levy showed a 9% increase. Comprehensive efforts by the City Council contributed to the lower tax levy. The Council cut \$39,526 in additional spending to get to the 3% tax levy increase. Following the approval of the levy, the council moved to pass the municipal budget for 2008.

| <u>Fund</u> | <u>Revenues</u> | <u>Expenditures</u> |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| General | \$1,350,711 | \$1,350,711 |
| Special Funds | | |
| Public Safety | \$209,534 | \$209,534 |
| Comm. Center | \$106,450 | \$106,450 |
| Cemetery | \$18,200 | \$18,200 |
| TIF District | \$48,600 | \$14,791 |
| Enterprise Funds | | |
| Water | \$376,575 | \$376,575 |
| Sewer | \$347,375 | \$347,375 |
| Electric | \$2,101,715 | \$2,101,715 |
| Elec. Transfers | \$0 | \$250,000 |
| Debt Service Funds | | |
| 2000 Imp. Bond | \$40,068 | \$61,110 |
| 2001 Imp. Bond | \$31,911 | \$35,400 |
| 2004 Imp. Bond | \$88,445 | \$87,143 |
| 2004 Ref. Bond | \$277,600 | \$277,288 |
| W.W. Sinking | \$50,000 | \$49,423 |
| Fire Certificates | \$54,345 | \$77,175 |
| 2004 Pub. Proj. | \$50,000 | \$81,173 |
| Total Funds: | \$5,151,529 | \$5,444,063 |

SNOW EMERGENCY NOTICE

Residents and business owners should remember that the City of Arlington will be hauling and plowing snow anytime there is a snowfall of two (2) inches or more. The City asks that all residents park all vehicles and trailers off the streets and avenues until they are plowed from curb to curb or they will be ticketed and towed. Vehicles that interfere with City maintenance activity, such as snow removal, may be towed to a designated area at the expense of the owner. The vehicle may be impounded until all parking fines, towing and storage charges have been paid. Unclaimed vehicles will be sold and the proceeds applied first against such fines and charges. Repeat violators will be towed without additional notice.

SIDEWALK SNOW POLICY

Property owners should remember that city ordinance requires that all ice and snow must be removed from all public sidewalks within 12 hours after such snow or ice has ceased to be deposited upon such sidewalk. Failure to remove the snow or ice within 24 hours may be a cause for the City to do so itself. If the City, or an agent assigned by the City, has to remove the snow, the City will bill the property owner according. Unpaid bills for snow removal will be a cause for a special assessment against the property. Also, please remember that snow and ice are not to be removed from a private property and placed on any public street.

SNOWMOBILES AND ATV OPERATORS

Snowmobile and ATV operators should be aware that city ordinance requires you to use public roadways/streets or alleys by the most direct route when entering or leaving town. Snowmobiles and ATVs are not allowed to be operated on sidewalks or boulevards, nor are they to be operated on private property without prior consent of the owner. Also, city ordinance prohibits the use of snowmobiles and ATVs on any cemetery land or city park/recreation area. Speed is not to exceed 15 miles per hour within city limits. Also, please be aware that the Twin Cities & Western Railroad, Minnesota Prairie Line, and Minnesota Valley Rail Authority prohibit snowmobiles and ATVs to operate on or traverse its property.

City Offices will be closed on Tuesday, January 1st and Monday, January 21st for the New Years and Martin Luther King Jr. Holidays.

City of Arlington, Sibley County

Contact us at:
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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

Welcome to the Mayor's Corner! I will be writing a brief column monthly, and plan to use this forum to update residents on "big-picture" issues facing our city. This month, however, I have chosen to review recent city-official turnover, and introduce our newly-hired city staff.

Not only was calendar year 2007 a time of transition in two elected-official positions--Mayor and one City Council seat, but also a time of turnover on the staff level. Our community is fortunate to have highly qualified, fair-minded, friendly, and sincere people to serve in staff positions of City Administrator, Planning and Zoning Administrator, and Building Official.

Matt Jaunich began his new duties as our City Administrator on September 4. As a City Council, we have been impressed by Matt's energy and dedication. Matt has been remarkably productive in his short tenure in Arlington, quickly acquainting himself with our city, its residents, and his new environment, while finding time to collaborate with and advise the City Council on creation of two vital city policies--an assessment policy and a revised employment policy. Furthermore, Matt has done an outstanding job of communicating with residents, elected officials, and city staff. This monthly newsletter is a concept that Matt brought from his previous job, and is the latest example of Matt's willingness and ability to communicate the happenings at City Hall.

Last summer, Cynthia Smith-Strack commenced service to the City of Arlington as our consulting Planning and Zoning Administrator. Cynthia, an Arlington Township resident, has brought a level of professionalism to our Planning and Zoning Department that has not only produced a flurry of essential updates in our Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, but has furthered our education and understanding of how these ordinances will be effectively and fairly implemented. Our City Council has been so impressed with Cynthia that we have recently hired her and her consulting firm to assist us with our city's Comprehensive Plan.

Darin Haslip assumed his duties as part-time building official in mid-summer, 2007. In addition to finding Darin to be exceptionally knowledgeable about the construction industry and building codes, we have observed that he has a true knack for applying that knowledge equitably and consistently when reviewing plans and applications or inspecting construction sites. With Darin's leadership, we are relearning our city's responsibility to ensure safe, reliable, conscientious building practices, and will soon be evaluating how we may do so more efficiently.

Last year proved itself to be filled with change; 2008 will likely manifest itself similarly, but as a freshly re-built City team, I am confident of our ability to make those changes for the good.

ARLINGTON CITY COUNCIL BEGINS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

At its November 12th meeting, the City Council approved the initiation of a Comprehensive Plan update. The Plan, which was last updated in 1970, will help to guide the overall future growth and redevelopment of the City of Arlington for years to come. When finished, the Plan will reflect a vision for the city through the year 2030. The city has expressed the need to address land use, housing, transportation, parks/trails/recreation, community utilities/facilities/services and economic development through the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan update is scheduled to be completed by December of 2008. So why a Comprehensive Plan? A Plan, along with accompanying land use ordinances and non-regulatory strategies, can identify how and where the community wants growth to occur -- in areas already serviced by public water and sewer for example -- forestalling the need of having to build redundant, expensive infrastructure. Conversely, a Plan can also designate areas where it does not want significant growth to occur, on productive croplands for example, or in recreation areas. The purpose of a comprehensive plan is not to control growth or intrude on private property and citizens rights, but it is to allow for proper planning of expenditures associated with the costs of growth and change within the City. A Comprehensive Plan can also set expectations that the community can look to for future projects. Most importantly, the plan is greatly affected by you, the public, and your input through a series of public meetings. When completed, the Comprehensive Plan will be an expression of the community's vision and a strategic map to reach that vision. As a resident/business owner, your participation in this important plan is highly needed and appreciated.

Public Invited to Open House Meeting on January 14th

What do you want living, working and relaxing in Arlington post-2030 to be like? What's the same, what has changed? How did that happen? These are questions City leaders and the public are answering through a series of public meetings held as part of the City's Comprehensive Planning process. The Comprehensive Planning process commenced in late November when elected and appointed officials and members of the public conducted a strength, weakness, opportunity and threat analysis. The future of Arlington will also be the subject of a community meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday, January 14th at the Community Center. Everyone living, working or recreating in the Arlington area is invited and encouraged to attend. The meeting on January 14th will feature small group discussion and participation in a visual preference survey. Topics addressed will include future land use in growth areas, attracting redevelopment investment in areas needing sprucing up, and protecting stable neighborhoods. Recreational opportunities, parks and community services will also be addressed. If you're interested in participating but are unable to attend the January meeting, you can access more information at the City's website. Regular updates and draft elements of the Comprehensive Plan will be available for downloading so check back often. You may also complete a written survey which is available from the website or by stopping at the City offices. For more information, please contact the City or the comprehensive plan update facilitator, Cynthia Smith-Strack with Municipal Development Group at 888-763-4462.