

The Bridge

Connecting with our residents

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City of Belle Plaine

January • 2017

2016 Year in Review

As the newly appointed City Administrator, I have been looking forward to what 2017 brings for the City of Belle Plaine. However, I would like to take the time now to acknowledge some the great achievements of 2016.

Community Development - There was a continued increase in the number of new homes permits. In 2016, we have issued thirty seven new single family home permits, an increase of about 50% over 2015. We have issued commercial building permits valuing more than \$9 million. Total construction value permitted this year is nearly \$20 million.

We are excited about the new construction that started this fall on the Ridgeview Health Campus. The campus will include a 12,900 sq. ft. clinic, a 10,000 sq. ft. wellness center, space for a coffee shop, and 55 units of independent senior housing. The clinic will be managed by Ridgeview Medical Center (RMC), based in Waconia. The senior housing component will be managed by The Lutheran Home Association (THLA), based in Belle Plaine.

The entire campus, located in the northwest quadrant of the Hwy 169 and Meridian Street, will be open to the public and will include site amenities such as extensive landscaping and a walking trail.

A community solar garden has been approved as a conditional use and will be located on the western limit of the city. This project is planned to be a 5 megawatt power plant on 30 acres of mostly uncultivated land.

Finance - The city continues to maintain its bond rating of AA-. The tax levy for 2017 will be a modest increase of 4.72%. The majority of homeowners will see a 1.8% tax increase of about \$25 in the city portion of their taxes. The city will continue with long range financial management planning to keep tax rates from fluctuating over time.

Fire - The Belle Plaine Fire Department again saw an increase in calls this year. Working with the City Council and Rural Fire Association, the Department ordered a new fire truck to replace one nearly 30 years old. We may have openings to be filled in the department this year. Please consider joining this great organization that gives back to the community every day. *Continued on back*

Water and Sewer Rates Increase for 2017

New water and sewer rates go into effect January, 2017 and will be reflected on the January utility bill. The City continues to review the status of its Water and Sewer Funds and make rate adjustments as necessary. Monitoring the cash flow of these funds and implementing recommended rate increases allows the City to work towards positive revenue to cover current and future debt, operations, and re-build reserves for future expansion and maintenance of the City's sewer and water infrastructure. The new utility rates are based on the 2015 Sewer and Water Study the City Council authorized through Abdo Eick and Meyers, LLP. The study took into consideration general operations, debt obligations, future expansion projects, cash flow and cash reserves. (Study available at www.belleplainemn.com.) The City enterprise funds are at a critical point due to the debt incurred from housing expansion and the downturn of the housing market that followed.

There is a 2% increase in the sewer and water base rate, senior base rate received a 0% increase;

usage rates increased as projected in the 2015 utility rate study.

The monthly residential base rate (not including usage charges) for 2017 is \$31.98; a \$0.58 monthly increase from 2016. The 2017 base rate (residential 3/4-inch meter) includes base fees of water \$9.96; sewer of \$15.77, state surcharge of

\$0.53, street light fee of \$2.30, and storm sewer fee of \$3.42. The senior monthly base rate for 2017 is \$18.57. The tables show the new 2017 rates and the 2016 rates for comparison. Irrigation monthly base rate for 2017 is \$3.59, and the per thousand-gallon usage fee is \$9.98 for 2017 compared to \$9.07 in 2016.

Residential Water Usage Rates		
All Usage Rates are Per 1,000 Gallons		
	2016	2017
Up to 2,000	\$3.31	\$3.64
2,001 - 4,000	\$4.98	\$5.48
4,001 and above	\$9.07	\$9.98

Residential Sewer Usage Rates		
Based on Water Usage		
	2016	2017
Up to 2,000	\$6.29	\$7.23
2,001 - 4,000	\$7.38	\$8.49
4,001 and above	\$14.90	\$17.14

Commercial Water Usage Rates		
All Usage Rates are Per 1,000 Gallons		
	2016	2017
Up to 4,000	\$3.36	\$3.69
4,001 - 24,000	\$5.04	\$5.54
24,001 and above	\$9.19	\$10.11

Commercial Sewer Usage Rates		
Based on Water Usage		
	2016	2017
Up to 4,000	\$6.37	\$7.33
4,001 - 24,000	\$7.46	\$8.58
24,001 and above	\$15.18	\$17.46

Monthly Water Base			Monthly Sewer Base Rate		
*Larger meter size base rates available at www.belleplainemn.com .					
	2016	2017		2016	2017
Up to 1" Meter Size*	\$9.76	\$9.96	Up to 1" Meter Size*	\$15.46	\$15.77
Low Income Senior	\$4.74	\$4.74	Low Income Senior	\$7.58	\$7.58

Year in Review, Cont.

Police - The City was recognized by SafeWise as one of the top 20 safest cities in Minnesota. The City was also recognized with a City of Excellence award from the League of Minnesota Cities for the second year in the Creative Public Safety Programs Category in recognition of our “Tiger Watch Program”.

Public Works - The City maintains its strong commitment to parks, trails, and the community pool. The pool again had an increase in visitors and the many special events, including the end of the season party, were a big success. In November, work was done to create an outdoor chess board near the library as a new park space. The City continues to maintain and improve our parks.

The City continued to maintain

infrastructure by undertaking two major projects this year. The 2016 Street and Utility Improvement Project included improvements on Forest St., Oak St., and Court St. These street and utility improvements are part of the capital improvement plan for Belle Plaine. The Enterprise Drive Overpass at the intersection of CSAH 3 and US Highway 169 was completed this fall. This has been a priority project and a great step towards improving the mobility within the community.

We are excited to see progress continue in 2017. Thank you to everyone who participates in city government – whether on a committee or commission, volunteers, or showing up at a public meeting. Through your participation the City of Belle Plaine reflects **YOU**.

**NEW FEE IN EFFECT
MARCH 1, 2017**

Any payments made by the phone will be assessed an additional processing fee of \$5.00. This new fee is effective March 1, 2017.

The City has many payment options available to avoid this additional fee:

- Pay on-line with your credit card or checking account at **www.belleplainemn.com**. Click on Online Payments, then Utility Bills.
- Drop off the payment at City Hall or in the after-hours drop box to the right of the front door.
- The easiest and most efficient way to make a payment is to sign up for ACH, where the payment comes out automatically from your checking account on the due date. You will continue to receive a statement each month.

Council Highlights & City Notices

December 5, 2016

- The annual Truth in Taxation hearing was held on December 5, 2016.
- Approved 3.2% intoxicating liquor license for Our Lady of the Prairie Catholic Church for fund raising event on April 22, 2017.
- Authorized purchase of 2017 police squad.
- Submitted request for limited use permit with State of Minnesota DOT for entrance monument in right-of-way TH25/Walnut Street.
- Authorized execution of memorandum of understanding with Scott County Community Development Agency for 2017 Economic Development Incentive Grant Program.
- Adopted Ordinance 16-14 pertaining to fees for 2017 and authorized summary publication.
- Adopted the final 2017 budget and levy.

December 19, 2016

- Accepted cash donation of \$20,000 from Belle Plaine

December 19, 2016 Continued

- Friends of the Library charitable gambling proceeds.
- Accepted public improvements of the 2016 Enterprise Drive Overpass and closed Enterprise Overpass Project Fund (478).
- Accepted the public improvements of the 2015 street and utility project and closed Project Fund (486).
- Approved large assembly permit for Belle Plaine Hockey Association for tournament on Jan. 14, 2017.
- Accepted resignation of volunteer firefighter Justin Dean.
- Authorized the purchase of a snow blower for Public Works Department.
- Approved 2017 wages and salaries for city employees.
- Appreciation plaques were presented to Mike Pingalore for serving as Mayor for four years and Council Member for two years; Gary Trost for serving as a member of the City Council for 16 years; and Henry Pressley, Jr., for his one-year service as a Council Member and 14 years as a Planning Commissioner.

January 2017 Calendar

2	New Years Day Observed	Offices Closed
3	City Council	6:30 p.m.
5	Public Works.....	9:00 a.m.
9	EDA	5:00 p.m.
	Planning Commission.....	6:30 p.m.
16	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Offices Closed
17	Park Board.....	5:00 p.m.
	City Council	6:30 p.m.
TBD	Public Safety.....	4:30 p.m.

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