

The Bridge

Connecting with our residents

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January • 2020

Message from the Mayor: Happy New Year!

Christopher G. Meyer – Mayor

I would like to start by wishing all of you a very happy and healthy year ahead. As we all do each year, we embrace the new calendar with renewed energy and a refreshed outlook. We get the same feeling throughout all City departments knowing that the new year will bring new opportunities and new challenges. It is how we as individuals and as a City, handle the challenges that will make a difference as we search for ways to turn challenges into opportunities. We can all look back at past experiences and determine the lessons we have learned and how we may apply them to the future. As all of the City departments look to the new year, they are looking at new budgets, goals, and employee performance plans, as well as continuing to deliver the high level of service that our residents have come to expect.

I, like many, are sure to make resolutions of happy and healthier living plans for the year ahead. Many of these plans are short lived due to the fact that the final outcomes may be unrealistic from the start. This is the same idea that goes into many conversations at City Hall as we look at new or existing services, especially when considering projects. Is the project realistic in its financial feasibility, as well as in the final outcome? Many ideas will never move past the discussion phase, but all ideas are important to consider as we move forward while continuing to protect our past.

Residents and local business owners alike have heard me ask that we all take pride in our community. This can be

accomplished in many ways - some easier than others. One of the ways to show pride in our community is to make a visual difference by cleaning up and maintaining your property. Will a small investment in physical labor or financial investment make the difference? I would certainly say that they would both make a huge difference. Can we honestly look at our own properties and not find ways to clean up, reduce or remove outdoor storage, or remove garbage? Those suggestions are fairly easy and in many cases, cost effective in terms of spending time instead of money to make the visual improvements. Some improvements will take a larger financial investment like replacing siding, windows, and upgrading landscaping. So whatever the case may be, I would ask that you please look around your property and see if there are any easy fixes you can make. There are many programs available at the City and County levels that offer grants, low interest loans, and other resources to aid residents and business owners.

Recently, I had the privilege to speak at the local Rotary Club and give an update on City events and projects. Engagements such as these are a great way to engage with residents and business owners and to have discussions regarding City business. After one of these discussions, a member asked why I serve as the Mayor. This is always easy for me to answer – serving as Mayor is the cornerstone of my civic service. My philosophy is to leave this place a little

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Construction Code Updates Expected in 2020

The City of Belle Plaine enforces rules and regulations contained in ten state mandated construction codes. The main purpose of construction codes is to protect public health, safety and general welfare. Specific codes are applied to a project depending on its use and type of construction.

The 91st Minnesota Legislature may update several existing construction codes when it reconvenes in February. City staff will receive training on any updates placed into effect. More than likely, how you get a building permit will not change; you will still apply for the permit at City Hall. Code amendments are likely to be placed into effect this coming Spring. The following are construction codes enforced in Belle Plaine, those italicized denote codes likely to be updated in 2020. For questions, contact Building Official Jim Tiegts at 952-873-5553.

- *2012 International Building Code as amended by the State of Minnesota*
- *2012 International Residential Code as amended by the State of Minnesota*
- *2012 International Mechanical Code as amended by the State of Minnesota*
- *2012 International Fuel Gas Code as amended by the State of Minnesota*
- *2012 Uniform Plumbing Code as amended by the State of Minnesota*
- *2015 Minnesota Energy Code with ANSI/IES Standard 90.1-2010*
- *2015 Minnesota State Accessibility Code*
- *2015 International Fire Code as amended by the State of Minnesota*
- *2015 Minnesota Conservation Code for Existing Buildings*
- *2017 National Electric Code*

better than how I walked into it. There are many, many committed people in our city that volunteer hundreds of hours to make projects come to life and continue to offer services and amenities that make Belle Plaine a great community in which to live. From the city to the schools, to all of the civic, church and veterans organizations, there are many opportunities for all of us to step up and help out. If we all gave a little time or our talent, imagine the huge differences we could make.

So, as you contemplate your New Year, please consider the opportunities to give where you live. Take a chance and join a group, share your talent or meet some new residents. As this world continues to change it is up to all of us to continue to build and plan the direction of our "favorite home town"!

Get out and enjoy the beautiful prairie and all of the great opportunities that are out our front door!

New For 2020 Elections

A presidential primary will be held on March 3, 2020. The presidential primary differs from the primary and general election because it requires voters to request a ballot of the party of their choice. Currently, only two political parties will have a presidential primary ballot. The voter's choice of party ballot is recorded and is private data. However, a list of who voted in the presidential nomination primary and the political party each voter selected will be provided to the Chair of each major political party. How a voter voted on the ballot will be secret.

Registered voters must be:

- A U.S. citizen
- At least 18 years of age on Election Day
- A resident of Minnesota for 20 days
- Finished with all parts of any felony sentence

Please remember if your address has changed or if you did not vote in the last election, you will need to re-register.

The MN Secretary of State website has information about the election process, allows voters to check their registration, register to vote, and find their polling location.

www.sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting/how-elections-

work/presidential-primary

On Presidential Primary Election Day, March 3, 2020, all Belle Plaine city residents vote at City Hall Council Chambers, 218 Meridian Street North. The presidential primary election will have absentee ballots available starting on January 17, 2020 at the Scott County Highway Department building or voters can apply for a ballot online at www.sos.state.mn.us. All voters are encouraged to verify their voter registration.

If you are interested in being an election judge in 2020, the requirements and applications are available at City Hall or on the City's website www.belleplainemn.com/elections.

NEW Absentee Voting Location

Scott County Highway Department
600 County Trail East Jordan, MN 55352

This is the location for absentee and early voting starting on January 17, 2020 and ending on March 2, 2020.

Snow Removal Regulations

Parking will not be permitted on residential streets during a snow emergency, when snow has accumulated to a depth of one-half (1/2) inch or more. Downtown parking will be posted as NO PARKING during a snow emergency. Don't let your vehicle get towed, sign up for Nixle, a free program which sends an e-mail and text message to your cell phone regarding snow emergencies and / or community information. Sign up for free at www.nixle.com.

City Council Contacts:

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Belle Plaine City Hall cityhall@ci.belleplaine.mn.us	952-873-5553

January 2020 Government Calendar

1	New Year's Day.....	City Offices Closed
6	Design Committee	5:15 p.m.
	City Council.....	6:30 p.m.
9	Public Works	9:00 a.m.
13	EDA.....	5:00 p.m.
	Planning Commission	6:30 p.m.
14	Public Safety	4:00 p.m.
20	MLK Day	City Offices Closed
21	Parks Commission	5:00 p.m.
	City Council.....	6:30 p.m.