

The Bridge

Connecting with our residents

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May • 2020

Message from the Mayor: Unexpected Life Changes

Christopher G. Meyer – Mayor

It continues to amaze me that in the weeks since my last column how drastic life has changed. Last month we were just getting hit with the first phases of the COVID-19 issue. Now a month later, life as we knew it has completely changed with many people staying home and businesses closed until further notice. This has been a total life change for all those that I associate within terms of trying to have a normal existence.

We are thankful for all medical staff for the work that they do day-in and day-out. This change in our lives has also given us more appreciation for people in all walks-of-life who are now on the front lines keeping us safe. These individuals provide necessary services and supplies and keep our internet, cell phone, municipal and many other systems up and running. We thank all of these people for the hard work and dedication during this time of need.

In my professional career, I am involved in the business of senior housing and housing for people with developmental disabilities. This whole sector has been totally upended by the fact that to protect this very vulnerable population, the majority of the residents are now staying safely within their residences and family visitation has been severely limited. It is heartbreaking to see a resident who is 80 or 90 years old not able to see their family on a regular basis. Families and friends are utilizing window visits, FaceTime, and other forms of contact, but this certainly does not take the place of a physical face-to-face visit. This in turn has taken a huge toll on the professionals who are there to care for the residents on a daily basis - so we thank them as well.

In many of my previous columns, I have mentioned how fortunate we are as a community to have some of the best

emergency response professionals within in our City. Our police, fire and EMS teams continue to answer the call 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week without hesitation. There have been numerous changes to processes and procedures in an attempt to protect all of these heroes as they respond, but there is still a huge health risk to all of them. I also echo this appreciation for the other City departments that continue to show up every day to make sure our city operates as normal as possible and delivers all of the necessary services and systems. So, thank you to all of you for what you do for all of us.

*Thank
you to all!*

I remain confident and hopeful that as we continue to move forward, the world as we know it today will start returning to somewhat of our previous normal routines. I do think that for many of the things we did in the past; there will be life long changes to our comfort zone. As the world works towards treatments of COVID-19, and at some point a vaccine that will control this awful virus, we will find more peace and comfort.

In closing, I would also acknowledge all of the 2020 graduates that are now going to miss the end of their school year and spring activities. As hard as this is, you can look at the fact that your class is now part of world history, and will be discussed for years to come. Many weddings are now not taking place or modified to a much smaller event, so again my thoughts are with all of these people as well.

We all have to continue to do our part to stay safe and work towards an end to this current situation. Please remember that you can still get out and enjoy our favorite hometown by utilizing our parks and trails with some limitations.

Please stay safe and wish all of you great health!

Activities for the Entire Family

Check out the new Youth Connections page on the City website. It is loaded with fun activities for the entire family. Jason Wadsley, the Aquatic Center Manager and Event Coordinator has spearheaded this effort to help everyone stay active. There are word finds, coloring and photo challenges, and fitness bingo games. You can watch virtual tours of the City Police Department, Fire Department, Waste Water Treatment Plant, and more.

Individuals and / or families also have the opportunity to participate in the Adopt-a-Bird Feeder program for the residents of the Belle Plaine Lutheran Home. The bird feeders are hung outside of residents' windows so they can enjoy watching birds year round. There are a limited number of feeders available so if you are interested, contact Jason at jwadsley@ci.belleplaine.mn.us. The Belle Plaine Police Department, Lutheran Home Association, and the City of Belle Plaine have partnered to bring bird feeders to the residents.

Another activity will be to construct wood duck house kits. Kick off for this is project is anticipated for mid-May. The kits will be dropped off at participants homes, picked up when complete, and then set up at the wastewater treatment plant. Details will be available soon.

Watch the webpage for more activities and fun challenges! www.belleplainemn.com/youth-connections.



Building Permits Are Booming

Despite the current Stay at Home Order, phones are ringing and permits are coming in at City Hall! Building and Zoning permits are available online at www.belleplainemn.com/permits-licenses-forms, by phone, or requested via email. Many permits have been updated to a format that you can fill out using a PDF application. Simply download the permit application, save it to your computer desktop, enter the fillable fields, save it, then email the form to City Hall using the EMAIL button at the top of the form. Other ways to submit permits are by, fax, mail, or the drop box at City Hall.

We have had many inquiries about constructing fences and sheds and whether a permit is needed. A Zoning permit is required for all fences and for sheds under 200 sq. ft. (Over 200 sq. ft. requires a building permit.) Refer to the City website for specific requirements.

APPLICATIONS: www.belleplainemn.com/permits-licenses-forms
SUBMIT: Email: lblue@ci.belleplaine.mn.us, drop box, or mail
PAYMENTS: credit card or check.

- UTILITY PAYMENTS:**
- **PAY ONLINE** with credit card: (You will need account number) www.belleplainemn.com click on quick links.
 - **DROP BOX** (next to main doors at City Hall)
 - **AUTOMATIC PAYMENT** - applications available at www.belleplainemn.com/permits-licenses-forms
 - **PHONE** 952-873-5553 – the convenience fee will be waived

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City Council Contacts:

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Filing Opens in May for City Elections

There are three City seats up for election in 2020. Open seats are for the Mayor and two City Council Members. Filing for the seats begins Tuesday, May 19th at 8:00 a.m. and closes Tuesday, June 2nd at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall. The filing fee is \$2.00. Due to COVID 19, you may have to set up an appointment at City Hall in order to file for a City office. Please watch for future notifications on the City's website, the City's Facebook page, or call City Hall at 952-873-5553.

To be eligible for a City office, an individual must be a qualified voter, at least 21 years of age on the date of taking office, U.S. citizens, and resident of the city for at least 30 days before the election. An individual who has been convicted of a felony under either state or federal law cannot hold elective office in Minnesota unless the individual's civil rights have been restored.

The County, State and Federal primary election is Tuesday, August 11th. The City of Belle Plaine operates under a primary system. If requirements are met, then City offices will be included on the primary ballot on August 11th. The 2020 general election is Tuesday, November 3rd. If you have any questions, please contact City Hall at 952-873-5553.

Annual Clean-Up Day
Saturday, May 16th

On-Line Swim Lesson

Registration Opens May 11th
www.belleplainemn.com

Aquatic Center Open House
May 16th | 2 - 4 pm | City Hall
Register for Swim Lessons
Purchase Pool Passes

Dates Are Tentative - Watch City Media For Updates

May 2020 Government Calendar

4	Design Committee	Canceled
	City Council	6:30 p.m.
6	OAA Belle Plaine	6:15 a.m.
11	EDA	5:00 p.m.
	Planning Commission	6:30 p.m.
12	Public Safety	7:30 a.m.
14	Public Works	9:00 a.m.
18	Parks Commission	5:00 p.m.
	City Council	6:30 p.m.
25	Memorial Day Observed	City Offices Closed