



City of Scandia
Scandia Community/
Senior Center
14727 209th St. N.
Scandia, MN 55073

We're on the web!
www.ci.scandia.mn.us

City Council:
Dennis Seefeldt, Mayor
651 433-5999
Dolores Peterson
651 433-2229
Pete Crum
651 433-5034
Donnette Yehle
651 433-3602
Mike Harnetty
651 433-4883

Regular Council Meeting:
Third Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.
**Council/Planning
Commission Meeting:**
First Tuesday, 7:00/7:30 p.m.

City Staff:
Anne Hurlburt, Administrator
Brenda Eklund, Deputy Clerk
Colleen Firkus, Treasurer
John Morrison, Public Works
Supervisor
Steve Thorp, Building Official
David Hebert, Attorney
Hebert & Welch PA
Paul Hornby, Engineer, Bonestroo
Sherri Buss, Planner, TKDA, Inc

City Office:
Phone: 651 433-2274
Fax: 651 433-5112
E-mail: mail@ci.scandia.mn.us
Hours: Monday through Friday
9 a.m. to Noon & 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Dedicated to Rural Community Values

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Scandia, MN 55073

Community Calendar, October 2008—March, 2009

October

- October 7, 7:30 p.m., Comprehensive Plan Hearing Continued
- October 12, Lion's Pancake Breakfast
- October 13, Columbus Day— Office Closed
- October 14, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., Fire Department Open House

November

- November 1, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Open for Absentee Voting for General Election
- November 4, Election Day
- November 11, Veteran's Day— Office Closed
- November 20, Lutfisk & Meatball Dinner, Elim Church
- November 21, Turkey Bingo
- November 27 & 28, Thanksgiving Holiday— Office Closed

December

- December 1, 7 p.m. Truth in Taxation Hearing
- December 13, Lion's Community Breakfast

- December 14, Lucia Dagen at Gammalgården
- December 16, 7 p.m. City Council Budget Adoption Hearing
- December 25, Christmas Day—Office Closed

January

- January 1, New Years Day— Office Closed
- January 6, City Council Swearing-In
- January 19, Martin Luther King Day— Office Closed

February

- February 7, Vinterfest
- February 16, President's Day— Office Closed
- February 28, Fireball 2009

For more information and a city meeting calendar, see the website, <http://www.ci.scandia.mn.us>.

For **Gammalgården** events, see: <http://www.gammalgardenmuseum.htm>.

A TWICE-YEARLY
PUBLICATION
FOR RESIDENTS
OF THE CITY OF
SCANDIA,
MINNESOTA



Volume 2, Issue 2

October, 2008

Flat city tax bills projected for many properties—

Council Begins 2009 Budget Talks

While the City's property tax rate and levy will go up many individual property tax payers may see decreases in their city tax bills, the Council heard in work sessions on the proposed 2009 budget this fall.

The 2009 preliminary tax levy of \$1,860,892 was approved by the Council in September. This is a maximum, "not to exceed" number that will be finalized in December. Scandia must comply with a state limit that holds the base levy to a maximum inflationary increase of 3.9% for most spending. Factoring in a 16.3% increase in the debt service levy (needed to pay for road projects from previous years) and increases in police and fire personnel costs (which are all considered "special levies") the total levy would increase by 9.23% compared to the 2008 tax levy of \$1,703,589.

Individual city property taxes are determined by complex relationships of property values, government spending, rules on property tax classifications, state aids and other factors. Between the 2007 and 2008 property value assessments, the median market value of Scandia properties decreased 11.5%. Preliminary calculations show that city taxes on properties with the median value change will remain flat or slightly decrease (less than 1%). Properties that decreased in value more than the median would show a bigger decrease, and vice versa.

Expenses are Up, Other Revenues are Down—Just as our household budgets are buffeted by the surge in fuel, utility, health care and insurance costs, so is the city's budget. Many of the contracted services the city uses, from refuse disposal to police, have passed along cost increases higher than the inflationary increase allowed by the state.

At the same time costs are up, revenues from sources other than property taxes are down.



Interest earnings are down, and permit fees remain low due to the construction slow-down. Scandia's small allocation of state aid was eliminated for 2009. Fees for service (such as rental fees for the Community Center) contribute only modestly to city coffers.

State Mandates and Budget Trends—City budgets are also affected by mandates from the state and federal governments, big and small. The 2009 operating budget will be hit for the first time with expenses for implementing the new 800 MHz public safety radio system. Completion of the new Comprehensive Plan (itself a state mandate) will trigger a required update of development codes, causing expenses for planning services to exceed those of the last two years. These are only two of the mandates directly affecting 2009 expenses.

Increasing mandates have a significant affect on the city's budget over time. Whether it's new financial reporting requirements, hiring and safety rules, emergency management, changing election laws, federal flood insurance program requirements, data practices and records retention, or any other of the myriad rules under which city government operates, it requires staff and/or consultants to carry them out. This explains

2009 Budget talks, continued on page 2

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2009 Budget Talks, continued...

much of the increase in the City/Township's budgets over the last few years. After modest levy increases from 2003 through 2007 (averaging about 6% per year) the 2008 actual and 2009 proposed levies have been higher (11.06 % and 9.23%, respectively) partly due to the need to add staff to meet many of these mandates.

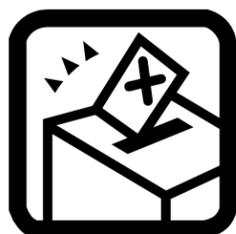
Smaller levy increases were also possible in previous years because of the use of reserve accounts to pay for road and drainage projects. Rather than levy additional taxes, borrow funds or assess property owners for more of the costs, the former township tapped reserve accounts. Those reserve accounts are no longer available, and the city has been advised to build more reserves for cash flow and to fund future needs.

Capital Projects Delayed— With the help of the Capital Improvements Committee, the City Council has begun to plan for the city's long-term capital needs including replacement of major pieces of equipment such as snow plows and fire trucks. A major accomplishment this year was preparation of a pavement management plan, which will help the city schedule its road maintenance projects (see separate article on page 3.) With the state levy limit in place for the next three years, funds for capital

projects will be very limited. This year's review of the capital plan resulted in some projects being delayed. Paving of most of the remaining gravel roads in the city (including Pilar Road, Old Marine Trail and 185th St.) which originally was planned to begin in 2009 has been pushed back to 2010/2011, at the earliest. Some planned equipment replacements have been delayed, and existing equipment (such as a dump truck/plow) will be kept for longer periods of time.

Truth in Taxation Hearing Scheduled for December 1—In November, each property owner will receive a "Truth in Taxation" notice with their estimated 2009 property tax bill from each of the property taxing jurisdictions. The County, School District and City will each have their own "Truth in Taxation" hearings, at which citizens are invited to comment on the proposed property tax levy.

Scandia's hearing will be on Monday, December 1 at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center. If necessary, the hearing will be continued on December 8. After the "T in T" hearing, the levy can be reduced but cannot be raised beyond the maximum levy certified in September. The final budget and tax levy will be finalized after the adoption hearing scheduled for Tuesday, December 16, 2008.



Did you know...

As of September 10, 2008, Scandia has 2,795 registered voters. The total population is 4,210.

Remember to Vote on Tuesday, November 4

Minnesotans will go to the polls to elect a new President, Vice President, Senator, Member of Congress and State Representatives on November 4. All Scandia residents vote at the Community Center Hall, 14727 209th St. N. Polls open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m.

Scandia will also choose a Mayor and two City Council members. The Mayor serves a two-year term, and the Council members will serve four-year terms, all commencing on January 5, 2009 (the first Monday of the new year.)

Candidates for city offices are:

Mayor: Dennis D. Seefeldt

Council member: Connie Amos, Michael C. Harnetty, Donnette S. Yehle and John Lindell

For more election information, please see the city website at www.ci.scandia.mn.us and click on "Election Information" on the home page.

*** Dates to Remember ***

Friday, October 3
Absentee voting begins.

Tuesday, October 14, 5:00 p.m.
Last date to pre-register. After this date, register at the polls on Election Day

Saturday, November 1, 10 a.m.-3p.m.
City office open for absentee voting

Monday, November 3, 5 p.m.
Absentee voting closes

Tuesday, November 4, 7 a.m.-8 p.m.
Election Day

New Comprehensive Plan Nears Adoption

As this newsletter goes to press, the final steps to adoption of Scandia's new 2030 Comprehensive Plan are being taken. After working for over a year to draft the plan, the Comprehensive Plan Committee has turned the plan over to the Planning Commission for a formal public hearing. The hearing, opened on September 18 and continued on Tuesday, October 7 (7:30 p.m.), will give Scandia

citizens one more opportunity to comment and give their input. Depending upon whether or not any changes are recommended, the City Council could approve the plan at the October 7 meeting or soon thereafter. The draft plan has already been submitted to surrounding local governments for their review and comment. The next step will be to submit the plan to the

Metropolitan Council for the required review. Then the plan will come back to the Council for formal adoption. That should happen early in 2009, and then the process of implementing the plan will begin. The city has 9 months after adoption to bring its official controls (primarily zoning and subdivision regulations) into conformance.

Pavement Plan Inventories Road Needs

Scandia has invested millions of dollars in paving gravel roads, and continued maintenance is necessary to preserve that investment. So concluded the Pavement Management Plan completed this summer. City Engineer Paul Hornby presented the report to the City Council at a work session in July.

The first step of the study was to complete a thorough inventory of the condition of all city streets. Each was given a numerical rating, and past maintenance

was documented. Then recommendations were made on what type of maintenance (such as crack filling and seal coating, patching, mill and overlay or reconstruction) will be needed, and when.

Asphalt streets deteriorate slowly during the first 10 years of their life cycle, but then tend to deteriorate more rapidly until they reach the end of their life cycle in 15 to 20 years unless there is proactive maintenance. The study recommended that the

city increase spending on preventive maintenance, to save millions of dollars later by preventing streets from deteriorating to the point that more costly reconstruction is necessary.

The plan provides a tool for spending maintenance dollars most efficiently and effectively. More study is still necessary to identify financing options. The Pavement Management Plan is available on the city web site, www.ci.scandia.mn.us, under "city services", "streets."

Short Takes

Attention snowbirds— Leaving town for the winter? Make sure to contact the Washington County Sheriff's Department (651 439-9381) for free home-checks while you are away.

Do I really need a permit for that?— Protect your investment in your home. Building Official Steve Thorp is here to help you do the job right. It's a buyer's market, so don't jeopardize a future sale or refinancing with improvements not up to code. It's more costly to correct problems later. Call Steve at 651 433-2274, Ext. 102 with any questions.

"New" Ice Rink will be ready for winter— The worn out and rotting boards have been replaced at the city ice rink with used boards salvaged from the city of Roseville. Final touches, including painting, will be completed soon. Many thanks to all the volunteers

who made this possible, especially Mike White & Matt Rasmussen.

Winter Rec Programs Planned— The Parks and Recreation Committee is planning a variety of winter programs including snow tubing at Trollhaugen (December), Saturday morning open-gym program at Scandia School, (January) and Vinterfest (February 7). The popular learn-to-skate and after-school hockey programs will also be offered. Watch the city website for details.

Burning Permits— A (no-charge) burning permit is required for open burning when there is no snow cover. In all cases, please notify the Washington County Sheriff's Office (651 439-9381) one hour before you burn. There may be restrictions depending on weather, time-of-day or air-quality issues. See the city office for more information and for permits.

Exterior Storage— Scandia requires that all personal property be stored in a building or fully screened, with a few exceptions for licensed vehicles and recreation equipment. No more than four passenger vehicles per dwelling unit are allowed on parcels less than 10 acres in size. No more than 2 items of recreational equipment (such as campers, boats, trailers etc.) may be stored in the side or rear yard on any lot.

Signs— Permits are required for all signs, including temporary signs for garage sales and community events. There's no fee for temporary sign permits. No signs may be placed in any public rights-of-way, on any roof, or painted on walls or attached to utility poles.

For more information on exterior storage and signs see the city website under "FAQs."

THANK YOU!

To the following people who spent the last year translating the community's vision for Scandia into the new 2030 Comprehensive Plan:

- Dennis Seefeldt
- Michael Harnetty
- Thomas Krinke
- John Lindell
- Christine Maefsky
- Moose Malmquist
- Michele McNulty
- Chris Ness
- Kevin Nickelson
- Susan Rodsjo
- Karen Schik
- Peter Schwarz
- Michael White
- Greg Zauner

...and all the other Scandia citizens who contributed to the planning process.



Reminder:

Permits are required for all signs.