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Mayor's Message

Hanging Baskets

On Monday, June 7, the hanging flower baskets went up on Main Street for the sixth consecutive year. The flowering baskets project, sponsored by the Business Improvement District (BID), began in 2005 when 18 containers were suspended from selected light poles on Main Street. River Falls was one of the last cities in the area to adorn its Main Street in this very popular fashion. Since then, the practice has expanded and improved locally. Every summer has produced a few more baskets. This season, 30 baskets will hang on Main Street and another ten will beautify the Maple Street Bridge. According to Joleen Larson, the BID board member who spearheads the project, future plans are to hang baskets from the walking bridge which connects Veterans' Park with Heritage Park on the west side of the Kinnickinnic.



Of course, more baskets mean more money spent on the project. The BID Board provides the bulk of the financing, and the City is chipping in with the remainder, in particular the cost of the brackets needed to hang the baskets on the Maple Street Bridge.

In addition to financial support, volunteer labor is required on weekends. During the week, the Public Works Department assigns seasonal employees to the watering task, a daily requirement unless rain makes watering unnecessary. If you are willing to volunteer as a weekend watering person, or if you are willing to purchase a hanging basket as a contribution to city beautification, please contact me at 715-426-3404 or drichards@rfcity.org. The flowers are purchased from three local vendors: Pearson Florist and Greenhouse, Cedar Hill Greenhouses, Inc., and Earthworks River Farm Nursery. ~

Don Richards, Mayor of River Falls

Don Richards

Cascade Avenue Project

In 2007, the City began working in partnership with UW-RF and Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) toward the eventual reconstruction of Cascade Avenue from Spruce Street to Wasson Lane. The road surface, road base, and underground and above ground utilities that have all reached or neared the end of their useful life. In addition, a goal is to reconstruct the roadway that addresses problems and concerns with the current roadway configuration - like accident frequency, capacity, safety, and parking. To identify these problems and concerns, the City conducted a public involvement process that has included six public meetings. In addition to soliciting the public's perspective on problems and concerns, we also asked what the project's goals and objectives should be and what potential solutions they thought we should explore.

Many different methods were utilized to encourage participation in the public involvement process. Direct mail invitations were sent to over 470 potential stakeholders. E-mail notices were sent to students via the campus E-mail system. The *River Falls Journal* and *Student Voice* ran articles and advertisements. Postings for the meetings were made in many campus buildings, city hall and the library. Announcements were made on RFC-TV Channel 16, UWRF-TV Channel 19 and on campus radio. Over 125 different people attended one or more of the six public meetings.

From these public meetings, a plan for Cascade Avenue has evolved that attempts to balance viewpoints of many different groups. While the concept plan that has been developed does not fully satisfy all the desires of each and every group, it does reflect a balance and attempts to work as much as possible within the common ground.

At this time, the project is nearing completion of the preliminary design phase. The preliminary design phase involved field surveying and engineering necessary to define the width of the right-of-way and identify utility issues.

(continued on page 2)



Inside This Issue

- Cascade Avenue Project..... Page 1
- Fall Elections Page 2
- Emergency Weather Siren Test Dates..... Page 2
- New Kwik Trip Coming Soon..... Page 2
- River Falls Main Street Project..... Page 3
- Residential Parking Ordinance Page 3
- Calendar of Events.... Page 3
- Radio Road Interchange..... Page 4
- RFC-TV State Award Winner..... Page 4
- Public Safety Building..... Page 4
- Development Updates..... Page 5
- Rental Housing Inspection Program..... Page 5
- Intern Program at the City Page 6
- West Side Project..... Page 6
- Emerald Ash Borer Information Page 7
- Employee Spotlight... Page 7
- Street Light Fee..... Page 8
- Library News Page 9
- City Garbage Contract..... Page 9
- Neighborhood Parks Page 10
- Rainwater Benefits.. Page 10
- Hot Tub/Pool Draining..... Page 10
- Storm Water Information Page 11



City of River Falls
Web Site
www.rfcity.org

Fall Elections

This fall, the City will hold two elections. The first is the Partisan Primary on September 14. The second is the general fall election on November 2. Offices on the ballots will be: Governor; Lieutenant Governor; Attorney General; Secretary of State; State Treasurer; US Senator; 3rd Congressional District; State Senator; Representative to the Assembly; County Sheriff; and Clerk of Circuit Court.

You can check your voter registration information at this website: <http://vpa.wi.gov>. You will be listed on this site according to the way you last registered to vote in Wisconsin. Birthdate must be entered as mm/dd/yyyy. If you have difficulty locating your record, try variations of your name. City of River Falls residents may call the City Clerk's Office (426-3408) to check on voter registration status. The City's Voting District Map is located on the City's web site at www.rfcity.org under Voter Information.

All registered voters can request an absentee ballot. Voting is done in person in the Clerk's Office or by mail. To receive an absentee ballot, send a written request to the Clerk's Office. The request must include your full name, your River Falls street address, the address you need the ballot mailed to, and the date of the Election you requesting the absentee ballot for, the date, and your signature. ~

Cascade Avenue Project *(continued from page 1)*

Highlights of the Cascade Avenue plan include:

- New road base, pavement, pavement markings, curb and gutter, sidewalks, water, sewer, storm sewer, street lighting, and electric.
- Three roundabout intersections at Second Street, Sixth Street, and Wasson Lane.
- Single curving traffic lane in each direction.
- On-road lanes for bicycles.
- 10' wide off-road pathway on south side of Cascade Avenue.
- Continuous sidewalk on north side of Cascade Avenue.
- Pedestrian safety improvements that concentrate pedestrian crossings at intersections.
- Landscaped medians continuous through corridor.
- Boulevards lined with trees
- Parking Neutral Concept
 - No parking on street from Spruce Street to 6th Street.
 - Additional new off-street parking spaces offsetting those eliminated on-street
 - A portion of Third Street vacated by City and used by University to expand existing parking lot west of North Hall

The City anticipates a \$5 million-\$8.4 million cost (2008 dollars) for the Cascade Avenue Project of which it was felt \$2-\$3 million should come from WDOT. A verbal agreement has been reached with WDOT that will meet the \$3 million contribution for cost participation.

With the terms of WDOT's participation headed toward an agreement, City staff is now preparing to negotiate an agreement with UWRF regarding the project. The Cascade Avenue Concept plan anticipated \$1-\$3 million should come from UWRF. The wide-range of these figures reflect the different levels of aesthetic amenities that UWRF may want to incorporate into the project. Cascade Avenue is the front door to the campus.

The project will not move into final design until written agreements are reached with both WDOT and UWRF. Assuming these agreements can be finalized in 2010, reconstruction of Cascade Avenue from Spruce through Sixth Streets could begin in 2012. Reconstruction and expansion of the University's parking lot west of North hall would ideally be completed before the road project is undertaken (2011). Reconstruction of Cascade Avenue from Sixth Street through Wasson Lane would take place in 2013 or later. ~

River Falls Emergency Weather Warning Siren Test Dates 2010

Listed below is the remaining schedule for 2010. The test is at 6 p.m. If severe or threatening weather exists on any of these scheduled dates, the test will be the next day (Tuesday) at 6 p.m.

- Monday, July 26**
- Monday, August 23**
- Monday, September 27**

It is important to remember the City of River Falls does not sound an "all clear" after an actual activation of the outdoor warning system.

All community members are encouraged to familiarize themselves with safe practices regarding severe weather. Information can be obtained at the National Weather Service website at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/safety.php/php> or Wisconsin Emergency Management website at: <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov> or by calling the River Falls Police Department at 425-0909. ~



KWIK TRIP

The appearance of North Main Street and Quarry Road will soon be changing as a new Kwik Trip Convenience Store rises on the vacant property once occupied by a used car lot and the Holiday Convenience Store. Plans and specifications have been approved by the City and the new Kwik Trip should be open by mid to late fall. Kwik Trip will be located on one of three lots created for commercial use.

Also, long-planned upgrades to the intersection are being made and will be completed by the time Kwik Trip opens. Turning lanes and signal lights are being installed to improve safety and traffic flows and will enhance access to into the site as well as improve the overall traffic safety of the general area. Sidewalks are being extended to ensure safe pedestrian access and landscaping will be planted along North Main and Quarry Road to brighten the aesthetics of the right of way. ~

The River Falls Main Street Project

Making downtown River Falls beautiful, one business at a time.

The Business Improvement District (BID) Board approved several grants this past quarter. Businesses *Growing in Style* and *The Goldsmith*, both received grant monies plus a grant went to *Junior's Bar and Grill*. All were beautiful projects that will continue to help the downtown area improve facades and signs.

The BID Board has voted on and approved \$10,000 per year for a mural project. The Board is in the process of determining where to start the project and is working on getting the procedure

on paper. If you are interested as a downtown building or business owner to participate in the mural project, please contact one of our board members.

Another project that the BID has approved is the addition of six new garbage cans and six new smoke stuffers. The BID Board also is in the process of purchasing new "America in Bloom" banners to replace the Kansas City Chiefs banners for the downtown business district.

The BID Board is very proud that we have assisted in making the downtown of River Falls more appealing to all who enjoy it. For more information, go to www.rfmainstreet.com.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to help cover Wildcat Sports!

RFC-TV volunteers play a vital role in the production of high school sporting events.

No experience is necessary and RFC-TV provides a great environment for learning the basics of video production.

Call RFC-TV at 425-5400 to set up an orientation meeting with our staff.

Residential Parking Ordinance

The City of River Falls has a Residential Parking Ordinance in effect for certain areas of the City. This Ordinance prohibits parking on one side of the street without a permit between the hours of 7 a.m. and 4 p.m., excluding Saturday, Sunday and legal holidays. The Ordinance is in effect in Zones A and B from September 1 – May 31 each

year. The Ordinance is in effect in Zone C year round. To see a map of those streets that are impacted by the Residential Parking Ordinance go to http://www.rfcity.org/police_resparking_info.asp or contact the River Falls Police Department at 425-0909.

Parking permits are issued by the Police Department on Mondays from 2 – 4 p.m. and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. – 12 noon or other times by appointment beginning August 16.

Calendar of Events

- July 10, 16, 23, 30.** **Music in the Park, Veteran's Park, 7 p.m.**
For more info visit <http://www.riverfallscab.org/musicinthepark.php>
- July 10, 13, 17, 20, 24, 27, 31.** **Farmers' Market,**
*Corner of East Locust and 2nd Streets
Saturday 8 a.m. – 12 noon, Tuesdays 3-6 p.m.*
- July 8-11** **River Falls Days**
- July 17.** **Rhino Foundation Bike Event**
Whitetail Ridge Corporation Park
- July 20-22** **Farm Technology Days**
Roger and Beverly Peterson Farm, River Falls
- August 3, 7, 10, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28, 31** **Farmers' Market,**
*Corner of East Locust and 2nd Streets
Saturday 8 a.m. – 12 noon, Tuesdays 3-6 p.m.*
- August 6, 13, 20, 27** **Music in the Park, Veteran's Park, 7 p.m.**
For more info visit <http://www.riverfallscab.org/musicinthepark.php>
- August 6-8** **Border Battle Bike Race**
Whitetail Ridge Corporation Park
- September 4, 5, 6.** **Library Closed**
- September 6.** **Labor Day**
City Offices Closed
- September 11.** **Art on the Kinni, 9 a.m.**
Heritage Park

Grow to Share

Grow to Share, a nonprofit organization, recently received approval to lease approximately three acres of property on the north end of Hoffman Park East for a community garden. The City Council agreed to lease the land for \$1 per year. This partnership between the City and organization will benefit the community as all the garden yields will be donated to charities. These plots are not community garden plots in the sense that people can rent space for their own gardens. For more information, contact Josh Hudek, President, Grow to Share 715-426-6334.

Radio Road Interchange:

This summer, construction began of an overpass at the intersection of Coulee Trail and State Highway 35 between River Falls and Hudson. Construction of this overpass is part of a process to convert Highway 35 between River Falls and Hudson into a freeway. The next step will be in 2013 when WisDOT anticipates constructing an interchange near the current intersection of Radio Road, Chapman Drive, and Highway 35. This interchange has been discussed since the mid 1990's. Construction of this interchange will close the intersection of Highway 35 and County Highway U which has been the location of multiple fatal accidents in recent years.

River Falls is a partner with WisDOT in the construction of the Radio Road interchange. On September 27, 2005, the City entered into an agreement with the WisDOT. This agreement obligates the City to cover \$3M of the \$8M project. The City anticipates recovering much of its investment through fees paid by developing property that most directly benefits from the interchange project. As early as 2002, the City negotiated an agreement with the developers of Sterling Ponds committing that developer pay \$800,000. It is anticipated that the additional contributions will be collected through other agreements.

In 2011, WisDOT anticipates acquiring the necessary real estate to allow construction of the proposed interchange. Finally, in spring 2013, WisDOT anticipates bidding the Radio Road Interchange Project. ~



RFC-TV 16 Brings Home State Awards!

RFC-TV Channel 16 was recognized for outstanding programming by the Wisconsin Association of PEG (Public, Education, Government) Access Channels.

*Back Row: Mayor Don Richards, Dennis Hildreth
Front Row: Trish Juers, Dawn Wills
Not Pictured: John Lindell*

Congratulations to the following RFC-TV Staff and Volunteers:

Falcon Frontier Days Rodeo 2009 produced by Trish Juers won an Award of Excellence in the Local Events Coverage category.

Memorial Day 2009 produced by Dennis Hildreth, won an Award of Achievement in the Local Events Coverage category.

River Falls in Bloom produced by John Lindell won an Award of Achievement in the Documentary category.

Threshing Bee 2009 produced by John Lindell won an Award of Achievement in the Local Events Coverage category.

River Falls Days Parade 2009 produced by Dawn Wills won an Award of Achievement in the Local Event Coverage category.

River Falls in Focus produced by Don Richards and Dawn Wills won an Award of Achievement in the Series category. ~

Public Safety Building Open House

The City of River Falls Public Safety Building Open House was held on Thursday, June 17. The Open House provided a great opportunity for

citizens in our community to interact with Public Safety Staff, view various emergency services vehicles, experience actual demonstrations of equipment and participate in a tour of the recently remodeled Public Safety Building. An exciting and informative day was had by all. ~



McGruff and Investigator/Youth Service Officer Golden



DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

University Falls Apartments

Earlier this year, the City Council approved a four-acre residential Planned Unit Development (PUD) located between West Cascade Avenue and Lake George. A PUD is a process that allows the City to negotiate the overall development of the site. The resulting plan becomes the zoning on the site and any changes must go back through the Plan Commission and City Council.

The Gerrard Corporation of LaCrosse, Wisconsin, received approval to develop three separate three-story multifamily dwellings consisting of approximately 12 units per building of three to four bedrooms, with a fourth building being a community use building. This development will occur over time and the immediate work will be on the first two phases.

The first phase of the project will be the demolition of three single-family residences along Cascade this summer, construction of the three-story multifamily building at the corner of Cascade and State Street this fall, and a trail on the north side of the property along Lake George. The second phase will also be a three-story multifamily building located to the west and is proposed to be developed in 2012. The third phase will be a three-story multifamily building to be located to the east of State Street and is scheduled for 2013, along with a proposed community use building proposed in partnership with the Foster and Associates, owners of the property on which the last of the four buildings is to be developed.

Along with approximately \$3 million in pledged private sector investment into the first two phases, the City provided funding through the creation of a Tax Incremental Financing District (TID) for public improvements like the trail along Lake George. The improvements will be constructed as part of the private project and the Gerrard's will be reimbursed up to approximately \$500,000 over the next ten years for those public improvements. The funding from the TID is only available as the Gerrard Company pays taxes to the City in an amount greater than or equal to the amount reimbursed to them. After ten years, all of the taxes from the property go to the City for other potential public improvements



University Falls Apartments

such as trail extensions and park improvements. The TID funding does not subsidize the housing units. No general property taxes are being used for this project. Detailed plans and maps can be found on the City's website (www.rfcity.org).

Holiday Station

The Holiday Station located at South Main and Spring Street is remodeling the exterior of the building along with new signage and additional landscaping this summer. This project continues the significant private sector investment in downtown buildings and properties.

Non-metallic Mining Operation

The Kraemer Company out of Plains, Wisconsin, has met with City staff in regard to a Special Use Permit to expand the existing mining of Cudd's Quarry and an additional 50 acres to the south. To date, the City has not received a completed application for action. Even though the quarry expansion is located in the Town of Kinnickinnic, the City of River Falls is involved with permitting such a use. When and if the Kraemer Company completes an application and satisfies the City's permit application requirements regarding the compatibility of their plans to the City's overall development plans, water quality expectations, and traffic impacts, the project will be discussed and considered by appointed and elected officials in a formal setting. A public hearing will be held before action is taken.

River Station

The first phase of the redevelopment of the area east of Clark Street and south of Cedar Street is about to occur. The vacant lot and former City Cable Access building will soon be transformed into a new building that will compliment the architecture of City Hall.

The City has reviewed and approved plans for a 21,400 square foot two story office building that will be the home of Frisbee Architects and future tenants. The Cable Access building has been carefully integrated into the new architecture that will include a green roof, an outdoor amphitheater and parking. Future development phases are being planned and will include an extension of the pathway system along the Kinnickinnic River. ~



River Station Building

Rental Housing Inspection Program

Over the past year, City staff has been working with some owners/managers of rental dwellings to update the existing ordinance on licensing and inspections. There have been few changes to this 40 year old ordinance, and there is a need to review the inspection process, fees, and licensing procedure for the approximately 2,100 rental units in the City of River Falls.

Currently, any residential unit in the City that is rented must obtain a rental license from the City. Units are inspected every three years and fees from the permits are used to pay for the costs of the inspections, complaint handling, and administration of the program.

The City Council will be considering a variety of changes to the program, including frequency of inspections, fee amounts, and the need for continuation of a regular inspection program for privately owned rental units. ~

Summer Intern Program at the City



From left: Lacey Davidson, Meredith Kirby, Matt Overturf, Chris Browning, Zack Miller, Ryan Albright, Dr. Rob Baker

This summer, the City of River Falls is hosting six interns who are participating in the Wittenberg University/International City/County Management Association Local Government Management Internship Program. The program provides students with hands-on projects combined with a twice-weekly night class that serves as an introduction to local government administration. Students are able to combine their hands-on experience with various theories taught in the classroom, enabling them to achieve a detailed understanding of local government practices. This year's interns include Lacey Davidson ('12, Wirt, Minnesota), a junior double major in Political Science and Philosophy; Matt Overturf ('11, Bellefontaine, Ohio) a senior Political Science major; Zack Miller ('10, West Jefferson, Ohio) a recent History graduate who plans to attend O.C.S., hoping to become an Army Officer; Meredith Kirby ('12, Buffalo, New York), a junior Political Science major; Chris Browning ('11, Avon, Ohio), a senior Political Science major; and Ryan Albright ('10, Downers Grove, Illinois), who recently graduated from the University of Northern Iowa with a degree in Public Administration. The interns are led by two Wittenberg Professors, Dr. Rob Baker, Political Science, and Dr. Jeff Ankrom, Economics. The eight-week program runs from June 2-July 23. For more information, go to the program website: <http://www.localintern.org>.

WEST SIDE PROJECT

The West Side project stems from the Lake George Area Study completed in 2005. This study suggested implementation of small scale infiltration practices on the west side of the Kinnickinnic River. As a follow up to that study and recommendation, representatives from the City, Trout Unlimited, the Kinnickinnic River Land Trust and the Kinnickinnic River Priority Watershed Project (which includes the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and St. Croix County) met several times to discuss the vision and goals of this project. The vision was to retrofit an older area of River Falls that was constructed before storm water management practices were installed. Two small sewersheds have been targeted to start a demonstration project for small scale practices.

The City implemented practices to capture and treat roadway runoff within one sewershed (area draining to a storm sewer outfall on the Kinni) in addition to private property improvements. Flow monitors have been installed in the discharge pipes for each sewershed. Two years of pre-construction data has been collected and the hope is to be able to determine effectiveness of the installed practices with post-construction data. The City expects that this demonstration project will allow it to determine if there is enough interest and general acceptance of these practices to consider installing similar practices in other City storm sewersheds in the future.

For information regarding this project please visit http://www.rfcity.org/eng_westside.asp, or contact Kristy Treichel, ktreichel@rfcity.org, (715) 426-3412.

Practices Installed

Curb Bump Outs

The curb line of the street was bumped out into the existing parking lane of the street and a curb cut provided in the gutter allows water into the practice.

The bump out area is slightly depressed to allow water to pond and soak into the ground before overflowing to the existing curb storm sewer inlet.

These were installed on Dallas Street and were planted with native, long-rooted grasses. The rain garden on Pearl Street also has a small bump out area to increase the size of the rain garden.

Pervious Pavers

These pavers are similar to regular pavers; however, they have bumps on the edges to create larger void spaces between the pavers. These spaces are then filled with a granular rock material which allows water to flow through it into a storage layer below and eventually infiltrate into the ground.

Permeable Concrete

Permeable concrete looks very similar to regular concrete but it allows water to pass through it. Many describe it looking similar to a rice krispie bar. This is the first permeable concrete installed in this part of Wisconsin.

- A section of installed curb and gutter was removed on Walnut Street and replaced a solid concrete curb and a permeable concrete gutter section.

Rain Gardens

Rain gardens are shallow depressions planted with flowers, grass or shrubs, that collect stormwater and allow it to soak into the ground. These gardens are taking street runoff through curb cuts.

- These were installed on Walnut Street and Pearl Street.

FAQ: Emerald Ash Borer



The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an invasive species from Asia that was first detected in the United States in 2002 and has since spread to nine other states and Canada. In 2008, EAB was confirmed in Eastern Wisconsin and in 2009 was found in Western Wisconsin and as close to River Falls as the Twin Cities. This erratic distribution pattern is caused by the transportation of infected

ash material, (principally firewood) and cannot be attributed to natural spread as EAB can only fly ½ mile from the tree where they emerge. EAB kills all species of North American Ash. In Wisconsin, the potential damage to the Ash population is huge as there are an estimated 737 million Ash in our forests and another five million in our communities. EAB will eventually make an appearance in our City, and it will have an aesthetic effect on the community for many years to come. The City is currently drafting a preparedness plan in anticipation of its arrival.



Common Questions Asked About EAB Are:

What does EAB look like?

The adult beetle is dark metallic green and about one-half inch long.

Is there anything I can do now to protect the Ash trees in my yard from EAB?

There are chemical treatments available to protect ash trees from EAB, but they are not 100 percent effective.

Is Ash still a viable choice when considering what to plant in my yard?

In general, having a diversity of species in your yard and along our streets is the best defense against all tree health problems. However, it may be wise to plant alternative species until EAB resistant cultivars are available at a future date.

What can I do to help?

Educate yourself on how to recognize signs and symptoms of EAB. Two excellent sources of information may be found at www.emeraldashborer.info and <http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives>. Report possible sightings of EAB by calling 1-800-462-2803. Do not move firewood. Purchase or cut all firewood from the same general location where you plan to use it. When camping or at a cabin, do not take any leftover firewood home with you.

What are those purple things hanging in City trees?

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) are looking for signs of the EAB deploying purple traps in Ash trees across the state. Several are located within the City. The purple traps

are hung by hooks out of the reach of pedestrians or passers-by. The three-sided trap is about two feet tall and little more than a foot wide on each side. A Manuka oil lure, derived from New Zealand's Manuka tree, is hung within each trap to help draw nearby beetles to the tree. The trap is coated with a sticky substance that will ensnare the adult beetle. In scientific studies, beetles were attracted to the color purple. The combination appears to be appealing to the EAB. Traps will be inspected after several weeks with workers looking for adult EAB beetles and refreshing the lure. In the fall, when the beetles are no longer flying, the traps will be collected and reinspected. ~



Employee Spotlight – Communication Coordinator Dawn Wills

In April, the council approved the new position of Communications Coordinator that will be filled by Dawn Wills. Dawn has been managing the public and government access channel for the city since 2000. She will still continue her duties at River Falls Community Television (RFC-TV) along with performing a variety of marketing,

communication and public relations activities for the City of River Falls. Dawn says, "I'm excited to be the Communications Coordinator for the City. This seems like a natural fit for me."

Last year Dawn coordinated the launch of the new city web site and most recently she has been working on the city's intranet for employees. Dawn has also been a part of the city newsletter team, and she is assisting with the city employee newsletters. Dawn says, "Every day I'm doing something different and I enjoy working with the public. When you are producing communication pieces and

videos on a wide range of topics you get to learn a little something about everything!"

Dawn graduated in 1992 from UW-Eau Claire with a communication arts degree and advertising minor. After graduating, she worked at WEAU TV-13 in Eau Claire for two years where she was a part of the studio production of the nightly news broadcasts. In 1994, Dawn went to TeleVideo Productions, also in Eau Claire, where she spent the next five years producing/directing corporate videos, safety and training videos, sales and marketing videos, and broadcast commercials.

Dawn lives with her boyfriend, Dave, in Hudson, and they own an English Springer Spaniel named Driver. Dawn enjoys walking her dog, reading, going to movies and spending time with family and friends. ~

Street Light Fee

Each year the City of River Falls spends approximately \$215,000 to provide general street lighting in the City. This includes the electricity cost for the lights as well as the cost to maintain the poles and equipment. The funds for street lighting currently come from general property taxes paid by homes and businesses in River Falls. During the 2010 budget discussions, the City Council examined many cuts to programs and potential sources of revenue to operate the City's services. The resulting budget made cuts of nearly \$500,000 and did not raise the property tax levy. The budget adopted by the City Council includes establishing a fee-based structure for streetlights beginning this year. General property taxes will pay for about 60 percent of the \$215,000 street lighting budget and a new fee charged to all properties in the City is planned for the second half of 2010.

Transferring the costs of street lighting to a fee does several things. First, it spreads the costs over a larger share of property in the City. Currently, with property tax funding for street lighting, exempt properties do not make a contribution toward the costs of street lighting. With a fee, all benefiting properties pay a proportionate share of lighting costs. Currently, property taxes are paid by approximately 55 percent of all properties. The proposed fee would apply to 97 percent of the property area. The fee will also allocate costs in relation to the type of services received. Properties that use more lighting in general will pay a higher share of the costs.

The proposed fee would be included in each property's monthly utility bill. The estimated fee for a single-family residential property is \$2.00 per month. This compares with the estimated cost of \$45 per year for a single family home under the current system. Non-residential properties would pay according to a rate per acre. The rate is determined by estimating lighting costs for eight different categories of properties and then dividing that cost by the total acreage of property in the category.

The eight categories of properties used for the fee are:

1. Single-family residential
2. Multi-family residential
3. Commercial
4. Industrial
5. Public/Quasi-Public
6. Office/Service/Church
7. City Property
8. Golf Course

Parks and open spaces, agriculture, roads, lakes, and rivers are exempt from the fee as proposed.

The categories are similar to those used in developing the stormwater utility fee. The City is grouping properties with other properties of similar characteristics as far as intensity of lighting, proximity to lights, and the types of lights used nearby. Residential properties will pay a flat rate per month, other properties will pay a fee per acre. The goal of staff is to balance simplicity in rate structure design versus equity in the resulting rates, resulting in less administrative costs.

For example, the estimate cost for street lighting near commercial properties is approximately \$4,700 per month. The total acreage of commercial properties is approximately 2,250. Therefore, the fee per acre is approximately \$25.00 per acre per month. A downtown storefront like Freeman Drug is approximately 0.1 acres so the fee for that business would be approximately \$2.50 per month. A larger commercial property like Shopko (7.5 acres) would pay approximately \$187.00 per month.

The following represents the relative costs by each of the eight categories under the proposed fee and under the current property tax payment method:

Category	Street Lighting Costs - Fee		Street Lighting Costs - Tax	
	% of total	Annual Cost	% of total	Annual Cost
Single Family residential	35%	\$ 74,605	70%	\$ 150,500
Multi-family residential	17%	\$ 36,550	13%	\$ 27,950
Commercial	16%	\$ 34,830	7%	\$ 15,050
Office/Service/Churches	15%	\$ 32,035	2%	\$ 4,300
Public/Quasi-Public	9%	\$ 18,490	0%	-
City Property, Developed	6%	\$ 12,900	0%	-
Industrial	3%	\$ 5,375	5%	\$ 10,750
Golf Course	0%	\$ 215	< 0.1%	n/a
Undeveloped	0%	\$ -	3%	\$ 6,450
	100%	\$ 215,000.00	100%	\$ 215,000.00

Following are some frequently asked questions about fees and specifically the proposed street light fee.

Will I be charged a fee if I don't have any street lights on my property?

Yes. Since there is benefit to the community as a whole, property owners with a light in front of their yard were not charged more than someone on an adjacent property. Rather, properties were divided into eight groups by property type. These property types have different demands for street lighting. For example, basic residential lighting is typically 100 watts every 300 feet. Commercial areas have higher wattages (and costs) and more density of lighting.

How many streetlights are operated in the City?

Currently, there are approximately 1,200 street lights in the City of River Falls.

What are the advantages to a streetlight utility versus property taxes?

Street light utilities can be structured in an equitable manner that more closely reflects the relationship between costs of lighting and the properties benefitting. Under the current system, a large percentage of properties do not contribute towards the costs, and those properties that do are treated the same regardless of relative benefit.

How does the streetlight network benefit the community?

Streets lights are a valuable tool to keep our community safe. Streetlights help ensure traffic and pedestrian safety. Anyone who drives or walks in our community after dark benefits from streetlights. Streetlights may also reduce crime—a benefit to the community as a whole.

Will my property taxes go down if the fee is implemented?

No, not as a direct result of the new fee. The current proposal does not include a planned reduction in the property tax by a corresponding amount. However, the street light costs will be paid entirely by the fees collected freeing property tax revenue for other City priorities and thereby minimizing the pressure for raising property taxes. In 2010, the property tax levy was not raised from 2009 assuming the new fee revenue would be in place. The property tax levy is set by the City Council each year. The Council has the ability to examine all operations to determine whether the priorities of the community require additional taxes, if current taxes are adequate to pay for priorities, or if taxes can be lowered and still maintain priority services.

At the Library

The Summer Library Program, Make a Splash: Read, is now in full swing. There are many events for kids to participate in. In the Independent Reading Program, kids ages two through middle school can pick up a reading folder and track the time they spend reading or being read to. This program is self-paced and is a great way for school age children to keep up their reading skills and for preschoolers to build on the early literacy skills. The Independent Reading Program will continue until August 26.

The following events are aimed at all ages of children:

July 14, 10:30 a.m. The Wonderweavers---Storytellers present Get Wacky, Wet and Wild

July 21, 10:30 a.m. Magician Norm Barnhart

July 28, 10:30 a.m. Musician Magic Mama

These events are free, and will take place in the lower level of the library. The cost of the Summer Library Program is underwritten by the River Fall Library Foundation.

Fall Preschool Storytime registration begins August 16. All programs start Labor Day week (September 6).

- Tuesdays at 10:30 and 11:30 a.m.: Lapsit for children 24-26 months with a parent or caregiver.
- Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.: Babytime for children birth to 23 months with a parent or caregiver.
- Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.: Preschool Storytime for ages 3 to 5.

Questions? Call Susan at the library at 425-0905.

City Garbage Contract

The City of River Falls currently contracts with Waste Management for residential solid waste and recycling disposal. This contract expires at the end of 2010. The City plans to solicit proposals from various providers as part of negotiating a new contract. The City last solicited proposals in 2001 and received bids from six different contractors before negotiating a final contract with Waste Management in 2002. Waste Management not only offered a significantly lower price, they also included commingled recycling pick up, meaning that residents no longer had to carefully sort things like cans, bottles, and plastics into separate bags.

There are a number of reasons why the City of River Falls has chosen to contract for residential garbage collection through one hauler including:

- It is a sustainable practice reducing fuel consumption, pollution, and unnecessary damage to roads.
- It makes our neighborhoods cleaner, safer and quieter with less unnecessary truck traffic.
- With garbage trucks being the single biggest contributor to deterioration of our local neighborhood streets, having one company's garbage truck travel down a street rather than four or more different companies saves taxpayer money on road repair and maintenance.
- We know who to contact if there is a litter problem associated with garbage pickup and avoid one company pointing the blame at another company.
- Monthly rates contracted for by the City are less than half of what is typically obtained by individuals contracting for their own service because it is more efficient for one hauler to pick up from each and every home in neighborhood.

Current City rates for refuse and recycling are \$10.19/mo. billed quarterly. This 5.6 percent below the \$10.80/mo. rate that City residents were paying ten years ago in 2000. While we cannot guarantee that these types of cost efficiencies can continue for the next ten years, we are committed to negotiating a contract that will deliver exceptional service to the residents of the City at an exceptional price. Keep in mind that a portion of these monthly rates help fund the City's Compost Site and Spring Clean Up operations.

We are interested in your perspective on and how we may be able to improve this service provided by the City. A survey has been created at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/riverfallsrefuse> or follow the link on the City website at www.rfcity.org.

Items that we would like your opinion on include:

- How much you are willing to pay to fund things like the City Compost Site and Spring Clean Up operations.
- Whether we should provide larger, covered recycling carts as opposed to the current recycling bins.
- If every other week recycling pickup as opposed to the current weekly recycling pickup is acceptable.

Please take time to complete our survey and help us to better understand your needs with regards to refuse, recycling, yard waste, and other solid waste disposal matters. If you would like a hard copy of the survey mailed out to you with a postage paid return envelope, please call Kristy Treichel at 426-3412, or e-mail ktreichel@rfcity.org.

"Print From Anywhere" to the River Falls Public Library

The River Falls Public Library has a web-based printing solution that allows you to print to our copier from your portable device, home or work computer or on our wireless network - anywhere you have an internet connection. Simply click on the "Print from anywhere" link on the library home page at <http://www.riverfallspubliclibrary.org/> or go directly to <http://www.printeron.net/riverfalls/library>. Select either color or black and white prints, enter your email address, and then upload your document or copy/type in the address of the web page you want to print. After your print job is ready, you will be given a six-digit print code. Bring your print code to the Reference Desk to retrieve your print job. Prints are \$.10 for black and white or \$.50 for color copies. If you need help or have questions, call the library at 715-425-0905. ~



The River Falls Public Library will be closed Labor Day weekend, September 4, 5, and 6. The library will re-open at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, September 7. Labor Day also marks the return of Sunday hours. Beginning Sunday, September 12, the library will be open 1-4 p.m.

Neighborhood Parks

The Park and Recreation Advisory Board along with City staff met in a park planning workshop with the residents of Sterling Ponds and Highview Meadows. More than 40 people attended and residents had the opportunity to review the parks and recommend the type of play equipment and amenities they wanted. A general plan was laid out for each of the parks and priorities set for the type of equipment to be phased in over the next several years. Presently each of these developments does not have neighborhood parks and have been considered high priority for park development.

The cost of a neighborhood park depends upon the amount of development occurring in each park. For example, a one to five acre neighborhood park may include items such as a paved pathway (\$7,500), a children's playground structure (\$25,000), a half basketball court (\$8,500), four picnic tables (\$3,360), four benches (\$3,944), two garbage/recycling containers (\$2,726), two bike racks (\$1,340), two signs (\$1,000), and 24 trees (\$6,600) for a total cost of \$59,970. This does not include the cost of the land, grading, seeding, watering, maintenance and upkeep. Neighborhood parks are funded almost exclusively with park impact fees paid by builders and developers when new homes are constructed. Of those fees, approximately 40 percent is earmarked to the specific neighborhood park serving that home while 60 percent is designated for improvements in regional parks like Glen, Hoffman, and DeSanctis. ~

Capture Rainwater to Benefit your Home and Community

In these tight times, homeowners are looking for ways to save money and improve the value of their home. With varying degrees of effort, homeowners can help improve water quality by reducing the amount of runoff that flows from their property, through simple actions such as redirecting downspouts, using rain barrels, and creating rain gardens.

There are three prime ways to achieve this goal. The simplest approach is to redirect downspouts away from impervious surfaces and toward gardens and grassy areas where water can infiltrate into the ground. The second approach is to collect and store rainwater from downspouts and rooftops into rain barrels for future use watering lawns and gardens. The third idea is to build an attractive rain garden to absorb runoff and provide a habitat for wildlife and native plants.

Redirect Downspouts

Each downspout on a house can drain approximately 12 gallons of water per minute during a one-inch rainfall. Unfortunately, most of that rainwater is directed down driveways and sidewalks and ends up in the storm drains. And along the way, this storm water runoff picks up pollutants, such as lawn chemicals, motor oil, and pet waste, eventually ending up untreated in lakes and streams. Homeowners can improve the water quality in their neighborhoods by disconnecting their downspouts and redirecting the flow of water to a grassy area or garden. That way rain infiltrates into the soil and recharges groundwater.

Benefits of Rain Barrels

With the use of a rain barrel, homeowners are lowering their water bills while benefiting their

plants, flowers, trees, and lawns. Homeowners collect the rainwater by attaching their downspout to a rain barrel. This water is actually better than tap water for plants and lawns because its slight acidity helps plants absorb the soil's minerals. Homeowners also save money on lawn and garden maintenance since an estimated 40 percent of household water is used for this purpose during the summer.

Plant Rain Gardens

Spring is the perfect time to plant rain gardens, another measure that adds to the value of a home and improves the water quality. One of the key benefits of rain gardens is that they allow 30 percent more water to soak into the ground as compared to a patch of conventional lawn.

Rain gardens are basically sunken gardens that are 4-12 inches deep with a flat bottom, designed to trap and infiltration rainwater. They are normally about one-third the size of what is draining to it, usually a roof, yard, or driveway. Deep-rooted native plants can absorb more water than other varieties. These gardens use little or no pesticides and don't need watering once established. The maintenance is similar to what is required for a perennial garden. They also enhance the beauty of your yard and neighborhood and provide valuable habitat for birds, butterflies, and beneficial insects.

The cost depends on who does the labor, the size, and the need to purchase plants. Homeowners interested in planning a rain garden can obtain a free how-to manual prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and University of Wisconsin-Extension. Go to clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/raingarden.

For more information, contact Kristy Treichel at ktreichel@rfcity.org, (715) 426-3412 or visit http://www.rfcity.org/eng_raingarden.asp. ~

Hot Tub/Pool Draining

The City of River Falls does not require a permit to discharge pool water; however, please keep in mind the following procedures and restrictions. To protect the environment, the following "Best Management Practices" apply to water discharged from swimming pools and hot tubs:

- It is recommended that discharge water be directed to grass and/or landscaping.
- If irrigating on site is not possible, water may be discharged off the owner's property – provided it is directed to a curblin gutter of a paved street.

How to drain your pool or spa:

- Prior to irrigating or disposing of the water, shut off the chlorination system (if you have one) or stop adding chlorine.
- Let the water in the pool or spa "sit" for at least one week to reduce the chlorine or bromine

level until it is undetectable and temperature is at air temperature.

- Measure the pH. It should fall within a range of 6.5-8.5 prior to discharge. Discharge water should not be cloudy or discolored as this typically indicates a pH imbalance.
- As the water is discharging, it **must be monitored to ensure that it does not cause any erosion or flooding**. Erosion is most likely to occur at houses on a bluff that discharge to the rear yard down the steep slope.
- Discharges may **not** run onto a neighbor's property or across a sidewalk
- If a pool or spa has been acid washed, the water may **not** be discharged off the pool/spa owner's property.
- Water from back flushing pool filters should **not** be discharged to a stream, ditch or storm sewer. Back flush from pool filters must be discharged to the sanitary sewer or on-site septic tank and drain field system. ~

Storm Water



What is storm water and why is it important?

As rain falls to the ground it becomes known as storm water. Storm water that falls on pervious surfaces (grass, fields, natural areas, etc.) soaks into the ground without running off into streams and lakes. Storm water that falls on impervious surfaces (roofs, driveways, roads, sidewalks, etc.) is not allowed to soak into the ground and runs off into streams and lakes. As land is developed, trees are cleared and houses, buildings, and parking lots replace them. Runoff on hard surfaces occurs faster and in greater volumes. Increased runoff can create erosion problems, increase water pollution, and destroy stream habitat. Impervious surfaces also reduce groundwater recharge, which is a critical factor for cold-water streams such as the Kinnickinnic.

What is the City doing to improve the effects of storm water?

The City has a long track record of taking serious its responsibility to manage storm water runoff from the City. The City has implemented storm water management strategies to comply with federal and state regulations, protect the Kinnickinnic River, and reduce the adverse effects of development. Storm water ponds, ditches, and swales are key components in storm water management.

Ponds provide runoff rate control, remove sediment from runoff, and replace infiltration lost to impervious surfaces. Each pond you see has a purpose.



Dry ponds are those that have an outlet pipe that allows the pond to drain completely after a rain event. These ponds are effective in reducing the rate at which storm water runs off the land. However, because there is no storage area for sediments, sediments settling to the bottom are generally washed down stream during the next rain event. The Hoffman Park Detention basin is a well-known example of a dry pond.

Wet ponds are designed to have water in them all the time. These ponds reduce the rate of storm water runoff and are very effective in removing sediment from runoff. The permanent water pool slows down runoff allowing sediments in the runoff to settle to the bottom of the permanent pool.



Infiltration basins are specifically designed to allow storm water runoff to soak into the ground, thereby replenishing the groundwater system (which is source of our drinking water) as well as replenishing the springs that feed the



Kinnickinnic. Runoff routed to infiltration basins is generally pretreated to remove sediments and prevent plugging of the basin. Additionally, these basins should drain dry within 72 hours, which is less than the time required for mosquito larvae to hatch.

Sterling Ponds, Spring Creek Estates, Highview Meadows and the Royal Oaks Subdivisions all have wet ponds and infiltration ponds working in series together.

Drainage ditches and Swales provide routes for storm water to reach ponding facilities. If these areas become obstructed with debris, flooding can occur in upstream areas of the drainage way. Any chemicals and/or debris may wash into downstream ponds and/or the Kinnickinnic River.

What can you do to improve the effects of storm water?

There are simple things we can all do to help improve storm water quality. It does not take large or costly projects to make a difference. In fact, small inexpensive practices can add up to a great deal of improvement. Homeowners can utilize rain barrels on their property, or direct their downspouts to lawn areas instead of impervious areas, or install pervious pavers on their driveway. These are just a couple simple practices that can make a difference. Other river-friendly practices include washing cars in commercial car washes or on the lawn. More information about each of these practices can be found at http://www.rfcity.org/eng_stormwater.asp.

Be a good neighbor to storm water facilities

Drainage ways and ponds need special consideration. To enhance the facilities in your community and make for a cleaner Kinnickinnic River, residents need to:

- Pick up pet waste around the ponds, in streets and boulevards, and in yards. Pet waste washing directly into the ponds (and then to the river) is no different than dumping raw household sewage into the river.
- Direct rain gutters to yard areas rather than driveways.
- Wash cars in commercial car washes or on your lawn. Keep in mind that the dirt and rust you rub off, along with the soap you use goes directly into the storm sewers and then directly into the Kinnickinnic River.
- De-chlorinate swimming pools and hot tubs prior to discharging. The City recommends discharging this water to the sanitary sewer system.
- Don't dump trash, grass clippings or leaves into the ponds or drainage easements.
- Only phosphorus free fertilizers should be used. Limit the use of fertilizers and herbicides and follow directions for application closely.
- Don't discard antifreeze, motor oil or other chemicals on your property or in the storm drains.
- Plant trees and other deep-rooted species to absorb excess water.
- Buy rain barrels to store rainwater for later use on your garden or lawn.
- Construct a rainwater garden on your property.

Did you know...

Discharging chlorinated pool/spa water into streams is harmful to fish and other aquatic life. Just as the chlorine is so effective at killing the bacteria and algae in your pool or spa, it can also kill the natural biota in the Kinnickinnic River.

FREQUENTLY CALLED PHONE NUMBERS

General Information
715-425-0900

Utility Questions
715-425-0906

Police Department
715-425-0909

Public Library
715-425-0905

Municipal Court
715-426-3429

NEWSLETTER TEAM:

(Please email comments or suggestions to:
newsletterfeedback@rfcity.org)

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City of River Falls
Web Site
www.rfcity.org



Back Row: Tom Caflisch, Scott Morrissette, David Cronk, Randy Kusilek
Front Row: Bob Hughes, David Reese, Mayor Don Richards, Jim Nordgren

2010 Mayor and Common Council

Quotes from our new council members on why they wanted to be a part of the City Council:

Bob Hughes: "Before 2008, I was very discouraged by the system of democracy that controls our lives but I found by running in a State Assembly Primary that I do have a voice and it does have impact. My primary issue during this last race was that the Cascade Redesign Project was superfluous to current and future need as well as completely

failing to address the primary concern of residents and students of this city - parking."

Scott Morrissette: "I ran for City Council because I believe that it is everyone's duty to do public service at some point in their life. My interest is to guide the City's growing while maintaining a small town atmosphere. As is always the case, decisions made today will affect the citizens of River Falls for years to come. It is a matter of making the best decision with the most information available at the time. My goal is to remember to be informed about issues before I make a decision and never forget that it is the tax payer's money we are dealing with." ~

The Current Mayor and Common Council

Position	Name	Address	Phone	E-mail Address
Mayor	Don Richards	106 N. Wasson	715-441-2397	drichards@rfcity.org
At Large	Randy Kusilek	518 N. Winter	715-425-0415	rkusilek@rfcity.org
At Large	David Cronk	843 Leroy Lane	715-425-9174	dcronk@rfcity.org
At Large	Scott Morrissette	2137 Rushmore Drive	715-425-8993	smorrissette@rfcity.org
District 1	Tom Caflisch	508 Roosevelt Court	715-425-7186	tcaflisch@rfcity.org
District 2	Jim Nordgren	1144 South Fork Drive	715-425-7327	jnordgren@rfcity.org
District 3	David Reese	425 N. Wasson Lane	715-425-9369	dreese@rfcity.org
District 4	Bob Hughes	709 Bartosh Lane	715-441-2110	bhughes@rfcity.org

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