

COMMUNITY LINK

FEBRUARY 2009



CITY OF
CHATFIELD

A NEW BEGINNING: THE CHATFIELD CITY COUNCIL

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A NEW CITY COUNCIL	1
UTILITY BILLS	2
ISSUES OF INTEREST	2

At the January 12th meeting of the Chatfield City Council, a new mayor and two new Councilors took their seats, forming a new Council that will serve for the next two years. Mayor Les Knutson, Councilor Josh Thompson and Councilor Dave Frank took the Oath of Office and joined Councilors Paul Novotny, Ken Jacobson and Ginny Engle.

Mayor Knutson is a twenty-two year resident of the city, is married and has two children, both of whom graduated from the Chatfield Public School. The Mayor has a history of volunteering as a coach, with CCTV, and by serving on the Board of Directors of the Chosen Valley Golf Club as well as serving a term on the Chatfield City Council. His election as mayor fulfilled a goal that he had made previously, which was to run for mayor after retiring from his job with the federal government.

Josh Thompson is a nine year resident of Chatfield, having moved to Chatfield when he was hired as a police officer. He currently is employed as a police officer at the City of Rochester, is married, and has three young children. Councilor Thompson has served on the City's Planning & Zoning Commission and on the business management committee of his local church. When running for office, he said that he hoped to assist in making responsible and well-planned decisions for the long term that do not negatively trickle down to the residents, and to ensure that citizens have a voice in their government.

Dave Frank is also a nine year resident of the city, is married and has one son. When running for office, Councilor Frank said that he will do what he can to ensure that the City runs efficiently, that it grows naturally and that it is managed for the better good of its residents. He is employed at Chatfield Lumber.

During its organizational meeting, on January 12th, the Council elected Paul Novotny to serve as Vice-Mayor. While the Vice-Mayor is not typically pressed into service frequently, that is a unique and important position as this is the person who will fulfill the duties of the Office of the Mayor whenever the Mayor is absent or is otherwise unable to fulfill the duties.

The Mayor also filled out a number of positions that are required by the City Charter during the meeting. Shane Fox was re-appointed to the position of Chief of Police, Fred Suhler, Jr., was re-appointed to the City Attorney's post and Tony Lammers was re-appointed as the Director of Public Works.

In order to do the preliminary work that various issues require, before the full Council works on them, Mayor Knutson also appointed Councilors to the standing subcommittees of the City Council. To the Public Works sub-committee, he appointed Councilors Ken Jacobson and Ginny Engle. This sub-committee deals with Streets & Alleys, Storm Water, Sanitary Sewer, Drinking Water, Weed Control, Snow Removal, etc.

To the Park & Recreation Committee, Councilors Thompson and Frank were appointed. That sub-committee deals with issues related to parkland, the swimming pool, playgrounds, recreational paths and that sort of thing.

Councilors Novotny and Jacobson were appointed to the Personnel Committee. They will have oversight of the Personnel Policy, the Union Contract, hiring process, Wages & Benefits, etc.

The Public Services Committee deals with Fire, Police, Ambulance, Skywarn, Animal Control, Liquor Licensing and Building Code issues. Councilors Novotny and Frank were appointed to this sub-committee.

Mayor Knutson and Councilor Thompson were appointed to the Joint Powers Committee, which serves as a liaison between the City and the School Board, so they can discuss collaborative efforts and/or conflicting issues.

Mayor Knutson has organized the Council and each of the Councilors are available and want to serve the community.

CITY OF CHATFIELD

www.ci.chatfield.mn.us

Phone: 507-867-3810

Fax: 507-867-9093

21 Second Street SE

Chatfield, MN 55923

In Case of Emergency:

9-1-1

Ambulance (Non Emergency)

507-867-4446

Police (Non Emergency)

507-867-3331

Chatfield Public Library

507-867-3480

ISSUES OF INTEREST

Finances: Due to the State's budget problems, the City lost \$72,000 of aid that was promised to it in 2008. We are expecting a larger cut in 2009 and 2010 and are working on a new budget. We will share the impact of these cuts as we can.

Burr Oak Extension: Favorable bids have been received for this project. This project is in the final stages of planning and should be resolved soon.

Highway 52: City officials have been working as closely as possible with MNDOT for some time, regarding the condition of Highway 52, between Fountain and Marion. The Commissioner of Transportation has agreed to meet with the City personally. Recently, the City was informed that a new driving surface should be in place, between Fountain and Marion, by fall of 2009. We have also been told that MNDOT hopes to complete a reconstruction project between Chatfield and Marion in the near future. This is far better news than we have been given in the past so are pleased this is moving in the right direction.

FEBRUARY 2009

- **Mon Feb 2nd— Planning & Zoning 7:00 pm**
- **Mon Feb 9th— City Council 7:00 pm**
- **Wed Feb 11th—Cable Television Board 7:00 am**
- **Tue Feb 17th— Heritage Preservation Commission 7:00 pm**
- **Mon Feb 23rd— City Council 7:00 pm**
- **Thu Feb 26th— Economic Development Authority 5:30 pm**

CITY OFFICIALS

MAYOR

Les Knutson (507) 867-1500
mayorknutson@ci.chatfield.mn.us

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Paul Novotny (507) 867-3549
paulcti@qwestoffice.net

Ken Jacobson (507) 867-4759
chatfieldjake@yahoo.com

Ginny Engle (507) 867-1687
gineng2@aol.com

Josh Thompson (507) 867-4448
joshthompson1@mchsi.com

Dave Frank (507) 272-7016
daviddfrank@gmail.com

YOUR UTILITY BILL

While it isn't fun to bear this news, please be aware that sanitary sewer rates have increased again. The good news, though, is that neither the water rates nor the garbage rates will go up. In fact, the water rates have not increased since 2003 and the garbage rates have not changed for a number of years, either. But, unfortunately, the sewer rates do need to be increased.

The base sewer bill (for those who use 2000 gallons or less) will go to \$32.67, an increase of \$2.28. A resident who uses 5000 gallons each month will get a bill of \$53.37, which is an increase of \$3.72.

The rate increase is due to the increased debt associated with a new treatment plant. The need to pay off a debt of \$6.5 million simply causes rates to increase. Instead of dramatically increasing rates all at once, the Council decided to increase rates gradually over time. It was hoped that a series of smaller, but more frequent, rate increases, would be easier to fit into personal budgets. Even though the rate increase is unavoidable, the City still regrets the need to do so and would appreciate your understanding.

A Clear and Safe Path

With all the snow and ice, it is especially difficult to get around, for most anything. Please keep your meter readers in mind and help them out by keeping a clear path to your meters.....oh, and a dog-free path is greatly appreciated, too.

Sidewalks have been especially difficult to maintain this year, too, but it is really important to do so. As soon as possible clear the snow and melt the ice. In the downtown area, clear the entire walk, all the way to the curb. In the residential areas, please make sure the walk is clear all the way to the curb/street. If you hire this work, please tell your contractor that you need the walks bare for the safety of your family, friends and neighbors. Everyone will appreciate you for that!!!

EMT TRAINING

Become part of this "Caring Team". The Chatfield Ambulance Service invites you to join the Service. An EMT information session is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on February 10th and formal classes will begin March 17th, right here in Chatfield. EMTs are needed. Please call 867-4446 for information or stop in the office. This is an exciting way to serve your community!!!