



BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE NEWS



City of Birchwood Village, MN

Winter 2020

CITY OF BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE BUDGET

The purpose of this report is to provide summary 2021 budget information concerning the City of Birchwood Village to interested citizens. The budget is published in accordance with Minnesota Statute Section 471.6965. This budget is not complete; you may examine the complete budget by contacting City Hall, tel.: 651-426-3403 or email: info@cityofbirchwood.com.

Revenues:	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Property Taxes	512,000	488,500
Capital Improvement		
Total Revenues	<u>512,000</u>	<u>488,500</u>
Expenditures:		
Current:		
General Govt	183,845	165,890
Public Safety	94,145	90,315
Streets and Hwys	49,400	50,400
Sanitation	20,800	18,500
Culture and Rec	29,880	29,380
Miscellaneous	3,930	4,015
Trans to other funds	<u>30,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>512,000</u>	<u>488,500</u>
Excess (deficiency)	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Special Property Tax		
Levy (lift station)	100,000	100,000

Our Condolences to: *Friends and family of Rose Frucci*

Welcome New Residents: **Joseph Evans**, 545 Wildwood, **Michael Mullan** 5 Oakhill Ct, **Lindsey Shellenberger** 402 Birchwood Av, **Dave and Carol Forsythe** 624 Birchwood Av, **Keiko Mayek** 580 Hall, **Trevor Moorehead** 4 Five Oaks Ln.

Thanks to our Volunteers:

- **Chris Sorenson, Bob Carson and Jon Fleck** on getting the ice rink prepped.
- All the folks who pitched in over 80 hours constructing the pickleball courts: **Mary Cahill, Mark Cahill, Karen Hagan, Sue Fleck, Mark Foster, Bonnie Foster, Mark Simanski, Julie Simanski, Larry Walker and Mary Wingfield** and the **Twin Cities Pickleball Club** folks.
- **Jim Rupert and Mary Wingfield** for taking care of the flags for Veterans' Day.

NEW ICE LAKE PATH (by Jon Fleck)

Not knowing what Mother Nature has in store we encourage each and all to get out and enjoy the winter. This winter a group of residents who have historically maintained individual skating venues on the lake will ATTEMPT to create and maintain a skating path along the shore of Birchwood. We invite any and all to participate. Please be aware that this is not endorsed by the city in any way other than to provide awareness to the residents of the hoped for existence of this skating venue. Access to the path will be at any of the public easements.

If any one wishes to enquire further, please reach out to Council-member Fleck at jonathan.fleck1@gmail.com.

NEWS BITS:

- The water-main surcharge (\$17) terminates with this billing. Let's hope any pipe breaks this year stay within our budgeted amount.
- Tennis/pickleball nets will remain up all winter. Please help shovel or else we'll have to play "Cut the Pie".
- VILLAGE CHRISTMAS PARTY—another Covid 19 cancellation.
- Garbage rate increase: Tennis Sanitation is passing along the county dumping fee--an increase of \$.50/mo starting in Jan.
- NEW CITY OFFICE HOURS: Mondays 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and Thursday evenings 6-9:30 pm.
- CITY OFFICE still operates virtually. Please email or leave a message and staff will timely respond. Thank you for your patience.
- WANTED: Planning Commissioner opening. Contact City Administrator by Dec. 15 for more information
- DEER CULLING RESULTS: four.
- If you need help with getting groceries or other needs due to Covid concerns, please let Mary Wingfield know (wingfield.mary@gmail.com). Our volunteers are at the ready.
- CITY CODE REMINDER: Please keep your dog on a leash at all times. As much as you love your pet, not everyone else likes them out and about.

ICE RINK/WARMING HOUSE BITS:

Open 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday – Friday
And noon to 9:00 p.m. Saturday – Sunday.

****WEATHER PERMITTING!****

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT OPPORTUNITY:

Neighbors are inviting you to create a little cheer this holiday season by ringing a bell outside for two minutes at 6 pm Christmas Eve.—a peaceful way to end a tough year.

SHOVELING OPPORTUNITIES

Kindly consider adopting a hydrant near you and shoveling it out after it snows. We appreciate your help in helping keep our community safe.

2020 CITY ELECTION RESULTS

Mayor: Mary Wingfield 395, Michael McKenzie 260. Council Two seats): Mark Foster 390, Justin McCarthy 348, Ryan Hankins 264, Tony Demars 92

VILLAGE HALL RESTORATION—Part I

(Bridget Sperrl contributed to this story)

Our Village Hall is approaching ninety years old! It has served us well over the years as the gathering place for our community; it has seen many town hall meetings, family reunions, wedding and funeral receptions, boy scout and girl scout meetings, elections, and community club events such as Common Table and Bridge parties.

It has an interesting history: built in 1931 in the Art Deco style and designed by local architect Magnus Jemne-- who is quite famous in the world of local architecture. He also designed the Jemne Building (formerly known as the Women's City Club) in downtown St. Paul. Both these buildings were featured in the French "La Revue Moderne" magazine in 1932.

It is solid, yet time has taken its toll. We know our siding is rotting in back and rainwater seeps into the basement office. It is also not ADA compliant. Despite that, our preliminary information is the building is sound and worth saving. Action needs to be taken now to fix it and make it more accessible to all the people of Birchwood.

We have created a Building Task Force and received a \$10,000 grant from the state historical society to help guide us. We are taking steps to define the extent of the work. The committee is working with a restoration company to assist us in this initial phase. The first thing will be to address the siding and determine the quality of the original façade which appears to still be in place. The big picture will also have to address the ADA requirements for public access to our office. That could mean installing a lift, or bringing the office upstairs.

All this costs money. The council and the task force will work to seek funding from public and private sources. Our centennial is an excellent opportunity to showcase our building plans and help get the word out to support our endeavor. Stay tuned for more developments in the spring.

BIRCHWOOD T-SHIRTS COMING BACK

Help celebrate our Centennial. Cynthia Tomlinson will be spearheading the reproduction of our beloved Birchwood t-shirts for folks to purchase. Orders will be taken in the spring.

STAFFING CHANGES

Covid-19 keeps taking its toll. Tobin Lay has been our city administrator for the past four years. The time needed to tend to his family has led him to resign. The good news is he is now our Treasurer, effective immediately. Meanwhile, our treasurer Andy Gonyou, just graduated from the Hamline School of Public Administration, and he is ready to move to the next phase of his career and will be our new Clerk-Administrator. Having both Tobin and Andy remain in our office is a huge benefit to the city.

Andy will be part-time and the city will be hiring a deputy clerk in the coming months. Office hours are now Mondays 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and Thursday evenings 6- 9:30 pm. With covid-19, there is no public access to the village hall. Please call or email to contact staff to pursue your business.

WANTED: DEPUTY CLERK

The City will be hiring a part-time deputy clerk. Duties include assisting the Clerk-administrator in the management of the office, answering emails and phone calls, staffing the office one morning a week and transcribing the council minutes. Hourly pay\$18-20 DOE. Weekly hours: 10-15.

MAYOR'S NOTES

2021 is just around the bend and it can't come soon enough. It is also the year of Birchwood's Centennial. Celebrating our history lets us understand the unique place we hold in our community. Piecing together these bits of information, like a jigsaw puzzle, allows us to see a clearer picture of who we are. This helps build community and a vision for the future.

A couple of things we are working on now: obtaining a Legacy grant for research to create historical signage for our parks. Most of our public spaces recognize the efforts of our forebearers: Al Bloomquist was our constable and school bus driver, Lucy Tighe was our first female mayor and her partner Clara Schmitz was our volunteer treasurer 70+ years ago, Polly Shank was the force behind our Fourth of July parade (since 1953) and was a founder in the artist group that led to the White Bear Center for the Arts, Lee Hall was our first "president", and Curt Feistner was arguably the first military casualty due to the 9/11 attacks.

The Village Hall preservation committee is working on protecting the building for the next 100 years. This will probably include the removal of the siding that was added in the late 1970s over the original Art Deco façade, and for a restoration company to guide us on the next steps. The committee will be investigating local fund raising opportunities to support this project.

Finally, I would be remiss without thanking Randy LaFoy for his 24 years of service as mayor, councilmember, and PC member--he has always been a ship with an even keel. Thanks for all your efforts, Randy! Enjoy your retirement. Stay safe this winter. We will get through this together. m