



# The Big Lake Wave



October / November / December 2015

## WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE...

The City of Big Lake will be recognized as a “**YELLOW RIBBON CITY**” at a proclamation ceremony scheduled on Sunday, November 1st. This is a public event and all citizens and business owners of Big Lake are encouraged to attend.

A Special “**THANK YOU**” to the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Steering Committee, the Big Lake City Council, City Staff and the Big Lake community for their support and dedication in helping to make this happen so we can support our military, veterans, and their families in our community.

*Mayor Raeanne Danielowski*

## Meeting Times

The Big Lake “Beyond the Yellow Ribbon” Committee meets the 3rd Monday of every month in the Cargill Room at the Big Lake Public Library at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend!

## Yellow Ribbon Community Mission Statement

In continuing Minnesota’s proud history of supporting our nation’s military, the Yellow Ribbon Network is a diverse group of citizens and community leaders uniting key areas within local communities to leverage existing support activities, build awareness and take action to recognize and support service members and military families.



### *Yellow Ribbon Recognition Program*

*You are cordially invited to the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Proclamation Ceremony where the City of Big Lake will be officially proclaimed.*

*It is with great pleasure that we announce Big Lake as Minnesota’s newest Beyond The Yellow Ribbon community. As such, we would be honored to have you say a few words at the ceremony. Respectfully, and in the interest of time, we ask you to please keep comments to 5 minutes or less.*

*Please join our steering committee and guests in the spirit of support for our service members, veterans, and military families. So their sacrifices will not go unnoticed, and to say Thank You for the tireless dedication to protect this great nation. For they are true HEROES, and because of their sacrifice, we are able to enjoy freedoms which many times are taken for granted.*

**When:** Sunday, November 1, 2015 – 2:00 p.m.\*

**Where:** Big Lake High School Auditorium  
501 Minnesota Avenue  
Big Lake, MN 55309

**Who:** Public event; open to all community members

*\*Program will start promptly, we ask everyone be seated by 2:00PM*

[www.BeyondTheYellowRibbon.org](http://www.BeyondTheYellowRibbon.org)

## Big Lake City Council 2015

| Mayor               | Council Member     | Council Member          | Council Member        | Council Member        |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Raeanne Danielowski | Nick Christenson   | Seth Hansen             | Duane Langsdorf       | Mike Wallen           |
| 763-263-3801        | 763-238-6670       | 763-262-6282            | 763-263-7867          | 763-286-3842          |
| cook113@aol.com     | blfd27@hotmail.com | sethansen1973@gmail.com | dlaustostop@izoom.net | mike.wallen@ymail.com |

## PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX LEVY 2016

### Mark your calendars:

The 2016 Budget and Levy Public Input Meeting will be held on **Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at Big Lake City Hall council chambers.**

Despite a projected levy increase of 4.45% for taxes payable in 2016, the City's tax rate is anticipated to increase by only 1.38% due to an increase in the City's overall market value. Below is a summary of estimated city property taxes based on the following home values:

| Assessed Value | Estimated Annual City Tax |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| \$125,000      | \$ 757.96                 |
| \$150,000      | \$ 909.56                 |
| \$225,000      | \$1,364.33                |
| \$300,000      | \$1,819.11                |

### Top five reasons for the increase

- Cost to relocate all Police staff to Community Service Center on Minnesota Avenue.
- Increase in Fire Department liability insurance.
- The budget incorporates a conservative estimate of what wages might be under a new pay scale. The pay scale was developed by Springsted Inc. who compared the wages of City staff to similar positions in similar cities. This is a strategy to recruit and retain key staff people and plan for future successions.
- 4% increase in health care cost.
- 4% increase in workers comp.

### What makes my property tax bill change from year to year?

- A. My property's value
- B. My neighbor's property value
- C. My city council, my county board, and my school board

- D. The state Legislature
- E. All of the above

A: **All of the above.** The decisions of your city council, county board, and school board regarding the amount of tax dollars they need to deliver services may be the most obvious factor in your property tax bill. However, the value of your property, the total value of all the property in your community, changes in state programs, and changes in state laws that affect the tax system also play a role. Changes in any of these factors can make your tax bill go up in some years and down in others.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS PROVIDED BY THE LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA CITIES

**Q: Some of the local news coverage talks about city budgets and other coverage talks about city levies. Are they the same thing?**

A: The property tax levy is the amount of money that the city (or other local government) decides it needs to collect from property owners in order to deliver services. Property taxes, however, are just part of the overall city budget. The budget includes both discretionary spending (for services the city is free to choose to provide) and non-discretionary spending (to meet obligations such as paying off debt). The budget includes all the dollars the city collects from various sources – fees, grants, revenue sharing, and property taxes.

**Q: What do I get for my property taxes?**

A: Local governments receive the money they use to deliver services from a few different sources: property taxes, fees, revenue sharing with the state, and grants. Property tax dollars pay for the services that everyone in the community – as well as visitors, commuters, and tourists – can access. This includes things like streets, police and fire services, parks, and libraries. Other services – like economic development programs to help businesses grow and develop, snowplowing, garbage removal, and recycling are also typically paid for with tax dollars.

# Finance cont...

## **Q: How does the city – or any local government – decide what services to provide?**

**A:** City councils review the services they currently provide and think about what local preferences are and what population trends suggest about the kinds of services people will need. For example, one community might favor running its own pool while another does not see the need. Communities with lots of young families need to offer different kinds of services than communities seeing big increases in the number of senior residents. Sometimes cities have to provide certain services in order to comply with state or federal laws. Some common examples are requirements for testing drinking water and making public buildings accessible to people with disabilities.

## **Q: How does the city decide how much to collect in property taxes?**

**A:** Cities look at their costs – like gasoline, road salt, salaries, and building repairs. They also determine the amount of money the city needs to provide the services residents expect and depend on. Councils then examine the dollars coming into the city from other sources – like fees people pay for building permits or to license their dogs, grants from state and federal governments, and state revenue sharing. Property taxes make up the gap between money coming in from non-tax sources and the money needed to run the city. Other local governments (e.g., counties,

schools) go through a similar process to set their property tax amount.

## **Q: Are property taxes the only way that the city takes in money?**

**A:** Cities have several sources of revenue, but the two largest sources are property taxes and state revenue sharing. Property taxes are collected from the owners of homes, businesses, and farms within the city. The sales taxes, income taxes, and gas taxes that we all pay to the state actually fund state aid dollars, such as local government aid and municipal state aid for roads. Some of these dollars are redistributed to cities through revenue sharing.

Cities also get money from a few other sources. One source of revenue is fees. Some examples of common fees that people pay to cities are for: dog licenses, building permits, use of the city park facilities, fines for failure to remove snow from sidewalk, and water and sewer services. Cities also get some money from grants. These come from the state or federal government and are used for very specific purposes such as a building or equipment improvement.

**THE 2016 BUDGET AND LEVY PUBLIC INPUT  
MEETING WILL BE HELD AT BIG LAKE CITY HALL  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH AT 6:00 p.m.**

### **Attention Bill-Pay Customers:**

The following errors in the set-up of your Bill-Pay account for the City of Big Lake may cause a delay in the application of your payment:

- If you are still using your old 9 digit account number (for accounts created before August of 2012) the system will **NOT** recognize it. Be sure you are utilizing the proper account number which is 13 digits long.
- One or more of the digits in your account number is incorrect.
- Removing any of the zeros from your account number.
- If the billing information does NOT include either the last name on the sewer/water account or the service address.
- If you have any questions, please call Utility Billing at 763-263-2107, Ext. 232





# Big Lake Police Department

## BODY CAMERAS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

One can turn on the news on any given day, and see in depth discussions about actions being taken by law enforcement officers in a variety of situations. While many of these instances take place in large urban areas, more rural and smaller communities such as Big Lake are not immune to these situations. Our officers deal with the same situations any urban department does, but on a much less frequent basis. Most of the analysis that takes place during these interviews follows an opportunity to evaluate the situation at hand everywhere



*Officers Norlin and Prigge*

from hours to years, decisions law enforcement officers made in seconds or less. After this analysis, an opinion is provided on the course of action law enforcement officers should, or should not have followed, most times without the full factual basis of what actually took place.

A new aspect to these dynamics, is that of readily available video via a new generation of smart phones, and their ability to instantly disseminate it to any location, including social media in real time. Our officers are recorded on almost a daily basis by bystanders on calls for service. Unfortunately, much of the information that is disseminated may capture portions of an incident, leading the viewer to a conclusion that may not otherwise come about had the incident been viewed in its entirety. Add to this dynamic, anti-law enforcement groups who work aggressively to portray our law enforcement officers in the worst light possible.

About 2 years ago, technology related to body cameras first began to surface in law enforcement. At the time, many agencies looked at them as a useful but yet unproven tool. With the events that have transpired over the past year, many law enforcement agencies are re-evaluating their usefulness in their tool chest. Every law enforcement agency is unique in how body cameras may fit their needs, there is no one standard that fits all. Body worn cameras are a new tool, which brings with them new challenges. First amongst those is that of privacy. It is a concern with Police Chiefs, that video

collected in private, nonpublic locations, be protected and available only to the person in the video. This can be a difficult balance to legislate with one side of the spectrum feeling all video, no matter what, should be public. The other side feels it should all be private and retained exclusively within the law enforcement agency. A second dynamic with body worn cameras, is in what should be recorded. Again, one side feels every law enforcement action should be recorded, the other does not feel cameras should be in place at all. This brings us to the two issues law enforcement agencies and legislators need to come to common ground on: 1) what should be recorded, and 2) how public should that data be.

The Big Lake Police Department began a test program with body worn cameras in July of this year. Three units were purchased, and are being worn by Officers on a voluntary basis. Our current policy allows officers the discretion when to activate the recording devices, encouraging their use in times of conflict or when there is evidentiary value. In the short time we have been utilizing these devices, their worth has paid off. Several instances have taken place where crimes have been captured, admissions presented, and demeanor of citizens seen first-hand. Over the next six months the department will evaluate whether or not this is a program which will be expanded to all officers. We work in an ever changing environment, one in which conclusions of law enforcement actions are quickly developed with litigation often following. Capturing actions of our staff protects them from unfounded complaints and litigation. I have the opportunity on a daily basis to see the professionalism and restraint our officers exhibit in very challenging situations. Body worn cameras serve to capture these situations for all to see when necessary. It is the goal of the Big Lake Police Department to be ahead of this rapidly evolving topic, rather than behind. As always, I welcome discussion and feedback about how we are doing in the community, or just the opportunity to visit with our citizens.



## FIRE PREVENTION WEEK ACTIVITIES

- ◆ The first week of October is Fire Prevention Week. Our members will be making visits to our schools, meeting with students to talk about fire safety and educating them about what it is like to be a fire fighter.
- ◆ Our message comes together when we host one of the largest attended fire prevention open houses in the state. This event will be held on **Sunday, October 11, 2015 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** The open house is held at the Big Lake Fire Hall located at 20243 County Road 43, Big Lake, MN.
- ◆ Several outside agencies will have representatives on hand to answer questions regarding anything from natural gas leaks to medical questions. We will have a live kitchen fire demonstration as well as the “Jaws of life” for auto extraction. Stop by to see what your fire department has to offer and ask any questions about how we operate.



## SEASONAL REMINDERS



- ◆ The Department would like to remind residents this is the time of the year to change your smoke detector and carbon monoxide batteries.
- ◆ Have your furnace and flue pipes inspected if you burn wood, and have your chimney checked for any cracks or creosote buildup.
- ◆ If winter comes early and we experience heavy snow falls, please help us by shoveling out any fire hydrants that may be in front of your house or business.

**Thank you for the continued support from the community, and to all members of the Department for their dedication and commitment to the community!**

## City Office Closings and Meeting Changes

### City Offices Will be Closed in Observance of the Following Holidays:

- ◆ Monday, October 12th - Columbus Day
- ◆ Wednesday, November 11th - Veteran's Day
- ◆ Thursday & Friday, November 26th/27th - Thanksgiving Holiday
- ◆ Thursday, December 24th - City Offices will close at Noon
- ◆ Friday, December 25th - Christmas Holiday
- ◆ Friday, January 1st, 2016 - New Year's Day



### City Council Meeting Changes:

- ◆ The November 11th Meeting has been changed to Thursday, November 12th in observance of Veteran's Day
- ◆ The 2nd Meeting in November (25th) has been canceled due to the Thanksgiving Holiday.
- ◆ The 2nd Meeting in December (23rd) has been cancelled due to the Christmas Holiday.

## MINNESOTA DRINKING WATER FLUORIDATION RULE CHANGE

On April 27, 2015 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) finalized new guidance which recommends a single national fluoride level of .7mg/l at community Public Water Supply's. The updated HHS and Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendation was based on recent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and HHS scientific assessments to balance the benefits of preventing tooth decay while limiting any potential negative health effects of high fluoride consumption.

In light of this new optimal fluoride concentration in drinking water, Minnesota Department of Health will begin a formal rulemaking process in the future to make changes to Minnesota Rule.

The existing rule states: Fluoride content of the water shall be controlled to maintain an average concentration of 1.2 mg/l; the concentration shall be neither less than 0.9 mg/l and not more than 1.5 mg/l.

The new rule proposed: Fluoride content of the water shall be controlled to maintain an average concentration of 0.7 mg/l; the concentration shall be neither less than 0.5 mg/l and not more than 0.9 mg/l.



Until the new rule is set by the Minnesota Department of Health municipal public water suppliers have the option to apply for a variance to the existing rule to start maintaining a lower proposed fluoride concentration.

On August 26, 2015 City Council voted to apply for a variance allowing the City of Big Lake to lower the City's fluoride content of the water, to be controlled at an average of .7mg/l. September 1, 2015 the City of Big Lake received notice of approval to provide fluoride in public drinking water at an average concentration of 0.7mg/l. Public Works has lowered the fluoride concentration to 0.7mg/l. Fluoridation does not affect the appearance, taste, or smell of drinking water so users will not notice this change.

Any questions in reference to this amended fluoride rule please call Big Lake Public Works Department at 763-263-2268.

### Snow and Ice on Sidewalks

The owner or occupant of any premises within the City of Big Lake is responsible to clean the sidewalks, in front of and/or beside the premises, of snow and loose or melting ice within 24 hours after the completion of any snowfall. Whenever the owner or occupant of any premises in the City fails to clear their sidewalk within the required timeframe, the City of Big Lake will clear the sidewalk or have a contractor clear the sidewalk and bill the property owner for all costs.



### Winter Parking



Parking is not allowed on any City street or roadway between November 1<sup>st</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> of every year, during the hours of 12:01a.m. and 8:00 a.m. After a snowfall of two inches or more, all streets in the City will be cleared of all motor vehicles for the purpose of snowplowing and /or removal, until all streets are plowed. If your vehicle should have mechanical failure and cannot be removed from the street during the required dates/times, please contact the Big Lake Police Department at 763-263-2500 and advise the officer on duty. This may help in avoiding a citation and/or your vehicle being impounded.

# Public Works Cont.

## FLUSHING FIRE HYDRANTS

Big Lake Public Works Department will be flushing fire hydrants October 5, through November 2, 2015, from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. During this time you may see discoloration and small particles in the water. If you have any questions, please call 763-263-2268.



## CITY OF BIG LAKE PARKS COMMITTEE VACANCY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Big Lake is presently seeking applicants to fill seats on the Parks Advisory Committee. The Parks Advisory Committee meets each month and serves in the following capacities:

- ♦ As a liaison between city government and the community.
- ♦ As a resource for new and existing neighborhoods, groups, and civic organizations seeking information concerning the Big Lake park system.
- ♦ Assist city government in setting open space, land acquisition and development policies.
- ♦ As a body to make recommendations to the City Council relating to specific parks, trails/sidewalks, and open space development.
- ♦ Assist City Council researching a variety of funding sources for the Capital Improvement Program and related park development.

Any City resident interested in serving on the Parks Advisory Committee may apply to City Hall by a letter addressed to the City of Big Lake. Please describe your reason (s) for applying as well as your employment and/or educational background which may be relevant to the position. Letters of application should be mailed to or dropped off at: Big Lake City Hall, 160 Lake Street North, Big Lake, MN 55309 Attention: Mike Goebel, Public Works Director. Applications will be accepted until vacancies are filled.

## Municipal Liquor Store

### CONGRATULATIONS!

**A HUGE “Thank You”** to everyone who voted for Big Lake in the Michelob Golden Light Draft “Celebrate Your Lake” Contest.

***BIG LAKE WAS VOTED THE WINNER FOR 2015!!***

Grant proceeds are required to be used towards lake conservation. City officials will be working with the MN DNR, the Fresh Water Society and the Big Lake Community Lake Assoc. to determine the best use of the grant dollars.

### OCTOBER NEWS:

Lake Liquors will be providing a wine and craft beer tasting for the Eagle Lake Association which is scheduled for Friday, October 2nd from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Friendly Buffalo.

In October, Lake Liquors will also be participating in the Minnesota Municipal Beverage Association’s and Coors Light annual food drive.



### NOVEMBER NEWS:

Our fall WineFest is scheduled for Fri., November 13, from 6 - 8 p.m. at the Friendly Buffalo. Our fall wine sale will be from Fri., November 13 to Sat., November 21. We will be offering a 25% discount on all wines in the store and if you purchase a case or more, mix and match, you will receive a 30% discount. Advanced tickets are available at the liquor store for \$20.00/\$25.00 at the door. Door prizes will be given away at 7:30 p.m.





160 Lake Street North  
Big Lake, MN 55309

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## Events

### Legacy Foundation Tree Lighting

**Monday, Nov. 30th**  
**Program starts at 6:30 p.m.**  
**Tree Lighting at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Big Lake City Hall**  
**160 Lake Street North**



The Legacy Foundation's 3rd annual tree lighting ceremony will be held outdoors on the north side of City Hall on Monday, November 30th. Beverages and snacks to follow at the Carousel Works.

### Events at the Library

#### OCTOBER

1, 2, 3 & 5, during library open hours: Friends Book Sale

Fridays, 9 & 23 from 10:30 to 10:50 a.m.: Toddler Story Time

Fridays, 16 & 30 from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m.: Preschool Story Time

Mon. 26 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.  
Snake Discovery! Yes, with real snakes!

Thurs. 29 from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.  
Spooky Foods for Teens!



#### NOVEMBER

Fri. 6, 10:30 to 10:50 a.m.:  
Toddler Story Time

Fri. 13, 10:30 to 11:15 a.m.:  
Preschool Story Time

Mon. 16, 4:30 to 7:00 p.m.:  
Needle Felted Snowmen for Adults

Thurs. 19, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.:  
Author/Columnist Mike Holst  
*A Minnesota author whose heroes are emergency services personnel*

Mon. 30, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.: Teen Crafts with Mollee *Make a cool piece of Jewelry with Mollee!*

#### DECEMBER

Mon. 7, 2:30 to 6:30 p.m.:  
Holiday Gingerbread Houses

Sat. 12, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.:  
Harpist Hannah Prange



*Some of our programs require preregistration, so please call us at 763.263.6445 or sign up at [www.griver.org/events](http://www.griver.org/events).*

Upcoming:

*Look for a cool Japanese Quilt Program in January!*

### Big Lake City Hall

Address: 160 Lake Street North, Big Lake, MN 55309

Phone: 763-263-2107

Web: [www.biglakemn.org](http://www.biglakemn.org)

Facebook: City of Big Lake, Minnesota

### REGIONAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



**WANT MORE WALKING & BICYCLING  
IN YOUR COMMUNITY?**

**JOIN US FOR AN OPEN HOUSE TO  
DISCUSS THE REGIONAL ACTIVE  
TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

**FOR BENTON, SHERBURNE, STEARNS  
& WRIGHT COUNTIES**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6TH 6-8 pm**  
**SHERBURNE HISTORY CENTER**  
10775 27th Ave Southeast, Becker, MN 55308

The plan identifies opportunities to make it safer and more comfortable to walk and bike in your community and the four county area.



For driving directions to the Sherburne History Center, visit  
[www.sherburnehistorycenter.org/visit](http://www.sherburnehistorycenter.org/visit)

For more information on the project, events, and ways to get involved visit [www.regionalatp.org](http://www.regionalatp.org)