



The Big Lake Wave

October/November/December 2014



www.biglakemn.org
763-263-2107

State General Election Tuesday, November 4, 2014

Polls open at 7:00am and close at 8:00pm. There are three precincts in the City of Big Lake as described below and shown on the precinct map on page 2.

Precinct # 1 Big Lake City Hall -160 Lake St. No.

All residents who live on the north side of Hwy 10, and east of Lakeshore Drive -or- south of Hiawatha Avenue will vote at Big Lake City Hall (located at the intersection of Hwy 10 and 25).

Precinct # 2 Public Works Building 18041 – 198th Ave.

All residents who live on the south side of Highway 10 will vote at the Big Lake Public Works Building (located by the water tower site along Hwy 10).

Precinct # 3 Saron Lutheran Church—311 Lake St. So.

All residents who live on the north side of Hwy 10, and west of Lakeshore Drive -or- north of Hiawatha Avenue will vote at Saron Lutheran Church.

Big Lake City Council Candidates

City of Big Lake residents will elect two City Council Members at the November 4th General Election. The following City of Big Lake residents have filed for office to fill these two seats:

- ◆ Richard (Dick) Backlund
- ◆ Duane Langsdorf
- ◆ Mike Wallen

Chamber of Commerce Political Candidate Forum

The Big Lake Chamber of Commerce is hosting a Political Candidate Forum on Monday, October 20th at the Big Lake High School Auditorium. A Candidate Meet n' Greet will start at 6:00pm and the Forum will start at 6:30pm.

Candidates invited to participate in the Forum include those running for Big Lake City Council, Big Lake School Board, Sherburne County Commissioner District 2, State Representative District 30A, and U.S. Representative District 6.

All citizens are encouraged to come out and hear what the candidates have to say and where they stand on issues that will impact you. The public will be able to submit questions for the candidates during the Forum.

Should you have any questions about this event, please contact Chamber of Commerce President, Tricia Skodje at 763-263-7800.



Big Lake City Council

Mayor	Council Member	Council Member	Council Member	Council Member
Raeanne Danielowski	Dick Backlund	Nick Christenson	Seth Hansen	Mike Wallen
763-263-3801	763-262-9567	763-238-6670	763-262-6282	763-286-3842
cook113@aol.com	Richard.backlund@charter.net	blfd27@hotmail.com	sethhansen1973@gmail.com	mike.wallen@ymail.com

Voter Registration

How do I register to vote?

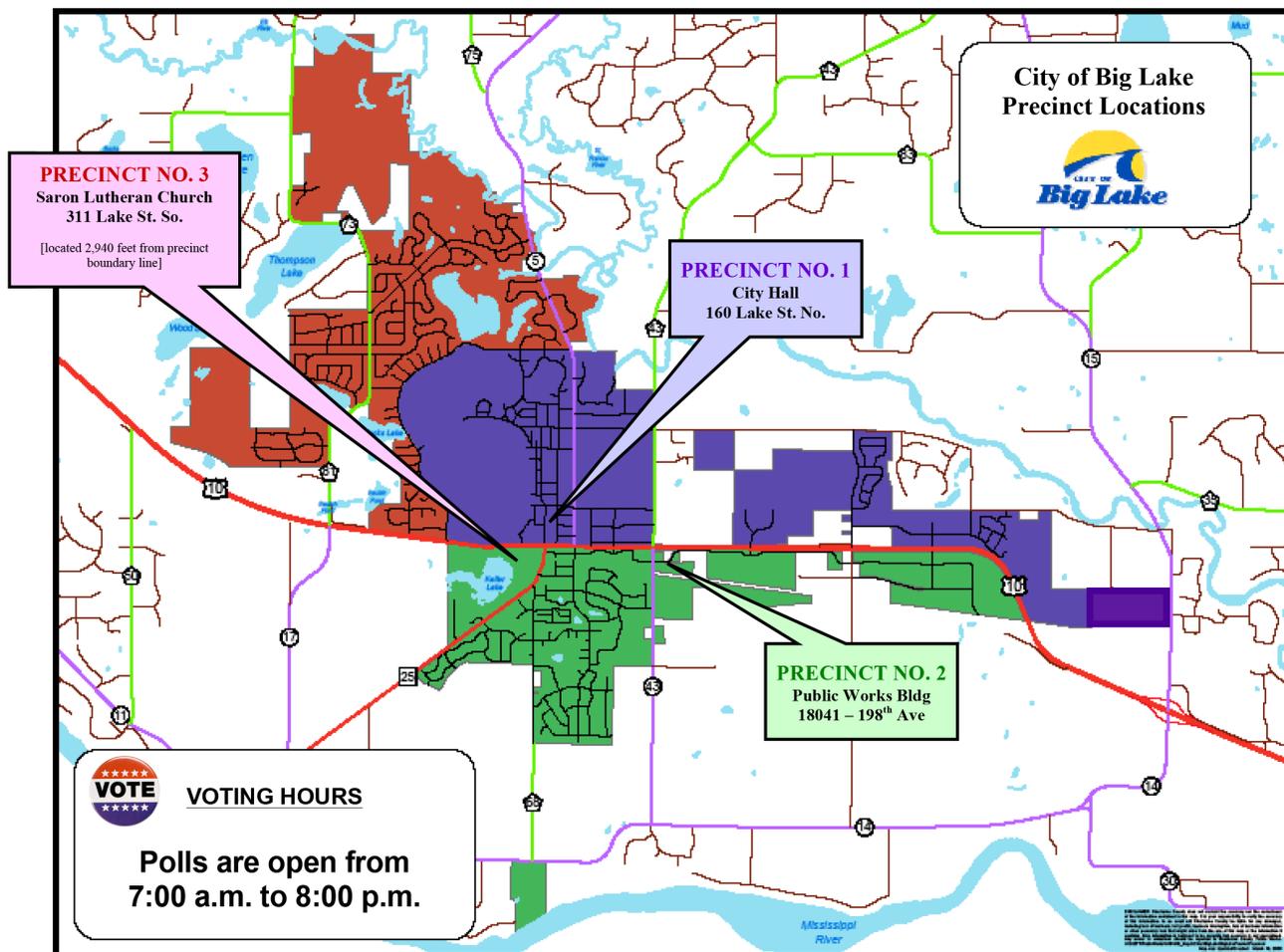


You can now register to vote online at <https://mnvotes.Sos.State.Mn.Us>. To register online, you must:

- Be eligible to register and vote in MN
- Provide an email address
- Provide your identification number (MN issued driver's license, MN identification card, or provide the last 4 digits of your SSN)

If you do not have an email address and one of the identification numbers above, you cannot register online. You may register to vote with a paper voter registration form. Paper voter registration application forms can be filled out and mailed or delivered to the Sherburne County auditor's office located at 13880 Business Center Drive NW, Elk River, MN 55330. **The last day to pre-register to vote for the state general election is 5:00pm, Tuesday, October 14th.** New registrations can also be processed on election day at all polling locations.

Locate Your Polling Place



Finance Department

Proposed Property Tax Levy 2015

Despite a projected levy increase of 3.8% for taxes payable in 2015, the City's tax rate is anticipated to fall by nearly 3% 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 of Home	Estimated Annual City Portion of Property Taxes
\$150,000	\$720
\$225,000	\$1,186
\$300,000	\$1,595

Mark your calendars! The 2015 Budget and Levy Public Input Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 25th at 5:00pm at Big Lake City Hall.



Franchise Fees

Like many cities, Big Lake faced significant challenges while developing the 2014/2015 Budget. With increasing debt payments and a significant shortfall in the general operating budget, the City was facing its largest tax levy increase to date. With concerns about the anticipated increase and the resulting effect on our already-struggling business community (which are taxed at a much higher rate than residential property owners), it was determined that the City needed to identify a more equitable way to generate revenue. A number of options were discussed, but the City ultimately decided to adopt a Franchise Ordinance which would allow the City to charge public utility providers for the continued use and maintenance of City-owned Right of Way. The fees are charged to utility providers, who pass the fee along to their account holders. While many may feel that Franchise Fees are another form of taxation, this alternate method of revenue collection will impact more than just tax payers. Those that are typically exempt from property taxes but still benefit from essential City services, such as renters, non-profits, and schools will all pay the same fees. Connexus, CenterPoint and Xcel Energy will start billing for these fees in October. All revenues collected by the City from these fees will be dedicated to the General Fund and will help offset the cost of providing various services to our community.

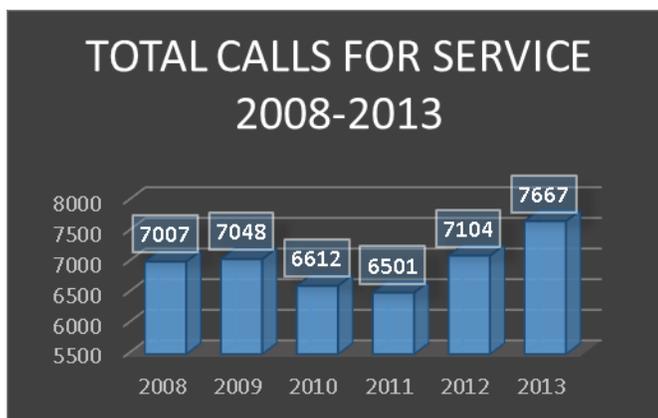
Water & Sewer Payment Options

- 1) Payments may be made by check, cash or credit/debit card in person at Big Lake City Hall.
- 2) Mail a check to Big Lake City Hall at 160 Lake Street North, Big Lake, MN 55309.
- 3) Drop your check off at our drop box located on the Lake Street side of our north parking lot.
- 4) Make a credit/debit card payment on our website at: www.biglakemn.org – Click on the “Visa/Mastercard” logo, then choose the “Utility Payments” tab. Please **do not** use the Accounts Receivable tab to make water payments.
- 5) Set up a bill-pay account with your bank. Please use 160 Lake Street North as the mailing address and the 13-digit account number that is located in the lower left corner of your postcard statement. Please **do not** use your old 9-digit account number. It is no longer valid.
- 6) Use our “AutoPay” system. Your payment will be automatically deducted from your checking account on the 10th of every month. You will be required to fill out an AutoPay Authorization form and provide us with a voided check.

If you have any questions about these payment options please call Utility Billing at 763-263-2107, ext 232.

Big Lake Police Department

One question commonly fielded by the Police Department, is that of the overall “Safety” of the City of Big Lake. I hope that this article provides a better view of our Calls for Service Load and Crime Rates in your community. Calls for Service translate to any requests for police services, administrative requests from records, or activity our officers initiate. A Call for Service can vary over a large spectrum of needs. Our most common calls for service are; Officer Initiated Traffic Enforcement, Medical Emergencies, Thefts, Civil Complaints, Agency and Public Assistance, Domestic Disturbances, Mental Health Concerns, and Suspicious Activity. The below chart outlines the Calls for Service trends within the Big Lake Police Department for the past 6 years. It is important to keep in mind not all Calls for Service translate to a crime, but many are related to enforcement action, or officers initiated activity in the community.



For the first 2/3 of 2014, our Calls for Service are definitely continuing with an increasing trend. In 2013 we saw 5,192 Calls for Service compared to 6,197 in 2014, a 16% increase to this point in the year. Looking at specific Call for Service Categories, those with increasing trends are; Medical Emergencies, Narcotic Offenses, Officer Initiated Traffic Enforcement and Activity, DWI, Criminal Sexual Contact, Trespassing, Agency Assists, Traffic Accidents, Alarm Activations, and Mental Health Issues. On the flip side, those with decreasing numbers include; Burglary, Assault, Crimes against Families, Harassment, Property Damage, Noise Complaints, and Domestic Disturbances. The most frequent

complaint we receive from our citizens, is that of driving conduct and other traffic safety issues. In 2013 our Officers initiated 2,459 Traffic Stops, and made 62 Driving While Impaired Arrests. At the same time, Officers responded to 142 traffic accidents, 46 of those had drivers or occupants who were injured. While we are fortunate to see our serious crimes on the decline, Traffic Safety continues to be forefront on categories that directly impact our citizens’ safety and continues to remain a priority for Big Lake Police.

There are a standardized set of crime reporting statistics provided to the State of Minnesota Criminal Bureau of Investigation on a quarterly basis by all law enforcement agencies. These numbers are used as a comparison to other jurisdictions as a general measure of the level of criminal activity. There are two categories of crimes which are rated. Part I Index Crimes (Serious Crimes) include; Criminal Sexual Contact, Robbery, Assault, Burglary, Theft, and Arson. Part II Index Crimes include; Forgery, Fraud, Property Damage, Narcotics, Family Law, DUI, Liquor Laws, and Disorderly Crimes. Numbers are formulated in terms of crimes per 100,000 residents. Using this comparison the following numbers were available for 2013 and give a view of Big Lake’s Crime Rate as compared to the rest of Minnesota.



Agency	Part I Crime Rate	Part II Crime Rate	Combined Rate
Big Lake Police	1,223	2,240	3,463
All Minnesota Cities	3,221	4,387	7,630
State of MN Average (Cities and Counties)	2,669	4,037	6,706

Our department is very proactive in providing a transparent view of the activity in the community through media releases, our website, Facebook, and Twitter as it relates to your police department. So to answer the question “Is Big Lake Safe?” Big Lake continues to be amongst the safest communities in our region and state statistically. There are no trends that stand out as disturbing for 2014. For a full report of our yearly activities, I urge you to view our 2013 Year End Report Video and Document at www.biglakepolice.com.

Big Lake Fire Department

With fall upon us, the Fire Department is gearing up for Fire Prevention Week when members visit schools, host station tours and meet with children to promote and teach fire safety. This takes place the week of October 6 and ends with our open house on **Sunday, October 12** from 11:00am to 2:00pm with pumpkins for the kids grown by Fire Department member Pete Ahrens. This event will have demonstrations on a kitchen fire, which is the number one cause of all residential fires, auto extraction using the jaws of life, fire extinguishers demo along with representatives from Center Point Energy, Connexus Energy, Department of Natural Resources, Red Cross, Big Lake Police and Sherburne County Sheriff's Department. It is also the time of year to change your smoke detector batteries. You should have a smoke detector on each level of your house and outside of each sleeping area. Have your heating equipment checked. If you burn wood, have your flue pipe checked and/or cleaned. Our summer has been busy with call outs and our scheduled training classes. We hired five new members that started training September 8th. This involves about 160 hours of their time before they can respond on calls. I would like to thank all of the residents of our community for their continued support of the Big Lake Fire Department. I want to thank all of our members who always are willing to help and make a difference. *Sincerely, Fire Chief Paul Nemes*



SolarWise Meeting: November 6

With 792 solar panels and an output of 245 kilowatts, Connexus Energy's community solar garden it is one of the largest community solar developments in the state. And, Connexus members can be a part of it. Members can purchase panels at \$950 each. The cost of the SolarWise project, as well as 20 years of maintenance and insurance, is covered in the price of each panel. Connexus Energy owns the physical panel, members own the energy that is produced by the panel. Based on typical weather in Ramsey, each panel's output will range from 21 to 45 kWh-per-month and will vary from year to year. The credit on member's bills will vary accordingly. Only members who wish to participate in community solar will pay for it. It will not be subsidized by members who are not interested in solar energy.

Community solar is a relatively new option for those who want to participate in solar energy production but can't install their own solar panels. The concept is comparable to a community garden, in that people who don't have the resources for a garden on their own property can instead

buy a share of a plot of land. In a community garden, participants get fruits and vegetables, and in a solar garden, members receive a credit on their electric bills.

Connexus plans to hold several informational meetings for those interested in learning more about SolarWise. A meeting is scheduled at **Russell's in Big Lake on Thursday, November 6 at 6:30pm**. To register for the meeting, and to find out more about SolarWise, go to connexusenergy.com.



Public Works Department

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 twenty-four (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 1st and April 1st of every year, during the hours of 12:01am and 8:00am. After a snowfall of two (2) inches or more, all street in the City will be cleared of all motor vehicles for the purpose of snowplowing and /or removal, until all street 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.

Snow Season Reminders

- 1) Please keep in mind that property owners are responsible to clear snow around their mailbox. The City will consider making repairs to mailboxes only if the snowplow equipment “physically” hits the mailbox or post, and only if the mailbox conforms to City Ordinance installation requirements. Check your mailbox to make sure it is installed and maintained to withstand snow coming off the end of the plow. If you have any questions about the mailbox policy, or to report a damaged mailbox, please contact Public Works at 763-263-2268.
- 2) Sod and Sprinkler Damage; To prevent damage to lawns, landscape, irrigation or other items that will get buried under the snow along the curb or edge of the road, it is recommended that residents clearly mark these areas with reflective stakes. Flexible reflective stakes are most effective placed along the curb line. Despite the plow operator’s best efforts, sod along the edge of the road occasionally may be damaged during snow removal activities. In general, if properly marked the City will repair boulevard sod damaged by a snow plow truck. The City will not be responsible for damage to irrigation systems and landscaping within the City right-of-way.
- 3) State and local laws prohibit pushing or placing snow back into or across the street. Doing so not only creates hazards for drivers, but also makes it difficult for the City to keep the streets clean.
- 4) If trash/recycling pick up day coincides with plowing activities make sure your trash can and recycling bin are well behind the curb or in the driveway so the plow will not hit them or possibly be tipped over.
- 5) Keep all toys and portable basketball hoops away from the street.
- 6) Residents may find it less frustrating to wait until the plow trucks have plowed their street before cleaning the end of their driveway. Keeping in mind some streets may need more than one plowing. City plows are designed to discharge snow to the sides of the road and are not capable of skipping driveways.
- 7) If possible when removing snow from your driveway, snow should be piled to the right as you are facing the street. This will reduce the amount of snow being placed back into the driveway during the next plowing. Or clear an area before the driveway so most of the snow is discharged into this cleared area.
- 8) The City of Big Lake does not have a bare pavement policy. The City does not guarantee bare, dry pavement conditions after each snowfall or that streets will be totally free of ice and snow or driving hazards common to Minnesota winter weather. The entire Big Lake Snow & Ice Control Policy can be reviewed on the City’s website.

Notices

Notice to all Charter Communications Cable Customers

Effective September 16, 2014, Charter Communications has changed the City of Big Lake Government Channel from Channel 12 to Channel 180. Windstream cable customers can still access the Government Channel on Channel 15.

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

Monday, October 13th – Columbus Day
Tuesday, November 11th – Veteran’s Day
Thursday & Friday, November 27th/28th – Thanksgiving Holiday
Thursday & Friday, December 25th/26th – Christmas Holiday
Thursday, January 1st – New Year’s Day



Council Meeting Cancellation Notice

The following City Council meetings in November and December have been cancelled due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays:

Wednesday, November 26th
Wednesday, December 24th

Municipal Liquor Store

Lake Liquors has completed another successful summer selling season. Like us on Facebook to view our sales and tasting schedules.

Lake Liquors was able to donate a trolling motor for the Big Lake Fireman’s dance.

Lake Liquors will, once again, participate in the Minnesota Municipal Beverage Association food drive during October. Food and cash donations will be accepted at the liquor store with all donations going to the Big Lake Food Shelf. Lake Liquors started a program at the liquor store where we have silent auctions on old display pieces. All auction monies are then

donated to the Big Lake food shelf. To date, the liquor store has donated \$1,200.00.

Lake Liquors will be participating in the wine tasting fundraiser for the Eagle Lake Association which is scheduled for Friday, October 17 at the Friendly Buffalo.

*Save the Date...*Our fall WineFest is scheduled November 14, from 6pm–8pm. Watch for details. The liquor store will close at 4pm on Christmas Eve and remain closed, according to state law, on Christmas Day. The liquor store will be open regular hours on New Year’s Eve and open 10 am–4pm on New Year’s Day.



WineFest
Friday,
Nov. 14



160 Lake Street North
Big Lake, MN 55309

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #32324
Twin Cities, MN

ECRWSS
Postal Customer
Dated Material
Postmaster: Time Sensitive Mail

Upcoming Community Events

Fire Department Open House

Sunday, Oct. 12
11:00am-2:00pm
Big Lake Fire Department
20243 County Road 43



The Fire Department will offer demonstrations on a kitchen fire, which is the number one cause of all residential fires, auto extraction using the jaws of life and fire extinguisher demos. Pumpkins will also be available grown by Fire Department member Pete Ahrens.

Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Event

Monday, Nov. 17
7:00pm
Friendly Buffalo
16722 198th Ave.



Join us for a “kick-off” meeting to discuss Big Lake’s process to become a “Yellow Ribbon City”. Let’s continue our support of our service members, veterans and military families who reside or work in our community.

For more information, call 612-219-2857 or email cook113@aol.com.

Legacy Foundation Tree Lighting

Monday, Dec. 1
6:30pm
Big Lake City Hall
160 Lake Street North



2013 Community Tree

The Legacy Foundation’s 2nd annual tree lighting ceremony will be held outdoors on the north side of City Hall on Monday, December 1st at 6:30pm.

Legacy Foundation Blenders Concert

Sunday, Dec. 7
4:00pm
Big Lake High School
601 Minnesota Ave.



The Legacy Foundation’s 2nd annual “Christmas with the Blenders” concert will be held in the Big Lake High School auditorium on Sunday, December 7th at 4:00pm. Tickets are on sale now at Klein Bank and RiverWood Bank.

Big Lake City Hall

Address: 160 Lake Street North, Big Lake, MN 55309
Phone: 763-263-2107
Web: www.biglakemn.org
Facebook: City of Big Lake, Minnesota