

LOCALNEWS

Ranier approves credit card application

BY SPENSER BICKETT
Staff Writer

RANIERThe Ranier City Council Monday approved a motion allowing the city administrator to apply for a credit card for city use.

City Administrator Sheril Gautreaux said there are certain things the city needs a credit card to pay for, like a recent update to the city’s payroll software from Intuit. In that instance, Gautreaux said she used her personal card to pay for the transaction, but a city credit card would be needed

for similar future instances.

Gautreaux said the council can follow a policy from the Minnesota State Auditor’s office in this situation. A low limit — less than \$1,000 — would be set on the card and the balance would be paid every month, as the city isn’t allowed to carry the debt, she said.

Councilor Todd Coulombe said the credit card was probably a necessity, given the how many transactions take place online.

“There is some things you just can’t buy without a credit card anymore,” Coulombe said.

Mayor Dennis Wagner was absent from the meeting, so Coulombe served as acting mayor. Gautreaux said Wagner was in India at the time.

In other business, the council approved the purchase of a new city snowblower, which was requested by city Maintenance Manager Nick Sears at an Oct. 14 council committee meeting.

The council also Monday approved a waterline connection request from Lindsey and Marty Goulet at 3131 County Road 112. The Goulets currently draw

water from the lake for personal use and use a water filtration system.

However, their water is contaminated and testing positive for coliform, and they have been advised to not use it. The Goulets have secured easements from the property owners whose property the emergency line will run through.

Councilor Tony Cole clarified the city will be responsible for the line running from the main line to the box at the curb. The line running from the curb box to the house is the Goulets’ responsibility.

Gas prices continue to fall

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Average retail gasoline prices in Minnesota have fallen 5.4 cents per gallon in the past week, averaging \$2.93 per gallon Sunday, according to GasBuddy’s daily survey of 2,856 gas outlets in Minnesota.

This compares with the national average that has fallen 6.1 cents per gallon in the last week to \$3.12 per gallon, according to gasoline price website GasBuddy.com.

In International Falls, the website shows gas prices Thursday ranging from \$3.01 per gallon to \$3.34 per

gallon.

including the change in gas prices in Minnesota during the past week, prices Sunday were 36.9 cents per gallon lower than the same day one year ago and are 28.3 cents per gallon lower than a month ago. The national average has decreased 22.9 cents per gallon during the last month and stands 23.1 cents per gallon lower than this day one year ago.

“The national average stands now at its lowest point since Jan. 18, 2011, and by the end of this week, it could stand at its lowest since late 2010.”

Patrick DeHaan, GasBuddy.com senior petroleum analyst

DeHaan in a news release. “The national average stands now at its lowest point since Jan. 18, 2011, and by the end of this week, it could stand at its lowest since late 2010.”

DeHaan said every day Americans are spending over \$100 million less on their gasoline purchases than they did a year ago, some of which will be injected back into the economy in other forms.

“And with the economic concerns taking shape lately, it could help jolt things back in the right direction” said DeHaan.

Grant sought for commercial, rental properties

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

International Falls commercial and rental property owners may benefit from a grant being sought for building rehabilitation.

International Falls Councilor Cynthia Jaksa told the Falls City Council Monday she is seeking letters of interest from property owners to apply for a grant that would help owners of rental and commercial property in the city rehabilitate their buildings.

“This is an effort to help landlords improve their properties and that improves the lives of everybody who rents and improves overall the appearance of the community, and to help commercial properties with a mini face lift for downtown,” she said.

The preapplication for the grant is being handled through KOOTASCA Community Action.

Letters of interest from property owners are under

a tight deadline. The letters of interest must be submitted no later than Monday to KOOTASCA Community Action. Letters may be emailed to Isaac Meyer, KOOTASCA Community engagement manager, at isaacm@kootasca.org or mailed to: Attention SCDP, KOOTASCA Community Action, 2232 Second Ave. E., International Falls, MN 56649.

City Attorney Steve Sherman Monday told the council his law office benefited from an earlier grant that helped he and the co-owner of his building add a new roof and windows.

“This is a great opportunity for some downtown business,” he said. “I encourage anyone with a commercial building who could use some updating to sign



Cynthia Jaksa

More information

Letters of interest from owners of commercial and rental properties may be emailed to Isaac Meyer, KOOTASCA Community engagement manager, at isaacm@kootasca.org or mailed to: Attention SCDP, KOOTASCA Community Action, 2232 Second Ave. E., International Falls, MN 56649. The deadline to submit letters is Monday.

up for it.”

Jaksa said the letters do not commit anyone to anything, but assists in the grant application. However, she added, without enough letters the application won’t get through the first screening. A minimum of seven letters from businesses are needed to apply.

An earlier application for a grant for rental and commercial properties failed, in part, because not enough letters of interest were obtained from commercial property owners, she said.

Should the city obtain the grant, money would be provided in no interest loans that would be forgiven

over a period of time under certain criteria. Property owners would be required to make a contribution to the improvements.

In other business Monday, the council approved submitting 31 unpaid water and sewer bills to the Koochiching County Auditor’s Office to be collected along with property taxes payable in 2015.

Jaksa said the 31 unpaid bills are out of 2,700 accounts.


In addition, the council approved submitting yard clean-up assessments to the Auditor’s office for collection in the 2015 taxes of property owners.



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