

Gas officials predict prices ‘nearing peak’

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Average retail gasoline prices in Minnesota have risen 5.4 cents in the past week, averaging \$3.55 per gallon Sunday, according to GasBuddy’s daily survey of 2,856 gas outlets in Minnesota. This compares with the national average that has increased 2.5 cents in the last week to \$3.65 per gallon, according to gasoline price website MinnesotaGasPrices.com.

Regular gasoline prices in International Falls, ac-

cording to the site, ranged from \$3.49 to \$3.54. Prices for midgrade fuel were listed at \$3.99 per gallon and diesel fuel was listed at \$4.29 per gallon. Local prices premium fuel were not listed on the site.

Including the change in gas prices in Minnesota during the past week, prices Sunday were 6 cents per gallon higher compared to the same day one year ago and are 7.6 cents per gallon higher than a month ago. The national average has

increased 12.9 cents during the last month and stands 16.5 cents per gallon higher than this day one year ago.

“While the national average has risen for the 12th straight week, it is likely nearing a peak,” said GasBuddy.com Senior Petroleum Analyst Patrick DeHaan. “Gas price increases have continued since early February but are likely nearing an end as oil refineries conclude seasonal maintenance, and the switchover to summer gasoline is nearing comple-

tion. Meanwhile, oil inventories are at their highest ever level as reported by the Energy Information Administration, which cited crude oil stocks at a record high of 397.7 million barrels, which should help propel oil prices lower in coming weeks as some storage facilities near capacity. For motorists, the peak to retail gasoline prices is likely very near, with some relief to follow in coming weeks as pressure eases on factors that drive gasoline prices,” DeHaan said.

BOARD

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- Keep the community education secretary at a half-time position to save \$18,000.
 - Drop remedial seventh- and eighth-grade classes to save \$42,000.
 - Delay the phy-ed curriculum cycle one year to save \$75,000.
 - Reduce the dean of students position to half-time to save \$38,000.
 - Non-renewal of Alex Ringhofer’s teaching contract to save \$43,214.
- Superintendent interviews**
- Also Monday, the board held interviews for superintendent. The three candidates interviewed were Beth Shermoen and Kevin Grover, who work in the

district, and Gwen Carman from Grand Marais.

“I thought all three candidates did very well on the interviews,” board Chairman Gordy Dault told The Journal Tuesday. “It will be a difficult decision.”

The board is scheduled to meet at 5 p.m. tonight in the cafeteria at Falls High School to review the responses of the candidates with a rating system.

“We’re going to hand in our ratings before the meeting and then go over them,” Dault said of Wednesday’s agenda. “At this point, there is no front runner.”

Dault stressed the interviews are only one component in figuring out who will succeed Nelson, whose contract expires June 30. He added applications, resumes, reference checks and experience will also be

considered.

“It all has to be put together to come up with the right fit,” he said.

Class sections

In other action Monday, the board set secondary classes at four sections for core classes in grades 7-10.

“I think all of the grade levels will have more than 90 (students),” Nelson said. “To keep the student-teacher ratios at a comfortable level...We ask that the board set those sections at four each.”

Board members were hesitant to set the sections at four instead of three in fear the district could suffer more student loss next year.

“If we lose a bunch more families this summer, we could come in with lower numbers,” said board member Darrell “Boxer” Wagner.

FHS Principal Tim Everson said enrollment projections are based on the hope the school will retain 90 percent of its students for the 2014-2015 school year.

In addition, Everson said registration materials will be distributed to students on Friday to give administration a clearer picture of what numbers to expect in enrollment.

Schedules for junior and senior students fluctuate based on electives and PSEO making it difficult to set sections for those grade levels, the principal said.

“Do we have the option to go back to three (sections)?” Wagner asked.

Nelson said in the event “another 50 students are lost,” sections can be adjusted and administration can “hand schedule” putting those kids in classes.

VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

VNP’s 2013 teen ambassador team.

VNP takes applications for 2014 teen program

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Voyageurs National Park continues the partnership that will again offer the National Park Teen Ambassador program locally.

In 2012, the National Park Service, Voyageurs National Park Association, and Wilderness Inquiry partnered together to launch the first-ever National Park Teen Ambassador program.

The program continues in 2014.

VNP officials encourage teens from VNP gateway communities and the Twin Cities to apply to be a national park teen ambassador this summer. The application deadline is May 9.

Participants are part of a student team that:

- Spends five days in Voyageurs National Park.
- Learns how to canoe and camp in the park.
- Explores topics including wildlife research, cultural and natural history, park service careers, and environmental conservation and stewardship.
- Advises the national parks about what matters to teens.

Who should apply?

High school students who:

- Will be a high school sophomore, junior, or senior in fall 2014.
- Are excited about the outdoors and making a difference.
- Are looking to develop leadership skills and learn more about environmental stewardship.

What is the cost?

There is no participant fee. The program involves overnight camping trip to Voyageurs National Park from July 30 through Aug. 5.

How to apply?

Visit www.voyageurs.org/teenambassadors to print an application or pick one up at park headquarters. Deadline to apply is May 9.

Email completed application to vnpa@voyageurs.org or mail to:

Voyageurs National Park Association
126 N. 3rd Street, Suite 400
Minneapolis, MN 55413

What the Ambassadors had to say about their experience last year:

- “This program is important so that generations to come will also understand how important and special our national parks are.”
- “I think that National Parks are important because they preserve places in nature so that generations to come can still be in touch with their ancestors and the world’s history. They tell stories that otherwise would be bulldozed over or forgotten.”
- “Nature offers endless points of view that we’ll never get to see. National Parks are important because (they take) all things you never get to see and make them accessible, put them in one place”
- “I enjoyed everything. The outdoor experience was incredible. We got to see a beautiful natural environment that I never saw before and I’m so thankful for this great opportunity. I learned so much, but I can say my favorite part was swimming to an island on Kabetogama (Lake). I was afraid but the group motivated me and the staff kept me safe.”

EDA

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speak confidently about the property when providing information to a potential developer.

In other business Monday, the EDA agreed on a 4-1 vote to join for the next year the Community Venture Network at a cost of \$4,000. Anderson voted no.

The network “is the premiere economic development program in the Midwest, linking small and mid-sized businesses with rural communities in an eight-state area,” the CVN website said.

CVN is “for businesses who know they want to explore rural opportunities, CVN answers the question of ‘where to start?’ For businesses who are unsure of the opportunities, CVN answers the question of ‘what are the opportunities and is this a fit for my business’; for communities, CVN provides access to over 25 opportunities each year in convenient, one day seminars – focused ex-

clusively on rural markets,” its website said.

Mason presented the council with information about businesses featured at the last two meetings. Thirty communities are presented information about businesses at three meetings each year, she said.

“I feel like if we’re not there, we won’t know about these folks,” she said. “If you’re not there, you’re not part of the menu to be offered.”

She suggested the EDA offer the Koochiching Economic Development Authority the opportunity to partner with the EDA in members. Even if the KEDA is not interested, Mason said information about potential developers would be shared.

Anderson said the KEDA had been a member in the past and dropped out because it found membership



Gail Rognerud

was not worthwhile.

Councilor Paul Eklund said membership appears to be a good opportunity to find businesses looking to relocate to or expand in places like International Falls.

“I see it as a good thing,” he said. “Part of the research has already been done. We need to look under every stone that comes along (for the chance to offer new jobs).”

Councilor Cynthia Jaksa said she believed the success rate of matching communities with businesses was quite high, and the success could be measured.

Mason suggested half the membership dues be paid in this fiscal year and the other half in the next. She also suggested membership be reviewed after the year to determine whether it makes sense to continue.

The council also agreed on a 4-1 vote to advertise for two more members to serve on the EDA Advisory Board for a total of 12 members. Anderson voted no. Applicants need not be

residents of the city.

In March, the EDA appointed Jenell Feller and Ward Merrill to the advisory board for four-year terms, making the board 10 members strong. The action was recommended by the board.

Councilor Pete Kalar asked whether the two additional positions needed to be advertised, wondering if the previous advertisements had brought in other candidates to be considered.

Mason said some people were unaware the additional positions were available and did not submit applications. Rognerud added advertising again is a way to offer another opportunity for people to serve.

Anderson asked why a 10-member board was not enough.

Rognerud said 12-members were not needed, but the bylaws allow up to 12 members on the board.

“If people want to be involved, and help be part of the solution, I think we would welcome them,” she said.

www.ifallsjournal.com

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Indus School Lunch Menu for May 2014				
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
			1	2
			ANSON Tater Tot Hot Dish Steamed Broccoli Strawberries Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk	BBQ Chicken WG Hamburger Bun Sweet Potato Fries Green Beans Mandarin Oranges SALAD BAR, Milk
5	6	7	8	9
Chicken Patty WG Hamburger Bun Potatoes Pear Sauce Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk	Meatballs in Gravy Mashed Potatoes Peas Applesauce Fresh Fruit Buttered Bread SALAD BAR, Milk	Burritos WG Flour Tortilla Refried Beans Romaine Mixed Fruit Fresh Fruit PB Sand SALAD BAR, Milk	Rotini Homemade Spaghetti Sauce Mixed Veggies Peach Cup, Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk	Breaded Beef Steak Mashed Potatoes Gravy Green Beans Mandarin Oranges Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk
12	13	14	15	16
TIFFANY Chicken Fajitas Corn, Salsa Pineapple Tidbits Fresh Fruit Chocolate Cup Cake SALAD BAR, Milk	Beef Stroganoff Egg Noodles Green Beans Strawberries Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk	LICIA Chicken Drumstick Baked Potato Steamed Broccoli Pear Sauce Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk	Irish Nachos Crisis Cut Potatoes Peas Mixed Fruit Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk	Chicken Noodle Soup Tuna or Cheese Sandwich Carrots w Dip Applesauce Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk
19	20	21	22	23
Tony's Pizza Green Beans Pear Sauce Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk	Italian Dunkers Cheesy Steak Bun Peas Mandarin Oranges Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk	Roast Pork Mashed Potatoes Gravy Stuffing Cranberries Pineapple Tidbits Fresh Fruit WG Dinner Roll SALAD BAR.	Turkey Wrap WG Flour Tortilla Romaine Potato Rounds Cheese Slice Strawberries Sun Chips SALAD BAR, Milk	LINDSEY Chicken Quesadillas Corn, Cheese Slice Fruit Shape Up Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk
26	27	28	29	30
MEMORIAL DAY NO SCHOOL	SOPHIA/DAMIAN Chicken Alfredo Egg Noodles Corn Strawberries Apple Crisp SALAD BAR, Milk	AMBER/HEATHER Subs: Turkey, Ham or Roast Beef Cheese Slice Baked Beans, Chips Applesauce, Fresh Fruit SALAD BAR, Milk	COOK'S CHOICE	Congrats to our Grads Much success to you! School's out for the Summer!!!!!!
MILK CHOICES: CHOCOLATE SKIM, WHITE 1%, WHITE SKIM				

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

2014 Street Improvements International Falls, Minnesota

WSN Project No 533C0122.000

Separate sealed BIDS for the furnishing of all labor, materials, and equipment for 2014 Street Improvements will be received by the City of International Falls, Minnesota until the hour of 1:15 pm on May 22, 2014, in the office of the City Administrator, 600 4th Street, International Falls, MN at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud.

The proposed work includes, but is not limited to the following major quantities:

7,600	SQ YD	Remove Bituminous Pavement
4,950	CU YD (P)	Common Excavation
3,550	CU YD (CV)(P)	Aggregate Base, Class 5
730	TONS	2360 Type SP Bituminous Wearing Course Mixture
930	TONS	2360 Type SP Bituminous Non-Wearing Course Mixture
2,200	LF	4" Perforated PE Pipe Drain
9.5	LF	Catch Basin Design G

The CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be examined at the office of the International Falls Public Works Director, located at 600 - 4th Street in the International Falls Municipal Building.

Complete digital project bidding documents are available at www.wsn.us.com by clicking on Bidding Documents in the upper right hand corner or at www.questcdn.com by inputting Quest project #3265372 on the website's Project Search page. Please contact QuestCDN.com at (952) 233-1632 or info@questcdn.com for assistance in free membership registration, downloading and working with this digital project information. You may download the digital plan documents electronically for \$30. An optional paper set of project documents is also available from Cadd/Engineering Supply (CES) for a nonrefundable price of \$30 plus printing costs. If you choose a paper copy you will get all addenda as paper copies and will be charged for the printing costs. Please make your check payable to Cadd/Engineering Supply and send it to 1701 James Circle N, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430. Please contact CES's Repro Dept at (763) 560-9098 or (800) 831-8587 for pricing and if you have any questions.

The City reserves the right to waive any informalities, to reject any or all bids and to accept that bid considered the most advantageous to the City.

No bidder may withdraw his bid within thirty (30) days after the actual date of the opening thereof.

Each Bid will be accompanied by a Bid Bond in an amount equal to Five (5%) percent of the total amount of the bid made payable without condition to the Owner, as a guarantee that the Bidder, if awarded the Contract, will promptly execute the Agreement in accordance with the Bid and the other Contract Documents.

Potential bidders and subcontractors are advised that this Project is subject to prevailing wage rates and other labor provisions identified in the Contract Documents.

Dated this 28th day of April, 2014.

Kenneth R. Anderson
City Administrator
City of International Falls