

LOCALNEWS

City water focus of special meeting

BY LAUREL BEAGER
Editor

The International Falls City Council met in special session Monday to hear about the challenges and key management areas to operating and maintaining municipal utilities and water infrastructure.

The meeting involved a presentation by Frank Stuemke and Teri Osterman of the Minnesota Rural Water Association.

Members of the city’s Water Department also attended the workshop as did International Falls Chamber of Commerce president Leif Larsen and local business owner Larry Keep. Mayor Bob Anderson did not attend because of another commitment.

Councilor Paul Eklund said, during the regular council meeting held later that day, the three-hour special session provided information that will allow him to ask intelligent questions as the council considers the water department and treatment plant. Water rates, infrastructure and plant operation were discussed in the special session, he said.

Association staff are expected to meet again with city officials to help provide information about whether a cost analysis is needed, as well as if and how the city can set its own water rates, among other issues.

The council has included



STAFF PHOTO BY LAUREL BEAGER

Frank Stuemke of Minnesota Rural Water Association discusses the 10 key management areas for a sustainably-managed utility.

\$25,000 in its budget to do a cost analysis the plant, Eklund said.

Among the 10 key management areas discussed, water quality is one in which International Falls has exceeded expectations, winning state and national awards in the past few years, Eklund said. However, he said, great tasting water costs a lot of money make.

While some people have wondered if the treatment plant could operate more efficiently, he said he believes it is.

Councilor Pete Kalar agreed the meeting is a good way to start the discus-

sion about water and rates, which he said seems to be a topic of discussion in the community.

He said the meeting did not include discussion about raising rates.

But Anderson pointed out 2015 is the third year of three-year plan that calls for water rate increases of 5 percent each year.

Councilor Cynthia Jaksa said the city may be eligible for grants to pay for water needs, but the rates must be in line with requirements.

“This could be a great opportunity to help defray costs, but there would be a rate increase to get there,” she said.

Filing period for councils and school boards now open

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

The filing period for positions on city councils and school districts opened July 29. The filing period closes Aug. 12.

So far, Preston Hoy, Littlefork, and incumbent Brian Lindvall have filed for a councilor position on the Littlefork City Council and incumbent Mike Fort has filed for the mayor position.

Incumbents Keith Knaeble and Mike Imhof have filed for positions on the Littlefork-Big Falls School Board.

International Falls City Council has also drawn filings. Harley M. Droba and Joe Schwartz have filed for Center Ward councilor; Brian Briggs for East Ward councilor; and Charles C. Lepper and incumbent Cynthia Jaksa for West Ward councilor.

As of Tuesday afternoon, Big Falls has not drawn any filings for mayor or for city council.

Cities and schools districts don’t participate in the primary elections and races for positions on city councils and school boards will be decided in the Nov. 4 election

People may file for the following positions at city offices and school district offices:

Ranier City Council Council positions are for four-year terms

■ Council member, now held by Brenda Bauer

■ Council member, now held by Ron Wilcox, who is finishing the term vacated by Fred Woods.

International Falls City Council Council positions are four-year terms

■ East Ward councilor, now held by Paul Eklund

■ Center Ward councilor, now held by Gail Rognerud

■ West Ward councilor, now held by Cynthia Jaksa

Littlefork City Council Council positions are four-year terms; mayor

is a two-year term

■ Councilor, now held by Brian Lindvall

■ Councilor, now held by Kevin Sather

■ Mayor, now held by Mike Fort

Big Falls City Council Council positions are four-year terms; mayor is a two-year term

■ Councilor, now held by Leslie Lepisto

■ Councilor, now held by Shawn Pritchard

■ Mayor, now held by Marta Lindemanis

Falls School Board Three board member positions, each of which are four-year terms, are up for election.

■ The positions are now held by Dena Wenberg, Willi Kostiuk, Darrell “Boxer” Wagner.

Littlefork School Board

Three board member positions, each of which are four-year terms, are up for election.

■ The positions are now held by Keith Knaeble, Mike Imhof, Anita Gray.

Despite severe spring weather, VNP eagle population considered healthy

Bald eagle nesting areas reopened in VNP

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Long-term averages for bald eagle breeding success and productivity in Voyageurs National Park near what’s considered a healthy bald eagle breeding population.

Park biologists report 23 young bald eagles fledged from 32 park nests this summer: six at Rainy Lake, 12 at Kabetogama Lake, 3 at Namakan Lake, and two at Sand Point Lake.

Nesting failures occurred at 13 of 32 territories, a rate of 41 percent, according to a park news release.

Namakan and Sand Point lakes, in particular, experienced a higher than normal proportion of nest failures, said the release. A severe snowy and cold early spring and excessive rainfall during incubation and shortly after hatching could be the cause for the failures.

The number of young

produced per occupied breeding area for the 2014 breeding population in VNP was 0.72. Fifty-nine percent of breeding pairs occupying a breeding area successfully raised at least one fledgling. Productivity of 1.0 and breeding success of 70 percent are considered characteristics of a healthy bald eagle breeding populations; long-term averages for Voyageurs National Park approach these thresholds.

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2014 WEERES Legacy Classic 220 Waterslide Yamaha F50 LB	Sugg. Retail \$31,354	\$27,119	
2014 WEERES Cadet Fish 180 Mercury 40 ERPT EFI	Sugg. Retail \$19,605	\$14,895	
2014 PREMIER 220 Sunsation RF Yamaha T50 HI-Thrust LTD Pkg.	Sugg. Retail \$36,968	\$26,253	

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Saturday, August 9, 2014 • 10 am - 5 pm

Come Celebrate Ranier's Past & Future

• U.S. Coast Guard • U.S. Border Patrol

• Buck Johnson's Model Boats • Historic Rainy Lake Pictures

• Vintage Boats at the Dock • Old Engines

• Old Outboard Motors

Auto Marine Shop, nominated by the Minnesota Historical Society, placed in the National Registry of Historic Places, U.S. Dept. of Interior, 1983.

Come join us at 3475 Finstad Lane, Ranier, MN 56668

KOOCHICHING COUNTY

Household & Business Hazardous Waste Collection Day

Wednesday, August 20 • Noon - 6 p.m.

At the Recycling/Transfer Facility

BUSINESSES MUST PRE-REGISTER call: 218 - 726 - 1602

Safely dispose of household hazardous waste at no charge.

<div>ACCEPTABLE HOME WASTE</div> <div>• Paint (all types) • Home & Garden pesticides</div> <div>• Button & Rechargeable Batteries</div> <div>• Thinners, Solvents, Flammables</div> <div>• Fluorescent Tubes • Household Cleaners</div> <div>• Adhesives, Hobby Supplies</div>	<div>NON ACCEPTABLE HOME WASTE</div> <div>• Tires • Alkaline Batteries</div> <div>• Empty Containers • Propane Tanks</div> <div>• Bullets/Explosives</div> <div>• TV's/Computers/Electronics</div> <div>• Appliances/Microwave</div>
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No products accepted before noon.

Sponsored by the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in partnership with Koochiching County.

For more information call the Environmental Services Dept. 283-1157.