

## FEE

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The vote followed pleas by several people for the council allow the fee to be implemented. Several people, including Ward Merrill, Chrystal Clance, and Bob Bahr spoke of the value of the programming offered to cable subscribers, via the Internet and other television systems, and said the additional monthly fee would assist in offering more programming and adding equipment.

But a petition submitted to the council containing the names of about 40 Falls residents asked the city to reconsider its action of Nov. 17 when it agreed to place the 50-cent fee on the monthly bills of city Midcontinent Cable subscribers. The petition asked the fee be put on hold until all subscribers in the area also pay the fee.

Councilors Brian Briggs and Harley Droba said the value of the programming isn't the issue.

## COUNTY

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application was the only one submitted. The position is a one-year contracted position, running from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31.

"I've known Willie for a long time, and I think he will do an excellent job," Hedlund said.

Kostiuk said while he has 29 years of experience in law enforcement, he's open and willing to learn from others about how to best fulfill his responsibilities.

"I'm the kind of person that will sit down and I'll learn from others," Kostiuk said. "I know there's a lot to learn, there's some training that I'm going to next week."

Kostiuk said he worked throughout northern Minnesota as a defensive tactics instructor during his career, and has experience working with planning and logistics.

"I've got experience coordinating with a lot of different people," Kostiuk said. "So I don't think I'd have any trouble doing a good job for you guys."

In other business, the county board approved two appointments to openings on the Board of Adjustments and the Planning Commission after spirited discussion.

County Environmental Services Director Dale Olson said there was one opening on each committee, and he had received three applications for the openings. Quay Whitbeck expressed interest in the Board of Adjustments, Debbie Bowman expressed interest in serving on the Planning Commission and John Cann expressed interest in serving on either committee.

The board approved a motion appointing Whitbeck to the Board of Adjustments on a 4-0 vote, with Commission-

er Wayne Skoe abstaining. Skoe said he would abstain from voting on either opening because "I don't know any of them, so I don't know what their qualifications are."

Commissioner Brian McBride said all three candidates are equally qualified for the openings, and without any recommendations from Olson, the easiest way to appoint them would be based on when their applications came in. Olson said Whitbeck was the first to express interest in the Board of Adjustments opening, and Bowman was the first to express interest in the Planning Commission opening.

Skoe said the openings were open for a specific amount of time, and some people will wait until a deadline nears to turn something in.

"So first or last, I don't know if that's the way to go," Skoe said.

A motion to approve Bowman for the Planning Commission opening failed on a 2-3 vote, with McBride, Chairman Wade Pavleck and Skoe voting no. While Bowman's application was the first received for the opening, Commissioner Rob Ecklund said there could be a conflict of interest for her.

Ecklund said during his time on the Planning Commission, half of the applications have been for rock quarries. Bowman Construction, the company Bowman works for, operates a rock quarry in Koochiching County.

"That's the only question I have," Ecklund said. "And I'm not saying for or against, on where she would be on that position, but I think there's a potential for a conflict she would have to be aware of."

Ecklund said a solution could be to advise her to

motion was made by Mayor Bob Anderson.

Anderson said the fee may be a financial burden on some city residents and noted the city had contributed \$10,000 to the effort two years ago.

He also pointed out some people speaking in favor of the fee wouldn't pay it because they live outside the city limits. He suggested private individuals could make donations to support the channel as they wish.

Jaksa recommended the fee be implemented, and the council refer the issue to the city's Cable Commission, and conduct a hearing if it desires, while meeting with the other governments about the fee.

The idea of fairness was addressed by Merrill, who said people don't always benefit from the things they must pay for, pointing to the Falls International Airport, which is supported by taxes of city and county residents, who may never fly.

"It's about quality of life," he said.



STAFF PHOTO BY EMILY GEDDE

A rider competes in a side-by-side race with another rider Saturday.

## RACING

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out to watch and donate to a good cause," Bigler said. "While our club is about snowmobiling and grooming trails, we also take great pride in holding this event with the Thunderbird Lodge."

When the snow dust settled Saturday after more than 220 runs were made down a 1,000-foot track, Dustin Christopherson, Travis Christopherson and Tyce Jackson, all of International Falls, set speeds of more than 100 miles per hour.

So where does racing snowmobiles tie into raising money for helping those suffering from cancer?

Bigler said several years ago, he was approached by Chris Raboin, former chief of the International Falls Police Department, about the city giving the snow-

### Speed Run Against Cancer results

- First place — Rod Haanen, International Falls, 91 MPH
- Second place — Dave Thurston, Bethel, Minn., 91 MPH
- Third place — Andrew Scholler, International Falls, 91 MPH
- First place — Tyce Jackson, International Falls, 102 MPH
- Second place — Preston Elsenpeter, Oakdale, Minn., 99 MPH
- Third place — Kevin Fields, Stacy, Minn., 98 MPH
- Dustin Christopherson, International Falls, 104 MPH
- Travis Christopherson, International Falls, 102 MPH
- Ryan Sury, International Falls, 98 MPH
- First place — Roger Paulson, Cloquet, Minn., 90 MPH

mobile club its old radar machine. Bigler said the club considered using the equipment to somehow teach snowmobile safety.

"After thinking about it, we decide it wasn't a good idea so we said, 'Let's do a radar run for fun,'" he said. "We did our first one to try and raise funds for a dialysis machine as one of our long-time members' son died with kidney disease."

The next year, the snowmobile club teamed up with the Thunderbird

Lodge, which donates a portion of its income received during the day of the event, to help the Community Cancer Walk. The program provides gas cards to cancer patients who travel out of town for treatment.

"It's a privilege for our club to help to relieve the burden of traveling out of town for treatment," Bigler said. "The IVSC is a proud organization of our community, so if you ride, join our club and share in the pride."

## SEWER

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Shermoen said. "I am confident Judge Marben will approve what the city did and allow Robert Thompson to serve."

Shermoen recommended the council instruct Thompson to become "immediately involved with as much as he can on the sewer board until the judge tells him he is not representing the city."

Thompson is the fourth member of the board appointed by Anderson.

Councilor Brian Briggs asked what would happen if McBride attends the Feb. 9 sewer board meeting.

"I don't think anyone on the board would have the authority to tell Mr. Thompson he is not a member," Shermoen said.

Shermoen said McBride's

"My belief is the mayor and council acted appropriately. I am confident Judge Marben will approve what the city did and allow Robert Thompson to serve."

**Steve Shermoen**  
International Falls city attorney

term is over and he has not been reappointed.

"It is my legal opinion (Thompson) would have to be recognized until a court order says he is not," Shermoen said.

Anderson said he believes the sewer board's attorney, Joe Boyle, has issued notice McBride will serve on the board, not Thompson. He asked the council to approve, and it did so unanimously, Shermoen's attendance at the next sewer

board meeting.

Anderson said he was served with the court papers the night Thompson was appointed and he is drafting a response to the claim.

Meanwhile, Shermoen told the council he hoped the 8 a.m. Feb. 9 sewer board meeting would be over by 9 a.m. as he is scheduled to start a jury trial at that time.

Jaksa said the city's PEG channel, KCCTV "would be there to capture the drama."



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## Tonic Sol-Fa



**BACKUS PERFORMING ARTS SERIES**

**TONIC SOL-FA • a cappella Group**

**Thursday, February 5, 2015**

Concert at 7:00 pm - Backus Auditorium

Concert Admission:

Adults \$12.00 • Students \$6.00

• Family \$25.00 • Under age 5 – Free

Tickets Available at Backus, City Drug and Betty's in Fort Frances

**Join us before the show**

**for a Top the Tater Dinner • 5:00 - 6:30 pm**

\$6.00 per person includes Baked Potato, Toppings, Salad, Dessert & Beverage • Dinner sponsored by Waschke Family GM Center

This activity is made possible through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund, and funding from the Marshall N. Knudson Family Community Fund.



Backus Community Center is fully accessible to persons with disabilities – please call our office for specific accommodations.

## BACKUS COMMUNITY CENTER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit us – [www.backusab.org](http://www.backusab.org) – or FaceBook – Backus AB

February 5.....	Top the Tater Dinner, 5:00 – 6:30 pm Sponsor: Waschke Family GM Center
February 5.....	Tonic Sol-fa – a cappella quartet Backus Performing Arts Series – Concert 7:00 pm
Feb 7, 21 & 28.....	Open Gym 3:00 – 5:00 pm
February 11.....	All-School Music Festival – 9:00 am – Concert at 1:30 pm
February 13.....	Borealis Bards Dinner Theater “Room to Act” Cash Bar/Dinner 5:30 pm – Performances 7:00 pm
February 16.....	Contractors Class/Seminar – 8:00 am – 4:30 pm
February 19.....	Citizens for Backus/AB – Annual Meeting – 5:00 pm
February 21.....	“TET - Vietnamese New Year” Special Dinner, 6:00 pm
February 23.....	Top the Tater Dinner – 5:00 – 6:30 pm Sponsor – Bremer Bank
February 23.....	Border Concert Association “Todd Oliver & Friends” Concert at 7:00 pm
February 25.....	All-School Choral Festival – 9:00 am, Concert 1:30 pm
March 2.....	Life Line Screening 8:30 am – 5:30 pm
March 27.....	Ethnic Food Festival – 5:30 – 7:00 pm

Dinner Theater “Room to Act”  
Friday, February 13, 2015  
Cash Bar/Dinner – 5:30 pm  
Performances – 7:00 pm

“TET – Vietnamese New Year”  
Special Dinner  
Saturday, February 21, 2015  
6:00 pm

**Solution Monday - Meets at 3:00 pm on Mondays - Backus Board Room 103**

Community Cafe • Tuesdays and Thursdays 5:30 - 6:00 pm



CITIZENS FOR BACKUS/AB

BACKUS

Community Center

(218) 285-7225 | 900 5th Street | Int'l Falls MN  
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