

OUTDOORS

Bright winter stars take center stage

BY DEANE MORRISON
University of Minnesota

The bright winter stars are finally taking center stage, and Jupiter—long a morning planet—follows them into the evening sky. The winter stars behave like a royal court. Not only do they boast many of the brightest stars, but the most luminous is the last to make its grand entrance. That’s Sirius, in Canis Major, a white beacon to the southeast of Orion’s majestic form. Orion is easy to spot, with its anchor stars Rigel, Betelgeuse, Bellatrix and Saiph; the three stars of the belt; and the hanging sword, an area of intense star formation. Just nine light-years distant, Sirius outshines all other stars. The bright star above and east of it is Procyon, in Canis Minor, whose name means “before the dog,” a reference to how it rises before Sirius, the Dog Star. The two “Canis” constellations are Orion’s hunting dogs, and the dog days of July and August were so named because the ancients believed that due to the Dog Star’s proximity to the sun during those weeks, its heat combined with the sun’s to cause the hot, sticky weather. The winter stars will be up by 11 p.m.—earlier as the month goes on—with Jupiter trailing them to the east. Jupiter outshines even Sirius, and its pale yellow color also distinguishes it from the lovely star. On the 9th, Jupiter begins retrograde, or westward, motion against the background of stars. This happens



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when Earth gets close to lapping the giant planet, which it will do in early February. Mars continues to hold its ground in the evening sky, setting about three hours after the sun all month long. A crescent moon appears just west of Mars on the 24th; this pairing may help you find the Red Planet. Saturn is gaining altitude in the southeastern morning sky, and Venus in the southwestern evening sky. Both will be easier to see next month. The Geminid meteor shower peaks around midnight on the 13th, but you may see nice meteors a few nights on either side of the peak. The meteors radiate from Gemini, just northeast of Orion. December’s full moon follows a high trajectory across the sky, reaching perfect fullness at 6:27 a.m. on the 6th. But it sets close to sunrise, so if you’re up, don’t delay in getting out to see it. This moon is known as the

occurs before the solstice. For example, in the Twin Cities the sun sets at 4:32 p.m. from the 4th through the 15th; in Duluth, it sets at 4:20 p.m. from the 6th through the 14th. But the latest sunrise doesn’t happen until early January. All in all, the day length changes very slowly in December, so it’s not hard to see where the solstice—which means “sun standing still”—got its name. The University of Minnesota offers public viewings of the night sky at its Duluth and Twin Cities campuses. For more information and viewing schedules, see: ■ Duluth, Marshall W. Alworth Planetarium: www.d.umn.edu/planet ■ Twin Cities, Minnesota Institute for Astrophysics (during fall and spring semesters): www.astro.umn.edu/outreach/pubnight ■ Check out the astronomy programs at the University of Minnesota’s Bell Museum ExploraDome: www.bellmuseum.umn.edu/ForGroups/ExploraDome/index.htm ■ Find U of M astronomers and links to the world of astronomy at http://www.astro.umn.edu.

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AGENDA

City of International Falls - City Council Regular Meeting
4:30 P.M., Monday, December 1, 2014
Council Chamber, 600 Fourth Street

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
1. Minutes of the Monday, November 17, 2014 regular City Council meeting (Council action-motion)

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS AND APPROVAL FOR PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
1. **CLAIMS**
a. Transfer Claims
to: City of Intl Falls Fund #101 from: City of Intl Falls Fund #812 \$207.85 Lodging tax (Council action-motion)
b. Regular Claims (Council action-motion)

AUDIENCE – OPEN FORUM (The Open Forum is an opportunity for the audience to address the City Council on any matter not listed on the agenda. Please limit your comments to five minutes.)

PUBLIC HEARINGS
Truth-in-taxation public input meeting at which the 2015 budget and levy collectible in 2015 will be discussed and all public input is welcome - scheduled to commence at **6:00 P.M. on Monday, December 1, 2014, Council Chambers, Municipal Building, 600 4th Street, International Falls, MN 56649**

OPENING BIDS (AND/OR QUOTES)

OLD BUSINESS
1. Approve leave of absence for Perryn Hedlund, Police Officer and Sheriff-elect, in lieu of previously approved resignation (Council action-motion)
2. Update and reconsideration of the Joint Resolution and Annexation Agreement with Koochiching County for the Multi-Modal site, Steve Shermoen, City Attorney (Council action-motion)

CONSENT AGENDA The Consent Agenda allows the City Council to take action on routine matters by one motion that shall not be debated and shall be adopted by unanimous vote of those present. Any individual council member may remove an item from the Consent Agenda for discussion on the regular agenda. (Council action – motion)
1. Year 2015 license renewals:
Duty Free Americas – gasoline pumps
Stock Tire Company – snowplow

NEW BUSINESS
1. Resolution____-14 approving application to conduct off-site gambling for International Falls Recreation Hockey Association (Council action- motion)
2. Resolution____-14 approving new gambling site International Voyageur Snowmobile Club (Council action- motion)
3. Year 2015 license renewal for Border Bar & Pizza House, Inc. dba Border Bar- 3.2 off-sale, off-sale liquor, on-sale liquor, Sunday liquor, restaurant, amusement games, pool table, and juke box (Council action- motion)
4. Year 2015 license renewal for C & J Smith LLC, dba The Viking Bar- 3.2 off-sale, off-sale liquor, on-sale liquor, Sunday liquor, restaurant, cigarette, and pool table (Council action-motion)
5. Year 2015 license renewal for Chocolate Moose Restaurant Company- wine on-sale, and restaurant (Council action- motion)
6. Year 2015 license renewal for Phung, Boi Vi, dba Rose Garden- 3.2 on-sale restaurant and bar, and restaurant (Council action- motion)
7. Year 2015 license renewal for Loyal Order of Moose Lodge #1259 dba Moose Lodge- club, Sunday liquor, gambling, restaurant, and juke box (Council action- motion)
8. Year 2015 license renewal for Timberpins LLC- on-sale liquor, Sunday liquor, restaurant, bowling alley, and pool table (Council action- motion)
9. Any other business.

REPORTS OF ALL BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENT HEADS
1. **Reports of the Administrator, Attorney, and Department Heads**
a. Police Monthly Report, November 2014
b. Fire/Rescue/EMS Monthly Report, November 2014
2. **Reports of the Mayor, Council Committees, Boards and Commissions**

AUDIENCE – OPEN FORUM

CORRESPONDENCE
1. November 18, 2014 – Mighty Ducks Ice Arena Grant notification
2. October 15, 2014 – Convention and Visitors Bureau meeting minutes
3. October 8, 2014 – International Falls Public Library meeting minutes

REMINDERS
1. Next regular City Council meeting is Monday, December 15, 2014 at 4:30 P.M.
2. International Falls Economic Development Authority (IFEDA) public hearing on proposed sale of property, December 11, 2014, at 4:30 P.M.
3. Regular meeting of the IFEDA, December 18, 2014 at 5:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT
Note: Matters inappropriate for consideration at the meeting or not in the order specified shall not be considered except 1) with the unanimous consent of the members of the City Council, or 2) scheduled public hearings or bid lettings, but not before the time stated in the notice.
The City of International Falls complies with the Americans with Disability Act. Individuals with disabilities requiring special aids should contact the City Administrator, 600 Fourth Street, International Falls, MN, 56649, 218-283-9484, at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

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