

KQPR FM – 96.1, Monthly Issues/Programs Fourth Quarter 2022

The following is a listing of some of the significant issues responded to or covered by KQPR FM radio of Albert Lea, Minnesota. These programs run at various times during the dates listed below. This listing is by no means exhaustive. The order in which these issues appear does not reflect any priority or significance

Issues List Q4 Oct-Dec 2022

CVB Report

10-6-22 Trinity Lutheran Soup and Pie lunch. Community Theater play opens at the Performing arts center, The Big 5-Oh. Fri, Rock Gum Opens 6-9 pm. Fall City Wide Garage Sale 8a-4p. Farmers Market opens 9-12p. Stop Sip and Stroll takes place on the 8th from 10-4p. Weekend activities include Rock Gym, Big 5-Oh performance, Monday the 10th Story Time at the Library at 10A.
6:00

10-13-22 Farmers Market on Wed, Library fall book sale. Freeborn County United Way's Casino Night at Wedgewood Cove on Friday night. AAUW Stacia Lang Meet and Greet at the ACT. On Saturday. Also Saturday, Denny and the DC Drifters Concert at the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center. CVB's Spooktacular event downtown AL. Also Halloween events at the Freeborn County Historical Library and Village, YMCA Trunk or Treat, Trunk or Treat at area churches, Truck or Treat at Worflin Auto.
10:10

10-20-22 2 Farmers Markets left in the season, Ended the Festival season. Weekly events in place for Halloween. Spooktacular takes place Thursday. Spooky Doll Collection at the historical library and village. Saturday, YMCA Trunk or Treat, Truck or Treat at Worflin, Community Truck or Treat at Central Park. Deer Widows Weekend will take place Nov 4.
15:38

10-27-22 Spooktacular in the downtown business district today, Trick or Treat the the Historical Library and Village, Sat Farmers Market 9-12p. Hy-Vee Pumpkin Contest on Saturday, Worflin Auto Truck or Treat, Community Truck or Treat @ Central Park. Sunday, Public Skate @ City Arena. Mall Oween at the Northbridge Mall. Upcoming events including Deer Widows Weekend, ELF at the Community Theater, Breakfast with Santa at the Wedgewood Cove and Shopping Event at the Golden Bubble in Wells.
12:42

11-3-22 Many events at the Albert Lea City Library. Thursday a Rock N Roll Tribute concert at the Marion Ross performing arts center. Friday and Saturday kicks off Deer Widows shopping event in the business district. Rock Gym open to the Public. Library presentation featuring local authors. Beauty and the Beast to be performed by the AL High School. Dec Preview of ELF to be performed at the Community Theater.
14:24

11-17-22 Discussed Small Business Saturday, Public skate at the City Arena. Music and Movement program at the Library, Puzzle competition at the library on Sunday. Concert on Sunday with the AL Cantor. ELF opens the 1st weekend of Dec. Holiday Lights at the Freeborn County Historical Library Museum and Village. Holiday Bluegrass concert at the performing arts center. Model train show and swap meet at the Northbridge mall Fri Sat Sun. Breakfast with Santa at Wedgewood Cove. Thursday Dec 8th will be the Santa Cruise at 6pm.
15:08

11-25-22 Discussed Small Business Saturday, Things to do including Public Skate, Rock Gym and the Library. Elf, the musical, opens at the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center. Holiday Lights will take place at the Historical Museum Library and Village. Train show at the Northbridge Mall. Breakfast

with Santa at the Wedgewood Cove. Sip and Stroll shopping event at the Golden Bubble and Thursday the 8th will be the Winter Bizarre.

12:52

12-01-22 Discussed Walks and more, Elf opens at the Marion Ross Friday YMCA hosts Bounce House, Holiday lights underway at the Historical Museum. Saturday is Breakfast with Santa at the Wedgewood Cove. Sip and Stroll happens at the Golden Bubble in Wells. Sunday the AL Public Library hosts Family Trivia at the Library.

12:44

12-08-22 Discussed the upcoming Downtown Christmas Celebrations, Shopping Events, Community parade, Holiday Bizarre. Discussed the Historical Museum library and Village holiday happenings and informed about membership opportunities as gift ideas.

17:06

12-15-22 Discussed open skate at the City Arena, Rock Climbing at the Rock Gym, Friday will be the Bounce House at the YMCA, Saturday and Sunday, a Sports Card and Collectible Show hosted by the Northbridge Mall. Dawson Family Christmas Show at the Marion Ross. Sunday, A Bluegrass Christmas Concert. Teased New Years Eve events and the Big Freeze community event coming in Feb.

13:12

12-22-22 Discussed Public Skates at the City Arena, New Years Eve concert at the Golden Bubble in Wells, New Years Day happenings including Tom and Jerrys at the AL Legion, Swedish Meatballs and live music at the 112 on Broadway. Jan 20 there will be a fundraiser and comedy show for AL Rugby Club at the Wedgewood Cove. Dueling Pianos will also perform Feb 10th at the Cove. Teased the Big Freeze with confirmed events.

11:53

12-29-22 Discussed plans for the Big Freeze, promoted Blood Drives that will take place Thurs and Friday. Rock on Ice event taking place at the City Arena Friday night. Discussed again the NYE Event at the Golden Bubble and New Years day event at the 112 on Broadway. Discussed the Dueling Piano show at Wedgewood Cove. Solicited community events for free promotion on explorealbertlea.com promoted upcoming AL Legion events.

16:04

Fwd: how about 9:45 a.m. instead?

10/6/22 8:01 AM

From: "Ron Budrik" <ronhunerradio@gmail.com>

To: Ron Budrik <rbudrik@kqprfm.com>

*Northridge
MACE*

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Cathy Malakowsky** <cmalakowsky@ci.albertlea.mn.us>

Date: Thu, Oct 6, 2022, 7:48 AM

Subject: RE: how about 9:45 a.m. instead?

To: Ron Budrik <ronhunerradio@gmail.com>

Thank you!

377-4316

Here's my stuff to talk about:

10 - 7 - 22

7:00

City of Albert Lea

Cathy Malakowsky, community engagement and enrichment director

What to know about Albert Lea this week:

1. Albert Lea Police on duty 24/7

The Albert Lea Police Department is fully staffed with 27 sworn officers. ALPD also has 10 volunteers in its Reserve Officers Program, 2 community service officers and 1 administrative assistant. Call 911 for emergencies and 507-377-5780 for non-emergencies, any hour of any day.

2. Council meets Monday with County Assessor explaining property values

If you're interested in why property values have jumped so much, then tune in to the City Council meeting Monday night. Freeborn County Assessor Ryan Rasmussen will give a presentation on the 2023 increase in property tax capacity.

The Albert Lea City Council will meet Monday at 7 p.m. The meeting is open to the public, held at City Hall, available online at cityofalbertlea.org and on Charter channel 180.

3. Fall Cleanup Day

The council set Saturday, October 15th, from 9 a.m. – noon as our fall cleanup day. This is your chance to get rid of brush, household garbage, and demolition debris for free at the City Transfer Station, 2506 Richway Drive.

Trivia question

A new business venture has gone into the former Streater building on First Avenue. It's available for warehouse, office and manufacturing space. Can you name one company already leasing space in this facility?

ALMCO -

From: Ron Budrik <ronhunerradio@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 6, 2022 7:38 AM
To: Cathy Malakowsky <cmalakowsky@ci.albertlea.mn.us>
Subject: Re: how about 9:45 a.m. instead?

Lol, we can make that happen Cathy. It's not a problem at all.

Ron

On Thu, Oct 6, 2022, 7:26 AM Cathy Malakowsky <cmalakowsky@ci.albertlea.mn.us> wrote:

Sorry to keep changing this ... people keep booking over stuff on my calendar!

How about 9:45 this morning? And I'm thinking you should call me this time, in case I'm still contagious.

I'll send you my info ahead of time.

– Cathy (507-377-4316)

10-14-22

City of Albert Lea

Cathy Malakowsky, community engagement and enrichment director

What to know about Albert Lea this week:

1) Bag of books

The Friends of the Albert Lea Public Library fall book sale is underway. You can find all kinds of used books today, from noon – 6 p.m. at the City Garage on Fountain Street, across from the new water tower. Tomorrow, from 9 a.m. to noon, you can fill a whole bag for only \$1. Bring grocery sack, paper bag or the biggest tote you have!

2) Council decides on dual track for city legal services

City Attorney Kelly Martinez recently resigned to take a different position. The city council voted this past Monday night to take a dual track for securing legal services. We are taking applications for a full-time position. However, many cities and counties are finding it difficult to fill attorney positions. And the job requires knowledge and experience in all sorts of issues, from housing to development contracts to prosecuting misdemeanors. So we are also seeking proposals to retain a firm to provide legal services

The council will look over the applications and proposals and then make a decision on whether to fill the position or contract out services by the end of the year. In the meantime, we have retained a firm to provide services. Prosecution and other city work will continue.

3) Fire prevention week

As part of fire prevention week, make sure your family practices an escape route in case of a fire. The Albert Lea Fire Rescue has a fun and informative open house planned for tomorrow, Oct. 15, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. So bring the kiddos to do the obstacle course, look at the big rigs and more!

11:27

Trivia question

This week is peak fall color for Albert Lea and Freeborn County, according to the Minnesota DNR. This is a great time to leaf peep around Fountain Lake on the Blue Zones walkway. How many miles is this walkway?

- a) 2.5 miles
- b) 4.35 miles
- c) 9.7 miles

You can find a map of the walkway, with parking and restroom options, on our website at cityofalbert.org. Search for Blue Zones walkway.

10 - 21 - 22

13:08

City of Albert Lea

Cathy Malakowsky, community engagement and enrichment director

What to know about Albert Lea this week:

1) Small bug, big impact

The emerald ash borer is smaller than a penny, but will have a big impact on Albert Lea. This invasive species will cost the City of Albert Lea almost \$800,000 over the next 20 years in treating and replacing 1,100 ash trees in parks and boulevards. We do have a DNR grant of \$100,000 to help with the management plan, which is essentially “treat the best and replace the rest.”

Albert Lea has about 12,000 ash trees total. If not treated, the borer will kill all of them, changing the look of our community. The tree loss could also impact property values, quality of life, and human and environmental health.

What can our listeners do? If you have ash trees, have a licensed tree professional assess them for treatment or replacement. You can find a list of licensed tree professionals on the city’s website. If you’re not sure what kind of trees you have, go to the city’s website at cityofalbertlea.org or the Minnesota DNR website and search for “emerald ash borer.” Pages should pop up with photos of ash trees to help you determine if you have this type of tree.

2) Council meets Monday night, will vote on applying for a grant to help with cleanup of Blazing Star Landing

The Albert Lea City Council will meet Monday at 7 p.m. The meeting is open to the public, held at City Hall, available online at cityofalbertlea.org and on Charter channel 180.

One agenda item is applying for a state grant to continue with cleanup of soil contamination at the Blazing Star Landing. In preparation for additional housing at the site, the City is planning to remediate four-and-a-half acres directly east of the existing apartment building. A private developer plans two additional housing buildings on the site.

3) Why the change for East Main intersections?

87 crashes in 10 years occurred on East Main Street between Garfield and Prospect avenues. 63 of them were right-angle or T-bone crashes, more likely to cause injuries. Another 10 were rear-end crashes. Replacing cross-street intersections with "J turns" can reduce injury crashes by 42%, according to traffic studies.

Trivia question

Albert Lea students are on fall break until Tuesday. If you're looking for something to do, head to the Albert Lea Public Library, which is open this afternoon, Sunday afternoon and Monday. Which of the following items can you check out from the library?

- a) State park passes
- b) Telescope
- c) Microscope
- d) Board games
- e) All of the above



11 - 4 - 22

City of Albert Lea

Cathy Malakowsky, community engagement and enrichment director

What to know about Albert Lea this week:

1) Reminder: Burning leaves and brush is illegal in Albert Lea

Earlier this week, Freeborn County issued a burning restriction because of unusually warm temps and high winds.

A friendly reminder that open burning is always prohibited in the City of Albert Lea without a permit. That includes burning leaves and brush. Let's protect the lungs of all our students participating in sports and activities outside. Also, we have many senior citizens with health issues in our community, along with others who suffer from allergies and other conditions. Be a good neighbor and dispose of your leaves at the transfer station. You can dispose of a pickup load of brush for \$5 at the transfer station, or buy an annual permit for yard waste for \$13.

Even better, leave them on the grass overwinter. The leaves actually benefit your lawn and insects.

Recreational fires are allowed. They need to be 3 feet in diameter or less, surrounded by non-combustible materials, and at least 25 feet from any structure or combustible material.

2) Election day is Tuesday

Tuesday, Nov. 8, is election day. We encourage everyone eligible to get out and vote! Albert Lea voters will elect a new mayor and decide on four city council seats: First, second, fourth and sixth wards.

Two polling places changed earlier this year in the city:

1303

- First ward voters now cast their ballots at the Fairlane Building at the Freeborn County Fairgrounds. Use the Bridge Avenue entrance. If you used to vote at Edgewater Park, now you vote at the fairgrounds.
- Fifth ward voters now cast their ballots at the National Guard Armory on Prospect Avenue. This precinct was previously at City Hall.

See the list of candidates and polling places on our website: cityofalbertlea.org and search for "election information."

3) Drainage project continues at Snyder Fields

Hershey Street has a small detour while crews continue to install a stormwater retention pond at Snyder Fields. The pond is part of a much larger project to improve drainage at the fields, meaning safer play for baseball and softball. These fields have hosted 4 big tournaments each season the last few years, including a state tournament. That means hundreds of players and their families visit Albert Lea and spend thousands of dollars.

And the drainage is just the beginning of several improvements. We are working with the Albert Lea Youth Baseball Association on new fencing, dugouts, lighting and parking.

Trivia question

Two local organizations recently donated a total of \$23,000 toward a new sound system for the Nystrom rink at the City Arena. This generosity resulted in the City buying a much higher-quality system and for a net cost to the City of \$13,000. The old system is almost 20 years old and the new one, to be installed soon, should last 15-20 years.

Can you name one of the groups that made a donation?

AL Figure Skating Club

10:44

11 - 11 - 22

City of Albert Lea

Cathy Malakowsky, community engagement and enrichment director

What to know about Albert Lea this week:

1) Let's salute our veterans

On this Veterans Day, it's important to say thank you to our veterans who have defended our freedoms. In their honor, City Hall and Fire Station are shining green lights this week to let veterans know they are seen, appreciated and supported.

2) Speaking of freedoms ...

Albert Lea voters on Nov. 8th elected a new mayor and three new city councilors:

- Mayor: Rich Murray (current councilor for Ward 1)
- Ward 1: Rachel A.B. Christensen
- Ward 2: Larry J. Baker (incumbent)
- Ward 4: Sherri Rasmussen
- Ward 6: Brian "BJ" Anderson

Earlier this year, Mayor Vern Rasmussen Jr. announced that he would step down after serving on the council since 2004, first as the Ward 1 councilor and then as mayor since 2010.

Al "Minnow" Brooks, Ward 6 city councilor, also chose to step down from his seat. He was first elected as Ward 6 councilor in 1998.

Reid Olson, current councilor for Ward 4, was first elected in 2006.

The council will conduct a Canvass Board meeting to certify the city election results at 5:15 p.m. Monday, Nov. 14, which is open to the public.

The new mayor and councilors will take their seats in January 2023. Thank you to all the candidates who stepped forward!

3) City council meets Monday night

At its meeting Monday night, the council will vote on several matters, including disposing of several city-owned properties. The city acquired many of these through unpaid taxes or to preserve historic buildings. The council will vote on issuing requests for proposals to purchase and develop nine vacant lots and four buildings.

Two of the buildings are in our historic downtown, the top two floors of the Freeborn Bank Building and the Jacobson Building next door. With the owner of the lower floors of the bank building marketing them for sale, and the City repairing the façade of the Jacobson Building, staff is recommending taking proposals to develop these vacant buildings.

If you ever wanted to own a piece of local history, here's your chance.

The overall purpose for the City to dispose of all these properties is to encourage development to increase the tax base, jobs and housing options while reducing blight.

The Nov. 14 council meeting starts at 7 p.m., is open to the public, and held at City Hall, 221 E. Clark St. For the full agenda, visit the City website. Watch the meeting online at cityofalbertlea.org (click on "ALTV" in the upper right corner) or on Charter channel 180.

Trivia question

Blue Zones is alive and well in Albert Lea. The goal of this program is make healthy choices easier to make, such as nutritious food options at schools and pedestrian trails for walking and biking. Under Blue Zones, worksites can be certified as healthy places to work if they meet certain criteria. Three local employers were recently named as Blue Zones Worksites.

Can you name at least one of them?

NORTBRIDGE MAIL

11:25

11 - 18 - 22

City of Albert Lea

Cathy Malakowsky, community engagement and enrichment director

What to know about Albert Lea this week:

1) Welcome hockey players!

After hosting the "B Bantams" last weekend, the City Arena is home to the "A Bantam" tournament November 18th-20th. We have 8 teams total coming from Minnesota, Iowa and Nebraska. Please give them a warm Albert Lea welcome. And good luck to our Albert Lea team!

2) City moving ahead with some wastewater treatment work

While still lobbying for state funding toward upgrades to our wastewater treatment plant, the city is moving ahead with some parts of the project. The council approved a \$434,000 agreement Monday night with an engineering firm to move ahead with a new grit removal building. Wastewater actually contains sand, silt, egg shells, coffee grounds and other grit that wears on the equipment. This grit is removed as part of the treatment process. Our current grit removal equipment is 10 years past its maximum useful life span of 30 years, and greatly corroded. In addition, the area needs more ventilation to be safe for our staff. The engineering firm will also look at using solar arrays to help offset some of the energy use and cost. The total project is expected to cost \$73 million.

3) Who should get an exception to zoning rules?

The Board of Appeals is a group of volunteers appointed by our council to decide whether to recommend approval of exceptions or variances to zoning rules. The intent of these rules is to protect public health and safety. But sometimes the only way to build a deck is with a smaller setback from a property line. Or expanding a garage means violating the density standard. That's where the Board of Appeals comes in. This board needs more volunteer members to keep construction projects moving along. It meets only when needed. Consider applying today. Learn more on our website at cityofalbertlea.org.

Trivia question

The East Main Street reconstruction project is nearly complete! How many new miles of sidewalk and trail did the project add to East Main?

- a) 1 mile
- b) 2 miles
- c) Little over 3 miles

East Main now has a pedestrian path along its entire length in Albert Lea, from State Highway 13/69 to County Road 38 that goes to Myre-Big Island State Park.

11 - 25 - 22

City of Albert Lea

7:05
- Northridge mall

Cathy Malakowsky, community engagement and enrichment director

What to know about Albert Lea this week:

1) 'Tis the season to shop local and give local

As we swing into the giving season, please shop local to keep businesses in our community and support our neighbors. Also keep our non-profits in mind, including the United Way, Salvation Army, and so many others.

2) Albert Lea girls' hockey celebrating 25th anniversary

Back in 1997, Albert Lea High School added a girls' hockey team. The program will celebrate its 25th anniversary on Saturday, December 3, at the City Arena. The Tigers will play Rochester Mayo at 7:15 p.m., and after the game, there will be a Skate with the Tigers! All former coaches and players are invited.

3) City council meets Monday

It's a light agenda for the city council on Monday, November 28th. One decision facing the council will be filling the City Attorney position or contracting out legal services to a qualified firm. The city received applications and proposals from several candidates and three firms. The city manager will present information on the costs, advantages and disadvantages of both options at the meeting.

The Nov. 28 council meeting starts at 7 p.m., is open to the public, and held at City Hall, 221 E. Clark St. For the full agenda, visit the City website. Watch the meeting online at cityofalbertlea.org (click on "ALTV" in the upper right corner) or on Charter channel 180.

Trivia question

Albert Lea Community Theater will present a fun production that opens Wednesday, Dec. 1. Which favorite holiday show will be on stage at the Marion Ross Performing Arts Center?

- 1) The Grinch
- 2) Elf the Musical
- 3) Christmas Carol

City Councilor Jason Howland has a part so be sure to catch the show. The show runs through Dec. 11. For more information, visit actonbroadway.com.

Fwd: City interview with library director?

12/1/22 9:31 AM

From: "Ron Budrik" <ronhunterrado@gmail.com>

To: Ron Budrik <rbudrik@kqprfm.com>

*Carl
Northridge
onecc*

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Cathy Malakowsky** <cmalakowsky@ci.albertlea.mn.us>

Date: Tue, Nov 29, 2022, 2:24 PM

Subject: City interview with library director?

To: Ron Budrik <ronhunterrado@gmail.com>

12:44

Hi Ron,

I need to attend a planning meeting this Thursday afternoon. OK if I send our library director, Annice Sevet, to do the city update? – Cathy



Cathy Malakowsky

Community Engagement

and Enrichment Director

City of Albert Lea

221 E Clark Street, Albert Lea, MN 56007

507-377-4316 www.cityofalbertlea.org



Happenys @ the library

Starting next week

Attachments:

- image001.jpg
- image002.jpg
- image002.jpg

~~12-10-A~~

12-9-22

North Bridge walk

10:20

City of Albert Lea

Cathy Malakowsky, community engagement and enrichment director

I have bad news, better news and good news.

1) Water and sewer fees may increase ~

The City Council is scheduled to vote December 12th on increasing water and sewer fees by 5 and 7%, respectively, to cover increasing costs. For the average household – using 6,000 gallons of water per month - that would be \$4.15 more, from \$69.32 to \$73.47. Local fees would still be less than several southern Minnesota cities, including Austin and Fairmont. For sound financial management, water and sewer services must be completely funded by fees, not subsidized by property taxes. Utility fees cover the costs of providing water and sewer, not fixing streets, plowing snow, buying books or fire trucks, making ice at the arena, running elections or other city expenses.

2) Council directs staff to trim city tax levy

Also at Monday's meeting, the Albert Lea City Council will vote on a tax levy increase of 5.75%, down from 6.5% first proposed. The city was able to trim the levy because it's in line for receiving state aid for firefighting in 2023. The proposed levy totals \$7.39 million, up \$399,000 from 2022, to cover increases in health care and inflation.

The impact to individual property owners will depend on their valuations as assessed by Freeborn County. For a \$100,000 home with no increase in valuation, city taxes would actually decrease by about \$83. For a \$100,000 home seeing a 22% increase in value – the average this past year - city taxes would increase by almost \$35 per year. The local property tax levy makes up 30% of the total city budget of \$18.1 million with the rest coming from state aid, fees, and other sources.

Compared to the rest of the state, Albert Lea's tax increase is on the lower side. Statewide, cities report an average increase of 9.1% in their local levies.

The Dec. 12th council meeting starts at 7 p.m., is open to the public, and held at City Hall, 221 E. Clark St. For the full agenda, visit the City website at cityoflabertlea.org. Watch the meeting on Charter channel 180 or ALTV in our website. If you would like to contact your city councilor, you will also find their emails and phone numbers on our website.

3) Proposals received for all 13 properties up for sale

The city recently issued an RFP for 13 properties it acquired through unpaid taxes. The good news is that all 13 properties have interested buyers and developers, including the historic Freeborn Bank and Jacobson buildings downtown. The city manager will be looking for direction from the city council on accepting the proposals during the work session before the regular council meeting on Monday. The work session starts at 5:30 p.m. and is open to the public. Stay tuned for the next steps.

Trivia question

The City Arena is the most-used recreational facility in Albert Lea. How many people visited the arena in the last year?

- a) 11,000
- b) 25,000
- c) 34,000

This weekend we have two tournaments on tap: The U10 and U12 girls' hockey tournaments plus an Albert Lea High School girls' hockey game.

12-16-22

City of Albert Lea

North Side mail

13:16

Cathy Malakowsky, community engagement and enrichment director

1) How and when does the city plow snow?

Tis the season for snow plowing ... our Streets Department is always monitoring the forecast and then getting ready. Their goal is safety followed by efficiency, not to plow all streets by the time most people leave for work or school.

We spend almost \$500,000 every season on snow removal.

Our council adopted a snow removal policy some years ago to maximize efficiency. Under this policy, the crews start snow removal or ice treatments when:

- Snow reaches 3 inches or more of accumulation;
- Drifting of snow causes problems for travel;
- Icy conditions seriously affect travel;
- Snowfall is heavy during peak traffic times.

In total, 16 workers will hit the streets, usually at 2 a.m. to plow about 120 miles of streets.

Priorities for plowing are 1) trunk highways, arterial and collector streets; 2) emergency vehicle locations; 3) school streets; 4) bus routes; 5) residential streets and alleys; 6) city parking lots.

We have quite a few new workers in the Streets Department who are still learning how to operate the equipment and the best way to plow their routes. They're also responsible for removing snow from many miles of sidewalks and trails.

Snow removal is expensive so we try to keep costs like overtime and fuel use down. Albert Lea's snow budget is \$485,261 per year. During an average winter, we use 800 tons of salt and 1,500 tons of sand.

2) Sold – almost! Local buyers interested in downtown buildings

At this week's council work session, the city councilors directed the city manager to negotiate contracts with interested parties to purchase and develop 13 properties that the city owns. Because we acquired them through unpaid taxes, their development needs to serve a public purpose, such as alleviating the housing shortage. That means we cannot make a profit on the sales.

A local group of investors submitted a proposal for the Freeborn Bank Building and Jacobson Building, with retail on the lower levels and apartments upstairs. They are proposing a \$5 million investment into the properties with renovations over 3 years. Stay tuned for more details!

3) Ugly sweater skate

The City Arena will hold an Ugly Sweater skate Sunday from 4:30 – 6 p.m. with prizes for the ugliest sweaters. Admission is \$5 per person, including skate rental. You can pre-register by going to cityofalbertlea.org, clicking on Recreation registration in the right column and then public skate.

If you need a gift for a hockey player or figure skater, consider a 20-admission punch card for public skate and open hockey. The punch card is \$60 – so \$3 per admission – and can be recharged.

Trivia question

The city council adopts a capital improvement plan every year for major projects. This plan helps us budget our resources and set our priorities. Which of these projects is in the plan for 2023?

- a) Paving the parking lots at Bancroft Bay Park and Aquatic Center
- b) A tractor and mower for the airport
- c) Reconstructing Cedar Avenue
- d) All of the above

12 -30- 22

City of Albert Lea

Cathy Malakowsky, community engagement and enrichment director

1) Outdoor rinks are ready

The nets are out and the lights are on! Head to Academy, Hawthorne, Hayek and Lakeview parks for outdoor skating at no charge. Lights are on until 9 p.m. Starting today, Dec. 30th, warming houses will be open Monday - Friday, from 5 - 8 p.m., at Hawthorne, Hayek and Lakeview. Also Saturday and Sunday, from 1 - 8 p.m. at Academy, Hayek and Lakeview.

The Lakeview Loop is back. The City Parks Department made the ice loop - in the shape of a figure 8 - at Lakeview Park a bit longer this year at 1,056 feet.

2) Christmas tree drop-off

If you put up a real tree this season and now need to dispose of it, please take it to Frank Hall Park or the Transfer Station. At the park, follow the signs to the parking lot north of the Humane Society. At the Transfer Station, please drop it off during operating hours: 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Tuesday and Friday, and 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. on Saturday. Deadline is Jan. 8th. There is no charge, but please remove any wire, metal, or plastic. And DO NOT drop it off in a city park or anywhere else!

3) New Year's Bash at Arena

Celebrate the new year with Rock on Ice tonight, from 7 – 9 p.m., at the City Arena, 701 Lake Chapeau Drive. Admission is \$5 per skater. There will be music and light refreshments.

4) Fun Guide arriving in your mailbox soon

The City of Albert Lea's Fun Guide for Winter and Spring will be mailed soon to every home in Freeborn County. Be sure to keep it handy! It's full of programs and fun stuff for people of all ages. Building birdhouses at the library, Easter Bunny deliveries, a theater trip and other events for senior citizens – it's all in there.

7.44

Trivia question

Rentals for park pavilions and the Edgewater Cottage open Jan. 3rd. True or false: You can make a reservation through Dec. 31, 2024?

Pavilions are rented on a first-come first-serve basis. Pavilions can be rented online at cityofalbertlea.org, over the phone by calling 507-377-4370, or by visiting the Recreation office in the City Arena, 701 Lake Chapeau Drive. Payment is required at the time of reservation. Facilities must be rented for a minimum of 2 hours. There is a \$300 security deposit due at key pick-up for all rentals.

Issues List Q-4 Oct-Dec 2022

Freeborn County United Way Spotlight.

With Erin Haag Exec Dir.

10-5-22 Discussed the upcoming Winter Gear Drive, Needs and the importance of monetary donations. Discussed upcoming fundraising event. Casino Night to be hosted by the Wedgewood Cove Cash Bar and Appitizers, guest dealers.

11:38

10-12-22 Promoted the Poker Night Casino event, discussed how the proceeds stay local and fund local in need programs that benefit the residents of Freeborn County. Joined by the local Crime Victims Crisis Center reps Heather and Kim to discuss Domestic Violence awareness month. Promoted the Turn the town purple event to promote awareness.

15:46

10-19-22 Reviewed Casino night, Introduced an new program from the FCUW, The Christmas Family Adoption Program. Reviewed requirements and goals. Mentions that it is a direct referral program for County Human Services personnel and social workers as well as school counselors. Discussed a doner list and gave updated information on the winter gear drive.

13:18

10-26-22 Discussed a new grant that was approved for the Freeborn County Community Foundation Solicited a request for help at the FCUW for a communications Assistant. Entry level job Part time for Marketing and Communications that includes working with other organizations and partner orgs. Skills should include Marketing, Social Media Content and Graphic Design.

8:54

11-09-22 Spoke with Heidi Skinner Community Impact and resource Assistant for the United Way of Freeborn County. Discussed the Welcome Pantry for food assistance for local residents, Also promoted the Winter Gear Drive and Coat Drive that are currently on going. Also introduced the SPARKLE program. Houses decorated by residents would be voted on by the community. Funds raised by the event are used within the community.

7:00

11-16-22 Promoted the winter gear drive and the community needs and requests that have gone up since the program opened and the cold weather has moved in. Discussed donation points and where the drop-offs are located. Warned against depleting our local retail stock of cold weather gear. Talked about the UW's buying power as a non profit and the importance of cash donations. Also made a plea for adult coats male and female.

12:37

11-23-22 Discussed the article that was written on community need and how great the need is for winter items. The stock of items went from feast to famine in short order. Discussed the Direct Referral program for Jingle. Suggested teen snacks for gift ideas. Have a need for wrapping supplies and water proof gloves for both boys and girls. Directed interested partys to visit the needs page at unitedwayfc.org.

16:26

11-30-22 Discussed the Winter Gear Drive Distribution policy, and the rescheduled date due to the bad weather. Discussed the upcoming Welcome Pantry distribution date and that the day will include mandatory masking due to the increase of cases of COVID, Influenza and RSV. Discussed infor and availability. Updated office hours 9-2:30 M-Th. Or by appointment.
8:26

12-7-22 Discussed more about the Jingle program and how it is NOT an assistance program. It is in fact, a direct referral program with referrals coming from county social workers and school counselors. Also discussed qualifications of the program. For those in need of assistance, they should contact the Freeborn County Department of Human Services for help and guidance.
11:19

12-14-22 Due to the poor weather, again, the winter gear drive distribution will be by appointment only. Due to lack of participation, the Sparkle program was suspended. Coats and winter gear are still available. Interested party's should call the FCUW offices to set up a time to pick up/try on items. Erin will be vacationing and spending time with family until after the new year.
10:22