



White Bear Township Report

Special Town Budget Meeting Nov. 27

White Bear Township's Special Town Budget Meeting will be held at 7 p.m., Tues., Nov. 27 in the Town Hall. The Town Hall is located on Old Hoffman Road, southwest of Hwy. 61 and White Bear Avenue.

Township residents are encouraged to attend the Special Town Budget Meeting, where Town staff members will present information to residents on the proposed 2008 Town budget and property tax levy. Residents will then vote on the 2008 budget and property tax levy proposals.

The proposed 2008 property tax levy is \$2,735,976, a 4.96% increase over the 2007 tax levy. The Township's tax capacity rate is proposed to increase slightly to 17.3477% and the Town's market value tax rate would increase to .00330%. The increase in the Township's tax rate is due in part to slower growth in the Town's tax capacity increasing only 3.0354% compared to double digit increases the past five years.

Utilizing the proposed tax capacity rate of 17.3477% combined with the Town's market value tax rate, a homeowner whose house has a market value of \$250,000, with no increase in market value from 2007 to 2008, could expect to pay \$442 in Township property taxes in 2008 compared to \$427 in 2007. However, with an increase in market value of 3.0354% to \$257,589, that same homeowner could expect to pay \$464 in 2008.

The Township's proposed 2008

budget includes:

- Charges for services increased 11.59% as a result of the \$20,000 revenue projected for staff services provided to the City of Gem Lake.
- Wage increases are budgeted at 3.25% for Township staff and Town Board members. Health insurance increases for Township staff are projected to be 12%.



- Recycling expenditures increased \$15,753 for an increase in spring clean-up costs.
- Elections increased \$20,947 due to the need for three elections in 2008 (including a presidential election) compared to one in 2007.
- Police and Fire activities increased 6.09% and 5.00% respectively.
- Road and Bridge Activity increased 5.11% which is a direct result of increased costs for street materials

(salt/sand and asphalt).

- Public Works costs increased \$32,304 as a result of increased fuel costs and an increase in equipment rentals.
- Town Building expenditures increased due to increases in personnel costs and \$15,000 for the implementation of an annual transfer to the building improvement fund for future building repair and improvements (roofs, HVAC, etc.).
- Park and Recreation Activity showed a slight decrease of 3.29%.

The proposed 2008 General Fund Budget would increase 6.02% to \$3,190,714 if all proposals are incorporated into the final budget. Prior to the Nov. 27 meeting, Township staff will continue to work to reduce the proposed budget, so the Town can achieve its goal of maintaining the lowest possible tax rate while providing the best municipal services to Township residents. Staff will present a detailed 2008 budget and proposed tax levy to residents during the Special Town Budget Meeting. Residents in attendance will then have the opportunity to comment and ask questions regarding the proposed 2008 budget and tax levy, followed by residents (not the Town Board) voting on the proposed budget and tax levy.

For more information on the Town's proposed 2008 budget and property tax levy, call Finance Officer Jessie Hart at (641) 747-2760 or visit the Township's website at www.ci.whitebear-township.mn.us.

White Bear Township has been nominated "Capitol For A Day" as part of the Minnesota Sesquicentennial celebration being planned for 2008. The five winners around the State will be chosen based on an online **vote November 11-24**. To vote, click on <http://mn150years.org/biome2.html> and follow the prompts. Let's move the Capitol to White Bear Township!

New Finance Officer On Board

White Bear Township recently hired a new Finance Officer, Jessie Hart, to replace outgoing Tom Kelly. Hart has more than two decades of municipal and private sector financial experience.

One of her biggest past challenges was serving as Finance Director for the City of Cambridge following a State audit that revealed a financial disaster.

“They’d never had a finance director. It was a great opportunity for me to help them comply with new rules and regulations and adopt governmental accounting standards,” said Hart.

White Bear Township’s finances, in contrast, are in excellent shape. Hart said the Township is financially stable; has an

excellent bond rating; and is able to maintain strong reserves.

“The Township’s finances are very comfortable, but there are still market pressures to consider when calculating the budget,” said Hart. “We didn’t see a huge increase in the tax capacity this year because the housing market slowed down. So we’re being very conservative with the 2008 budget to avoid raising taxes in the future.”

Sound financial decisions in the past and present have laid the foundation for the Township’s financial stability.

“The Town Board makes the most of its finances by using joint powers agreements and taking a hard look at discretionary services,” said Hart.



Finance Officer Jessie Hart

Other Township News

- **History Book.** Town Life’s Publisher, Catherine Carey, has written a history of White Bear in preparation for the Township’s 150th Anniversary in 2008. A limited number of “White Bear: A History” are being printed and will be available for pick-up at the Township offices in early 2008 (please call first to make sure they’re in). To reserve a copy of the book, please download an order form at www.ci.white-bear-township.mn.us, fill it out and mail it along with a check or money order for \$45 per book to the Township’s Offices. Those wishing **to order books** without computer access should include the number of books they’re ordering along with their name, address, and telephone number plus a check or money order (for \$45 per book) to White Bear Township, Attn: History Book, 1281 Hammond Rd., White Bear Township, MN 55110. For more information, call (651) 747•2750.
- **Heritage Hall.** White Bear Township and Gem Lake’s “Heritage Hall” should be completed next month. Heritage Hall is a new municipal building built collaboratively by the two communities. Heritage Hall will provide office space for Gem Lake staff; community meeting space for both the Township and Gem Lake; and office space for Ramsey County Sheriff’s Department.
- **Winter Regulations (Nov. 1–April 1).**

Safety: Keep children out of snow piles and forts near the road to prevent injury from snowplows. Do not put anything in the road right-of-way including plants, shrubs, rocks, etc. **Parking:** Motorists cannot park vehicles on the street for more than 24 consecutive hours. Motorists cannot park on a Township street, boulevard, highway or alley after a snowfall of one inch or more until the road is cleared curb to curb. Automobiles should be parked in driveways more than two feet from the edge of the road. **Snowplows:** Stay back, slow down and be patient. Give snowplow operators room to work in. Don’t pass snowplows. Maintenance vehicles frequently back up. **Driving:** Never drive into a snow cloud. Monitor weather and road conditions. **Snow removal:** Perform snow removal and ice control tasks in a timely manner. Keep fire hydrants, gutters and catch basins free of ice and snow. Store shoveled snow “downstream” of driveways (in your yard) to reduce the chance of having your driveway filled with snow as snowplows pass. Check the condition of your mailbox post and make any necessary repairs prior to winter.

- **Christmas Tree Disposal.** Allied Waste Service will pick up Christmas trees on normal collection days Jan. 2 – 11. Trees should be bare, free of tinsel, lights and stands and placed at the curb across the driveway from trash prior to 6:30 a.m. Wrapping paper and packing materials are not recyclable and should be thrown away with regular trash. For more information, call (763) 784•2104.

