

# Woodbury City Update

January 2017 • Volume 18, No. 1



## City Council Chambers remodel will begin in February

The Council Chambers at City Hall – where the City Council conducts the official business of the city – will be getting a facelift this year.

The project includes new finishes and enhancements to the security, audio, visual and lighting features in the meeting space on the second level of City Hall. In addition, the current conference room and Woodbury Heritage Society space adjacent to the Chambers will be reconfigured into one large meeting room.

“This portion of City Hall has not been upgraded since the building was constructed in 1990,” said Parks and Recreation Director Bob Klatt, who is managing the project for the city. “With the exception of some audio and visual technology enhancements, the Chambers has remained largely untouched. These improvements are long overdue and needed to better serve our growing community today and into the future.”

The city’s cost for the renovation is expected to be approximately \$579,000. The project will be funded through the Capital Improvement Fund, which consists of money allocated specifically for major projects. The South Washington County

Telecommunications Commission (SWCTC) is funding the audio and visual upgrades. Work is expected to begin in early February and be completed this summer.

### Meetings moving to City Hall conference rooms

City Council meetings and workshops and advisory commission meetings will be temporarily relocated to allow for remodeling of the Council Chambers. Meetings will be moved to the first-floor Ash and Birch Conference Rooms of City Hall.

During construction, SWCTC will be unable to cablecast meetings live on cable Ch. 16 or [www.swctc.org](http://www.swctc.org) from the temporary meeting location. However, SWCTC will record the meetings for rebroadcast on cable Ch. 16 and its website.

The Woodbury Heritage Society office will be relocated to the Public Works Building at 2301 Tower Drive.

Questions about public meeting locations should be directed to City Hall at [woodbury@woodburymn.gov](mailto:woodbury@woodburymn.gov) or (651) 714-3500. Inquiries about the project should be directed to Klatt, (651) 714-3580, or [bob.klatt@woodburymn.gov](mailto:bob.klatt@woodburymn.gov).

## 50 Years

### Happy 50th birthday, Woodbury!

In 1967, Woodbury Township became a city. This year, city staff, residents and community organizations are working together to celebrate Woodbury’s 50th anniversary. This year marks a special opportunity to honor the past, celebrate the present, and look ahead to the next 50 years of growth and community.

Throughout the year, the city will be partnering with organizations such as the Woodbury Community Foundation, Woodbury Heritage Society, and R.H. Stafford Library to recognize the achievements of the past 50 years and celebrate the growth, diversity and future accomplishments that are still to come.

### State of the City event

The celebrations will kick off with the State of the City, which Mayor Mary Giuliani Stephens will deliver in Central Park Sunday, Feb. 26, at 1:30 p.m., followed by a musical performance.

### Woodbury Heritage Fair

On Saturday, March 25, the Community Foundation will host a Heritage Fair from 5 to 9 p.m., also in Central Park. This event will allow participants to learn more about the history of Woodbury and enjoy a fun evening with food, music and games for the whole family.

Recognition of Woodbury’s 50th anniversary will continue throughout the year at other popular community events such as Woodbury Days, the Woodbury Area Chamber of Commerce Community Expo, the Fourth of July fireworks and more.

“As Woodbury continues to grow, it is important to retain and enhance all the great qualities and characteristics that have attracted so many people here in the first place, while also realizing that ‘community’ means something different to all of us,” Stephens said. “The 50th anniversary provides an opportunity to adapt and expand civic pride and identity, and to think creatively about the needs of

the community. It also is an occasion to celebrate our predecessors, who built the foundation of where we live, work and thrive today.”

Woodbury was originally named Red Rock Township. However, after another Red Rock Township was discovered in northern Minnesota, the township was renamed Woodbury, after Levi Woodbury of New Hampshire, a friend of the first town board chairman. Levi Woodbury had an extensive career in government, serving as a U.S. Supreme Court justice, U.S. senator, the governor of New Hampshire and more.

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50 YEARS

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# Council Perspective

By Mayor Mary Giuliani Stephens

## Woodbury Public Safety seeking input about police officer cameras

Our Public Safety Department is preparing to launch a body worn cameras pilot program for police officers in 2017 and is seeking public input about the implementation of the initiative. Interested citizens are invited to attend a public forum scheduled at our City Council workshop Wednesday, Jan. 18, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Woodbury City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road.

Near the end of the 2016 Minnesota Legislative session, a new law was passed addressing new body worn cameras for police. The new rules establish standards relating to whom and under what circumstances the data can be shared and the minimum amount of time the data needs to be retained. The new law also provides local law enforcement agencies guidance in establishing a program and developing a policy. One key legislative requirement is the need to provide opportunity for public input regarding the purchase and implementation of a body worn camera program and the development of policies.

After months of research, Woodbury Public Safety has crafted a draft policy that governs the use of body worn cameras by police officers. It follows important civil rights principles, as developed by a broad coalition of civil rights, privacy and media rights groups. Now we have the opportunity to review the policy and learn from other communities that are a few steps ahead of us in this process.

Our draft policy is available on the

city's website. In accordance with the law, Woodbury Public Safety will accept public comments submitted electronically at [police@woodburymn.gov](mailto:police@woodburymn.gov) or by mail at 2100 Radio Drive, Woodbury, MN 55125.

As mentioned, we also are providing an opportunity for public comment at the Jan. 18 City Council workshop. Those interested in attending the workshop are encouraged to read the policy prior to the workshop. Also, keep in mind this is a draft document and is subject to change.

We will use your feedback to guide and manage the use of body worn cameras, storage, data retention and data dissemination during the pilot program, which is expected to begin in March.

The pilot program will run through 2017. We will use this time to become familiar with the data storage technology component of the program. In addition, we will evaluate the policy and review public comments so we can balance the needs of all who have an interest in

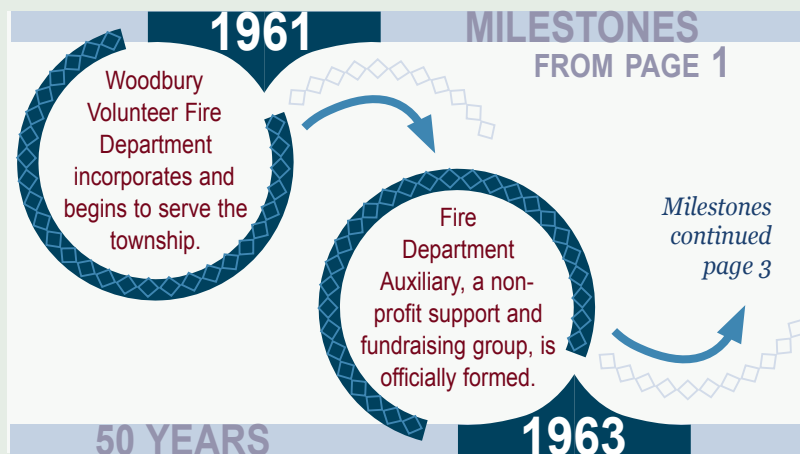
the policy. We'll continue to provide updates about the pilot program on the city's website.

### Police vehicle cameras

The use of cameras is not new to our police force. We've used cameras on police vehicles since the mid-1990s and will be integrating them with the body worn cameras as part of the 2017 pilot program.

It's also important to share that our police officers appreciate exploring the use of body worn cameras. The video captures their good work while also providing the transparency the public has come to expect from law enforcement.

As a 31-year resident of Woodbury, I take great pride in our Public Safety Department's excellent reputation. This good-standing has been earned over the last several decades, thanks to our dedicated, compassionate, well-trained people who have embraced progressive approaches to policing. A body worn cameras pilot program is the next step forward for us.



## Apply now for 2017 Citizens' Academy

The Woodbury Citizens' Academy is returning for the eighth consecutive spring in 2017. Applications are being accepted via email through Friday, Jan. 27, by the Woodbury Community Foundation, sponsor of the program.

The Citizens' Academy consists of eight sessions, designed to educate participants about the city and to encourage more involvement in the community. The weekly sessions begin Thursday, Feb. 9, and will end on March 30. The academy is open to the public at no charge and is limited to 30 persons. Enrollment is offered on a first come, first served basis.

The sessions cover a variety of topics including government, economic development, history, culture and diversity, public safety, local media, city works (public works, community development and advisory commissions), education and volunteerism.

"To date, more than 160 people have graduated from the Citizens' Academy," said Claudia Millington, the program's volunteer director. "They are our future leaders who will help ensure Woodbury remains a strong, robust community for years to come."

If you are interested in applying for the 2017 Citizens' Academy or would like more information, visit the Woodbury Community Foundation website at [www.woodburyfoundation.org](http://www.woodburyfoundation.org) or send an email to Millington at [cmillington@cortrustbank.com](mailto:cmillington@cortrustbank.com).



**Brian Massel, a paid-on-call firefighter/emergency medical technician, talks with some members of the 2016 Citizens' Academy at the Public Safety Building last March. The eight-week program is a great way for residents to learn more about Woodbury and become more involved in the community.**

The Woodbury newsletter is published 10 times per year by the City of Woodbury and mailed to all residents and businesses. Send comments to: Woodbury City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road, Woodbury, MN 55125-3330. Phone: (651) 714-3500. Email: [jason.egerstrom@woodburymn.gov](mailto:jason.egerstrom@woodburymn.gov).

**Mayor:** Mary Giuliani Stephens. **Council Members:** Christopher Burns, Andrea Date, Julie Ohs, Amy Scoggins. **City Administrator:** Clinton Gridley. **Communications Coordinator:** Jason Egerstrom.

The City of Woodbury is subject to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In accordance with the act, the Woodbury newsletter is available in other formats. Call Jason Egerstrom, (651) 714-3500; TDD: (651) 714-3568.



# Council appoints 16 to citizen advisory boards

Sixteen residents were appointed to Woodbury advisory commissions by the City Council in December. All serve on a volunteer basis, and their terms are for three years, unless noted otherwise.

Those appointed were selected from a pool of 40 citizens who applied for the advisory board vacancies in October. Council members interviewed candidates in November and, according to Mayor Mary Giuliani Stephens, the applicants once again impressed the Council with their qualifications.

“Woodbury has been very fortunate in attracting candidates who have professional or personal experience relevant to the various advisory boards,” Stephens said. “In addition, our residents are strongly motivated to serve their community.”

Advisory groups and those appointed include:

### Audit and Investment

**Commission:** Janell Balzovich (reappointed) and Nathan Kolman.

### Economic Development

**Commission:** Gregory Waibel.

### Parks and Natural Resources

**Commission:** Greta Bjerkness (reappointed), Arin Kurttila and Karin Freymann. Student representative (one-year term): Emma Jones (Math and Science Academy).

**Planning Commission:** John Chikkala (reappointed), David Filiatak (reappointed) and Steven Morris. Student representatives (one-year terms): Emily Carlton (Tartan High School) and Blake Wigen (Woodbury High School).

### South Washington County Telecommunications

**Commission:** Craig Johnson. Robert James (two-year term) will serve as the alternate. Council member Julie Ohs (one-year term) will serve as the elected official with voting authority.

In addition to the commission appointments, the City Council consolidated the Business Development Committee (BDC) with the Economic Development Commission (EDC). Conducting separate meetings with the EDC and BDC was no longer needed due to the overlapping duties of the two groups. Staff recommended this change to improve work efficiencies. The eight existing BDC members were merged into the EDC.

Meanwhile, Michael Madigan was nominated to represent Woodbury on the South Washington Watershed District (SWWD).

The Council also selected chairpersons for the commissions. They are: Gina Kazmerski, Economic Development Commission; Tim Sullivan, Parks and Natural Resources Commission; and

Al Rudnickas, Planning Commission. Council member Christopher Burns will chair the Audit and Investment Commission.

The South Washington County Telecommunications Commission, which is a collaboration of five communities, has selected Woodbury resident Craig Johnson as its chair.

As new appointees are named, the City Council wishes to acknowledge those who have completed their service on city boards and commissions. They include: Paul Rebolz and Jim Tobin, Audit and Investment Commission; Don Place, Robert Pounds, Abraham Schwager and Jimmy Wong, Economic Development Commission; Nicholas Alfano, Andrea Date, Margaret Kenney (student representative) and Felix Oh (student representative), Parks and Natural Resources Commission; Irfan Ali, Maxwell Gates (student representative) and Dasom Ham (student representative), Planning Commission; Jim Edberg, Business Development Committee; and Wendy Chretien, South Washington County Telecommunications Commission.

Citizens interested in serving on any of the city’s advisory boards may apply for openings annually. Applications generally are accepted in October, with interviews in November. Commissioners’ terms begin in January.



## Keep sidewalks clear of snow this winter

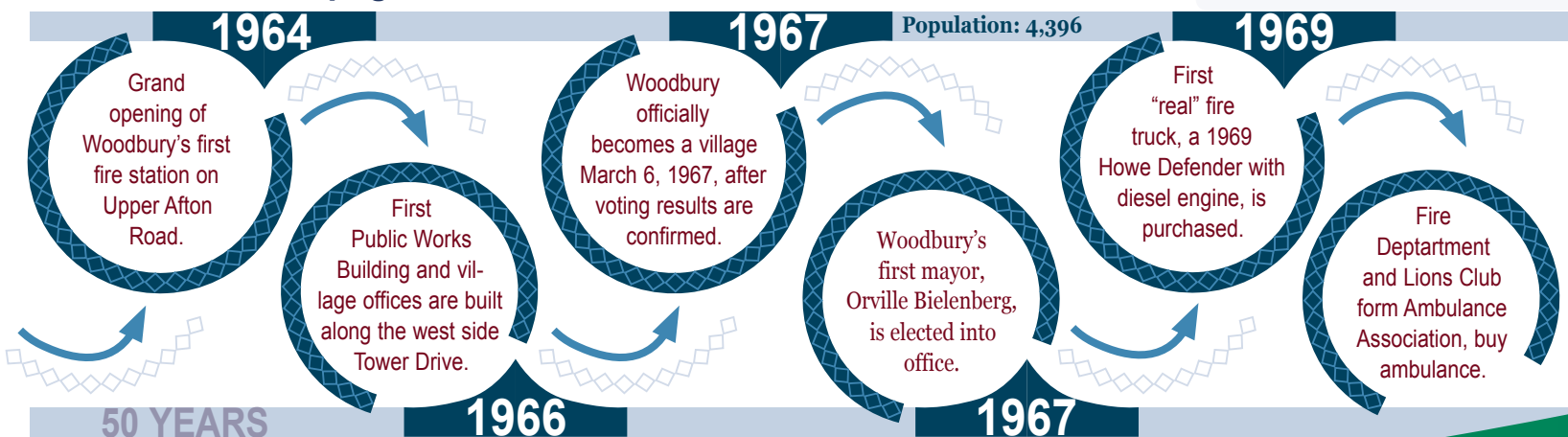
With winter now upon us, it is important to know that city ordinance requires property owners with property adjacent to a public sidewalk to maintain the sidewalk by clearing snow and ice within 12 hours after it stops falling.

If you own property adjacent to a public sidewalk, be sure to keep it clear. If you have a contractor clearing the snow and ice from your sidewalks and driveway, remind them to also include the clearing of the public sidewalk(s) adjacent to your property.

Be aware that sidewalks not cleared within 12 hours may be abated, meaning the city may hire a private contractor to clear the sidewalk at the cost of the adjacent property owner. The cost of removal varies depending on the sidewalk as well as the amount and nature of the material to be cleared. Typically, the cost for abatement exceeds \$200 and may include administrative costs as well.

If you have questions, contact Matt Novak, building inspector/code enforcement officer, (651) 714-3553 or matt.novak@woodburymn.gov.

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remodel begins**  
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**Keep sidewalks  
shoveled**  
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## Key milestones of Woodbury's first 50 years

To honor Woodbury's past and celebrate its 50th anniversary, a timeline of key milestones in the city's history will be published in the City Update newsletter throughout 2017. This month, important events from between 1859 and 1969 are featured (begins on page 1). Look for more milestones in the February edition!

Sources: City of Woodbury and Woodbury Heritage Society

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## Stay focused on driving when behind the wheel

While driving may seem like a routine activity, it's critical motorists stay attentive at all times and be prepared to react safely should the driving conditions change unexpectedly.

According to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, distracted or inattentive driving is a factor in one in four crashes, resulting in at least 70 deaths and 350 serious injuries each year in Minnesota.

"It is illegal for drivers to read, compose or send text messages and emails, or access the internet using a wireless device while the vehicle is in motion or a part of traffic, including stopped in traffic or at a traffic light," said Woodbury Police Sgt. Scott Melander. "Cell phone use is totally banned for school bus drivers and for teen drivers during their permit and provisional license stages."

### Tips to avoid distracted driving

The Department of Public Safety shares these tips for stopping distracted driving:

- Cell phones – turn off cell phones, or place them out of reach to avoid the urge to dial or answer. If a passenger is present, ask them to handle calls/texts.
- Music and other controls – pre-program favorite radio stations for easy access and arrange music (mp3 player/CDs) in an easy-to-access spot. Adjust mirrors and heat/AC before traveling, or ask a passenger to assist.
- Navigation – designate a passenger to serve as a co-pilot to help with directions. If driving alone, map out destinations in advance, and pull over to study a map.



- Eating and drinking – try to avoid food/beverage, at least messy foods, and be sure food and drinks are secured.
- Children – teach children the importance of good behavior in a vehicle; do not underestimate how distracting it can be to children while driving.
- Passengers – speak up to stop drivers from distracted driving behavior.
- When making/receiving a call, ask if the person is driving. If so, ask them to call back at a safer time.

Source: dps.mn.gov