

CITY CONTACT



*A Quarterly Publication
from the City of Mound*

Nov Dec 2012
Jan 2013

The City of Mound, through teamwork and cooperation, provides, at a reasonable cost, quality services that respond to the needs of all citizens, fostering a safe, attractive and flourishing community.

Message from the Mayor

Dear Fellow Citizens of Mound,

One of the major initiatives that the council and staff have been working on over the last several years has been to find new ways to deliver quality services that people expect at lower costs. This has included job shifting and redesigning the labor force. The result of this has been more efficient staff that is, unquestionably, getting more done with fewer people and fewer resources. In fact, the labor force has been reduced by 18% over the last few years with almost no reduction in services. This is why we have been able to hold our taxes flat even though inflation and materials costs rise. It is an ongoing process that can fluctuate over the years as expectations and priorities change.



Mark Hanus

Recently, some people have been raising issues regarding pay and benefits of the City management team. There is merit in some of what they say. That's why we have been taking a close look this. But caution must be exercised in these matters. In most cases our management staff earns wages and benefits that are in the middle of the range for cities that are similar in workload and functions being performed. Some others are higher. This is an issue that we have been working on since last spring, but it's a subject that is protected by data practices so we are very limited regarding what we can talk about. Hacking and slashing haphazardly is an invitation to disaster. So we have to proceed thoughtfully and carefully, but deliberately. We have been meeting on this subject for a while now and expect to have some adjustments ready prior to the final budget approval in December.

This is just another of the many phases we have been working so hard on as we continue to reinvent government to gain the most efficiency and get the most bang for the buck as possible. This is what people have been telling us to do over the years, and that's why we are focused on it.

Respectfully,

Mark Hanus

Mark Hanus, Mayor

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR PARKS & OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMISSION

The City of Mound wishes to notify its residents of a vacancy on the Parks and Open Space Advisory Commission and would like to invite interested residents to apply. The Commissions act as recommending bodies to the City Council.

There are currently two, three-year term openings. The Commission meets the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. and considers all matters pertaining to parks and open spaces, including plats and trails. Call Jim (952-472-0611) for more information. Email Jillnorlander@cityofmound.com for an application. Submittal deadline is 4:30 PM, Thursday, November 1, 2012. Interviews are Thursday, November 8 at 7:00 PM. Prior candidates and participants are encouraged to apply. You must be available for the interview to be considered.

Message from the City Manager ... The City of Mound Financial Overview



Kandis Hanson

The housing market crisis and the resulting recession, which began in 2008, brought about major change in our community. The failing financial state of our nation eventually precipitated the reorganization of our City. That reorganization has taken place over the last five years.

Prior to that, beginning with the hiring of the new City Manager in 2000, the City of Mound displayed its commitment to the strategic plan through the initiation of redevelopment efforts and infrastructure improvements. The tax base was increasing, city staff was increased to meet the growing demands, and projects got underway. From 2000 – 2012 the following investments were made:

- General Obligation Bonds increased from \$225K to \$18.8M to fund street replacement projects and capital equipment and improvements. By policy, a portion of the cost of street replacement is assessed to benefiting property owners and the remaining amount, approximately 40%, is levied to the general public.
- Utility Revenue Bonds increased from \$940K to \$19.9M to upgrade all of the water, sewer and storm sewer infrastructure associated with the annual street projects. In addition, a new water tower and pump house was constructed on Chateau Lane. Many benefited from the under-lake water main crossing in Harrison Bay and water main loops have increased water pressure and volume to area residents. The topography of Mound necessitates 30 lift stations to move waste through the system. One-half of those will be refurbished as of 2012, reducing the chance of sewer back-ups in area homes.
- Tax Increment Financing Bonds increased from \$745K to \$8.22M, which helped fund the Mound Marketplace and Village by the Bay redevelopment projects, and reroute County Road 15, making way for the Mound Greenway and Pier, the Lost Lake Villas, and future development planned for the Harbor District.
- Investments were made in public facilities, including a new public safety building in 2002, a new liquor store in 2003, and a new parking deck in 2006, which did away with derelict properties in the Harbor District and readied the downtown area for redevelopment.
- General Fund personnel-related expenditures rose from \$1.68M in 2000 to a projected \$3.02M in 2012. The General Fund liability related to severance obligations to employees rose from \$193K to \$436K during this same period.

All of this effort and progress had two-fold purpose: 1) It would benefit our citizens' quality of life and 2) it would create a favorable environment for attracting business and furthering economic growth in Mound.

Most Minnesota cities were in a similar growth mode when the recession hit. In 2008, the council and management recognized decreasing property values, high unemployment and restricted credit markets necessitated a change in the way we do business. Since that time, there have been many initiatives implemented to reduce costs, enhance efficiencies, and respond to the ongoing budget challenges. Highlights include:

- The City offered an Early Retirement Incentive Plan to Police and Public Works employees in 2008 and to salaried employees in 2012.
- The City has reorganized the departments to absorb positions vacated by retirements and, in some cases, employed reductions in force to accomplish reorganizations. In that time, full-time employees have been reduced from 50 to 41, an 18% decrease since 2008.
- The City's labor unions/admin staff settled for a 0% general wage increase for 2010 and it is anticipated that increases will be held to 1% for 2011 and 1% for 2012.

- The City offered employees a Vacation Purchase Program, in which employees can supplement their vacation accruals by forfeiting pay, resulting in personnel related savings during levy limits (2009 – 2011).
- The City is streamlining operations and focusing on providing the most essential services as resources diminish. Example: Outsourced public housing management and plowing of the downtown district.
- The City has consolidated vendor contracts, and in some cases, locked into extended terms to take advantage of efficiencies and quantity discounts, including:
 1. Consolidated all garbage contracts, saving the General Fund \$3,225, or 37%, per year.
 2. Reduced City Hall janitorial services frequency, saving over \$10,000, or 47%, per year.
 3. Consolidated computer network support services contract and integrated the City Hall and Public Safety servers to provide increased capacity and support.
 4. Entered into 5-year flat-rate contracts for residential curb-side recycling and brush disposal, saving approximately \$ 18,000, or 10%, per year.
 5. Retrofitted lighting fixtures in public safety, city hall, liquor store and public housing to save on power consumption and expense.
- The City has pulled back on capital expenditures for equipment over the years.
- Bonds have been refinanced to take advantage of lower interest rates, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars over the remaining life of the bonds.
- Management flexes public works shift schedules during snow events to minimize overtime.
- A cross functional task force was created to investigate health care insurance alternatives that ultimately ended with a reduction in premiums of 16% for 2012.

Increasing collaboration with other units of government is a natural extension of these efforts. The contract for police services from Orono was recently approved which ensures Mound will receive equal or enhanced services at a reduced cost over a 10-year term.

Environmental pressures show no sign of letting up, including higher levels of government continuing to push costs down.

- The State of Minnesota eliminated local government aid to Mound in 2003 (\$351K in 2000) and the reimbursement of the Market Value Homestead Credit in 2009 (\$472K in 2000).
- Hennepin County continues to keep more of the fine revenue and push more of the costs of prosecution and boarding prisoners to the City.
- The County recently announced their intent to charge cities for dispatch services that have been HC's cost until now.
- Met Council increased its Environmental Charges for the treatment of wastewater from \$391K in 2000 to \$748K in 2012.
- Engineering costs have risen substantially since 2000 as unfunded mandates related to water, sewer and storm sewer utilities increase.
- Street and other infrastructure improvements continue since what is being replaced was long past its estimated useful life.

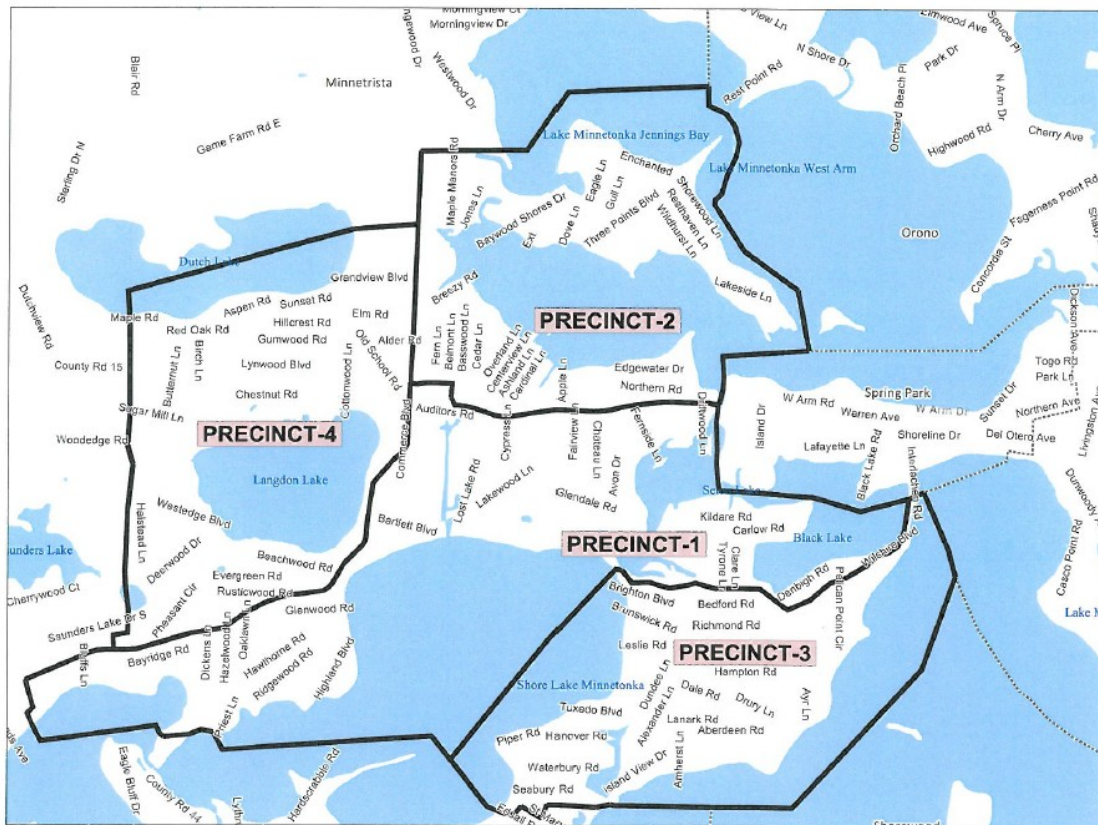
These are the challenges facing the City of Mound.

The council and management have tried to keep the public informed and hope that the public values the progress that has been made. The City of Mound is poised for the day when the economy improves and developers are ready to invest again. We have already seen a significant uptick in developer interest. The Walgreens project happened with no public assistance and that is a sign that Mound is becoming a destination of developer interest again.

Even in the boom times of the early 2000's it was the City's responsibility to look for ways to provide the same service at less cost. Correspondingly, when the economy fully recovers, City leaders will still be challenged to make government as small and efficient as possible, and always be responding to the 'new normal.'

Election Information

Following the 2010 census and 2012 redistricting, the City of Mound has changed voting precinct lines and polling place locations. These changes were made to even out our precinct populations, and to have polling places that meet election regulations. The following map shows the new precinct lines.



The polling places are as follows:

- Precinct 1 - Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, 5218 Bartlett Boulevard
- Precinct 2 - Bethel United Methodist Church, 2116 Commerce Boulevard
- Precinct 3 - St. John's Lutheran Church, 2451 Fairview Lane
- Precinct 4 - The Gillespie Center, 2590 Commerce Boulevard

Hennepin County mailed postcards to all registered voters, informing them of their correct voting precinct and polling place. You can go to: <http://pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us> to verify the location of your polling place.

The General Election is November 6, 2012. Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Are you registered to vote? If you are a new Mound resident, or have not voted in the last four years, you can pre-register to vote until October 16 for the General Election. You can pick up registration applications at City Hall, or online at our city website: www.cityofmound.com. Also visit the website for other information and election forms.

Absentee voting: Absentee voting for the General Election is from September 21 through November 5. A voter may cast an absentee ballot in person at City Hall during regular business hours, or have an application and ballot sent by mail. Absentee ballot applications are also found on the City's website. Voters may vote by absentee ballot if they are unable to vote in person on election day for the following reasons; absence from the precinct, illness or disability, religious discipline or observance of religious holiday, service as election judge in another precinct, or eligible emergency declared by the governor or quarantine declared by federal or state government. In person absentee voting can also be done at City Hall on Saturday, November 3rd from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

For more information on elections, please go the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.state.mn.us or the City's website at www.cityofmound.com.

HEROIN: IT IS IN OUR COMMUNITY

**Thursday, November 1st, 2012
7pm - 8:30pm
Gillespie Center
2590 Commerce Boulevard, Mound**

**Keynote speaker:
Carol Falkowski, Nationally recognized drug abuse expert and author of
Dangerous Drugs: An Easy-to-Use Reference for Parents and Professionals**

CURRENT TRENDS IN DRUG ABUSE AND WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

This fast-paced presentation will address the newest trends in youth drug abuse:

- Heroin
- Prescription Drugs and the non-medical use
- Why the increases in abuse?
- How far reaching is the impact?
- How can you tell if your child is using?
- What is being done to lessen the number of people abusing?

Other topics include:

- An update on heroin use in our communities- West Metro Drug Task Force
- Local awareness and prevention- Kevin Borg, Correy Farniok
- Q&A with a panel of experts and community leaders

Mayors: Lili McMillan, Orono; Sarah Reinhardt, Spring Park; Mark Hanus, Mound

Council Member: Ray Salazar, Mound

Police Chiefs: Correy Farniok, Orono; Dean Mooney, Mound; Paul Falls, Minnetrista

Superintendent: Kevin Borg, Westonka I.S.D;

School Resource Officers: Jami Wittke, Mound; Pat Cummings, Minnetrista

West Metro Drug Task Force Officer: Tim Sonnek, Orono

Recovery Community Professionals: Charles Hilger, Treatment Program Director, Valhalla Place, Inc; Howard McMillan, LADC, MN Recovery Counselors

Sponsors for the public awareness meetings are Mound Crime Prevention Association; Cities of Minnetonka Beach, Minnetrista, Mound, Orono, Spring Park; Westonka School District; and Orono School District

Indian Knoll Manor Public Housing

Indian Knoll Manor Apartments, located at 2020 Commerce Boulevard, are reserved for low income seniors, age 62 or older, handicapped and/or disabled persons that are able to live independently or with the help of a privately contracted service. Income limits are \$45,500 for one person household and \$52,000 for a two person household. There are one bedroom and studio apartments. Please call the Housing Coordinator at (952) 472-5078 for an application or to take a tour.

Winter Plowing Information



With winter just around the corner, the Mound Public Works Department offers the following information regarding the City's snow removal policies and procedures:

- * Mound Public Works crews are dispatched to plow snow if there is more than two inches of snow.
- * Sand/Salt Use: The City makes a determination whether to apply salt and/or sand to the streets. Sand assists in traction, and salt assists in ice and snow melt, however, salt is only effective in certain temperatures, and doesn't work well in sub-zero conditions. Due to budget restrictions, decisions are made that minimize plowing/snow removal and most effectively utilize our street materials.
- * The City of Mound has numerous county roads within the city which are owned and operated by Hennepin County and therefore not maintained or plowed by the City of Mound.
- * Residents are encouraged to drive to the current conditions of the road.

If you have questions or concerns on the condition of our streets, please call Joyce in Public Works at 952-472-0603.

CHANGES TO THE MOUND SIGN REGULATIONS

The City Council recently approved amendments to the sign regulations that now allow temporary banners and portable signs to be up for 30-days. Previously, banners were allowed up to 15 days and portable signs were allowed for 10 days. Subject to the provisions in Sec. 119-4 of the City Code, portable signs placement on public property allows for approval by the City Manager. A temporary sign permit is required for both banners and portable signs, however, there is no fee required for a portable sign.

FREE LEAF DUMPING

City of Mound residents are eligible for free dumping of leaves, weeds, garden waste, milfoil and grass clippings at THE MULCH STORE located on Highway 7, just 3 miles west of County Road 44 at 4275 Creekview Circle. This site is open Monday thru Friday from 8:00 – 5:00, and on Saturday from 9:00 – 1:00 thru November 30th, 2012.

Mound residents MUST have picture identification to qualify for the free dumping of leaves. Any items containing wood stems are considered brush and will be charged for accordingly along with limbs, logs and stumps.

If you have any questions call the Mulch Store at (952) 446-1056 or the City of Mound (952) 472-0603.



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Change your Clocks, **Change Your Batteries**



The Mound Fire Department has a simple but powerful reminder for all members of our community. When you change your clocks for daylight-saving time, change the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

Twenty-five years ago, *Energizer* and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) recognized a disturbing trend that many home fire fatalities were taking place in homes without working smoke alarms. So the *Change Your Clock Change Your Battery®* program was developed to help reduce and hopefully, one day, eliminate this number. Along with thousands of fire departments nationwide, *Energizer* and the IAFC have been reminding communities to check and change their smoke alarm batteries and to make sure their smoke alarms are working when they set their clocks.

Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fire structures in half. Overall, almost 66% of home fire deaths in this country occur in homes without working smoke alarms. Considering that residential fire deaths peak in winter months, it's critical to check and change your smoke alarm batteries each and every fall.

Energizer has generously supplied the Mound Fire Department with a limited supply of batteries that are available to residents served by the Mound Fire Department. You may stop by the Fire Department during business hours to pick up free batteries for your residential smoke and/or CO detector after October 29th.



Mound Fire Department Auxiliary Turkey Bingo

Tuesday, November 13, 2012

Doors open at 6:00 pm ~ Bingo begins at 7:00pm

.50 cents per card -- \$10.00 to play all games of the night.

Fish Fry Proceeds Support Fire Department

Proceeds from the June 2012 Mound Fire Fish Fry were used to purchase needed equipment for the Mound Fire Department. The Mound Fire Department Auxiliary and the Mound Fire Volunteer Relief Association donated approximately \$7,525 for the following:

- The Mound Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary provided \$3,000 to purchase needed tools and equipment, including two Mustang Ice Rescue Suits, a portable training projector, a digital scanner, a DVD/VCR combination player. The Mustang suits provide firefighters protection against the icy waters in the event of a winter ice or cold water rescue.
- The MVFD Relief Association approved the purchase of three Tele-Lite Portable Generator Lights totaling \$4,525. These portable generator lights are a compact self-contained unit that can be used at emergency scenes, training drills and other public safety events.

City of Mound
5341 Maywood Road
Mound, MN 55364
(952) 472-0600
www.cityofmound.com

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City Council Members

Mark Hanus, Mayor (952) 472-5480
Heidi Gesch (952) 472-5508
Kelli Gillispie (507) 382-2191
David Osmek (952) 472-1238
Ray Salazar (952) 472-7383

Kandis Hanson, (952) 472-0609
City Manager

City Hall Hours

(beginning November 5th)

Monday - Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

Water bills can be dropped off 24/7 in the
payment box located in City Hall parking lot
near the flag!

Dates To Remember

Nov 6 Election Day
Nov 12 Veteran's Day Holiday - City Hall Closed
Nov 15 Tree Lighting - Lost Lake Greenway
Nov 22/23 Thanksgiving Holiday - City Hall Closed
Dec 24 Christmas Eve - City Hall Closed at noon
Dec 25 Christmas Day - City Hall Closed
Dec 31 New Year's Eve - City Hall Closed at noon
Jan 1 New Year's Day - City Hall Closed
Jan 21 Martin Luther King Day - City Hall Closed

Mound Meeting Calendar

- City Council meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month beginning at 7pm
- HRA meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month beginning at 6:30pm
- Planning Commission meets the first Tuesday of each month beginning at 7pm
- Parks and Open Space Commission meets the second Thursday of the month beginning at 7pm on an as-needed basis
- Docks and Commons Commission meets the third Thursday of the month beginning at 7pm on an as-needed basis

