

NORTH SHORE JOURNAL

Friday, January 5, 2018

The North Shore's best source for local news & information 10,300 copies printed & delivered along the north shore

Christine Mallory, Editor

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NSJ Gets the Vote

By Kitty Mayo

During the last week the Lake County board of commissioners again voted to continue with the NorthShore as their legal newspaper for another year.

The Northshore Journal is based out of Silver Bay, and is a locally owned small business, specializing in community news and local events.

By recently making the decision to close their office in Two Harbors, the Lake County News Chronicle took themselves out of the running in the bid for printing the legals, as state statute requires that first priority be given to newspapers with offices in the county.

The Big Corporation. With their corporate offices in Fargo, North Dakota, Forum Communications Company (FCC) acquired the Duluth News Tribune and Lake County News-Chronicle in 2006. A division of FCC, the Northland Smart Shopper is also distributed under that same name in Cloquet and Superior.

FCC owns over 30 newspapers, most of them in small communities throughout Minnesota, with several in Wisconsin, South Dakota, and North Dakota. They have been in operation since 1878, and also run TV stations and commercial printing companies.

The Little Guy. The Northshore Journal has been continuously locally owned since 1958 in Silver Bay. We serve Lake, Cook, and a small portion of northern St. Louis counties, and have been expanding our reporting coverage to include even more Northshore communities. Our tiny, but dedicated, news and advertising team love the Northshore, live here, and are proud to work hard to bring you the local information that you want and need.

Throughout Lake, Cook, and St. Louis counties readers often tell us that they anticipate their weekly newspaper delivery, so they can read the free newspaper that represents their communities with important information, local stories, and legal news. Delivered to every mailbox holder in Lake County, Cook County, and part of northeastern St. Louis County, we strive to make connections between a larger audience than ever before, well over 10,000 addresses each week!

Local tough. Has the recent deep freeze got you down? Reframe that to feeling super tough. While the bitter cold does take its toll on machinery and psyches, most of us feel pretty rugged and proud of it for surviving northern Minnesota winters. Here at the NorthShore Journal we are proud of surviving tough, for reporting on things that matter to the people who live here, and we pride ourselves on responding to events that bring our small communities together.

We will go on working hard to put out an honest and good paper that reflects the needs and interests of the people living here, all with a local staff that is devoted to



connecting our readers. Despite the far-flung nature of our readership, and the long country miles in between towns, homes, and cabins on the northshore, we are dedicated to creating community through the written word. Locally run, and operated by residents of the northshore, the NorthShore Journal will remain an independent voice, and another small

business fighting to make a good go of it.

As always, we value your input on how we are doing, and any story ideas. Contact us at (218) 226-3335, or email at northshorejournal@gmail.com. Legal postings and meeting minutes can be found on our new website at: www.northshorejournalmn.com.

Silver Bay Tax Levy Set at Special Meeting

By Kitty Mayo

In a special meeting called last week, the Silver Bay city council voted unanimously to carry on with the tax levy as previously set.

"The council did their due diligence, and decided to leave the levy the way it is," said Lana Fralich, Silver Bay city administrator.

Some confusion had come about while setting the 2018 levy and budget for the city when a discrepancy between the county's initial tax capacity increase of 1.7 percent and a later value of a decrease of 4.7 percent tax capacity were reported.

"The tax capacity numbers from the Lake County Assessor's office from August showed an increase of 1.7 percent," said Fralich, and that would have meant that most property owners in Silver Bay would have seen little change from the proposed 7.4 percent levy increase.

While the change in the tax capacity has yet to be explained, Fralich says that the city's budget needs remain the same regardless. According to the Minnesota Department of Revenue website, property taxes in Minnesota are primarily levied on a measure called net tax capacity, which is simply the taxable market value of a property multiplied by its class rate. Class rates reflect what policymakers see as appropriate relative burdens between classes of properties.

"Then the question became: knowing the actual tax capacity number, would our budget and levy have changed?, and the council said no," Fralich stated.

At the beginning of the budget preparation meetings months ago, Fralich says the council looked at what the needs of the community were, what expenses were going to be incurred, and what they were hoping to accomplish for the future. And, Fralich pointed out that regardless of what the levy is set at, the cost of roads, wages, and

necessary projects will stay the same.

Fralich says that the overall change is only a difference of \$65,000 dollars all together to the taxpayers in Silver Bay.

Even though the tax impact was more than councillors initially thought it would be, they felt they had already trimmed down the budget to where it needed to be for a stable future.

"When the council was talking about it (at the special meeting), they asked 'Where would we cut further than has already been cut?', and there wasn't anything that made sense to cut," Fralich stated.

The increases in the coming year's budget, Fralich says, are related to much needed, in some cases very overdue, repairs and projects. Street repairs, capital improvement repairs including \$300,000 roof replacement for a city building, and building up the street fund for the future are all in the current budget, along with an increase to the general fund related to wages.

"Most of that is related to planning for retirement payouts that are upcoming, and that's not something you are able to cut," said Fralich.

While no one likes to see taxes go up, Fralich says that Silver Bay still has relatively low taxes, and emphasizes that planning ahead will be critical for the future of the city.

"We're in a tough spot with no plans having been made before this for long-term road repairs, and we are trying to play catch up. You can't ignore fixing what needs to be fixed, and we still have to plow the streets, and have police protection," said Fralich.

Fralich said the tax statements that residents have received in the mail are based on the budget levy and final certified taxes, and are correct.