

BYRON COMMUNITY NEWS

— BROUGHT TO YOU BY BYRON EDA AND CITY HALL —

www.byronmn.com | Like us on Facebook: City of Byron, Minnesota

Volume 7 | Issue 2 | February 2025

OUR COZY CORNER MOVES TO BYRON



Laura and Dusty Barwald and their two-year-old daughter Emberlynn moved their business - Our Cozy Corner - to Byron in December.

Wouldn't it be great if you could order reasonably priced clothes or shoes from your couch and support a local business? Now you can. Laura and Dusty Barwald and their two-year-old daughter Emberlynn recently moved their business - Our Cozy Corner - into two large warehouses on High Point Dr. NE. The faith-based business runs on the Whatnot app, employs 17 people and runs 24 hours a day.

"It's like a combination of EBay and QVC," joked one of the employees and that perfectly describes the business.

"Never pay retail again," said Laura.

This referral link will take you to the Whatnot app and then on to one of the channels the business uses to sell primarily clothes and shoes through the magic of the internet. It also gives you a \$15 credit automatically.

<https://whatnot.com/invite/ourcozycorner>

"While our main channel OurCozyCorner focuses on upscale shoes and clothing like FreePeople, NorthFace, OnCloud, and Birkenstocks, we have recently launched a second channel, CozyCorner_Outlet that is focused more on everyday apparel including Target, Kohls, JCP and more," explained Laura.

The couple chose Byron because they want their two-year-old daughter to go to Byron schools. They started the business out of a basement in Rochester and then moved it to their home in rural Dodge County. Needing more space, they found they couldn't build a warehouse in the agricultural district, so they began looking for a warehouse in Byron. The company ships between 2,000 to 3,000 items per day. The streaming side of the business is in one warehouse and the shipping is in the other.

If you'd like, you can pick up your order at their office at 550 High Point Dr. NE. The company sells products from national retailers like Scheels, Target, and Macy's and buys in big lots. They then pass the savings to their 60,000 customers.

Laura and Dusty travel around the U.S. to maintain their product

sources and the products are from retailers inside the U.S.

The company is looking for outgoing, creative and fashion-minded streamers and shippers that would like to work in a positive, fun, fast-paced environment. Contact Laura for more information at info@laurascozycorner.com.

Visit this link see the Barwald's business live. <https://whatnot.com/invite/ourcozycorner>

Scan this QR code to see the Barwald's business live.



ADA Transition Plan approved

During the past year, all pedestrian facilities in Byron were inventoried to ascertain if all aspects of the system are properly accessible to disabled individuals. Pedestrian facilities in Byron include 314 pedestrian ramps, six railroad crossings, 23.13 miles of sidewalks, and 7.76 miles of shared-use paths. Most of the system is properly accessible.

At the Byron city council meeting Feb. 11, council members unanimously approved an Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan to bring all parts of the system into compliance with the Act.

City Engineer Bill Angerman told the council members that Byron has been very proactive in planning and building new pedestrian facilities for many years, so the city is in pretty good shape. This plan lays out a schedule to complete those items that need to be modified. It is estimated that the changes will cost about \$1.7 million spread over 20 years. The plan includes the appointment of Public Works Director Tom Ricke as the ADA coordinator to oversee the policy. To view the plan, please visit <https://www.byronmn.com>

CITY OF BYRON MISSION STATEMENT

To provide valued public service and guide the city with innovative thinking toward smart growth.

Strategic Plan updated



City staff members and other stakeholders discuss Byron's future.

In early 2022, a group of city officials, city staff members, and members of volunteer committees drafted a strategic plan for Byron's near future. The planning included input from surveys completed by residents and outlying participants.

Feb. 11, members of that group and other interested citizens met again to review the city's accomplishments and decide if we are on track with those strategic plan objectives.

The three main divisions of the group's vision were enhancing recreation, engaging the community, and being intentional about growth.

The group quickly identified some of the achievements showing that the city is indeed on track. Accomplishments include the summer concert series at city hall, the basketball courts built in Valley View Park, new playground equipment in three parks, an expanded trail system, the revision of the city's zoning code, the installation of the lift station south of Highway 14, the completion of the mapping of the proposed Highway 14 interchanges. (For more information, visit <https://www.olmstedcounty.gov/residents/roads-transportation/maps-reports-and-studies>).

Other accomplishments include the growing popularity of Good Neighbor Days and the establishment of the Diversity and Inclusion Council which led to the creation of the Community Calendar (<https://www.byronmn.com/communitycalendar>).

This group also launched Open Mic nights and the Ukrainian monthly gatherings. The planning group then discussed what is still needed. Ideas included a community center, pickle ball courts, and updating the municipal swimming pool.

Anyone interested in being involved in any facet of Byron's future, please contact Byron city hall to learn about volunteer opportunities at cityhall@byronmn.com or call 775-3400.

The city's Comprehensive Plan may be found at <https://www.byronmn.com/comprehensiveplan>.

The city's Comprehensive Plan may be found at <https://www.byronmn.com/comprehensiveplan>.



Byron will apply for cannabis dispensary license

At their meeting Feb. 18, the members of the Byron Economic Development Authority voted unanimously for the city to apply for a municipal cannabis license. Obtaining a license is the first step for Byron to open a city-owned dispensary.

Delaney Consulting had prepared a feasibility study for the city to consider and after reviewing the study, members of BEDA voted for the company to go ahead with preparing the application for a municipal cannabis license with the help of city staff members. Minnesota is the only state that allows municipal dispensaries, and these businesses are a good source of revenue, the group agreed, which would give the city of Byron another source of income to lighten the load of Byron property taxpayers.

Whether or not the city is granted the license probably won't be known until late spring. At that point, the city has a year to go ahead with opening a dispensary.

"Applying for the license and even receiving one, doesn't lock us into going ahead with a dispensary," commented City Administrator Al Roder. "But the window to apply for a license is very small."

Applications will only be accepted by the state from Feb. 18 through the end of business March 14.

For more information, please visit <https://www.byronmn.com/>



Utility rates will increase

During the past year, the city of Byron approved a water rate study and a sewer rate study to determine if the water and sewer enterprise funds have sufficient income to properly maintain and, if needed expand, repair, or improve the city's utility infrastructure. This includes the pipes, pumps, wells, and water towers that provide water to Byron residents and businesses and the pipes and pumps to carry away wastewater to the wastewater treatment plant.

The studies recommended that the city increase the water base rates by 5% per year over the next five years and the sewer base and flow rates by 4% annually beginning this year. These increases are needed so the city may fund capital projects related to the water and sewer departments. City council members approved the rate increases at their meeting Feb. 11.



FOOD PANTRY HOURS

Wednesdays: 9-11 am

Thursdays: Noon-2 pm

Fridays: First Friday of each month, 6-8 pm

Community Education Center

Room #217, 2nd Floor, South End



There are no income requirements to shop the Food Pantry.

If you can't make it to the Food Pantry during regular shopping hours, please request an appointment.

Call Byron City Hall at 775-3400 to have the latest edition of the Byron Community News sent to your inbox OR pick up a copy at Byron City Hall.

• Byron Community News layout by Mind to Message Print Design •