

RECENT ACTIONS

ANOKA COUNTY BOARD PASSES RESOLUTION ASKING FOR STADIUM COSTS REIMBURSEMENT *by ACR staff*

At its Nov. 22 meeting, the Anoka County Board approved a resolution that called for reimbursement of funds spent by the county on its failed attempt to lure the Vikings football team to Blaine. The language, passed 6-1, was directed to the state legislature: "... if the state legislature decides to use the revenue generated to fund a Vikings Stadium in Ramsey County, the Anoka County Board of Commissioners requests Anoka County be compensated for the \$2 million spent on salary, benefits and professional services developing the plan, which Ramsey County has been able to utilize in crafting a financing package." Commissioner Matt Look voted against the final resolution as amended.

The original resolution presented, #2011-145, supported the addition of electronic gaming machines at the two state-licensed horse racing tracks, Canterbury Park and Running Acres in Columbus; the latter track being in Anoka County.



Commissioners Kordiak, Sivarajah and West

The resolution stated that if approved by the legislature, the added gaming machines would bring a significant boost in revenues to the state, and predicted added economic activity of \$400 million, not to mention an additional 500 jobs.

The County Board's resolution supported one that was passed by the

Columbus City Council last February, which asked the legislature for a share of the revenues of not less than 1/2 of one percent per year.

Thoroughbred race horse owner Bill Ulwelling, Equine Development Coalition of Minnesota President Jeff Hilger, John Derus representing the Running Aces Board of Directors, and Columbus citizen Howard Andy Anderson addressed the board in support of the County Board resolution.

On a motion made by Commissioner Andy Westerberg and seconded by Commissioner Carol LeDoux, two amendments to the resolution were voted on separately.

The first amendment, made by Chair Rhonda Sivarajah, "Whereas, any legislation should treat Running Acres the same as Canterbury Park for fairness," was approved 6-1 with Look voting no.

The second amendment, the stadium reimbursement language, was approved 5-2, with Commissioners Kordiak and Erhart voting no. Both later voted for the final amended resolution.

At its Dec. 13th meeting, the County Board added to their 2012 Legislative Agenda its endorsement of electronic gambling devices for Running Acres, however the county will not actively lobby for it:

"With the addition of Racino (video and slot machines) at Running Aces Harness Track in the City of Columbus, located in Anoka County, there is a potential for creating a significant number of jobs. It would also encourage economic development opportunities, which includes growth in Minnesota's agricultural businesses."

In other business at its Nov. 22 meeting, the Anoka County Board made a new appointment to the Community Corrections Advisory Board: Cindy Cesare, representing social services (term ending Nov. 2013) and these re-appointments: Bob Wright, representing Commissioner District 6 [Sivarajah] (term ending Dec. 2013); Don Kjonaas, representing Commissioner District 7 [Erhart] (term ending Sept. 2013); Dr. Roger Worner, representing education (term ending Sept. 2013); Comm. Dave Pacholl, representing law enforcement (term ending May 2013); and Judge Spencer Sokolowski, member at large (term ending Sept. 2013). Chair Sivarajah also announced the appointment of Erik Aamo of the Dept. of Employment and Economic Development, to the Anoka County WorkForce Council through June 30, 2013, replacing Linda Tabor.

The County Board also held a meeting on Dec. 2 to approve the final 2012 budget and levy, which totals \$119,833,198. Included in that figure are \$50,658,086 to General Services; \$7,206,889 to Road and Bridge; \$30,886,949 to Human Services; \$2,381,566 to Parks and Recreation and \$6,286,908 to library operations.

COUNCIL REDUCES LEVY; BLAINE CONTINUES TO LEAD THE METRO IN GROWTH

by Clark Arneson, Blaine City Manager

The Blaine City Council recently set the property tax levy for taxes payable in 2012, and for the third consecutive year, the Council reduced the City's property tax levy. In fact, the levy for 2012 is 6% lower than the property tax levy adopted three years ago. Even with significant budget constraints, the City continues to provide the quality services that citizens have come to expect, and to develop initiatives to promote efficiency and productivity in order to "do more with less". For this effort, the City has been rewarded with a high credit rating from Moody's Investor Services, and national recognition from *Money* magazine.

At the outset of this budget cycle, the City Council's goals were to maintain services, achieve structural balance (where revenues match expenditures over the long term), and maintain a flat tax rate. The City Council achieved these goals while setting a tax levy that gives a median value home a larger percentage decrease in City taxes than they received in Anoka County's recent tax reductions. The City Council reduced the tax levy by \$943,000 from 2011, giving Blaine the lowest tax rate for any full service city in Anoka County, and making it one of the few cities in the County to reduce its tax levy for three consecutive years. Since 2009, the City Council has cut the levy by \$1.2 million and the monthly cost of all City services for the average homeowner has continually dropped.

As part of the City's goal to achieve structural balance, the City uses a 5-year budget model as a forecasting/planning tool. In part, because of the City Council commitment to long-range budget planning, the City had its Aa1 bond rating reaffirmed by Moody's Investor Services. This is one notch below Aaa, the highest rating a City can achieve. A high bond rating means lower interest rates on borrowed money and reduced costs to Blaine taxpayers.

While the City Council continues to reduce the tax levy, Blaine has continued to grow during the latest economic downturn. For 2011, Blaine has outpaced all other cities and is the metro and state leader in new housing growth. As the City continues to grow, the new additional tax base will provide financial resources to assist with additional service levels that are required to meet the needs of new residents and businesses. The City has maintained service levels despite reduced staffing levels and without additional financial resources. Since 2008, the City has reduced staffing levels by 15 positions.

With reduced financial and staffing resources, the City is investing in new technology in order to maintain existing and future service levels, and "do more with less". Examples of new technology the City is using to increase productivity include a new financial software system that utilizes efficiencies in utility billing and human resources, an automated agenda system, and in-squad cameras that digitally record and download street patrol activities.

As we look to the future, we expect to have more challenging budget years ahead of us due to the current economic downturn. However, the City Council has positioned the City well to meet the future challenges and to continue to meet its mission to provide residents and businesses with quality services and development.



Commissioner Dan Erhart

ANOKA IMPROVES EFFICIENCIES THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

The city of Anoka has implemented several technologies to help improve efficiencies to benefit overall service to its customers, residents, and the community. These technologies include an automatic meter reading system, mobile laptop device, e-billing, an automatic bank pay program, a document imaging system, Ticket Writer, Laserfiche, CJIN, and a record management system.

The automatic meter reading system for the city's electric and water metering systems allows meter readers to receive a radio signal without having to enter a customer's property address. The electric and water utilities have been upgrading its aging residential and commercial meters to read via radio frequency for the past five years. Converting to radio read meters has not only reduced time spent locating and reading meters, it has improved the accuracy of readings, provides safety for city staff, easily identifies problems, and provides quicker response to our customers. This project was started in 2010 and will be complete in 2012.

Anoka Municipal Utility (AMU) now provides its electric service personnel with a mobile laptop device. This device is used to respond to Gopher State One Call locate requests and to communicate with staff back in the office and provide data on repairs, readings, and meter status.

The city provides on-line e-billing service allowing customers to sign up online to receive their utility bill via e-mail eliminating paper, printing, and postage costs. Plus, the Auto Pay Plan automatically withdraws payment from the customer's checking or savings account on the due date each month, eliminating the use of personal checks, mailing costs, and late fees.

A city-wide document imaging system was recently implemented. This turns existing PC hardware into a robust search and retrieval database, eliminating the need for paper copies. The system can scan page for page and retain a high-resolution photocopy on-line. Each city department will utilize this system to save storage space, reduce paper needs, provide quicker retrieval of documents, allow for a paperless exchange of information, and improve document management.

The Anoka Police Department currently scans all case files to an electronic storage system called Laserfiche, making it easier to route cases to the appropriate charging agency and eliminating the need for paper case files to be mailed or hand delivered. This saves money on postage and personnel time. Investigators can access their cases from the computers. Anoka police squads are equipped with a Ticket Writer program that issues a printed citation from the squad's laptop. Officers enter limited information on the violation, vehicle plate number, and driver information and the program pulls all the information needed to complete the citation. The citation is then sent to the Anoka County Courts electronically. Ticket Writer has streamlined the citation process between courts, city prosecutors, and law enforcement.

The Criminal Justice Information Integration Network (CJIN) is a collaboration that connects criminal justice agencies in and beyond Anoka County. It uses the latest technology to make information sharing and integration easier; leverage knowledge, dollars and resources by promoting conversation, discussion, and information sharing across jurisdictional boundaries. CJIN makes timely, accurate, and relevant information available to the police officers, prosecutors, judges, and probation officers who work together to make our communities safer. Anoka County Law Enforcement currently shares one records

management system county-wide. This enables each city police department to share, update, and access information on a timely basis. Departments can see what type of contact other Anoka County Agencies have had with complainants, victims, and suspects.

City personnel continue to research ways to improve efficiencies through the use of technology.



TESTS INDICATE PRESENCE OF eDNA FROM INVASIVE SILVER CARP ABOVE COON RAPIDS DAM IN MISSISSIPPI RIVER

The latest round of eDNA testing for Asian carp in the Mississippi River has yielded unexpected results, according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Nineteen of the 48 water tests near the Coon Rapids Dam have tested positive for silver carp DNA, and three of the positive results are from above the dam. The highly sensitive tests are designed to detect DNA in the environment that comes from the mucus or excrement of invasive Asian carp. Although testing was done to detect DNA of two Asian carp species – bighead and silver – all positive results were for the leaping silver carp.

The Coon Rapids Dam, located upstream of the river's lock and dam system, has been a significant fish barrier since it was upgraded in the 1970s, preventing a number of native species such as white bass from migrating upstream. DNR fisheries biologists are surprised by the positive eDNA results.

"We are investigating the likelihood of false positives or other sources of Asian carp DNA in the river," said Tim Schlagenhaft, Mississippi River manager for the DNR. "A study being done in the Chicago area is providing insight into other potential sources of Asian carp DNA, where they have also been getting positive eDNA samples but have been unable to document the presence of live fish. The results of that study will help determine other potential sources of DNA in our waters. Until we can prove the DNA is from other sources, the risk is too high to assume live fish are not present."

In recent years, the dam's effectiveness as a fish barrier has figured prominently in the DNR's strategy for keeping invasive Asian carp out of the Mississippi River north of the Twin Cities. The dam is about to undergo \$16 million in repairs and upgrades in an effort to further improve its effectiveness as an Asian carp barrier. DNR officials said the improvements are still necessary to slow the

upstream spread of Asian carp in the Mississippi River.

So far, most of the eDNA tests done on Twin Cities metro area rivers have come back positive for silver carp, but extensive netting efforts in the St. Croix and other parts of the Mississippi River this summer and fall have not yielded any of the elusive fish.

The netting results and ongoing commercial fishing in the Mississippi River further downstream suggest a very low population of invasive carp, said Schlagenhaft, so there is still time to implement strategies to slow their movements and keep population levels low.

The eDNA testing has been conducted by the Asian Carp Task Force, a consortium of local, state and federal agencies, along with local environmental groups, examining Asian carp risks and policies. When eDNA is detected, the group's protocol is to deploy netting operations to look for Asian carp. The DNR said it will hire a commercial fisherman to look for Asian carp below and above Coon Rapids Dam, as it has at other sites where the carp DNA has been detected.

The eDNA samples were collected last September. Test results are still pending for water samples collected in the Minnesota River and above the St. Croix Falls Dam on the St. Croix River.

Here are the test results for the St. Croix River and various sites on the Mississippi River. All positives were for Silver carp, there were no Bighead carp samples testing positive:

- St. Croix River below St. Croix Falls – 22 out of 50 samples.
- Mississippi River below Ford Dam – 14 out of 52 samples.
- Mississippi River below Hastings Dam – 19 out of 62 samples.
- Mississippi River above Coon Rapids dam – 3 out of 19 samples.
- Mississippi River below the Coon Rapids dam – 16 out of 29 samples.

Bighead and silver carp are voracious eaters, capable of eating 5 to 20 percent of their body weight each day. Asian carp feed on algae and other microscopic organisms, often outcompeting for food with native fish. Scientists believe the fish could severely disrupt the aquatic ecosystems of Minnesota waters.

"THE 1968 EXHIBIT" NOW AT THE MN HISTORY CENTER

A multimedia exhibit at the Minnesota History Center focuses on one year—1968—through the lenses of politics, war, identity, and popular culture. It was a wild time. The war in Vietnam was in full force. The assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy hit hard. Feminists faced down pageant queens. African-American athletes used television to take a stand. Broadway let its hair down and put the counter-culture on stage. We went to the far side of the moon.

Through gallery exhibits, events, blogs, and visitor-contributed reflections, *1968* examines the people, images, issues, and conflicts of the time, which continue to resonate in the present moment.

The exhibit *1968*, on view through February 20, 2012, was organized by the Minnesota History Center in partnership with the Atlanta History Center, the Chicago History Museum, and the Oakland Museum of California.

Located in downtown St. Paul, the Minnesota History Center is open Tuesday through Sunday. For hours, admission prices, and more information, visit the Minnesota Historical Society website (minnesotahistorycenter.org) or call 651-259-3000. Admission is free between 5 and 8 pm on Tuesdays.



“Too many people spend money they haven’t earned, to buy things they don’t want, to impress people they don’t like.” — Will Rogers

Opinion

Sen. Nienow: Looking Ahead to 2012

2012 Legislative Session preparations have started and we will continue the work started last year to bring fiscal responsibility to state government and jobs to Minnesota by strengthening our state economy. With state unemployment currently at 7% and national unemployment at 9.1%, this is not the time for government to expand at the cost of growth in the private sector.

Last session we found several areas of agreement with Governor Dayton. Our hope is that we can continue to identify, scale back or eliminate excessive costs, regulations and other obstacles that over-burden job creators. In meeting with business leaders across our state, they tell us that we can help them by getting government “out of their way” and letting them do what they do best: create jobs.

The Senate has been conducting meetings with business owners, community leaders and local elected officials throughout the state to get their input on job creation and economic growth. The Senate has a goal for the 2012 session to lower the cost of doing business in the state for job providers. We can do this by reducing and eliminating the overlap, duplicity and excessive mandates on job providers, i.e. businesses. We need to scale back or eliminate excessive regulation while respecting the environment, conserving energy and maintaining workplace safety.

Ultimately, it means getting government out of the way and provide a favorable environment for businesses to succeed on their own merit. Plans are to create a Small Business Regulatory Review Board consisting of representatives from the small business community and others that will review new and existing rules that may impact businesses. They will create a list of regulations to change or eliminate. We will also direct agencies to audit existing regulations to identify those that hinder economic growth.

Minnesota’s current business income tax system is regressive. We should reduce the tax burden on job creators if we want to promote growth.

Let me address income tax here. Our plan is to reduce business income tax by 50% over the next 6 years. (contained in SF1 last year). Under current law business income tax is 9.8%. Beginning in tax year 2012, this proposal reduces 9.8% to 4.9% over 6 years. The 9.8% rate is the third highest tax rate in the world. Some economists estimate that a reduction in Minnesota corporate income tax will increase state GDP growth. The corporate Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) is also reduced proportionately. This provides \$120 million in tax relief over the next biennium. There is also a need and I support it, for an up-front sales tax exemption for capital equipment. Jobs and economic growth will be front and center in the 2012 Session!

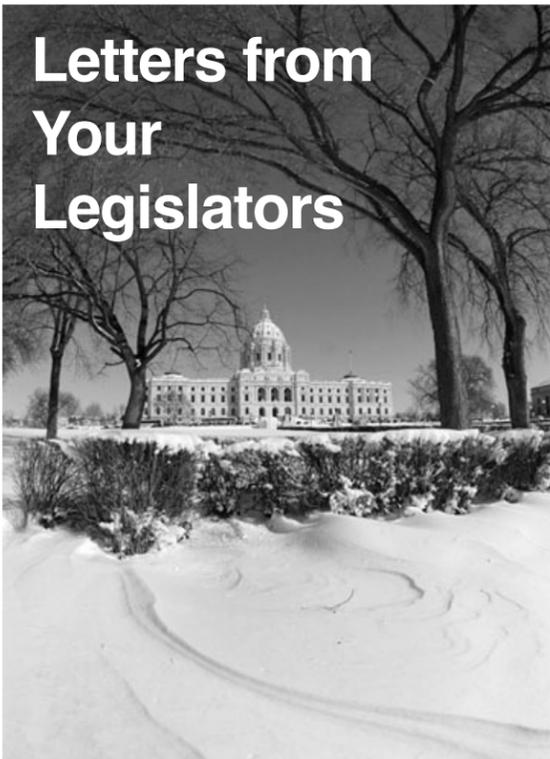
Sen. Nienow letter continued on next page, B-2

Sen. Sean Nienow
District 17



Room 120, State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul MN 55155-1606
Office: (651) 296-5419
Website: www.senate.mn/senatornienow
E-mail: sen.sean.nienow@senate.mn

Letters from Your Legislators



POTENTIAL 2012 LEGISLATION:

- Reform the statewide business property tax
- Reduce the business income tax rate
- Create a Small Business Regulatory Review committee
- Create an executive-level position to oversee expedited environmental permitting
- Expand the “Sunset Commission” created last session

Daycare unionization vote on hold; hearings to be in Jan.

Dear Neighbors,

It is good to see justice prevail as a Ramsey County judge placed a temporary restraining order on Gov. Mark Dayton’s unilateral attempt to conduct a child-care unionization vote.

Gov. Dayton recently issued an executive order calling for a vote that could unionize private, in-home child-care providers. The judge’s restraining order echoed strong concerns many of us share. First, this issue should be subject to thorough public discussion and examination in the Legislature instead of passing along as an executive order behind the scenes. Furthermore, the judge disapproved of Dayton’s order only allowing roughly 40 percent of this state’s approximately 11,000 in-home providers a vote in the matter.

Daycare providers and other members of the public deserve an opportunity to publicly weigh-in on this issue, regardless of their positions on organized labor. The judge did the right thing by allowing this topic to be fully vetted. Hearings are scheduled to take place at the Capitol starting in mid-January and I will keep you posted as things develop.

Until then, I continue to welcome your input on this issue. I also encourage parents and daycare providers to contact Gov. Dayton and let him know where you stand on this issue. You can call his office 651-201-3400.

NEW LAWS IN EFFECT JAN. 1

A number of new laws will go into place Jan. 1. Below is an overview of some of those, along with one that went into effect last May. You can find summaries of all the laws passed in 2011 by logging on to www.house.mn/hinfo/Newlaws2011-0.asp.

Business and Commerce

Insurance claims law modernized (HF1405)

A new law allows claims processors-supervised, non-licensed insurance adjusters to enter data into an automated claims adjustment system. The computerized system is designed for data collection, calculation and final resolution of portable electronics insurance claims. A licensed adjuster may supervise up to 25 people for that purpose. The law makes other clarifications about who is eligible to seek a Minnesota portable electronics claims adjuster license, including those with out-of-state licensure and residents of Canada, under certain conditions.

Rep. Scott letter continued on next page, B-2

Rep. Peggy Scott
District 49A



477 State Office Bldg.
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul MN 55155
Office: (651) 296-4231
E-mail:
rep.peggyscott@house.mn

Opinion

**“Why not go out on a limb?
That’s where the fruit is.”**

— Will Rogers



REP. SCOTT LETTER *continued from previous page, B-1*

Health and Human Services

Nursing home reimbursement rate formula changes (SF1286)

A new law conforms state statutes to new federal requirements related to case-mix classifications and reimbursement rates at nursing homes. The new rates will be based on an updated minimum dataset or any new version mandated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that nursing facilities are required to complete for all residents. The new law also states that the health commissioner shall establish resident classes according to updated resource utilization groups. The law also makes technical and clarifying changes to body art technician licensing and inspection statutes. Additionally, the law permits counties and the state to contract with facilities in a bordering state for detoxification services for Minnesota residents. It also allows Minnesota detoxification facilities to contract with bordering states to provide services to residents of the bordering states.

Donation for anatomical gift program (HF808)

In addition to being asked if they want to be an organ donor, people applying for a driver’s license or state identification card will be asked to contribute \$2 to a donor awareness campaign. The same question will be posed when registering and transferring title on a motor vehicle. The money will be used as grants to federally certified organ procurement organizations and nonprofit organizations that advocate for organ and tissue donation. Funds will also cover all Department of Public Safety expenses to implement the program.

Transportation

Carbon monoxide awareness testing (HF650)

A new law taking effect May 25, 2011, required that information about carbon monoxide poisoning be included in the driver’s manual and be part of driver’s education training. Beginning Jan. 1, those seeking a driver’s license will be tested on their knowledge of carbon monoxide dangers. The so-called “Tyler’s Law” is the result of a December 2010 tragedy when Tyler Lavers, a sophomore at the University of Minnesota, was accidentally killed when installing stereo speakers in his car. He backed his car into the garage at the family’s cabin to be closer to the tools and best lighting. With the garage door open, he started the car at some point to test his speakers. Despite a ventilated garage, the very cold air created a higher output of carbon monoxide from his engine, and combined with a confined space, allowed the deadly poison to concentrate around and ultimately kill him.

Sincerely,

Peggy

Rep. Scott’s district includes Andover and Ham Lake.

SEN. MICHELLE BENSON: STADIUM HEARING INFORMATIVE

The Minnesota State Senate held an informational hearing on financing a new Vikings stadium on December 6th at the State Capitol. During the 6-hour hearing, legislators heard testimony from Ramsey County and Minneapolis officials, Vikings executives, members of the public and many others. Thank you to Senator Julianne Ortman, R-Chanhassen, chair of the hearing, for being even-handed and respectful of all involved. The hearing focused on funding possibilities for building the stadium. I am concerned about the Vikings refusal to disclose their financial status while asking for state dollars. Also, I believe government should not pick winners and losers in business, but rather create a healthy business environment for all businesses to thrive. None of us want the Vikings to leave, just as we would not want any other business to leave, which is why I am focused on reforming government to improve Minnesota as a place to do business.

Court Upholds Legislature Position on Unionization of Daycare

On December 5th, Ramsey County Judge Dale Lindman halted Governor Dayton’s executive order to unionize in-home daycare providers through a union election, stating it was “very harmful to all parties involved.” Governor Dayton over-stepped his authority, as it is clear the creation of any new law needs to go through the legislative process. The Senate majority’s decision to support the legal action challenging the executive order was an important step in protecting child care providers from this proposal’s many unknowns.

I am pleased that the court agreed with the legislature since I have always stood in opposition to the unionization of daycare. These independent businesses are capable of providing quality care and making fair contracts with the families who depend on them without the intrusion of a union.

Senator Benson’s district (49) includes Coon Rapids, Andover and Ham Lake.

NEWS UPDATES

NOWTHEN CHOOSES TO GO WITHOUT POLICE SERVICE; COON RAPIDS PRE-PAY GAS INITIATIVE PUT ON HOLD

An update to two stories that we featured in our Dec. 8 and Oct. 13 issues, respectively. The city council of Nowthen decided on a 3-2 vote at its Dec. 13 meeting not to add policing to its budget for next year. Neighboring Oak Grove will pay nearly \$500,000 a year on a 2-year contract with the county sheriff’s office but Nowthen has chosen to take the minimum amount of law enforcement required by state law.

The proposal for an ordinance that would require Coon Rapids gas stations to make their customers pre-pay for their fuel has been tabled to a Jan. 24 city council work session. The council made the decision to table by a 4-3 vote (Howe, Larson, Koch and Sanders) at a Dec. 6 work session. The proposal was made by the police chief who has said that the nearly 500 run-offs in 2010 and a like number to be expected for 2011, is taxing the police department.

SEN. NIENOW LETTER

continued from previous page, B-1

Property tax proposals benefit business

Legislation is being proposed to phase out statewide business property tax in a little over ten years (part of last year’s vetoed tax bill). This will start with \$50 million in statewide business property tax reductions in 2012-2013 and then phase out at 10% each year beginning in 2015. This will put the property tax back to being solely a revenue source for local governments. Proposals to lower statewide property taxes advanced in the 2011 session however, the 2011 Omnibus Tax Bill, which included a phase out and repeal of the statewide property tax, was vetoed by Governor Dayton. It is expected to be a top priority for the next session. The Homestead Market Value Exclusion replaced the unworkable Homestead Market Value Credit. Contrary to what some in the media are saying, this change will not automatically cause property taxes to increase. The prior program was completely unreliable to local government and the HMVE had broad support by county and city associations. You can learn more about this change at my legislative website www.senate.mn/senatornienow

Sen. Nienow’s district includes St. Francis in Anoka County.

SEN. ROGER CHAMBERLAIN: A SURPLUS IS NICE, BUT WE CAN’T REST ON OUR LAURELS

Neighbors,

Minnesota Management and Budget recently released its November forecast which showed the state budget has a surplus of \$867 million. There are a number of factors that contribute to these forecasts, but this news should be taken as a clear endorsement of the work we did last Session. Revenue collections increased without tax increases. Rather, spending restraint and government reforms helped fill the coffers. Living within your means works. We just need to act responsibly and resist the temptation to spend money we don’t have on things we can’t afford.

While the surplus is good news, we cannot rest on our laurels because of one positive economic forecast. We must continue to push forward with reforms that will make our business climate more attractive, incent companies to create jobs, and ease the tax burden for all of Minnesota’s citizens. The best way to increase government revenues is not through higher taxes, but through a thriving economy.

There is a legal hierarchy we must follow when it comes to spending the surplus money. We must first replenish cash flow accounts. This will account for \$255 million. Second, \$621 million will be allocated to the emergency budget reserves. The surplus is not big enough to pay back the school shift, but if we continue to implement more of our reforms in 2012, I am hopeful we can pay it back during the following biennium.

The surplus will also likely generate more stadium funding discussions. Remember that these are separate issues, and I still do not support raising taxes or using public dollars to build a Vikings stadium.

Senator Chamberlain’s district (53) includes Circle Pines.

Anoka County GOVERNMENT MEETINGS

Anoka County Board

Anoka County Government Center
2100 3rd Ave
Anoka, MN 55303-5024
Ph.: 763-323-5700
www.co.anoka.mn.us

Tues. Jan. 3 & 10

Anoka County Board (Management Cmte — 8:30 am, Board mtg 9:30 am), Rm 705 ACGC

Andover

Andover City Hall
1685 Crosstown Blvd NW
Andover, MN 55304
Ph: 763-755-5100
www.ci.andover.mn.us

Tues. Jan. 3

City Council — 7 pm

Thurs. Jan. 5

Parks Comm. — 7 pm

Tues. Jan. 10

Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Anoka

Anoka City Hall
2015 1st Ave. N.
Anoka, MN 55303-2270
Ph: 763-576-2700
www.ci.anoka.mn.us

Tues. Jan. 3 & 17

City Council — 7 pm

Mon. Jan. 9

HRA — 5 pm

Bethel

Bethel City Hall
23820 Dewey St. / PO Box 64
Bethel, MN 55005
Ph: 763-434-4366
www.bethelmn.govoffice2.com

Thurs. Jan. 5

City Council — 7 pm

Blaine

Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Dr NE
Blaine, MN 55449
Ph: 763-784-6700
www.ci.blaine.mn.us

Tues. Dec. 27

Parks Board — 7 pm

Centerville

Centerville City Hall
1880 Main St
Centerville, MN 55038
Ph: 651-429-3232
centervillermn.com

Wed. Dec. 28 & Jan. 11

City Council — 6:30 pm

Tues. Jan. 3

Planning Comm. — 6:30 pm

Wed. Jan. 4

Parks Comm. — 6:30 pm

Circle Pines

Circle Pines City Hall
200 Civic Heights Circle
Circle Pines, MN 55014
Ph: 763-784-5898
www.ci.circle-pines.mn.us

Tues. Dec. 27 & Jan. 10

City Council — 7 pm

Tues. Jan. 3

Park Board — 7 pm

Columbia Heights

Columbia Heights City Hall
590 40th Ave NE
Columbia Heights, MN 55421
Ph: 763-706-3600
www.ci.columbia-heights.mn.us

Wed. Dec. 28 — 5:30 pm, Murzyn Hall

Tues. Jan. 3 — EDA, 6:30 pm; Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Wed. Jan. 4

Library Board — 6:30 pm, Library

Mon. Jan. 9

Friends of the Library — 1 pm, Library
City Council — 7 pm

Columbus

Columbus City Hall
16319 Kettle River Blvd.
Columbus, MN 55025
Ph: 651-464-3120
www.ci.columbus.mn.us

Wed. Dec. 28

City Council — 7 pm

Wed. Jan. 4

Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Wed. Jan. 11

Economic Dev. Auth. — 6 pm

Coon Rapids

Coon Rapids City Hall
11155 Robinson Dr.
Coon Rapids, MN 55433
Ph: 763-755-2880
www.coonrapidsmn.gov

January schedule not available at press time

East Bethel

East Bethel City Hall
2241 - 221st Avenue NE
East Bethel, MN 55011
Ph: 763-367-7840
eastbethel.govoffice.com

Wed. Dec. 27

Planning Comm. — 7 pm CANCELLED

Wed. Jan. 4

City Council — 7:30 pm

Tues. Jan. 10

Road Commission — 6:30 pm

Wed. Jan. 11

Park Comm. — 7 pm

Fridley

Fridley City Hall
6431 University Ave NE
Fridley, MN 55432
Ph: 763-571-3450
www.ci.fridley.mn.us

Wed. Jan. 4

Appeals Comm. — 7 pm

Thurs. Jan. 5

H R A — 7 pm

Mon. Jan. 9

Charter Comm. — 7 pm

City Council — 7 pm (pre-meeting); 7:30 pm

Parks Comm. — 7 pm

Tues. Jan. 10

EQEC — 7 pm

Ham Lake

Ham Lake City Hall
15544 Central Ave NE
Ham Lake, MN 55304
Ph: 763-434-9555
www.ci.ham-lake.mn.us

Hours: M-Th 7 AM - 4:30 PM Fri: 7 AM-12 NOON

Tues. Dec. 27

Planning Comm. — 6 pm

January schedule not available at press time

Hilltop

Hilltop City Hall
4555 Jackson St. NE
Hilltop, MN 55421
Ph: 763-571-2023

City Council — 1st & 3rd Mon., 7 pm

Lexington

Lexington City Hall
9180 Lexington Av
Lexington, MN 55014
Ph: 763-784-2792
www.ci.lexington.mn.us

January schedule not available at press time

Lino Lakes

Lino Lakes City Hall
600 Town Center Pkwy
Lino Lakes, MN 55014
Ph: 651-982-2400
www.ci.lino-lakes.mn.us

Tues. Jan. 3

City Council (work session) — 5:30 pm
Park Board — 6:30 pm

Thurs. Jan. 5

EDAC — 8 am

Mon. Jan. 9

City Council — 6:30 pm

Wed. Jan. 11

Planning & Zoning Bd. — 6:30 pm

Linwood Township

Linwood Town Hall
22817 Typo Creek Dr. NE
Stacy, MN 55079
Ph: 651-462-2812
linwoodtownship.org

Tues. Jan. 10 & 24

Town Board — 6 pm

Wed. Jan. 4

Fire Dept. — 7 pm

Tues. Jan. 3

Road & Bridge Cmte. — 7 pm

Editor's Note: In our last issue, Dec. 8, we inadvertently omitted a paragraph from a *Anoka County Watchdog* editorial. We now republish the editorial in its entirety:

HAIL, OAK GROVE

The Watchdog gives big props this week to the city council in Oak Grove.

It looks like Ham Lake has competition when it comes to common sense in government.

The council has approved a budget that will cut some \$600,000 from the budget and reduce the city's portion of property taxes by whopping 18%.

Among other things, the city eliminated the city manager position, renegotiated the law enforcement contract with the county, and made changes to city employee health insurance.

The Watchdog salutes these courageous city leaders for doing what many politicians only say they will do: cut government. Not slow growth, not "put the brakes on." These folks CUT government and thereby expanded the liberty of the good citizens they represent.

We have too many politicians, especially some Republicans, who talk a good game about limited government and then turn around in a panic looking for "revenue streams" and other ways to avoid the admittedly tough job of slashing the Leviathan.

With the state looking at another budget shortfall, Republicans in Saint Paul would do well to look at Oak Grove's example. The answer doesn't lie in some new scheme to get money into Saint Paul to dump more money into public schools, prop up failing market sectors, or subsidize a profitable \$9 billion industry called the NFL. The answer is to cut spending and pay fidelity to the principle that government is too large and needs to be pared back.

The Watchdog is especially proud of Mayor Mark Korin and councilman Dan Denno. These two Watchdogs have led the way and deserve the thanks and praise of Oak Grove taxpayers. These two have a bright future. Their leadership and conviction would be welcome at any level of government.

Oak Grove's budget is nothing short of a profile in political courage.

Whether you live in Oak Grove or not, let the council know you're behind them. Heck, one of these guys may be representing you down the road.

NOTE: All meetings listed on this page are subject to change of time or date — call ahead to verify

Nowthen

Nowthen City Hall
19800 Nowthen Blvd.
Elk River, MN 55330
Ph: 763-441-1347
www.nowthenmn.govoffice2.com

Mayor's Saturday hours at city hall
2nd Saturdays — 9 am

Oak Grove

Oak Grove City Hall
19900 Nightingale St. NW
Oak Grove, MN 55011
Ph: 763-404-7000
oakgrove.govoffice.com

2nd and last Monday of month
City Council — 7 pm (EDA 8 pm on last Mon)
3rd Wednesday
Parks Comm. — 7 pm
3rd Thursday
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Daytime Volunteer Firefighters Wanted
The City of Oak Grove needs daytime volunteer firefighters. Please call City Hall (763) 404-7000 for an application or more information.

Ramsey

Ramsey Municipal Center
7550 Sunwood Dr. NW
Ramsey, MN 55303
Ph: 763-427-1410
Fax: 763-427-5543
www.ci.ramsey.mn.us

All Dec. 27 and Jan. 3 meetings have been cancelled
Thurs. Jan. 5
Planning Comm. — 7 pm
Mon. Jan. 9
EPB — 6:30 pm
Mayor's Town Hall Mtg — 7 pm
Tues. Jan. 10
City Council (worksession) — 5:30 pm; mtg 7 pm
HRA — follows City Council mtg
Thurs. Jan. 12
EDA — 7:30 am
Parks & Rec Comm. — 6:30 pm

St. Francis

St. Francis City Hall
23340 Cree St. NW
St. Francis, MN 55070
Ph: 763-753-2630
stfrancis.govoffice.com
Hours: M-Th 7AM-5:30 PM (Closed Fri)
Meetings held at ISD #15 offices
4115 Ambassador Blvd NW

City Council
1st & 3rd Mondays — 6 pm
Planning Comm.
3rd Wednesday — 7 pm

Spring Lake Park

Spring Lake Park City Hall
1301 81st Ave NE
Spring Lake Park, MN 55432
Ph: 763-784-6491
www.ci.spring-lake-park.mn.us

City Council
1st & 3rd Mondays — 7 pm

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Anoka-Hennepin ISD #11

11299 Hanson Blvd NW
Coon Rapids MN 55433
Ph.: (763) 506-1000
http://www.anoka.k12.mn.us

Mon. Jan. 9 & 23
School Board — 6 pm

Centennial ISD #12

4707 North Rd
Circle Pines, MN 55014
Ph.: (763) 792-6000
isd12.org

January School Board meeting schedule not available at press time

NOTE: Meetings listed on this page are subject to change of time or date — call ahead to verify

Columbia Heights ISD #13

1440 49th Ave NE
Columbia Heights, MN 55421
Ph.: (763) 528-4436
columbia.mn.schoolwebpages.com

School Board Meetings
Tues. Jan. 10 & 24 — 7 pm
Tues. Jan. 17 — 5:30 pm (Work session)

Elk River Area ISD #728

815 Hwy 10
Elk River, MN 55330
Ph.: (763) 241-3400

School Board mtgs 2nd and 4th Monday, "generally at" Elk River City Hall, council chambers, 13065 Orono Pkwy. — 7 pm
"Listening Sessions" with public, 2nd Mondays — 6:30 pm

Forest Lake ISD #831

6100 N 210th St
Forest Lake, MN 55025
Ph.: (651) 982-8100

School Board meetings: held, with a few exceptions, at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month in the District Office Boardroom, 6100 N. 210th St., Forest Lake.

Listening Sessions: Residents are invited to speak informally with representatives of the board, prior to regular meetings, at 6 p.m.

Fridley School Dist. #14

6000 W Moore Lake Dr
Fridley, MN 55432
Ph.: (763) 502-5000
fridley.k12.mn.us

School Board Meetings held at Fridley City Hall, 6431 University Ave NE
Work Session — 5:30 pm, Public Comment — 7 pm; Meeting — 7:30 pm
Next meeting: Tues. Jan. 17

St. Francis ISD #15

4115 Ambassador Blvd
St. Francis, MN 55070
Ph.: (763) 753-7040
stfrancis.k12.mn.us

School Board mtgs 2nd & 4th Mondays 6:30 pm
Public comment; Meeting 7 pm

Spring Lake Park ISD #16

1415 81st Ave NE
Spring Lake Park, MN 55432
Ph.: (763) 786-5570

School Board mtgs 2nd Tuesday 7 pm
4th Tuesday scheduled as needed

White Bear Lake ISD #624

4855 Bloom Ave
White Bear Lake, MN 55110-5418
Ph.: (651) 407-7501
whitebear.k12.mn.us

School Board mtgs
Mon. Jan. 9 — 7 pm
Mon. Jan. 23 — 5:30 pm (work session)

ANOKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1318 McKay Dr NE #300
Ham Lake, MN 55304
Ph.: (763) 434-2030
anokaswcd.org

Mon. Jan. 17 — 5:00 pm

ANOKA COUNTY RECORD LLC

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editor@anokacountyrecord.com

The Anoka County Record is also available on our website:
anokacountyrecord.com

NEXT ISSUES:

JAN. 5 JAN. 19
(Deadline Jan. 2) (Deadline Jan. 16)

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4111 CENTRAL AVE NE in COLUMBIA HEIGHTS

SOUTH BLDG., ROOM 100

FREE CLASSES IN:

ADULT DIPLOMA

ENGLISH (ESL)

GED PREPARATION

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Citizenship Classes

Conversation

763-783-4870

ANOKA COUNTY LIBRARIES HOURS

MON, WED Noon-8pm

TUES, THUR 10am-6pm

FRI Noon-6pm SAT 10am-5pm

(St Francis Saturdays 10-2;

closed during lunch hour Thurs 12-1pm)

NORTHTOWN ONLY open Sundays 1pm-5pm

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS LIBRARY

Mon, Tue, Wed 9am-8pm

Thurs 10am-6pm

Fri 9am-5pm Sat 10am-4pm

ALL LIBRARIES CLOSED THESE DATES:

DEC 24, 25, 26, 31

JAN 1, 2

CITY OF FRIDLEY PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL (Legal Notice)

Notice is hereby given that the Fridley City Council will hold a public hearing at the City Municipal Center, 6431 University Avenue Northeast on **Monday, January 9, 2012**, at 7:30 p.m. on the question of establishing Chapter 224 City Code entitled "Stormwater Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination."

Hearing impaired persons planning to attend who need an interpreter or other persons with disabilities who require auxiliary aids should contact Roberta Collins at 572-3500 no later than January 4, 2011.

Anyone having an interest in this matter should make their interest known at this public hearing.

/s/ Debra A. Skogen, City Clerk

Bunker Hills Compost Site will be open Jan 7-8 and Jan 14-15

Still need to get rid of leaves and brush from this fall? The Anoka County Compost Site will **reopen for four days in January 2012.**

Residents will be able to drop-off yard waste, leaves, Christmas trees and holiday wreaths for a small fee. Trees must be free of tinsel, garland, ornaments and stands. The January hours are Saturday, Jan. 7 and 14, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 8 and 15, noon - 4:30 p.m.

Location:

13285 Hanson Blvd, Coon Rapids

Phone: 763-767-7964