

THOUSANDS OF VOTERS CHALLENGED AFTER BALLOTS WERE COUNTED MINNESOTA MAJORITY REPORT SHOWS NEED FOR VOTER ID

Minnesota Majority has released a new report on voters flagged for challenge in the statewide voter registration system (SVRS) because of official election mailings to their listed addresses being returned as undeliverable by the United States Postal Service. The mailings, commonly known as postal verification cards (PVCs) are sent to newly registered voters as a means of confirming their identity and residence. Thousands of voters were flagged for challenge following the 2008 and 2010 general elections in Minnesota.

“The PVC is the only real test we have for confirming a voter’s registration information, and we often don’t perform that verification until after a person has voted,” said Minnesota Majority president Jeff Davis. “After the 2008 election, over 6,000 Election Day registrants were found to have provided addresses that were undeliverable and after 2010 there were over 1,200 more that remain unexplained even after accounting for voters who moved shortly after voting. This is a strong indicator of the possibility of voter fraud.”

A 2009 law change that was championed by Minnesota Majority now requires election officials to investigate the reasons for PVC returns, referring suspicious cases to county attorneys for investigation. Under that new law, 399 suspicious returned PVC cards have thus far been referred to county attorneys, according to a March 2011 report issued by the secretary of state’s office.

Davis believes the prosecution of voter fraud discovered in the course of investigating returned PVCs is next to impossible. “If a voter registers using a false identity or residence, prosecutors have very little to go on in terms of actually locating the offender. There’s simply no way to tie a falsified registration to the actual person who committed the fraud, which explains why there are few if any actual convictions for false-identity voting.”

PVC cards may be undeliverable for a number of reasons, including no such person at the address; no such address; the address isn’t residential; the address is a vacant lot or vacant property; the address is condemned and other reasons.

Minnesota law requires voters to register more than 20 days before an election so that the information they provide and their eligibility to vote can be verified by election workers before they vote on Election Day. However, Election Day registration creates an exception. People who register at the polling place are given a ballot without first being subject to the same scrutiny.

Election Day registrants can account for as many as 25% of all votes cast in a typical election. For those voters, the postal verification card isn’t mailed until after their ballots have been accepted and counted. Voters whose PVCs are returned as undeliverable will be flagged for challenge if they show up at the next election, but meanwhile, their ballots have already been accepted.

“This is an example of why creating two classes of voters is unacceptable,” said Davis. “You shouldn’t be subject to less scrutiny than everyone else, just because you waited until the last minute to register. Less responsible voters are allowed to cut in line and cast a ballot without being validated and this is what happens.”

Senator Scott Newman (R-Hutchinson, Dist. 18) has introduced a bill, Senate File 1577, to amend Minnesota’s Constitution to require voters to present photographic identification before casting a ballot. The bill was first heard by the Local Government and Elections Committee on Feb. 1, and was laid over.

The Task Force on Election Integrity was created by Gov. Dayton last year, and it too has released a report. The task force has been focusing on voting by ineligible convicted felons and made several recommendations; some are already required by state laws, such as cross-checking a Department of Corrections database against the Statewide Voter Registration System to flag ineligible felons for challenge.

The task force also suggested providing another written notice to convicted felons that they are not eligible to vote until they are done serving their sentence. Another written notice would follow stating when their right to vote has been restored. Minnesota Majority recommends that this be taken a step further by having convicted felons sign a document affirming that they understand they are not to vote until they have been discharged from their sentences. The task force’s report is available on the Secretary of State’s website.

You’re invited to a Legislative Listening Session
Rep. Carolyn Laine (Dist. 50A) and Sen. Barb Goodwin (Dist. 50)
Saturday February 4, 2012 - 11:00 am
Anoka County Library - Mississippi Branch
410 Mississippi St. NE in Fridley

If you are unable to attend, you can always contact us by e-mail or phone. Sen. Goodwin can be reached at barbg@senate.mn or called at 651-296-4334 (office), and Rep. Laine can be e-mailed at rep.carolyn.laine@house.mn or called at 763-788-1864 (home) or 651-296-4331 (office).



GET OUT OF YOUR LA-Z-BOY!

**GO TO YOUR PRECINCT CAUCUS MEETING
THIS TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7th - 7 PM**

**Your location can be found on the
Secretary of State website’s Caucus Finder
<http://caucusfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>**

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS’ BRUCE NAWROCKI COUNCIL MEMBER QUESTIONS CITY STAFF ABOUT MISSING MAIL

by ACR staff

At the conclusion of the January 23rd Columbia Heights City Council meeting, Council Member Nawrocki inquired as to whether members have been regularly receiving copies of the Anoka County Record sent to city hall. Mr. Nawrocki stated that staff has forwarded him only one edition.



City Councilman
Bruce Nawrocki

Mr. Nawrocki stated that, “I can see where staff is not too happy with what they say, but I would like to get a copy.”

Mr. Nawrocki’s question elicited several responses from other elected officials and staff. Mayor Peterson indicated that he had never seen a copy of the paper. Council Members Diehm and Schmitt, along with the city clerk indicated that newspaper articles are generally available on the internet. Mr. Nawrocki reiterated that the availability of the paper on the internet was not the issue. The fact that city hall was receiving it and staff was not forwarding it to council members is the problem that he wanted resolved.

At the end of the discussion, the city clerk was unwilling to commit to forwarding the newspaper to Mr. Nawrocki as he requested. The clerk again stated that newspaper articles can be found on the internet.



Editor’s note: The Anoka County Record is mailed to Columbia Heights City

Hall on a bi-weekly basis by First Class U.S. Mail, with enough copies for distribution to elected officials and senior staff members.

RUNBECK TO SEEK MODIFICATION OF MARTY GIFT BAN AND PUBLIC EVENT PAYMENT LAWS

Checks and Balances is reporting that Rep. Linda Runbeck (R-53A, Circle Pines) is drafting legislation intended to modify the gift ban and legislator public event payment laws. Many of the laws were created by Sen. John Marty (DFL-54, Roseville) in 1994.



Rep. Linda Runbeck

Checks and Balances has stated that the Marty Laws have been a bad thing for state politics and have made the legislature a more hostile environment. Prior to 1994, legislators had greater opportunities to break bread and hoist a beverage with their colleagues without being forced to decide which events they want to attend and pay for.

It is reported that Runbeck has secured the support of Rep. Tom Rukavina (DFL-05A, Virginia) as a co-author. — ACR staff

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS 2011 POLICE STATISTICS RELEASED

“Part 1” offenses

	2011	2010	2009
Homicide	0	1	0
Rape	10	9	10
Robbery	21	24	24
Aggravated Assault	64	57	39
TOTAL OF THE ABOVE VIOLENT CRIMES	95	91	73
Burglary	131	114	168
Larceny	493	527	579
Auto Theft	33	29	55
Arson	4	8	8
TOTAL OF THE ABOVE PROPERTY CRIMES	661	678	810
TOTAL OF THE ABOVE CATEGORIES COMBINED	756	769	883

“Part 2” offenses

	2011	2010	2009
Other Assault	157	194	165
Forgery/Counterfeiting	42	52	45
Fraud	18	32	26
Embezzlement	0	0	0
Stolen Property	10	13	14
Vandalism	194	208	328
Weapons Violations	16	17	19
Prostitution	0	0	1
Other Sex	6	8	11
Narcotics/Drug Laws	153	156	207
Gambling	0	0	1
Family/Children	7	5	10
DWI	109	164	292
Liquor Laws	39	52	67
Disorderly Conduct	205	256	210
Other	620	533	606
Total “Part 2” Offenses	1576	1690	2002

CITY OF COLUMBIA HEIGHTS SALARY NOTICE
 Minnesota State Statute 471.701 states "a city or county with a population of more than 15,000 must annually notify its residents of the positions and base salaries of its three highest-paid employees." For the City of Columbia Heights, titles and salaries as of January 17, 2012, are:
 City Manager — \$124,258.00, Public Works Director — \$117,030.00, Police Chief — \$109,914.00.
 Date of publication: January 17, 2012.

CITY OF FRIDLEY STATE OF MINNESOTA NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE
 Notice is hereby given that the Police Department of the City of Fridley, Minnesota, disposes of surplus, found, unclaimed and seized items through an online auction service. Some of the items that may be auctioned include bicycles, electronic equipment, computers, jewelry and tools. The online auction can be found on the internet at www.propertyroom.com.
 Dated this 24th Day of January, 2012
 /s/ William H. Burns, City Manager
 City of Fridley, MN 55432

FREE INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

For taxpayers with low and moderate income, persons with disabilities, with special attention to those 60 years and older.

E-filed tax preparations will be done between February 1st and April 17th at the following Anoka County locations:

- Anoka Senior Center, 1500 South 6th St, Anoka —Wed (1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.), Thurs, (9:00 a.m. - noon)
- Anoka Historical Society, 2135 3rd Ave N, Anoka—Sat, (10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.)
- Anoka County Library, Northtown Branch, Blaine – Sun, (1:30 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.) You can also complete your own Fed & State returns (Free) by using *FAST (Fast Assisted Self-Serve Taxes)* during these hours.
- Blaine Human Services Building, 1201 89th Ave NE, Blaine—Tues & Thurs, (1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
- Blaine – Mary Ann Young Senior Center, 9150 Central Ave NE, Blaine—Mon, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (appointment only, Call 763-786-9375)
- Columbia Heights Senior Center, 510 Mill St, Col Hgts, —Tues & Thurs, (9:00 a.m. – noon)
- Coon Rapids, Epiphany Church-School, 1913 111th Ave NW, Coon Rapids—Sat. only, (9:00 a.m. – noon)
- Coon Rapids Senior Center, 11155 Robinson Dr NW, Coon Rapids —Tues & Wed, (8:30 a.m. – noon)
- Fridley Senior Center, 6085 7th St NE, Fridley—Wed, (9:00 am. –noon, & 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
- Fridley Unitarian Church, 6565 Oakley Dr NE, Fridley— Mon, (5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.)
- Ham Lake Senior Center, 15544 Central Ave, Ham Lake —Tues, (8:30 a.m. - noon)

Please bring a copy of your 2010 tax return and all 2011 tax information; such as any W-2s from employment, 1099s for pensions, interest, social security, miscellaneous income, records of contributions and medical expenses. To complete the rent credit, we will need the CRP form from your landlord. For the real estate refund, please bring your property tax statement payable in 2012.

This FREE Service is sponsored by the AARP Tax Aide Foundation, the IRS, and the MN Dept of Revenue

SESSION 2012: WEEK ONE NOTEWORTHY BILLS

by Evan Paskach — *Minnesota State News*

The 2012 Legislative Session kicked off last week with a flurry of new issues, including several bills, stadium discussions, and constitutional amendments.

Introduced by Rep. David Dill (DFL-Crane Lake), HF 1856 would open up wolf hunting in Minnesota for a limited season as early as this year. The bill would require the DNR commissioner to establish a wolf hunting season by the 2012 deer hunting season, and a wolf trapping season by 2013. Wolves will be delisted from the federal Endangered Species Act and were returned to state management as of Jan. 27. The legislature removed a previous state law that required a five-year waiting period on hunting animals that had been delisted.

A bipartisan bill that would update the state’s current permit-to-carry law was also introduced this week to the Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance Committee. Rep. Tony Cornish (R-Good Thunder), Chairman of the committee, is an author of the bill. Both Rep. Carly Melin (DFL-Hibbing) and Rep. Dill have signed onto the bill as well. The bill ([HF 1829](#)) would authorize County Attorneys and Assistant County Attorneys to carry firearms while on duty. They are currently prohibited under Minnesota Statute, section 626.84 that disallows employees of political subdivisions from carrying a firearm on the job.

In response to the major developments to the child care industry in the state led by Gov. Dayton following the close of the 2011 Legislative Session, HF 1766 modifies child care assistance fund payments and would restrict union dues or fair share fees from being deducted from child care assistance fund payments given to some providers. The Senate companion bill will be referred to the Senate Health and Human Services Committee next week.

Sen. Paul Gazelka (R-Brainerd) brought up a Senate bill earlier this week that would require drug screenings to qualify for the public assistance eligibility requirement. According to the bill, drug screenings would be required for eligibility in Department of Human Services programs, medical assistance (MA), MinnesotaCare, and others. It also required that Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) debit cards to have a photo printed on the card. The bill does not yet have a House sponsor, though similar bills have circulated throughout the House in years past.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN COURSE

The Centennial Fire District will be offering a basic Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) class starting March 12, and to be held Mondays and Thursday nights from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Emergency Medical Technicians work in a variety of fields such as ambulance services, fire departments, emergency rooms, and health care facilities. The class focuses on basic emergency care and is instructed by professional staff that work in the field every day. The cost to attend the class is \$1250.00, which includes a book. Call 651-792-7900 for registration information.

Opinion

by Phil Krinkie



LEVELING THE GAMING FIELD

You've heard the term a hundred times: "We want a level playing field."

It's an old axiom that refers to a flat playing surface so that one side is not advantaged over the other. The term is also used in business jargon to discuss the desire for fair and equal treatment from the government. Businesses and unions alike spend hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to lobby the government in order to tilt the playing field to their advantage through government regulation or to preserve an economic advantage they've already established through legislation.

One such economic advantage that has been an issue for years at the state legislature is tribal gaming.

Years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that sovereign Indian tribes could conduct gambling on tribal lands without interference from the state. However, the Federal Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 added a requirement that in order for tribes to operate casino-style gaming, they must enter into a compact with the state to provide some measure of control at the state level over Indian gaming.

Minnesota tribes were the first in the nation to negotiate and sign gaming compacts with a state government. Then-Governor Rudy Perpich signed the compact that permits video games of chance (slots) and blackjack (a class of gaming illegal in the rest of the state) to be operated on tribal land, and a gaming monopoly was born.

The Minnesota compact has no expiration date and doesn't require the tribes to pay taxes to the state on gambling proceeds, but it does grant the state power to impose and collect specified fees to reimburse the state for gaming enforcement costs. This gaming monopoly granted to Minnesota's Indian tribes has been a contentious issue at the Capitol for years. It is estimated that tribal gaming produces up to \$600 million a year from the 18 casinos in the state. Year after year, there is an eager group of lawmakers who want to end the tribal gaming monopoly. But the difficult question is how?

Minnesota's tribal-state compacts may not be "re-opened" or renegotiated unless both sides agree to do so. Because the once-modest, tribal-operated bingo halls have evolved into profitable Vegas-style casinos, there is little motivation for the Minnesota Tribes to agree to reopen negotiations with the state.

State lawmakers have proposed dozens of methods in an attempt to end the monopoly on gaming that they created more than 20 years ago. The legislative proposals have ranged from electronic pull tabs to a state-run casino in downtown Minneapolis. But the proposal that has gained the most support over the years is Racino.

The Racino legislation would establish casino-style gaming at Minnesota's two horse racing tracks one in Shakopee and the other in Columbus. Under this proposal, both establishments would be allowed to install thousands of slot machines to be operated by the state Gambling Control Board. The estimate is that should these two facilities be permitted to add slot machines, they would bring in more than \$100 million a year in new tax revenue for the state. These two gambling operations would be closer to downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul than any of the 18 tribal gaming operations, and therefore impact the casino gambling monopoly held by the tribes.

A level playing field? No, the two horse tracks are privately owned, for-profit businesses.

In the legislators' attempt to level the playing field, they are actually creating a separate field for two racetrack owners, one based on the premise that it will produce hundreds of millions in new tax revenue for the state.

Granting a gambling monopoly to two private business owners in order to compete with the tribal gaming monopoly is a very short-sighted plan. It does little to diminish the tribal gaming monopoly and results in a new tax that will grow government spending.

But what is even more bizarre than proposing to fix a monopoly by creating a new monopoly is the fact that lawmakers are proposing to use the new tax revenue from the horse track gaming monopoly to fund another government created monopoly a new Vikings stadium. That's right: create a monopoly enterprise and use the revenue produced to fund another government-created monopoly. It makes perfect sense if you are in government. Establish a new tax for people who gamble so we can subsidize people who want to watch football, while three private businesses make millions because the government granted them a monopoly enterprise.

Creating a government-granted monopoly in a free market is always a mistake, and the state made a mistake when it granted the tribes a monopoly on casino gambling in perpetuity. There is nothing legislators can do to change that reality, but they can learn from the mistake and not create more government-granted monopolies. Putting slot machines at two horse tracks to fund a new home for Mr. Wilf's NFL monopoly is a bad idea. The only reason the Vikings owner can extort hundreds of millions of dollars from Minnesota taxpayers is because the federal government has made the NFL a multi-billion dollar monopoly.

The goal of legislators in the upcoming session should be to create a level playing field for all businesses. Don't provide millions in subsidies to some businesses while at the same time selectively taxing others. Protect the free market by preventing more government-granted monopolies.

Phil Krinkie is a former Republican state representative and is president of the Taxpayers League of Minnesota.

AMENDMENT MANIA

The Anoka County Watchdog urges Republican friends in the legislature to exercise caution regarding the avalanche of constitutional amendments under consideration for the ballot this fall.

In determining to put a question on the ballot, a number of factors should be carefully considered.

Literally dozens of constitutional amendments are under consideration, many of them dealing with public policy issues the Watchdog fully supports, such as limiting tax increases, showing a photo ID to vote, and term limits for those who believe legislative service is a career choice, not an opportunity to serve.

But as worthy as the issue may be, there many factors to consider before throwing an issue on the ballot and possibly enshrining that issue in our founding document.

First, there has to be a solid campaign plan in place. Passing a constitutional ballot question requires a sophisticated political, media, and financial plan that must be flawlessly executed. The constitution requires a majority of affirmative votes to pass an amendment. That means that someone who doesn't vote on the issue is counted as a "nay" vote.

And it takes a boatload of money. The most recent successful amendment, to raise the sales tax for water, wetlands, bike trails, and puppet shows, saw the proponents spend over \$5 million.

Depending upon the intensity of the issue, it could be far more.

The "marriage amendment" that will be on the ballot this fall will undoubtedly attract far more attention and resources. Over ten million will likely be spent trying convince voters one way or the other, while trying to grab their attention in a presidential election year with a crowded ballot.

Just how many campaigns can be properly waged this year?

Second, many good conservatives are troubled by the prospect of legislating through the constitution.

Conservatives agree that the constitution is a founding document that should be changed rarely and only to address the most fundamental issues of a well ordered society.

Of course, there is a great deal of subjectivity involved in this analysis.

The recent amendment to put arts and outdoors funding in the constitution is a prime example of the abuse of the constitutional amendment process.

Now, this funding is protected by the constitution and is beyond the reach of the legislature.

Thus, Minnesota citizens were treated to the bizarre spectacle this past legislative session of millions being cut from public safety and our courts while millions upon millions were lavished upon puppet shows, bike trails, and beaches.

In a very real sense, constitutional amendments short circuit the democratic process by cutting out the governor in the near term (no gubernatorial action is needed to pass legislation on to the ballot) and cuts out the legislature, and by extension the people of Minnesota, in the long run because that issue is now in the constitution and can only be repealed or amended by another amendment.

Again, in some cases that's good public policy because some issues are so imperative that they simply must be put beyond the reach of the temporary passions of the people and the sometimes arbitrary decisions of the judiciary.

But these instances should be rare.

Moreover, care must be taken not to have these amendments perceived, fairly or not, as a tool of convenience to get around a gubernatorial veto.

While the Watchdog is just as disappointed as anyone that Mark Dayton was elected governor, the fact is that he was duly elected and he should not be bypassed merely because he disagrees with many Republican issues. To do so is to violate a sacred obligation to uphold the constitution.

If the motive is based on purely on public policy, that's fine. If the motive is more nefarious, than legislators should pay heed to the better angles of their nature. And if that doesn't work, take a look at recent Minnesota political history.

The most important consideration of this whole is the realization that what is good for the goose can be good for the gander.

A DFL majority could have certainly gone around Governor Pawlenty on a number of occasions. What would conservatives have said about that?

There is one constitutional amendment the Watchdog can support. The amendment proposed amendment to require a 2/3rds vote of each house of the legislature to put a proposed amendment on the ballot. The current simple majority is too low a threshold and allows unworthy measures to make the ballot.

If the 2/3rds requirement had been in place, the so-called Legacy Amendment would have never made the ballot and the sales tax increase it brought wouldn't be the reality we face today.



Opinion

**SEN. ROGER CHAMBERLAIN
(DISTRICT 53) 651-296-1253**

Neighbors,

The 2012 legislative session begins this week. While it is not a budget year, there are still several key issues to be addressed.

We were elected to focus on jobs and the economy. Last session we made great strides to improve our business climate for job creators. The result was a surprising November forecast that showed Minnesota collecting more revenue than expected.



During the interim, legislative Republicans met with business leaders all over the state. The overwhelming message was that they wanted the state to get out of their way, reduce regulations and taxes allow-ing them to operate and grow. This will be our primary objective this session: continue the progress

we made last year to get our economy back on track.

VIKINGS STADIUM

The subject I get asked about most is a new stadium for the Minnesota Vikings. The Vikings want to build a \$1.1 billion stadium in their preferred location of Arden Hills, but other potential sites have emerged, including two in Minneapolis and one in Shakopee.

There have yet to be any new stadium bills introduced so it is difficult to gauge legislative support, but I have said all along that I do not support using any increase in general sales taxes to fund a stadium. There is a path to build it with a mix of private money from the team and with user fees. This is the best option for all parties.

BONDING BILL

Even numbered years are traditionally bonding years, but a \$497 million bonding bill was included in the agreement to end last year's shutdown. As part of his legislative agenda, the governor is calling for another bonding bill of \$775 million.

The chairman of our Capital Investment Committee has said that a bonding bill of that size is too large, and that we should focus on building and repairing infrastructure rather than a use it as a "stimulus or short-term jobs program." The legislature has received over \$2 billion in funding requests for bonding projects, so it is difficult to know what will end up in a final bill. If a bonding bill is passed, it will be less than the governor's proposed \$775 million.

DAY CARE UNIONIZATION

The governor's executive order authorizing a vote that would allow in-home child care providers to unionize was met with strong opposition from providers, families, and legislative Republicans. Senate Republicans filed a "friend of the court" brief supporting a providers' lawsuit against the governor's action. The suit prevailed and a Ramsey County judge ordered a halt to the forthcoming election.

I held a town hall forum recently that was attended by over 50 people, and there was unanimous opposition to the governor's actions. Several providers spoke about the disastrous impact that unionization would have on their businesses, but not one person spoke in favor of the effort. This issue is not yet dead, but I am optimistic that the outcome will side with the day care providers and not with the governor, and I'm going to keep working to see that that happens.

LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

The tentative calendar for this session is as follows:
January 24: 2012 Session convenes
February 2-7: Legislative recess to allow legislators to return home for caucuses
February 15: Gov. Dayton is tentatively planning his State of the State speech in the House Chamber
April 6-13: Easter/Passover recess
Mid to late April: Final adjournment

**SEN. MICHELLE BENSON
(DISTRICT 49) 651-296-3219**

Dear Friends,

The 2012 session convened on Tuesday, January 24th, and we entered into it with a surplus of nearly \$1 billion. This budget surplus provides not only opportunities as we move ahead, but allows the 2012 Session to focus on needed government reforms and helping job creators put Minnesotans back to work.

In the Agriculture and Rural Economies Committee, we heard SF 1527, which would allow companies to voluntarily certify ingredients and details regarding feed, and voluntarily have inspectors come and inspect their manufacturing plant to make sure everything is in order so that their feed can be imported into countries like Mexico or Brazil.

In the Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications Committee, we heard Brent Christenson, President/CEO of MN Telecom Alliance and Dan Lipshultz give part one of a two-part presentation on Minnesota's telecommunication industry. They shared that the telecom industry needs competition and the new challenge is the issue of regulation.

I recently had the pleasure of joining Dynamic Sealing Technologies Inc. (DSTI) in their ribbon cutting ceremonies, as they celebrated a new facility expansion in Andover. DSTI was the 45th fastest growing private manufacturing company in America for 2011, according to Inc. Magazine. I commend DSTI for creating manufacturing jobs right here in Minnesota and I thank them for the opportunity to be able to be a part of their celebration.

BILLS INTRODUCED BY SEN. BENSON IN 2012:

SF 0864 Public employees long-term care insurance
SF 1283 State Capitol security advisory committee
SF 1376 Black bear as official state mammal
SF 0880 Health coverage mandates evaluation

**REP. PEGGY SCOTT
(DIST. 49A) 651-296-4231**

Hello Neighbors,

This week marked the beginning of the 2012 legislative session. This year's legislative agenda will also feature government reform focused on creating a competitive business climate, high performing education and a smaller, cost-effective government.

Calling it Reform 2.0, we've traveled to dozens of cities for public meetings with business owners, local government leaders, and interested citizens to gather input on how to reform state and local government. We drove thousands of miles and listened to hundreds of people who shared their ideas on what government can and should do better. Reform 2.0 is based on what we heard from them.

This agenda will modernize outdated, rigid public systems that have failed to respond to the evolving needs of Minnesota's economy and citizens. Reform 2.0 is not a Republican agenda. It is Minnesota's agenda.

I will provide more details on the initiatives that comprise Reform 2.0 throughout the session. In the meantime, visit www.reform2.mn for more information.

I would also encourage you to go to your local precinct caucus meetings on February 7th at 7:00 p.m. You can find your specific meeting location at <http://pf.mngop.com/>

**REP. DENISE DITTRICH
(DISTRICT 47A) 651-296-5513**

Editor's Note: Rep. Dittrich has put together a survey for business owners that can be taken online at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZKG5X25livepage.apple.com>

Minnesota still faces a number of challenges — first and foremost, creating jobs and strengthening our economic recovery. As before, I need your input on a variety of topics to help me make the best decisions for our community and Minnesota's future.

Please contact me with your questions, concerns, and suggestions for legislation. As always, I look forward to hearing from you.

As co-chair of the bipartisan Small Business Caucus, I'm interested in ideas to increase opportunities for entrepreneurs, and improve the climate for small businesses.

Which of the following options would help your small business create jobs?

- Doing a better job connecting small business owners with existing state resources
- Helping provide low-interest loans for small business expansion and entrepreneurs
- Developing a statewide small business health insurance pool to lower costly premiums
- Reducing and revising state business regulations
- Cutting taxes on small businesses
- Providing small business tax credits for long-term investment
- Reigning-in property taxes
- Improving workforce training efforts and continue our investment in higher education

Which of the following options do you support to grow new jobs in Minnesota?

- Make targeted capital investments in the state's aging infrastructure
- Provide tax incentives for businesses that hire and retain workers
- Investments in renewable energy industries to bring green jobs to Minnesota
- Support for research and development at colleges and universities
- Enact new tax breaks for corporations

According to your truth-in-taxation statement, the assessed value of your business:

Decreased by (0 - 5%)
Decreased by (5 - 10%)
Decreased by (over 10%)
Increased by (0 - 5%)
Increased by (5 - 10%)
Increased by (over 10%)
Stayed the same
Other (please specify)

According to your truth-in-taxation statement, the property taxes for your business:

Decreased by (0 - 5%)
Decreased by (5 - 10%)
Decreased by (over 10%)
Increased by (0 - 5%)
Increased by (5 - 10%)
Increased by (over 10%)
Stayed the same
Other (please specify)

What concerns do you have about our current economic climate?

What about our current economic climate gives you optimism?

Please share any additional thoughts you have about the 2012 Legislative Session

**CONVERSATION CIRCLE
SATURDAYS through Feb. 25
Crooked Lake Library**

**11440 Crooked Lake Blvd., Coon Rapids
11AM to 11:45 AM**

A weekly gathering of adults who practice everyday conversational English; you need to speak some English to participate
sponsored by Anoka Co. Libraries / MN Literacy Council

Anoka County RECORD

Vol. 1 No. 10 Feb. 2, 2012

**A bi-weekly free publication
published by Anoka County Record LLC**

Available by subscription; sent 1st Class U.S.
Mail \$50.00/yr (check or money order)

**P.O. Box 21014
Columbia Heights MN 55421-0014
(763) 220-0411**

editor@anokacountyrecord.com
Website: www.anokacountyrecord.com
**NEXT ISSUES: FEB. 16 (Deadline Feb. 13)
MARCH 1 (Deadline Feb. 27)**

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

Mon. Feb. 6 & Fri. Feb. 17
Public Works Cmte — 9 am, Rm 772, ACGC

Tues. Feb. 7
Parks & Rec Cmte — 9 am, Riedel Farm Estate, Riverfront Regional Park

Wed. Feb. 8
Waste Mgmt & Energy Cmte — 8:15 am, Rm 772, ACGC

Tues. Feb. 14
Mgmt Cmte — 8:30 am, Rm 772, ACGC
County Board — 9:30 am, Rm 705, ACGC

Thurs. Feb. 16
Community Corrections Advisory Bd — 8:30 am, Rm 710, ACGC
Public Safety Cmte — 3 pm, Rm 1140, Anoka Co Public Safety Ctr, Andover

Andover

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

Thurs. Feb. 2
Parks Comm. — CANCELLED

Mon. Feb. 6
EDA — 6pm; City Council — 7 pm

Wed. Feb. 8
Open Space Advisory Comm — 7 pm

Tues. Feb. 14
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Thurs. Feb. 16
Parks Comm. — 7 pm

Anoka

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

Mon. Feb. 6
City Council — 7 pm

Tues. Feb. 21
City Council work session — 5 pm
City Council reg mtg — 7 pm

Bethel

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

No information available

Blaine

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

Thurs. Feb. 2 & Feb. 16
City Council — 6:30 pm (Workshop);
7:30 pm (meeting)

Thurs. Feb. 9
City Council workshop — 6:30 pm

Tues. Feb. 14
Blaine Historical Society — 6:30 pm
Blaine Arts Council — 6:30 pm
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Centerville

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

Wed. Feb. 8 & Feb. 22
City Council — 6:30pm

Tues. Feb. 14
Planning & Zoning Comm. — 6:30 pm

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

Circle Pines

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

Thurs. Feb. 2
2012 Street Reconstruction Mtg. — 6:30 pm

Tues. Feb. 14
Park Board — 6 pm
City Council — 7 pm

Wed. Feb. 15
Utilities Comm. — 4:30 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

Mon. Feb. 6
Traffic Comm. — 5:30 pm
EDA — 6:30 pm
City Council (work session) — 7 pm

Wed. Feb. 8
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Mon. Feb. 13
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. Feb. 1
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Wed. Feb. 8
EDAB — CANCELLED
EDA — 6 pm; City Council — 7 pm

Wed. Feb. 15
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Thurs. Feb. 16
Park Board — 6:30 pm

Coon Rapids

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

Thurs. Feb. 2
Bd of Adjustment/Appeals — 6:30 pm

Wed. Feb. 8 & 21
City Council — 7 pm

Thurs. Feb. 16
Planning Comm. — 6:30 pm

East Bethel

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

Wed. Feb. 8
Parks Comm. — 7 pm

Sat. Feb. 11
Economic Developmt Auth — 9:30 am

Tues. Feb. 14
Road Comm. — 6:30 pm

Wed. Feb. 15
City Council — 7:30 pm

Fridley

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

Thurs. Feb. 2
HRA — 7 pm

Mon. Feb. 6
Charter Comm. — 7 pm
Parks & Rec. Comm. — 7 pm
City Council — 7 pm pre-agenda; 7:30 pm meeting

Mon. Feb. 13
City Council — 7 pm pre-agenda; 7:30 pm meeting

Wed. Feb. 15
Planning Comm. — CANCELLED

**Federal Holiday
PRESIDENTS DAY
Monday FEB. 20**

Ham Lake

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

Mon. Feb. 6 & Tues. Feb. 21
City Council — 6 pm

Mon. Feb. 13 & Feb. 27
Planning Comm. — 6 pm

Wed. Feb. 15
Park & Tree Comm. — 6 pm

Hilltop

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

City Council — 1st & 3rd Mon., 7 pm

Lexington

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

Thurs. Feb. 2 & Feb. 16
City Council — 7 pm (workshop after the Feb. 16 meeting)

Mon. Feb. 6
Park Board — 6:30 pm

Wed. Feb. 8
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Tues. Feb. 21
Fire Relief Mtg — 6:30 pm, Fire Hall

Lino Lakes

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

Thurs. Feb. 2
EDAC — 8 am

Mon. Feb. 6
City Council work session — 5:30 pm
Parks Board — 6:30 pm

Wed. Feb. 8
Planning Comm. — CANCELLED

Mon. Feb. 13
City Council — 6:30 pm

Linwood Township

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

Mon. Feb. 6
School Forest Cmte. — 5 pm

Tues. Feb. 7
Road & Bridge Cmte. — 7 pm

Mon. Feb. 13
Senior Advisory Board — 9 am

Tues. Feb. 14 & 28
Town Board — 6 pm

Tues. Feb. 21
Planning & Zoning Comm. — 7 pm

Mon. Feb. 27
Parks & Rec. Comm. — 7 pm
Fire Department — 7 pm

Nowthen

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

Call city hall for information

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

**HAVE A LETTER?
AN ANNOUNCEMENT?**
Send them to us:
editor@anokacountyrecord.com

**NEXT ISSUE
THURS. FEB. 16**

Ramsey

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

Thurs. Feb. 2
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Mon. Feb. 6
City Council (work session) — 6 pm
EPB — 6:30 pm

Thurs. Feb. 9
EDA — 7:30 am
Parks & Rec. Comm. — 6:30 pm

Mon. Feb. 13
Mayor's Town Hall Mtg. — 7 pm

Tues. Feb. 14
City Council (worksession) — 5:30 pm; mtg 7 pm; HRA — follows City Council mtg

Tues. Feb. 21
Public Works Cmte. — 5:30 pm

St. Francis

St. Francis City Hall
23340 Cree St. NW
St. Francis, MN 55070
Ph: 763-753-2630
stfrancismn.org
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
(3rd Monday meeting moved to Tues. Feb. 21 due to Presidents Day holiday on Feb. 20)

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

MAYORS' ANNUAL SNOWMOBILE TRAIL RIDE SET FOR SATURDAY FEB. 11

The 2012 Mayor's Trail Ride will be held February 11, leaving from the Anoka Co. Fairgrounds. The Mayors of Andover, Anoka, Nowthen, Oak Grove, Ramsey and St. Francis will be participating in the ride.

Rider registration begins at 10 am in the blue pole barn on the fairgrounds.

There will also be a vintage snowmobile show and swap meet at 11 am; cost to participate is \$10 per sled (\$15 per sled on the day of the event). Awards for Best in Class will be given at 3:00. Antique classes include snowmobiles of 1968 vintage or older; the Vintage class includes models after 1968. Other awards such as "The People's Choice" and "The Mayor's Pick" will round out the festivities.

All proceeds will go to charities chosen by the mayors; the St. Francis portion of the proceeds will go to the St. Francis Ambassadors Program. Please come out and show your support for this worthwhile organization. Call 763-421-7130 for more information.

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. Feb. 13
School Board (work session) — 6 pm
Mon. Feb. 27
School Board — 6:30 pm

Centennial ISD #12

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

Mon. Feb. 6
School Board (work session) — 5:30 pm
Mon. Feb. 13
School Board — 6:30 pm

Columbia Heights ISD #13

1440 49th Ave NE
Columbia Heights, MN 55421
Ph.: (763) 528-4436
columbia.mn.schoolwebpages.com
Tues. Feb. 14 & 28 School Bd — 7 pm

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. at 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
<http://www.forestlake.k12.mn.us>

School Board meetings: held, with a few exceptions, at 7 p.m. on the first Thurs. 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. **Editor's note:* There are often work session meetings on the 3rd Thurs.; check website or call to verify

Fridley ISD #14

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

School Board mtgs held at Fridley City Hall, 6431 University Ave NE; Work Session — 5:30 pm, Public Comment — 7 pm; Meeting — 7:30 pm
Next meetings: Tues. Feb. 21, Mar. 20

St. Francis ISD #15

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

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

Spring Lake Park ISD #16

1415 81st Ave NE
Spring Lake Park, MN 55432
Ph.: (763) 786-5570
www.splkpark.k12.mn.us/

Tues. Feb. 14 — 7 pm
Tues. Feb. 28 — 6:30 pm (work session)

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. Feb. 13 — 7 pm
Mon. Feb. 27 — 5:30 pm (work session)

Anoka Conservation District

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

Tues. Feb. 21 — 5 pm

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

FORMER MAYOR OF NEW ORLEANS TO SPEAK AT CENTURY COLLEGE

Ray Nagin, the mayor of New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina decimated the city in 2005, will give two presentations at Century College in White Bear Lake in February. The events are free and open to the public. The first presentation is Thursday, February 9, at 7 p.m. in the West Campus Theatre. The second is Friday, February 10, at 10 a.m. in the West Campus Cafeteria Conference Room (W1420).



Ray Nagin

In the aftermath of the Katrina disaster, Nagin became one of the best-known political figures in the country as a result of his outspoken criticism of federal and state attempts to help the devastated city. Nagin was re-elected mayor of New Orleans in 2006 and served until 2010. He is currently a consultant, public speaker and entrepreneur. He also has written and published his first book, "Katrina Secrets: Storms after the Storms," which gives a first-hand account of how New Orleans overcame major devastation.

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS

2012 ANOKA COUNTY POLAR BEAR PLUNGE SET FOR FEB 11

"Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt." Inspired by the words of the Special Olympics athlete oath, hundreds of daring souls in Anoka County are registered and ready to take the Special Olympics Minnesota Polar Bear Plunge on Feb. 11, into the icy waters of Crooked Lake. This annual event supports more than 7,100 Special Olympics Minnesota athletes, as they train, compete and work together year-round, to grow as athletes and members of their communities.

Anoka County's first annual Plunge will be held at Crooked Lake in Coon Rapids, and will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 11. Pre-plunge check-in will occur at from 4:30pm-7:30pm, and check-in at the Plunge site itself will begin at 10:30am- 1:30pm. Registration on the day of the Plunge will take place at Crooked Lake Park, 13180 Crooked Lake Blvd NW, Coon Rapids MN 55448. In its 15 years of existence in Minnesota, the Special Olympics Polar Bear Plunge has grown from one Plunge site to 15, and this is the first year that Anoka County has participated in the Plunge.

On the plunge day, plungers and spectators will be provided with a free shuttle service to the plunge site from Andover Lanes in Andover and Broadway Pizza in Coon Rapids beginning at 11:00 and returning after the plunge. Those supporting the plunge from the Anoka County area by making the jump into the frigid water will be

eBOOK HELP AT ANOKA COUNTY LIBRARIES

Need help getting free eBooks from the library? Beginning February 13, you can get assistance at these locations and times:

Centennial Library (100 Civic Heights Circle in Circle Pines):
Mondays from 12pm – 2pm in the Meeting Room

Northtown Library (711 County Road 10 NE in Blaine):
Mondays from 5:30pm - 7:30pm in the Conference Room

Johnsville Library (12471 Oak Park Blvd. in Blaine): Tuesdays
from 3:00pm – 5:00 pm in the Meeting Room

Rum River Library (4201 6th Avenue NW in Anoka): Thursdays
from 3:30pm - 5:30pm in the Meeting Room

Free assistance will be provided on a first come, first helped basis. Patrons are asked to bring your device, your user account and password associated with your device, and your Anoka County or Columbia Heights Public Library card.

"Hundreds of people have already taken advantage of our eBook classes in the past month," said Anoka County Commissioner and Library Board liaison Jim Kordiak. "It only makes sense that we make these a regular part of the library offerings so that more people can take advantage of the ease and mobility of eBooks."

Anoka County Library offers a wide variety of eBooks for adults, teens, and children—both fiction and nonfiction. More titles are added every month and are listed on the library web site. For library locations or more information about drop-in help, call 763-712-2322 or visit the website at www.anoka.lib.mn.us.

several law enforcement agencies as well as their Police Chiefs and the Sheriff of Anoka County, in addition to fire departments, local school teams, businesses and churches. Anyone is welcome to sign up and plunge at the event! Go to <http://www.plungemn.org/location/anokacounty> for more information, to register or donate.

The first Special Olympics Minnesota Polar Bear Plunge took place in 1998 at Como Lake, in St. Paul. Now, in its 15th year of existence, the Plunge has expanded to 15 locations across Minnesota, growing exponentially more successful each year. Although each Plunger is only required to raise \$75 to participate, the average Plunger raised \$192 in 2011.

Minnesota law enforcement presents the Polar Bear Plunge as part of the year-round Law Enforcement Torch Run® events benefitting Special Olympics Minnesota. These generous law enforcement officers and personnel from across the state raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics Minnesota. They lend their time, energy and enthusiasm to host a variety of fundraising events which, in 2011, raised almost \$2.4 million for inspiring Special Olympics Minnesota athletes.

CITY OF RAMSEY TAKING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMISSIONS

The city of Ramsey is looking for residents who are interested in participating in the governance of their community by serving as a board or commission member on one of its advisory commissions. The purpose of an advisory commission is to make specific recommendations to the City Council on current issues facing the city.

The city is accepting applications for the following boards and commissions: Economic Development Authority, Environmental Policy Board, Board of Administrative Hearings, Park and Recreation Commission, and Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment. New terms begin on April 1, 2012 and are typically four year terms, with the exception of the Economic Development Authority which has six year terms.

Please visit the city's website at www.ci.ramsey.mn.us/livepage.apple.com and click on "Boards & Commissions" to view information on the current vacancies or to print or complete an application on-line. You may also call Human Resources at 763-576-4301 for additional information or to receive an application.

Advisory commission seats are open until filled; however, the first review of applications is scheduled for February 15, 2012. To be considered for a seat on the advisory commission of your choice, please submit a completed application by February 15, 2012, to Human Resources at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW.

Community
North Metro Home & Garden Show
Saturday, February 25, 2012 • 9:00 am to 2:00 pm
National Sports Center's Schwan Center, Blaine, MN
www.northmetrohomeandgarden.com Find us on Facebook!

