

**ANOKA COUNTY RECORD INVESTIGATIVE SPOTLIGHT**

## SERVING ON OBSCURE BOARD LUCRATIVE FOR SOME ANOKA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Have you heard of Northeast Metro Intermediate School District #916? Were you aware that board members are some of the highest hourly compensated elected officials in Anoka County? If not, you are probably in the majority.

District 916 is a regional school district that serves several school districts in Anoka County. They are Centennial #12, Columbia Heights #13, Spring Lake Park #16, and White Bear Lake #624. Think of District #916 as an overlay district. For example, a resident of Lino Lakes is not only in the Centennial School District #12, but is also in District #916.

District #916 provides member districts with several programs and services including alternative high school programs, career and technical programs, and staff development services.

Like a local school district, District #916 also has a school board. But what is different, is that the District #916 school board is not elected by the people. Instead, each local school district appoints one of their locally elected school board members to the District #916 school board. In 2012, the board members from Anoka County School Districts are as follows:

Marilynn Forsberg, Spring Lake Park #16, Vice Chair  
Janet Newberg, White Bear Lake #624, Treasurer  
Karen Lodico, Centennial #12  
Keith Roberts, Columbia Heights #13

Like a local school district, District #916 board members are compensated for attending board meetings. According to 2011 board meeting minutes, the board averaged one meeting a month, meeting for an average of 90 minutes per meeting. Meetings ran as short as 45 minutes in November and as long as 164 minutes in October.

Local school board members are paid around \$5,000 a year to perform the duties that they were elected to in their home districts. This includes attending multiple school board meetings a month, other school related meetings, and communicating with the public.

What a majority of the public is unaware of, is that the locally elected school board members that are appointed to the District #916 school board, are receiving an additional \$5,000 to \$5,700 a year in salary on top of their local school board salary, raising their total compensation to over \$10,000 a year, making them on an annual basis, one of the most highly compensated local elected officials in the county.

When comparing salary vs. time spent at board meetings, District #916 board members appear to be the highest hourly paid elected officials in Anoka County. With an average annual board salary of \$5,100 a year, divided into 18.65 hours of meeting time in 2011, board members averaged an hourly salary of \$274 an hour. The chair earned \$305 an hour.

An hourly salary of \$274 appears to surpass the hourly salary of Anoka County Commissioners, the County Attorney, and the Sheriff.

It is important to recognize that elected officials do more than just attend board meetings, according to Linda Zahradka, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of District #916. She stated that board members occasionally serve on subcommittees, have phone conversations with staff, and review materials outside of meeting times. She also stated that members may attend meetings of other organizations that they are appointed to as a liaison but that sometimes board members do double duty. Sometimes members serve as a liaison to an organization not only representing District #916 but also their home district. She indicated that some of these additional commitments were minimal.

When asked about job descriptions Zahradka stated that there are no specific job descriptions for District #916 board members. The district relies upon generic school board association policies.

According to meeting minutes, District #916 board members set their own salary in January on an annual basis. Minutes indicate that the salary has been set based upon the average salaries paid to school board members in their home district. There is no evidence to suggest that any comparison has been done to determine if the work requirements and time requirements are comparable.

In comparison, Intermediate School District #917, based in Dakota County, pays school board members \$1500 less a year but compensates \$30 a meeting for meetings other than regularly scheduled board meetings.

District #916 board members will set their salaries again in January 2013. ACR

## DID THE WALKER ART CENTER REALLY REQUEST A LOAN FROM THE STATE OF MINNESOTA?

This past week, a major television news station ran a news story under the following headline, "Mpls. Sculpture Garden wants to borrow millions from state taxpayers."

At Anoka County Record, we asked the question, "So they plan on paying the taxpayers back?" To us, this was certainly a novel concept since the state typically does not act as a bank, loaning money to private organizations. If they did indeed need a loan, why didn't they just contact a bank? We did note that the article stated that the garden and conservatory lost \$211,000 last year.

After further research, Anoka County Record discovered that this major television news station was a little liberal with their use of the term "borrow".

In reality, the Sculpture Garden is asking the State to borrow \$8.5 million and then turn around and give those funds to the Sculpture Garden. It is the taxpayers of the State of Minnesota that are going to be paying back the loan, not the Sculpture Garden.

The lesson to be learned is to question any article that claims that a private organization only wants to "borrow" money from the state, more often than not they are asking for a handout. ACR

## Salary Analysis for Intermediate School District 916 Board Members for 2011

January 4, 2011, the board voted to set the compensation as follows:

Chairperson	\$5,700	Vice-Chair	\$5,100
Clerk	\$5,200	Treasurer	\$5,100
Directors	\$5,000		

(Salaries are an annual stipend, regardless of whether members show up or not.)

Total number of board members = 10

South Washington County #833  
Spring Lake Park #16  
North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale #622  
White Bear Lake #624  
Centennial #12  
Columbia Heights #13  
Mounds View #621  
Roseville #623  
Mahtomedi #832  
Stillwater #834

916 Board members are appointed by their member school boards. Members are elected to their home school board by the people of their district and then the school board appoints one of their members to the 916 board. Members are compensated by their local school boards in addition to the 916 school board.

Total length of meetings for 2011 = 1119 minutes or 18.65 hours

Salaries per board member:

Chairperson	\$5,700	\$305.63/hr	\$5.09/min
Vice-Chair	\$5,100	\$273.46/hr	\$4.56/min
Clerk	\$5,200	\$278.82/hr	\$4.65/min
Treasurer	\$5,100	\$273.46/hr	\$4.56/min
Directors	\$5,000	\$268.10/hr	\$4.47/min

Salary collected by all 10 board members combined:

\$51,100/yr      \$2739.95/hr      \$45.67/min

### 2011 Meeting schedule:

Meeting, Tuesday, January 4, 2011  
6:00pm-8:07pm Total 127 minutes

Meeting, Tuesday, February 1, 2011  
6:04pm-8:15pm Total 131 minutes

Meeting, March 1, 2011  
6:06pm-7:29pm Total 83 minutes

Meeting, Tuesday, April 5, 2011  
6:02pm-7:16pm Total 74 minutes

Meeting, Tuesday, May 3, 2011  
6:02pm-7:52pm Total 110 minutes

Meeting, Tuesday, June 7, 2011  
6:05pm-7:25pm Total 80 minutes

Meeting, Tuesday, June 21, 2011  
4:12pm-5:30pm Total 78 minutes

Meeting, Tuesday, July 5, 2011  
6:05pm-6:35pm Total 30 minutes

Meeting, Wednesday, August 3, 2011  
6:03pm-6:59pm Total 56 minutes

Meeting, Tuesday, September 6, 2011  
6:05pm-7:09pm Total 64 minutes

Meeting, Tuesday, October 4, 2011  
6:06pm-8:50pm Total 164 minutes

## BOARD SALARIES

*continued on next page, A-2*

**BOARD SALARIES** *continued from previous page, A-1*

Meeting, Tuesday, November 1, 2011  
6:06pm-6:51pm Total 45 minutes

Meeting, Tuesday, December 6, 2011  
6:03pm-7:20pm Total 77 minutes

January 3, 2012, the 916 board voted to set the compensation as follows:

Directors	\$5000
Vice-Chair	\$5100
Chairperson	\$5700
Clerk	\$5200
Treasurer	\$5100

**ANOTHER "PAGE & STAGE" PROGRAM FROM ANOKA COUNTY LIBRARY: "OKLAHOMA!"**

Anoka County Library, in partnership with the Lyric Arts Theater, is pleased to offer a "Page & Stage" experience on Sunday, February 26th beginning at 12:00 pm at the Lyric Arts Main Street Stage. Lyric Arts Theater is located at 420 E. Main Street in Anoka.

During this afternoon of drama, participants will take a closer look at the play "Oklahoma!", which was named Best Musical of the Century by the New York Drama League. Before "Oklahoma!" opened in 1943, no other show had run more than 500 performances; "Oklahoma!" ran for 2,212 performances, making it the first real phenomenon in modern Broadway history. It was Rodgers and Hammerstein's first collaboration, but remains their most innovative and features classic tunes like "Oh What a Beautiful Morning," "People Will Say We're in Love," and "Oklahoma!"

"When Oklahoma! and its 'Surrey with the Fringe On Top' rolled onto the stage nearly 70 years ago it was truly a turning point for American theater," said Anoka County Commissioner Robyn West. "This program gives fans a behind-the-scenes look at one of the finest works from the great American songbook."

This program is free and appropriate for ages 14 and older, but registration is required and seating is limited. To reserve a spot, contact the Main Street Box Office at 763-433-2510 ext. 101 and mention the Anoka County Library Oklahoma! "Page and Stage" program. Participants must register by Feb. 17th and are expected to take part in all aspects of the program, including pre-show and post-show discussions.

Once registered, participants will receive a copy of the script and a study guide to prepare for the pre-show discussion. Christopher Tibbetts will facilitate the discussion of the script, its characters, and "what to look for" in performance. Mr. Tibbetts is an actor, director, playwright, performance instructor and Artistic Director of Workhouse Theatre Company. Participants will enjoy the performance of "Oklahoma!" and then stay for a post-show discussion where the cast and director hold a question and answer session with the audience.

To register for this free event, call 763-433-2510, ext. #101. This event is funded with money from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. For more information about Lyric Arts Theater, visit [www.lyricarts.org](http://www.lyricarts.org). For more information about this program and the Anoka County Library, visit [www.anoka.lib.mn.us](http://www.anoka.lib.mn.us). ACR

**ANOKA COUNTY LIBRARY PRESENTS SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEUR CLASSES**

Anoka County Library is presenting several classes in March and April for entrepreneurs, small business owners, and those planning to start a small business. Classes are free to participants, but seating is limited.

The following classes will be held at the Rum River Library, located at 4201 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Anoka and at the Northtown Library, located at 711 County Road 10 NE in Blaine:

**Business Orientation** - Learn what it takes to start and finance a business *before* you invest your time and money. Offered at:

Northtown Library on Saturday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10:30 – 11:30 am

Rum River Library on Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 – 11:30 am

**How to Write a Business Plan** - Explore the components of a business plan that can distinguish your business in a positive, concise and persuasive way, with tips for planning a feasible and viable business model. Offered at:

Northtown Library on Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 – noon

Rum River Library on Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 – noon

**Understanding Business Accounting** - Learn the basics of simple bookkeeping and understanding financial statements. Offered at:

Northtown Library on Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 – 12:30 am

Rum River Library on Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup> from 10:30 – 12:30 am

**How to Get a Lender to Say Yes** - Get tips on small business financing, underwriting guidelines that determine whether a loan will be approved, as well as what makes an effective business loan proposal. Offered at:

Rum River Library on Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 – noon

"Being your own boss is the dream of many people," said Anoka County Commissioner Dan Erhart. "These classes can help an entrepreneur make the dream a reality."

These Anoka County Library programs are presented by Women Venture and the Neighborhood Development Center and are funded by MELSA (Metropolitan Library Service Agency).

For more information about these classes and other library programs, call 763-712-2322 or visit [www.anoka.lib.mn.us](http://www.anoka.lib.mn.us).

**ANOKA CITY COUNCIL OUTLINES GOALS AT JAN. 30 MEETING**

At its Jan. 30 meeting, the Anoka City Council and city staff outlined its goals for 2012-13. Here are excerpts from the presentation:

Administration

- Big Picture Financial Plan
- Celebrate successes better
- Make every contact we have, every day, a positive one
- Plan for future relocation of Public Services and Electric Dept.
- Exam merits of lean kaizen

Finance Department

- Adopt financial management plan; city mission, goals/objectives, fund and equity balance planning
- Additional training for staff on Incode to provide improved service and efficiency
- Prepare for anticipated levy freeze
- Prepare for large property tax court caseload
- Implement single billing system to be accomplished after radio water meters are installed

Fire Department

- Plan and conduct one of the largest full scale drills in the state, using local, state and federal resources
- Write grants for full scale drill to offset costs to responding agencies

- Continue partnership with CC rescue and conduct a trench rescue class that will be offered to students at a national level

Golf course

- Increase rounds
- Close the gap between where we are now and positive cash flow after debt service
- Fill the year with 75th anniversary events that highlight Greenhaven's connections to the history of the city

Liquor Store

- Pass all compliance checks
- Increase business in a flat industry
- Research feasibility of a 3rd store for the future
- Reduce employee turnover
- Additional employee training on customer service and product knowledge

Planning, Building And Code Enforcement

- Complete ordinance amendments for brew houses, signs, parking in residential districts, rezoning east of library & HPC ordinance
- Complete scanning of all building permits, planning and code enforcement documents
- Institute administrative citation process with Administration
- Complete South Ferry Corridor Plan
- Identify and apply for grants

Police Department

- Continue to explore opportunities to increase efficiency in police operations
- Launch APD Facebookpage
- Plan & participate in full scale Emergency Response Drill at ATK Federal
- Re-apply for 2013 *Toward Zero Death Grant*
- Seek grant funding for Emergency Management Training
- Work with Parking Advisory Board to identify revenue sources for parking fund

MAYOR PHIL RICE

- Install 2 more windmills, so at least one can be viewed spinning every day

CITY COUNCILOR CARL ANDERSON

- Budget — continue to hold the line on spending
- Amphitheatre — decide whether to fix or raze it

CITY COUNCILOR MARK FREEBURG

- Adopt a below zero levy for 2013
- Decision on amphitheatre, remove worst and preserve best

CITY COUNCILOR STEVE SCHMIDT

- Improve citizen communication
- Castle Field, Health Partners, move current proposed deals forward to groundbreaking

CITY COUNCILOR JEFF WEAVER

- Commuter rail station development
- Increase tax base by returning tax exempt properties to the tax rolls

**CITY OF HAM LAKE SALARY NOTICE**

Minnesota Statutes Chapter 471.701 requires that 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 Ham Lake, titles and salaries of the four highest-paid employees as of January 1, 2012 are: Administrator - \$99,888, Public Works Superintendent, Fire Chief, and Finance Director - \$82,705. Dated: January 12, 2012

**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.

# Opinion

by Phil Krinkie



## LEGISLATORS MUST GUARD TAXPAYERS' "BLIND SIDE"

With the Vikings stadium debate still occupying center stage this legislative season, one can't help but think of another football drama that played out on the big screen a few years ago.

The 2009 movie "The Blind Side," starring Sandra Bullock in her Academy Award-winning Best Actress role, wasn't just a heartwarming story about overcoming adversity and perseverance on the football field. It also contained an important message for today's state lawmakers.

The message for the legislators is not about the value of an NFL franchise, but how to play as a team and your role on the team.

In the movie (which is based on a true story) a young man named Michael Oher bounces from foster home to foster home and finally finds a family in an unexpected place: He meets Leigh Anne Tuohy (Bullock) and is taken in by her wealthy southern family.

While Leigh Anne helps Michael get back on track in school, she learns that although he scored very low in almost every category in a career aptitude test, his 'protective instincts' were in the 98th percentile. After struggling to improve his grades, Michael starts playing football. At first his polite and gentle nature makes him ill-suited for the contact sport. But Leigh Anne helps Michael tap into his "protective instincts" and coaches him to think of his teammates as family members who need protection.

With this motherly advice, Michael has a change of perception. After spending his entire life trying to find his place in the world, he finally can see his role. The Tuohys adopt Michael, and he becomes a star football player who not only excels in the college game, but goes on to be drafted by the Baltimore Ravens, where he remains the starting left tackle.

So, what is the important message from this film for our lawmakers? It is quite simple: "protective instincts."

In the game of football, most quarterbacks are right-handed. This means they face right when they drop back to pass, leaving them blind to an opponent who is rushing them from the left side. Therefore, the key blocker to protect them from the blind side hit is the left offensive tackle.

Once Michael understood his role as a left offensive tackle — the protector of the quarterback — he was a natural.

This important lesson can be applied to the political gridiron as well. For example, legislators can be viewed as the left offensive tackle of the taxpayers. The legislator's role is protecting the interests of their constituents, like the left tackle protecting the quarterback.

In the political game of public financing for a new Vikings stadium, the role of the opponent is played by the New Jersey billionaire who is desperately trying to tackle the taxpayer. Legislators should be there to protect the interests of the home team — their taxpaying constituents.

On the football field and at the Capitol, any good offensive tackle always knows where their quarterback is.

In a recent survey by Public Policy Polling, 59 percent of the respondents opposed any public financing for a new Vikings stadium. After five months of constant pounding by Vikings owner Zygi Wilf, Gov. Mark Dayton and the media for a

new billion-dollar stadium, the majority of voters still oppose financing the project with taxpayer's money.

Even under the threat of the team leaving Minnesota, 39 percent of the people responded by saying "let them leave" vs. using taxpayer funding.

If you doubt these numbers or think the most recent survey is a fluke, check the results of any survey on public stadium funding over the past ten years.

Every time the public is asked, the result is the same: 60 to 70 percent of taxpayers are opposed to paying for a new Vikings stadium.

So, why do legislators continue to propose spending hundreds of millions of Minnesota taxpayers money to subsidize a New Jersey billionaire?

They seem to have forgotten that their No. 1 job is to protect the interests of their constituents.

Last year, the Vikings spent half a million dollars lobbying the Legislature to approve more than \$600 million in taxpayer funding for a new stadium. As quarterbacks, the taxpayers have done their part to play offense on public funding for a new stadium. They have fought for a vote on a charter amendment in Ramsey County, signed petitions in opposition and testified at stadium hearings.

But the game isn't over. They still are under attack and need their elected officials to block for them.

Maybe legislators have never seen the movie "The Blind Side," or perhaps they are confused about the role they play at the Capitol. Some may even consider this metaphor too hypothetical.

But having participated in both arenas, my experience is that it's absolutely true.

As legislators take the field in the political game of public financing for a new Vikings stadium, they need to remember whose team they are on. It's time to take off the "New Jersey Billionaire" jersey and put on the "Minnesota Taxpayer" jersey.

Legislators should sharpen their "protective instincts" in their role as the defenders of the taxpayer, or the billionaire owner and his multi-millionaire players will win.

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

## ONCE AGAIN, ANOTHER LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORE GOP VINDICATION

The GOP legislative majority experienced further validation of its fiscal stewardship when the state announced a December unemployment rate of 5.7%, the lowest rate since the financial collapse of 2008.

The state's unemployment rate has fallen 1.5% since August, the fastest four month drop since 1976.

Guess we don't need massive tax hikes and a big expansion of government to get the economy going. A little governmental restraint is all that's needed.

### STIMULUS-LITE

Here they go again. Governor Dayton has unveiled a whopping \$775 million stimulus bill chock full of all the DFL economic canards about the ability of government to work some kind of black magic on the economy.

Otherwise known as a bonding bill, the stimulus bill is debt-financed government spending that is paid back, with interest, over time.

While the state may be in a better fiscal position than in the recent past, the legislature should be very cautious when putting more spending on the state's credit card.

Debt service is the fastest growing area of the state budget and something that needs to be watched closely.

Moreover, conservatives well know that government doesn't create jobs, wealth, or prosperity. Government should spend money to provide core functions, not to "stimulate" the economy.

Finally, as one would predict, Dayton just couldn't help himself when it came to recommending pork projects.

Among the more dubious:

- Civic Centers for Rochester, Mankato, and Saint Cloud;
- A baseball park for the Saint Paul Saints;
- A "wellness center" for Wadena;
- Light rail for the Southwest Metro;
- A new dolphin tank at the zoo;
- A renovated sculpture garden for Minneapolis.

Having said that, there is a place for a modest bonding bill that is truly focused on repairing and maintaining the state's core capital assets.

For example, replacing structurally deficient bridges is a proper expenditure of bonding dollars. So is the upgrade of security systems at state prisons.

As long as spending is kept reasonable and focused on core infrastructure, a bonding bill is fine.

This is especially true when one considers what happened to Republicans in 2004 when they failed to pass a bonding bill (more on that in our "session predictions" piece below).

### REFORM IS FINALLY HERE!

And not a moment too soon. Republicans finally got back on message when they unveiled "Reform 2.0," a welcome change of pace from the constant diet of football stadiums, slot machines, party debt, and marital infidelity.

Reform 2.0 is a series of legislative initiatives centered on key issue areas including:

- Reduce business property tax and encourage economic growth;
- Reduce regulation, create opportunity;
- Provide a highly skilled workforce;
- Fight nationalized health care;
- Modernize the bureaucracy.

Let's hope the GOP stays focused like a laser on this package of reform ideas, passes them timely, and adjourns the session.

### WATCHDOG PREDICTIONS FOR THE 2012 SESSION

**Vikings Stadium.** The legislature will not pass a Vikings stadium bill in the 2012 session.

Stadium politics are always difficult and GOP leaders realize they are asking their troops to walk the plank if they take a stadium vote in an election year, especially one that promises to be so volatile and contentious as this year. Whether the red or green button is pushed, it's a losing proposition for Senjem and Zellers to bring up a vote this year.

And there's also that no so small matter of the team's utter incompetence, a true saving grace for those of us who believe the government has no business subsidizing a professional sports franchise.

### WATCHDOG OPINION

*continued on next page, B-2*

Opinion



**WATCHDOG OPINION** *contd. from B-1*

Lester Bagley and company still have no settled stadium site, financing plan, or local champion, which means they still have no bill for legislators to consider.

Moreover, the team's ham-handed strategy of creating a false sense of urgency back in the fall has utterly backfired. With the session days away, legislators and the public are beset with a sense of stadium fatigue and the feeling that the wind has gone out of the purple longboat's sails.

After the session ends, Bagley and crew will announce that they agreed to wait until 2013. They will sign a lease extension at the Metrodome.

Looking deeper into the crystal ball, a stadium bill will pass at some point in the future, but only after the team is sold to a group with a local ownership angle and a more competent lobbying team is brought in to restore gravitas to the team's efforts at the Capitol.

**Bonding Bill.** Yes, Watchdogs, a bonding bill will pass. Republicans will moderate Governor Dayton's massive, bloated bill and pass a more affordable bill focused on priorities besides dolphin exhibits and sculpture gardens.

GOP leadership will recall the whipping Republicans took at the polls in 2004 after they failed to pass a bonding bill and were tagged with a "do nothing" label that cost majority Republicans 13 seats in the Minnesota House, leaving them with a slim 68-66 majority that certainly was no majority on a large number of issues.

**Reform 2.0.** The GOP finally got back on message, focusing on the issues that got them elected in the first place. Perhaps we're now done with the senseless focus, near obsession, on football stadiums and slot machines.

The Watchdog predicts the GOP will find some common ground with the governor on these issues and a small element of Reform 2.0 will pass.

**Constitutional Amendments.** GOP leadership will come to realize that constitutional ballot initiatives are the equivalent of running a state-wide campaign and there simply aren't enough resources to fund multiple ballot issues (including the ultra-pricey gay marriage issue), fund a presidential effort against Obama, fund a redistricting legal effort, fund the daycare provider union challenge, repay the state GOP debt, fund a senate race, fund 8 congressional races, and fund the election and re-election efforts of 201 legislative Republicans who aim to keep the majority in both houses.

Photo ID may make it to the ballot if Governor Dayton is unwilling to sign a compromise bill.

Other than that, there won't be enough GOP support for either an amendment to require a super-majority to raise taxes or a "right to work" amendment.

This is especially true with the latter amendment. Unless the GOP has a spare \$10-12 million laying around to match the all-out union blitz that would make Ohio look like a tickle fight, it is best to let sleeping dogs lie and not provoke the sleeping giant.

Many GOP candidates have yet to seriously engage fundraising for 2012. They're about to find out that there isn't a lot of spare change to go around in the GOP donor universe. Opening more political battle fronts risks a scenario where none are adequately funded.

**Gambling.** This is another issue that induced no small amount of fatigue as an inordinate amount of time has been dedicated to an issue the average voter doesn't care about.

No gambling will pass, with the possible exception of electronic pull tabs. The DFL and Gov. Dayton won't abandon the tribes, who have been a steady ally over the years. The only question is whether or not the GOP will pass a bill and incur that wrath of the tribes. If so, we hope the racino folks have a few hundred thousand in the bank for the GOP.

**Adjournment.** This is the year the legislature actually adjourns early, just before Easter. The GOP anxious to hold its majority, rushes to get its troops back home to begin campaigning and meeting new constituents because of redistricting.

Moreover, there is very little common ground with Gov. Dayton, especially in an election year.

With a projected budget surplus, there is no budget repair bill to be done.

The cherry on top is the bragging rights of having done the people's work early and heading home.

The GOP will do a bonding bill, pass reform items, do property tax reform, perhaps add a photo ID ballot issue, and go home.

That's a good thing. Every day spent in Saint Paul is a day off the campaign trail.

With a low unemployment rate and a budget surplus, the GOP has the makings of a solid re-election narrative.

We'll revisit our predictions after session ends to see just how prescient we were. 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.

**GOVERNOR THROWS TANTRUM**

Governor Dayton displayed a decided lack of leadership last week when he melted down and threw a tantrum that would have made any self-respecting toddler blush in admiration.

The cause? The rejection of Public Utilities Commission member and former DFL state Senator Ellen Anderson by the state Senate.

Apparently, Dayton was either unaware that the Senate had such powers or he and Anderson are the only two people in Minnesota who consider her views on energy to be within the mainstream, even in this left-leaning state.

Moreover, it's not like Dayton had no warning. If he had been a Watchdog subscriber, the governor would have read weeks ago that Anderson was heading to rejection, which may have prevented his fit.

Dayton's press release was decidedly unbecoming the chief executive of this great state:

"A very good person, a very dedicated public servant, and an excellent Chair of the Public Utilities Commission was wrongly maligned and cruelly rejected today by Republican Senators, who showed once again that they are **unfit to govern this state.**"

"You would think after their leadership scandals, which caused them to replace all of their leaders last month, they would behave themselves for at least a little while. However, they seem **incapable of doing so.**"

"Republican Senators tried to demean Ellen Anderson today; instead they demeaned themselves. Once again, they showed Minnesotans who they really are. **They are too extreme to lead.**"

If Governor Dayton is going to lose his composure and allow his emotions to dictate his actions in a circumstance like this, how is he going to react in a far worse crisis situation?

God forbid, but what if a serious natural disaster strikes? What if a situation arises at a nuclear plant? What if a mass casualty scenario becomes a nightmarish reality?

As both the chief executive of the state and the commander-in-chief of the state militia, Dayton would be called upon to exercise decisive leadership, making decisions that could literally mean the difference between life and death.

If he reacts like this over a rejected appointment, the Watchdog shuts to think what might happen if the crap really hits the fan.

Compare Dayton's hysterics and drama to Governor Pawlenty's measured, rational response to the rejection of Cheri Yecke as his Education Commissioner, who was one of two appointments rejected by the DFL-led Senate.

Said Pawlenty:

"In the dark of night, the Democrats in the Minnesota Senate have done a great disservice to our state. By rejecting Commissioner Yecke on a party-line vote, they have rejected innovation and accountability for our education system. My

disappointment in their action and the loss to our state is deep and profound."

By the way, Pawlenty really meant the dark of night. The DFL took up Yecke's confirmation at 3:40 AM, with no notice.

The GOP gave all parties involved the courtesy of both notice and a floor vote during regular business hours, when the public and the media had an opportunity to witness the proceedings.

The Yecke rejection also offers readers an opportunity to once again swim in the liberal hypocrisy that seems to infect nearly all their words and actions.

DFL Senators decried Anderson's rejection as one based on subjective factors surrounding style and not based on actions.

First, let's take a step back and consult the record regarding the reasons the DFL gave for rejecting Yecke.

One special interest group accused her of being "polarizing." Former DFL state Senator Steve Kelly, a leader on education issues for the DFL, called her an "active divider."

Whatever that mumbo jumbo means.

Second, Anderson had a demonstrated record over 18 years in the legislature of pursuing a radical environmental agenda that was far outside the mainstream. And don't worry about Ellen Anderson. She avoided the fate of being forced to rely on the private sector for a pay check by accepting a job in the governor's office as some type of "advisor."

**BILL OF THE WEEK**

The week's recipients of the Bill of the Week award both hail from Anoka County, the home of the Watchdog.

The Dog is proud this week to shine a spotlight and doff its cap to state Representative Branden Petersen (R - Coon Rapids) and Senator Pam Wolf (R - Spring Lake Park) for their authorship of HF 1870 and its companion SF 1690.

This legislation allows school district to base discharge decisions on the basis of something besides seniority.

In other words, the bill would free up school districts to base layoffs decisions on something other than a "LIFO" (last in, first out) system.

So, for example, a school district could lay off a senior teacher who gets poor results while retaining a newer teacher who is educating children well and providing a good value to the taxpayer.

What a novel concept!

Make no mistake. Petersen and Wolf deserve credit for their Profile in Political Courage.

Education Minnesota and the Teacher Industrial Complex hate the idea of teacher accountability and have made these two legislators Public Enemies number 1.

These two freshmen legislators, who represent swing districts, have staked out an admirable position, taking a big risk to truly reform education and stand tall in the face Minnesota's biggest special interest.

Oh, by the way, Senator Wolf is herself a teacher and just may know a thing or two about how schools work (or don't work).

It's kind of ironic that the teacher union always speaks to the need of the public to view teachers as professionals yet complains when teachers are treated that way.

After all, no engineering or accounting firm uses a LIFO system to address layoffs.

This old, Soviet-style pay grid for teachers is coming to an end.

Minnesota is only one of 11 states that makes seniority a deciding factor when making layoffs.

Let's make it 10.

Make sure you thank Rep. Petersen and Sen. Wolf for their hard and often thankless work to reform our public schools.

# 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

**Wed. & Thurs. Feb. 15-16**  
Anoka County Board members may attend legislative hearings at the State Capitol re fiscal disparities  
**Fri. Feb. 17 & Thurs. Mar. 1**  
Public Works Cmte — 9 am, Rm 772, ACGC

**Tues. Feb. 21**  
Human Services Cmte — 8:30 am, Rm 710, ACGC  
Information Technology Cmte — 10:30 am, Rm 772, ACGC  
Finance & Capital Improvemnts Cmte — 1 pm, Rm 772, ACGC  
Intergovernmental-Community Relations — 3 pm, Rm 772, ACGC  
County Board — 9:30 am, Rm 705, ACGC  
**Mon. Feb. 27**  
Library Board — 5:30 pm, Library Support Services Bldg., next to Northtown Library

**Tues. Feb. 28**  
Management Cmte — 8:30 am, Rm 772  
County Board — 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

**Thurs. Feb. 16**  
Artificial Turf-Dome Task Force Mtg — 6 pm  
Parks Comm. — 7 pm  
**Tues. Feb. 21**  
City Council — 7 pm  
**Tues. Feb. 28**  
City Council “Workshop” — 6 pm  
**Thurs. Mar. 1**  
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

**Tues. Feb. 21**  
City Council — 7 pm  
**Wed. Feb. 22**  
Planning Comm. — 6 pm, City Hall Cmte Rm  
**Mon. Feb. 27**  
City Council “work session” — 5 pm  
**Mon. Mar. 5**  
City Council — 7 pm  
**Tues. Mar. 6**  
Planning Comm. — 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. 16 & Mar. 1**  
City Council — 6:30 pm (Workshop); 7:30 pm (meeting)  
**Tues. Feb. 21**  
Natural Resource Conserv. Bd — 7 pm  
**Tues. Feb. 28**  
Park Board — 7 pm

**HAVE A LETTER?  
AN ANNOUNCEMENT?**

Send them to us:  
editor@anokacountyrecord.com

**NEXT ISSUE  
THURS. MARCH 1st**

## Centerville

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

**Wed. Feb. 22**  
City Council — 6:30 pm  
**Tues. Mar. 6**  
Planning & Zoning Comm. — 6:30 pm  
**Wed. Mar. 7**  
Parks & Rec Cmte — 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

**Mon. Feb. 27**  
Planning Comm. — 7 pm  
**Tues. Feb. 28**  
City Council — 7 pm  
**Tues. Mar. 6**  
Park Board — 6:30 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

**Wed. Feb. 22**  
Parks & Rec. — 5:30 pm, Murzyn Hall  
**Mon. Feb. 27**  
City Council — 7 pm  
**Wed. Feb. 29**  
Landlord Meeting — no information given on web site. 7 pm. Call for info

## Columbus

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

**Thurs. Feb. 16**  
Park Board — 6:30 pm  
**Wed. Feb. 22**  
City Council — 7 pm  
**Wed. Mar. 7**  
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

## Coon Rapids

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

**Thurs. Feb. 16**  
Planning Comm. — 6:30 pm  
**Wed. Feb. 21 & Mar. 6**  
City Council — 7 pm  
**Thurs. Mar. 1**  
Bd of Adjustment & Appeals — 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. 22**  
Econ. Develop. Auth. — 6:30 pm  
**Tues. Feb. 28**  
Planning Comm. — 7 pm  
**Wed. Mar. 7**  
City Council — 7 pm

## Fridley

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

**Thurs. Mar. 1**  
HRA — 7 pm  
**Mon. Mar. 5**  
Charter Comm. — 7 pm  
Parks & Rec. Comm. — 7 pm  
**Mon. Mar. 12**  
City Council — 7 pm pre-agenda; 7:30 pm meeting

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

## Ham Lake

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. Feb. 21 & Mon. Mar. 5**  
City Council — 6 pm  
**Mon. Feb. 27**  
Planning 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 City Hall  
9180 Lexington Av  
Lexington, MN 55014  
Ph: 763-784-2792  
www.ci.lexington.mn.us

**Thurs. Feb. 16 & Mar. 1**  
City Council — 7 pm (workshop after the Feb. 16 meeting)  
**Tues. Feb. 21**  
Fire Relief Mtg — 6:30 pm, Fire Hall  
**Mon. Mar. 5**  
Park Board — 6:30 pm  
**Wed. Mar. 7**  
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

## 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. Feb. 28**  
Environmental Bd — 6:30 pm  
**Thurs. Mar. 1**  
EDAC — 8 am  
**Mon. Mar. 5**  
City Council (“work session”)  
Parks Board — 6:30 pm

## Linwood Township

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

**Tues. Feb. 21**  
Planning & Zoning Comm. — 7 pm  
**Mon. Feb. 27**  
Parks & Rec. Comm. — 7 pm  
Fire Department — 7 pm  
**Tues. Feb. 28**  
Town Board — 6 pm

**Annual Township Meeting  
Tues. Mar. 13, 7 pm, Linwood Senior Center, 22817 Typo Creek Dr**

## 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

## Ramsey

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

**Tues. Feb. 21**  
Public Works Cmte; council work session — 6 pm

**Tues. Feb. 28**  
City Council (“work session”) — 5:30 pm  
EPB — 6:30 pm

**Wed. Feb. 29**  
**Local Government Officials Mtg** —  
Hidden Haven Bar & Grill,  
20520 NE Polk St., Cedar

**Thurs. Mar. 1**  
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

**Mon. Mar. 5**  
EPB — 6:30 pm

**Tues. Mar. 6**  
City Council “work session” to interview commission candidates; followed by HRA “work session” — 6 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

## ANOKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

**Tues. Feb. 21** — 5 pm

## From the State Auditor

### Avoiding Pitfalls: Municipal Representation on Fire Relief Association Boards

When a volunteer fire relief association is affiliated with a municipality, the municipality must have representatives serving as trustees on the fire relief’s board. See [Minn. Stat. § 424A.04](#).

While these municipal trustees can’t be officers of the relief association, they have the same rights and duties as any other trustee, including the right to vote.

All trustees, including municipal trustees, should receive notice of all board meetings and be allowed to fully participate.

If you have questions regarding the composition of a fire relief association’s board of trustees, please feel free to contact the Office of the State Auditor’s Pension Director, Rose Hennessy Allen, at **651-296-5985** or [Rose.Hennessy-Allen@osa.state.mn.us](mailto:Rose.Hennessy-Allen@osa.state.mn.us).

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

**SCHOOL DISTRICTS****Anoka-Hennepin ISD #11**

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

**Mon. Feb. 27**

School Board — 6:30 pm

**Mon. Mar. 5**

School Board “work session” — 6 pm

**Centennial ISD #12**

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

**Mon. Mar. 5**

School Board “work session” — 5:30 pm

**Mon. Mar. 19**

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. 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  
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  
splkpark.k12.mn.us/

**Tues. Feb. 28** — 6:30 pm (work session)**Tues. Mar. 6** — 7 pm**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. 27** — 5:30 pm “work session”**Mon. Mar. 12** — 7 pm**916 Intermediate  
School District**

2540 Cty Rd F, White Bear Lake  
Board meetings at Bellaire School,  
District Office Board Room  
Ph.: (651) 415-5562  
nemetromn.k12.mn.us

**Tues. Mar. 6** — 6 pm

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

**RESIDENTS INVITED TO SHARE IDEAS ON GOALS, VALUES AND PLANS  
COON RAPIDS COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

The City of Coon Rapids invites residents to attend one of three upcoming community meetings. The meetings are an opportunity to provide valuable input and ideas to city leaders about the future direction of Coon Rapids. Residents will have a chance to talk about a variety of topics ranging from transportation to future building projects. City leaders want to understand how residents feel about their community, and the goals they have for the future.

The Community Meetings will be moderated by Dave Unmacht, a consultant with Springsted Incorporated. Unmacht has worked as a former city manager and county administrator, and currently helps cities and counties achieve their goals through strategic planning.

The Community Meetings will take place from 6:30 to 8:30 pm on:

*Monday, February 27* at Coon Rapids Civic Center, 11155 Robinson Drive; *Thursday, March 15* at The Harvest Grill at Bunker Hills Golf Club, 12800 Bunker Prairie Drive; and *Wednesday, March 21* at Coon Rapids Ice Center, 11000 Crooked Lake Boulevard.

No reservations are required. For more information contact City Clerk, Cathy Sorensen, at 763-767-6493.

**MINNESOTA DNR ANNOUNCEMENT****COON RAPIDS DAM POOL TO BE RAISED THIS WINTER; PROPERTY OWNERS AND RECREATIONISTS SHOULD BE ON ALERT**

Asian carp pose a significant threat to aquatic habitat in the Mississippi River, so the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will be requesting the Three Rivers Park District to raise the water level in the pool behind the Coon Rapids Dam this winter to make it a more effective fish barrier.

Property owners along the pool should immediately begin to remove any docks and boat lifts from their shoreline that could be damaged by the higher water levels. Winter recreationists should be on alert, because ice conditions in the pool will be unpredictable for the rest of the winter.

The DNR recently met with representatives of the park district, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Geological Survey, the National Weather Service and several local residents and community representatives, to discuss how to raise the pool in a safe manner to minimize damage to the shoreline and the danger to wintertime recreationists.

The DNR was advised to raise the pool slowly (no more than 6 inches per day) and to do it when open water is visible in the center of most of the pool. DNR and park district staff will monitor ice conditions on the reservoir, and as soon as the conditions are right will begin raising the pool.

DNR hydrologists do not believe this change in dam operations will affect overall peak flood levels along the pool. The Coon Rapids Dam pool does not contain enough storage to lessen flood levels. The water level of the pool when a flood starts does not make any difference in the severity of flooding.

DNR will begin reconstruction of the dam to make it a more effective Asian carp barrier either late this fall or early next year. The Three Rivers Park District and the DNR recently signed a joint powers agreement which paves the way for the dam reconstruction project.

Last year, the Legislature provided \$16 million for the project. DNR will be replacing the gate system and making other badly needed repairs. DNR will keep the pool level at or near the normal summer pool level all year long in the future.

**DNR SEEKING COMMENTS ON ANOKA SAND PLAIN SUBSECTION  
FOREST RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

A draft of the Anoka Sand Plain Subsection Forest Resource Management Plan (ASP SFRMP) is now open for public comment until 4:30 p.m., March 8, according to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The plan consists of two primary products. The public review document outlines the planning process, forest vegetation management goals and directions, and implementation strategies and stand selection criteria used to identify the forest stands to be site-visited by foresters and possibly treated over the next 10-year period, 2013 through 2022. The 10-Year Stand Examination List includes 268 stands totaling 3,883 acres that are being considered for site visits and possible treatment over the next 10 years.

“The focus of the public review is to seek comments on the process and criteria used to select specific forest stands for site visit and possible treatments,” said Robert Pulford, a forest planner with the DNR Division of Forestry. “We also are looking for comments about the specific stands included on the stand exam list.”

In addition to the ASP SFRMP, a management plan has been prepared specifically for the Sand Dunes State Forest located in Sherburne County. The focus of the operational plan for management of the Sand Dunes State Forest is to guide vegetation management within the Sand Dunes State Forest and is a part of the broader ASP SFRMP.

Stands on the list have received a preliminary prescription (i.e., harvest, thin, site visit to determine management or re-inventory) based on the directions as stated in the draft ASP SFRMP. Once the stands are site-visited and evaluated, final treatment will be assigned. Based on past experience, not all stands identified for site visits result in a timber sale and harvest.

The Anoka Sand Plain SFRMP public review document, 10-Year Stand Exam List, and operational plan for Management of the Sand Dunes State Forest are available online. Paper copies (235 pages) may be requested from the DNR. Comments on the public review document or individual forest stands placed on the Ten-Year Stand Exam List may be submitted to: Robert Pulford, DNR Division of Forestry, 1601 Minnesota Drive, Brainerd, MN 56401; phone: 218-833-8704; fax: 218-833-8668; or email: robert.pulford@state.mn.us. All written comments received will be considered with responses prepared. Comments and responses will be included in the final Anoka Sand Plain SFRMP scheduled for adoption by the DNR in April.

The Anoka Sand Plain is an ecological subsection in central Minnesota that includes approximately 42,000 acres of state forest timberlands (lands capable of producing timber) administered by the DNR divisions of Forestry and Fish and Wildlife. This subsection covers all or parts of 12 counties: Crow Wing, Morrison, Stearns, Benton, Wright, Sherburne, Mille Lacs, Isanti, Anoka, Chisago, Ramsey and Hennepin. However, the majority of lands subject to this SFRMP are located in Morrison, Sherburne, Anoka, Isanti and Chisago counties. The draft ASP SFRMP takes into consideration a broad range of factors that affect forest management including: increasing forest health and productivity, managing vegetation for rare species and habitat, balancing timber age classes over time, identifying stands to be managed as older forest to accommodate diverse wildlife and ecological resources, and limiting impacts to cultural, visual and water resources — all balanced to provide sustainable forest resources. Sustainable forest management is the underlying goal of the SFRMP planning process. The DNR prepares management plans consistent with ecological subsection boundaries to ensure that ecological characteristics are considered as forestry management is implemented. The ASP SFRMP is one of 10 ecological subsections in the state for which the DNR has prepared a subsection plan.