

LEGISLATORS ANNOUNCE RETIREMENTS AND ELECTION PLANS

by Evan Paskach — *Minnesota State News*

As members of the state legislature decide their future plans, we will do our best to stay ahead of all the latest updates. This is a detailed rundown of legislators' election plans as of press time.



Sen. Al DeKruif

GOP members not seeking re-election to MN Senate:

Gretchen Hoffman* — Senate District 10
 Amy Koch — Senate District 19
 Doug Magnus — Senate District 22
 Al DeKruif — Senate District 25



Sen. Gretchen Hoffman

Gen Olson — Senate District 33
 Geoff Michel — Senate District 41

* *Running for Congress*

Republicans not seeking re-election to MN House:

Mark Murdock — House District 10B
 Torrey Westrom* — House District 11A
 Mary Kiffmeyer* — House District 16B
 Bruce Anderson* — House District 19A
 Connie Doepke* — House District 33B
 Mark Buesgens — House District 35B
 Branden Petersen* — House District 49B

* *Running for state Senate*

GOP endorsement contests:

Senators Michelle Benson (R-Ham Lake) and Michael Jungbauer (R-East Bethel) will seek the GOP endorsement in the new Senate District 31. Representatives Glenn Gruenhagen (R-Glencoe) and Ron Shimanski (R-Silver Lake) will seek the party endorsement in the new House District 18B.

Representatives Matt Dean (R-Dellwood) and Carol McFarlane (R-White Bear Lake) will seek the party endorsement in the new House District 38B.

Note: All six candidates have said they will abide by the party endorsement.

DFL members not seeking re-election to MN Senate:

Keith Langseth — Senate District 9
 Linda Higgins — Senate District 58

DFL members not seeking re-election to MN House:

Kent Eken* — House District 2A
 Larry Hosch — House District 14B
 Lyle Koenen* — House District 20B
 Kate Knuth — House District 50B
 Mindy Greiling — House District 54A
 Bev Scalze* — House District 54B
 Bobby Joe Champion* — House District 58B

* *Running for state Senate*

DFL endorsement contests:

Senators John Marty (DFL-Roseville) and Mary Jo McGuire (DFL-Falcon Heights) will seek the DFL endorsement in the new Senate District 66.

Representatives Frank Hornstein (DFL-Minneapolis) and Marion Greene (DFL-Minneapolis) will seek the DFL party endorsement in the new House District 61A.

Note: All four candidates have said they will abide by the party endorsement.

Other notes:

Sen. Mike Parry (R-Waseca) is currently seeking the GOP endorsement in the First Congressional District. He has not ruled out running for re-election to the state Senate if he is unsuccessful.

Rep. Kurt Bills (R-Rosemount) announced March 8 that he is running for the U.S. Senate.

Senator Gary Kubly (DFL-Granite Falls) passed away on Friday, March 2, leaving an open seat in current Senate District 20.

BILL TO PAY BACK SCHOOL SHIFTS INTRODUCED IN HOUSE

by Evan Paskach — *Minnesota State News*

Last Thursday, GOP legislative leaders announced a proposal that would start to repay the 2010 and 2011 school shift payments using the state's current budget reserve funds.



The legislation (HF 2083) would return the state to the 70/30-payment rate to school districts that was scheduled to occur in 2011.

The 2011 education payment shift was enacted as part of the budget compromise with Gov. Mark Dayton that ended the longest state government shutdown in history. The state currently has \$1 billion in budget reserves. Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) has already authorized a repayment of \$318 million later this month.

"A prudent course of action, when you have cash on hand, is to pay down your debt," said bill author Rep. Pat Garofalo (R-Farmington) during a news conference.

House Speaker Kurt Zellers (R-Maple Grove) also expressed the need to repay the shifts while the state has money in reserves.

"In just eight months, the budget outlook improved enough so that we can repay schools," said House Speaker Kurt Zellers (R-Maple Grove). "We're saying that instead of letting that cash sit in a bank account, we use it to pay back the shift. That should be our priority."

House DFLers were skeptical of the plan, saying that the proposal merely shifts funds from one account to the other.

GOP members were quick to point out that the legislation would also go towards paying back the 2010 shift enacted by the DFL controlled legislature.

"We are repaying our shift and starting to clean up the debt the Democrats left schools under in 2010," Garofalo said. "My hope is they will go along with us in starting payments on the portion of the debt they are responsible for passing onto our schools."

HF 2083 will likely be taken up on the House floor later this month as part of the omnibus education policy and finance bill.

CENSUS 2010: DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN FRIDLEY and COLUMBIA HEIGHTS

from city and ACR reports

Fridley's most significant changes in the 2010 U.S. Census indicate the city is aging and becoming more multi-racial. There has been a decline in the number of family households, a decrease in the number of owner-occupied housing units, and an increase in the number of vacant homes. Fridley's overall population as reported by the new census is only slightly smaller than it was in 2000 — 27,208 compared to 27,449 in 2000. Fridley's .8% drop in population compares with an 11.0% increase in Anoka County population, a 7.8% increase in Minnesota's population and a 9.7% in U.S. population. The median age of Fridley residents has also climbed in ten years from 36.3 to 37.1.

The number of residents over 65 years of age has grown from 3,281 or 12% of the total population in 2000 to 3,870 or 14.2% of the population in 2010. The under-18 segment of the Fridley population appears to be growing however, up by 3.5% since the 2000 census and now standing at 6,398.

Significant changes are seen in the ethnic make-up of Fridley's population: the Caucasian portion of the population shrunk from 24,674 or 97.1% of all Fridley residents in 2000 to 20,457, or 75.2% of the Fridley population in 2010. During the same period, the number of African American residents climbed from 939 (3.4%) to 3,015 or 11.1% of the population.

Other ethnic groups have also increased: in 2000 there were 794 Asian residents (2.9% of the total population). By 2010 Asians numbered 1,344 or 4.9% of the total population.

Although the Hispanic portion of the Fridley population was included in the Caucasian numbers listed above, a separate breakdown of this segment shows that in 2000, the Hispanic portion of Fridley's residents included 704 individuals or 2.6% of the total population. By 2010, the number of Hispanic residents had grown to 1,976, or 7.3% of the city's population.

The U.S. Census also provides household data. The number of Fridley households shrunk from 11,328 in 2000 to 11,110 in 2010. During the same period, the number of family households (households consisting of two or more related people) dropped from 7,323 to 7,057, or by 3.6%. As family households declined, non-family households climbed from 4,005 to 4,053, or by 1.2% and the number of people living alone climbed from 3,039 to 3,196, or by 5.2%. As the number of households in Fridley shrunk, somewhat surprisingly, the number of housing units grew from 11,504 to 11,760, or by 2.2%.

At the same time the number of vacant units in Fridley grew dramatically from 176 to 650 (a 269% increase) and the number of owner-occupied units declined from 7,671 to 7,271, or by 5.3%.

Columbia Heights data

Similar but sharper changes can be seen in Columbia Heights, where we compared data back to the 1980 census. The total population in 1980 was 19,978 and then dipped by about 1500 people in 1990, followed by a slight dip again in 2000 but rebounding to 19,496 in the 2010 census.

Racial diversity has become more pronounced since 1980, when the city was 97% white and only about 500 residents were non-white.

CENSUS *continued on next page, A-2*

CENSUS 2010

continued from previous page, A-1

The racial mix of Columbia Heights is now comprised of 65% White, 12% Hispanic, 13% Black and 5% Asian.

There are slightly more females in the city: 10,038 compared to 9,458 males.

23% of the city's population is under the age of 18; the total median age is 36.9 years.

Residents age 60 and over represents 20% of the total population. From age 65 on up, the percentage drops to 12.6%. When using age 21 as a yard-stick, all residents 21 and over comprise 74% of the population. In 2010 there were 213 residents aged 90 and over.

At the time the 2010 census was taken, there were 8,584 housing units, 658 of which were vacant. 68% of housing units were owner-occupied and 18% of those were owned free and clear. 32% of housing units were renter-occupied.

Anoka County data

On the county level, the 2010 census found Anoka County's male to female ratio almost perfectly split 50-50. Just for the record, there were 165,327 males and 165,517 females counted, for a total county population of 330,844.

The county's population in 1960 was about one-quarter of what it is now.

We also checked the population histories of Minnesota and the United States. The state's population was 3.4 million in 1960; 4.075 million in 1980, and 5.3 million in 2010.

The U.S. population was 179 million in 1960, 226 million in 1980 and 308 million in 2010.

NEWS BRIEFS & EVENTS

The Ham Lake Charter Commission will hold its annual meeting on Wednesday, March 28, at 6:00 p.m. The Ham Lake City Charter sets rules on how the City government operates, how it is organized, and how it is financed. The advantage of having a City Charter is that a city can tailor its form of government to the desire of its citizens and establish greater powers or more stringent limitations than state statutes call for. Any citizen interested in placing an item on the agenda for that meeting should provide the information to info@ci.ham-lake.mn.us, with a subject line of Charter Commission by Mon., March 19, at 4:30 p.m. You may also mail your request to the Ham Lake City Hall, 15544 Central Ave. NE, Ham Lake, MN, 55304 or fax it to (763) 434-9599. Please provide your contact information.

Blaine Fire Department Report: 87 calls in February

30 false alarms	The Fire & Life Safety Bureau conducted 51 public education events.
4 gas leaks	Highlights include:
5 good intent	6 child seats were inspected
2 medical assist	1 CPR adult class
3 outside fires	1 event assist
10 personal injury incidents	1 friends-family CPR
2 police assist	27 home surveys
4 power line down	11 safety presentations
9 structure fire	4 station tours
1 vehicle fires	
17 other	

Anoka County library events

Discover Your Roots

Who's on your family tree? Discover your roots at Anoka County Library with the help of the Anoka County Genealogical Society. Join us on Saturday, March 31st from 2:00-4:00 pm in the Rum River Library computer lab, 4201 6th Avenue in Anoka.

Learn how to begin researching your family roots in this basic genealogy class, which includes hands-on computer instruction. You will learn about software programs you can use to document and keep track of your ancestry and discover genealogy resources the library has to offer, including Ancestry Library Edition. The differences between Ancestry Library Edition and Ancestry.com will be explained and tips will be offered about how to best navigate these resources. Time is allowed at the end of the class to explore your own ancestor's state and federal censuses, immigration records, military records, and other documents that can prove your ancestor's existence in a particular place and time.

Class size is limited to 15 for this free class. To register, call 763-576-4695 or visit www.anoka.lib.mn.us.

This program is presented by Anoka County Library, in partnership with Anoka County Genealogical Society and is funded with money from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

Health Care Directives

Learn why a health care directive is important and how to complete a Minnesota Health Care Directive, as well as what a health care agent can do if a person is unable to make or communicate decisions.

Long Term Care Options/Live Well at Home

Learn about personal risks that could cause an older adult to have to move from home. Find out about options for those who prefer to stay in their homes and "age in place" but need assistance with issues like home maintenance, caregiving, food support or transportation.

Senior Medicare Patrol – Prevent Medicare Fraud & Abuse

Don't be a target of Medicare fraud. Become familiar with examples of Medicare fraud and waste. Learn how to review billing statements and report system abuse.

"It's crucial for our seniors, and the people who care for them, to know about the services available," said Anoka County Commissioner and Library Board liaison Jim Kordiak. "These classes are designed to provide news you can use, whether you are in need of services or know someone who could benefit from having this information."

These Anoka County Library programs are presented by the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging in partnership with Senior LinkAge Line. The Senior LinkAge Line® is the Minnesota Board on Aging's free statewide information and assistance service. Call 1-800-333-2433 or visit <http://www.minnesotahelp.info> for assistance.

For more information about these classes and other library programs, call 767-763-3267 or visit www.anoka.lib.mn.us.

Starting Seeds at the Library

With our short growing season in Minnesota, we need a way to give some of our plants a head start. This year, give your plants a head start by starting them from seed indoors. Instead of buying plants in a nursery, learn how to start your own flowering plants and vegetables. This class will teach you the secrets of starting your own plants from seed.

Come to the Crooked Lake Library on Saturday March 17th at 2:00 p.m., to learn gardening tips from a Master Gardener. Crooked Lake Library is located at 11440 Crooked Lake Blvd. in

Coon Rapids. Be sure to check out the wide variety of gardening books and information the library has to offer, too.

"This class couldn't come at a better time," said Anoka County Commissioner Carol LeDoux. "We need to eat healthier as a society, and growing it ourselves is a great way to build community and save money in these tough economic times."

This program is free and open to the public and is offered in partnership with the University of Minnesota Extension and presented by University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardeners.

Visit www.extension.umn.edu/master-gardener/ for more information about the University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener program or visit blog.lib.umn.edu/mgweb/anoka/ for specific information about the Anoka County Master Gardener program. For more information about this library program, call 763-576-5972 or visit www.anoka.lib.mn.us.

Five Minnesota Mail Processing Operations Moving

As a result of studies begun five months ago, the Postal Service has made the decision to move all mail processing operations from the following locations:

Duluth Processing & Distribution Facility (P&DF) to the St. Paul Processing & Distribution Center (P&DC) in Eagan.
Rochester Processing & Distribution Facility to the St. Paul P&DC.
St. Cloud Processing & Distribution Facility to the Minneapolis P&DC.
Mankato Processing & Distribution Facility to the Minneapolis P&DC.
Bemidji Customer Service Mail Processing Center to the Minneapolis P&DC.

Once the transfer is completed, the mail processing operation of those five facilities will cease.

The Postal Service has experienced a 25 percent decline in First-Class Mail volume since 2006, and receives no tax dollars for its operations, relying instead on the sale of postage, postal products and services.

"The decision to consolidate mail processing facilities recognizes the urgent need to reduce the size of the national mail processing network to eliminate costly underutilized infrastructure," said Chief Operating Officer Megan Brennan. "Consolidating operations is necessary if the Postal Service is to remain viable to provide mail service to the nation."

Specific dates have not been set for the transition. Until a specific date has been announced, residential and business mailers will continue to be served through the current facilities.

In December 2011, the Postal Service agreed to impose a moratorium on closing or consolidating post offices and mail processing facilities prior to May 15, 2012, to give Congress and the Administration the opportunity to enact an alternative plan. This delay was designed to allow Congress sufficient time to enact comprehensive postal legislation. In the meantime, the Postal Service continued all necessary steps required for the review of these facilities, including public notifications, public input meetings and consideration of public comments.

Implementation of this consolidation is contingent upon the outcome of pending rulemaking for a proposal to revise existing service standards. This announcement is provided in advance so that appropriate planning and notification can be made in accordance with existing employee agreements.

U.S. Dakota War History

with author
Dean Urdahl

at the
Anoka County Historical Society's
Annual Meeting

SUNDAY, MARCH 18
2 pm ANOKA CITY HALL
2015 First Ave N, Anoka

Cost: \$5.00 for ACHS members, \$7.00
for non-members.
More information:
(763) 421-0600,
www.ac-hs.org



Join the Anoka County Historical Society for its annual meeting and learn more about the 1862 U.S. Dakota War. Author Dean Urdahl has written three novels set in the conflict and featuring actual historical characters. His presentation will include a background on the war, its causes, and its legacy. ACHS will set up a display at the event that will look at Anoka County men who served in Company A of the Eighth Minnesota. The unit was made up largely of Anoka County men (and a woman) and was sent west to fight the Dakota before being sent south to fight the Confederacy during the Civil War. The event will be preceded by a brief business meeting that will include the results of the elections to the ACHS board of directors. Refreshments will be served.



VOTER FRAUD WATCHDOG GROUP MAY BE CLAIMING \$1,000 REWARD

by Bryan Olson



Opinion

A few weeks ago the Minnesota chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union held a press conference saying it was fed up with all the conspiracy theories about voter fraud. Let's

put an end to it once and for all. They thought that a \$1,000 reward to anyone who could show proof of voter fraud would bring about closure on the matter.

Charles Samuelson, Executive Director of the Minnesota ACLU said in a press statement, "There is no voter impersonation fraud in Minnesota and we are willing to bet on it . . . we believe this amendment push is being fueled by rumor and fear, but not facts."

Dan McGrath, of the voter fraud watchdog group Minnesota Majority, stepped forward to call for the ACLU's \$1,000 check. He had found that a woman in Andover was prosecuted for voter impersonation fraud that occurred in 2008. She had filled out an absentee ballot for her daughter who was away from home at college. As it turned out, the daughter voted in person at her polling place after all. An important point to make here is that the mother signed someone else's absentee ballot — an impersonation and forgery. Completing an absentee ballot is really a two-person job: the voter and a witness — which can be a notary public, someone who is registered to vote in Minnesota, or someone who has the authority to administer oaths.

So let's put an end to the conspiracy theories that voter fraud is only a conspiracy theory. Everyone will be provided an ID to use to vote. No one will be without one. Getting the card will not be a hardship.

It isn't a sin to want to maintain the highest integrity possible for our elections. Whether there is one instance of voter fraud, or one million, is irrelevant. There should be none, and we should do everything we can to attain that. Fraud is difficult to find, and therefore we may never know its true scope.

Minnesota Majority released a report last fall with findings that showed over 2,800 felons may have voted in the 2008 election; of these, 113 had been convicted of voter fraud, with another 185 awaiting trial or charges. Court documents, polling place roster signatures and voter registration cards were used to detect these suspicious voters. Since these documents are public information, this citizens group was able to do research that should be done by law enforcement and election officials. They aren't doing it.

Officials have said there have been only a handful of convictions. What they don't say is they haven't been looking hard enough. They also forget to mention that statutes keep them from having a solid case for prosecution — an ineligible voter has to freely admit wrongdoing with malice aforethought. "Knowingly" is the key word here. Anyone can say "I didn't know any better" and be in the clear. This is most often the reason why a voter fraud case never reaches prosecution. To say that the low number of convictions proves there isn't a problem is ludicrous and laughable.

Another problem area has been the use of false identities or addresses, not found until *after the voter has cast his ballot*.

6,200 postcards came back to the Secretary of State's office as undeliverable and unverifiable as addressed after the 2008 election. In 2010 this number was about 1,200 — with one-third of them being referred to county attorneys for investigation.

A postcard is mailed out after a voter has registered *before* an election. The voter is supposed to mail back the card, which verifies that person lives at that address.

Minnesota Majority found that many undeliverable postcards had fictitious addresses, or the addresses were found to be forests, empty lots, warehouses, etc.

The postcard verification process is also used for those who vote on election day. But what can you do *after* the vote has already been counted? Not much. Election day registrants ("EDR's") are sent a postcard *after* the election, and their eligibility is then determined for the *next* election. These are the postcards that contain many of the fictitious names and addresses; the damage has been done — the ineligible votes were counted.

Anyone who doesn't have an ID and has not pre-registered can still vote on election day. Any eligible voter can vouch for the identities and residency of up to 15 people who live in that voter's precinct. However, there have been many reports from poll watchers and election judges of suspicious vouching. One has to question whether the voucher really knows the people he is vouching for, when they are brought to the polling places on buses and have been told to "look for the person who's going to vouch for you".

Find such "organized voting" hard to believe? There are many recorded testimonies on this point; not *all* of these witnesses can be lying. Just last week at a legislative committee hearing, a small-town election judge testified that suspicious voters at his polling place prompted him to call the state auditor's office. About a dozen people had showed up to register on election day and all claimed the town laundromat's address as their own. The reply from the auditor was not to challenge anyone's right to vote. This attitude seems to be held by all authorities, as many election judges have opined. Being told to "make a note of it" implies "we will investigate later," but that rarely happens.

Our highest voter turnout is during presidential elections. The last such election had over 542,000 people registering at the polls, representing 18.5% of the total votes cast (2,921,498). Another 293,000 voted absentee, representing 10% of the total votes cast. The number of pre-registered voters voting in person on election day is dwindling. One has to weigh whether this is a good thing. The cost of elections keeps going up, partly due

to the postage and handling involved with absentee ballots. Years ago, you needed a good reason to get an absentee ballot. Now absentee voting, early voting at city hall, and same day registration are liberally encouraged. None of these gimmicks have dramatically boosted voter participation compared to the turnouts prior. We have yet to surpass the 83% turnout Minnesota had for the 1956 presidential election. The lowering of the voting age to 18 took effect in 1972, and same day registration in 1974.

Training and recruitment of election judges can also be improved. Perhaps we need to tap citizens on the shoulder like we appoint juries. It also wouldn't be a bad idea to shuffle them around so that they are not election judges in their home precinct for decades. Do the proponents of the "pollbook" idea, meant as an antidote to voter ID cards, really believe that election judges, some of whom have been around since Eisenhower, can handle such newfangled technology?

The Minnesota Voters Alliance recently filed a federal lawsuit that argues state officials are not following the state's Constitution. Article VII, Section I states that persons not eligible to vote should not be "entitled or permitted to vote at any election in the state". This language puts the onus on the state to *determine the eligibility* of voters *before* their ballot is counted.

Interested parties who wish to maintain the status quo claim that verifying eligibility before a same-day registrant's vote is counted, will contribute to higher election costs and a delay in reporting results. Oddly enough, the same claims can be made against these parties' pet project, Instant Runoff Voting (a/k/a Ranked Choice Voting).

Although it dominates today's news, Voter ID is only *one* chapter in the book of election reforms we need to discuss.

IT'S "SUNSHINE WEEK" — NO, IT'S NOT A CONTEST FOR A FREE TRIP TO FLORIDA

A non-profit organization dedicated to observing government transparency, Sunshine Review, recently handed out awards to 214 government entities in honor of the nationally-observed Sunshine Week (March 11-17).

Only two award recipients were located in Minnesota: Carver County and the Minneapolis Schools. The awards spotlight a high level of transparency found on government websites.

A 10-point checklist was used to gauge the comprehensiveness of the websites. Information about budgets, meetings, lobbying, audits, contracts, public records, academic performance and taxes were among the items that figured into grading the websites' content.

The highest concentration of awards were given to 28 government websites in Florida and 21 in Texas.

Civic groups and media have called attention to government transparency by observing Sunshine Week each March for a few years now.

This brings to mind how easy it is to provide the public the information that is theirs. Despite the technology we have at our fingertips today, many in government believe that public information should not be volunteered; the public can ask for it. Others take that a step further and make it a game of "keep away" — that's how they get their amusement. They sometimes take the game so far however, that only when threatened by state agency intervention, such as the Department of Administration's IPAD, do they relent.

For government management and low-level employees it seems that the simplest things are the most difficult.

Five year-olds can manage a computer better than their parents and grandparents. Many children even maintain web sites.

Efforts to get governments to post public information on their websites, such as meeting agendas and the background information packets for those meetings, often meet with the excuses, "I don't know how to do that", "we don't have enough staff" or "it would raise our website costs." The number of government employees who seem to not know how to make a PDF file is stunning.

Some local governments believe that posting documents on their websites is cost prohibitive. Their only source for this information however is their website provider, which uses its customers' lack of techno-knowledge to its advantage. The website provider can bill more for these "extras".

If a city manager would only ask his teenage son about the World Wide Web, more efficiencies and wise use of taxpayer money would result. Costs could be cut to pennies a day with savvy shopping.

SEND US YOUR LETTERS AND OPINION COLUMNS!

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REP. BRANDEN PETERSEN
(Dist. 49B) 651-296-5369



Mar. 2. Hello Neighbors, The Minnesota Management and Budget's February forecast, which was released this week, showed an increased budget surplus of \$323 million. This, in addition to the \$876 million surplus from November's forecast, adds up to a \$1.2 million projected increase for the current biennium.

Our great legislative initiatives from last session and better-than-expected economic growth have helped to turn a \$5.1 billion deficit to a \$1.2 billion surplus in one year's time. This is a remarkable turnaround! Had we followed the governor's advice and raised taxes by billions of dollars, this positive economic news would have been severely jeopardized.

While most of this surplus will be used to replenish state reserves, \$318 million will go to repaying school aid shifts. There is still work to be done to finish repaying the shift and get our budget back to balanced, but these forecasts clearly show that we are headed in the right direction.

In addition to the budget surplus, Minnesota's 5.7% unemployment rate is well below the 8.5% national average. This difference is greater than normal, signaling that our state's economy is in better shape than most. Minnesota's unemployment rate is also falling faster than the national average.

Now that we've seen the substantial benefits of last year's efforts, it is clear that responsible government reformation is the common sense solution for Minnesota's economic woes. This year we have already begun to build on last year's successes by introducing legislation that will improve the way Minnesota government programs are run. To learn more about these reforms or to track specific bills visit: <http://www.minnesotahousegop.com/reform2/>

Earlier this week, the companion to my "Last In, First Out" bill (HF1870) passed through the Senate. We will now have a conference committee to make sure the two bills match up and then will send it to Governor Dayton to get signed into law.

House File 1870 will allow school districts to consider licensure and teacher performance, along with seniority, when unfortunate teacher layoffs (ULA) are required. This initiative has already been passed in many other states and has earned support from parents and teachers across Minnesota. The Obama administration has recently even begun a push to tie teacher pay to performance instead of seniority.

I urge the governor to consider the detriment that the "Last In, First Out" policy is causing our children and support this bill. This law will protect students and teachers alike and it is what the people of Minnesota want for their children.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or want to share your thoughts on the legislative session.

REP. TOM HACKBARTH
(Dist. 48A) 651-296-2439



Mar. 9. Dear Neighbor,

Gov. Dayton recently vetoed another bipartisan bill. This time it was key self-defense firearms reform that would help Minnesotans better protect themselves.

Dayton keeps saying he wants bipartisan cooperation at the Capitol, but his actions tell a different story. He previously vetoed four lawsuit-abuse bills that had support from both sides of the aisle. Now the governor refused to enact legislation dealing with self defense and gun rights. It passed both chambers of the Minnesota legislature with broad bipartisan support.

This is yet another instance where he says one thing and does another.

This Castle Doctrine self-defense bill (H.F. 1467) Dayton vetoed would let law-abiding citizens defend their property and stand their ground. Some of the provisions include removing the duty to retreat for people who are having a crime committed against them, as well as preventing victims from facing a lawsuit from their attacker because they chose to defend their life. It also would prohibit gun confiscation during a declared emergency, and would have recognized the right-to-carry permits secured by law-abiding citizens in other states who happened to be traveling through Minnesota.

I am disappointed in Dayton for vetoing H.F. 1467. These are common-sense firearms reforms that would enhance self-defense laws for the law-abiding residents of our state. The right to self defense is fundamental to our state Constitution, not to mention the founding of our nation. Too bad we have a governor who must not agree.

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



Mar. 9. Hello Neighbors,

The March 16th first committee policy deadline for the House and Senate is fast approaching. Here's a quick update on some of the exciting things we are working on this week.

Met Council Recommendations

This week the Legislative Commission on Metropolitan Government has released their list of recommendations to the Metropolitan Council. This list comes after hearing public testimony from the Office of the Legislative Auditor, the Council itself, and city and county officials across the metropolitan area.

One of these testimonies included the example of Highway 10 in Anoka. Anoka County received a letter signed by a member of the Met Council staff informing them that Hwy 10 had been taken off the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) with no prior discussion or meetings on the issue. The TPP is a long-term commitment to road enhancement and suddenly removing a road from the plan is a *major* decision that should not be made by a member of the Met Council staff.

As the Chair of the Legislative Commission on Metropolitan Government and an author on several Met Council reform bills, I am committed to changing the way the metropolitan area is governed. The Met Council is an unelected body with no accountability to a voting public. These recommendations focus on bringing some accountability and transparency to a governing body that has grown in size and scope and is causing a great deal of frustration to local officials. The list includes a set of principles and reform ideas that I would like to see come to fruition:

Principles for Regional Governance:

- Realigning Metropolitan Council member terms to encourage continuity.
- Positioning city and county elected officials to self-determine development through Met Council advisory guidance and expertise to ensure accountability to the voting public.
- Stipulating more direct state legislative approval of the Met Council budgets to promote transparency.

Key Reforms for Accountable and Transparent Regional Governance:

1. Reorganize the Met Council so that the gubernatorial appointees have staggered terms.
2. Allow local governments the ability to accept or reject Met Council plans by positioning city and county elected officials to self-determine development through Met Council advisory guidance and expertise to
 - a) Ensure tax levy authority resides with elected officials, and
 - b) Make livable communities criteria and guidelines advisory.
3. Position Legislature for direct involvement in budget approval process.
4. Strengthen Regional Transportation Governance:
 - a) Transfer metropolitan transit governance, power and operations to the Regional Transportation Governance Board represented by elected officials,
 - b) Open options over a two-year time frame for replacement service/suburban transit providers,

- c) Require proportional distribution of Met Council transit reductions,
- d) Authorize local approval of light rail transit facilities, and
- e) Establish transition criteria for long-term funding of reorganized transit options.

Small Business Caucus

This week the House Small Business Caucus, which is a bi-partisan group made up of 42 representatives (including myself), held a press conference to discuss the bills we have in the works. I was absolutely shocked that not one member of the press showed up!

All the media seems to want to talk about is how Republicans and Democrats don't get along down here but then they don't even want to cover a bi-partisan committee of 42 members. Our list of pro-business reforms included Tax reformation, Finance and investment solutions, and regulatory changes to ease the permitting barriers for Minnesota small businesses. It amazes me that the state of the Minnesota business climate is something that would be completely ignored by members of the media.

K-12 Education Shift Payback Bill

With the MMB's February Forecast showing a \$1.2 billion budget surplus, this gives us a unique opportunity to start to pay back the K-12 education shift. With a bill announced this week, we plan on paying back all of last year's shift and starting payments on the debt left on schools by the previous Legislature.

With this bill, we would tap into the state's \$1 billion of cash reserves to pay back all of the \$430 million additional education shift passed as part of the budget agreement with Governor Dayton last year. We would also make the first ever repayment of the \$2 billion education shift Democrats passed when they controlled the Legislature. Think of this as your family taking money from your excess savings to pay off your loans.

This shift payback is a continuation of our focus on putting kids first. We are changing the state's priorities to say that repaying schools is more important than sitting on a large pile of cash. It also improves our overall fiscal position and credit.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or want to share your thoughts on the legislative session.

RAMSEY BUSINESS EXPO 2012
SAT. APRIL 28 — 9 AM-2 PM
Fountains of Ramsey Event Center
7533 Sunwood Dr NW
Free admission to the public
Exhibitors should contact Aaron Backman
763-433-9829 to reserve a table

Anoka County RECORD

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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

Thurs. Mar. 15
Community Corrections Advisory Bd — Noon, Rm 710, ACGC
Public Safety Cmte — 3 pm, Rm 1140, Anoka Co Public Safety Ctr, Andover

Mon. Mar. 19
Public Works Cmte — 9 am, Rm 772, ACGC
Library Board — 5:30 pm, Library offices next to Northtown Library

Tues. Mar. 20
Human Services Cmte — 8:30 am, Rm 710, ACGC
Information Technology Cmte — 10:30 am, Rm 772, ACGC
Finance & Capital Improvements Cmte — Rm 772, ACGC
Intergovernmental/Community Relations — 3 pm, Rm 772, ACGC

Tues. Mar. 27
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. Mar. 15 & Apr. 5
Parks Comm. — 7 pm

Tues. Mar. 20 & Apr. 3
City Council — 7 pm

Tues. Apr. 10
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Wed. Apr. 11
Open Space Advisory 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. Mar. 19
City Council “work session” — 5 pm
City Council — 7 pm

Tues. Mar. 20
Parks & Rec. Advisory Bd — 7 pm
Planning Comm. “work session” — 6 pm, City Hall Committee Rm

Wed. Mar. 21
Parking Advisory Bd — 7:15 am, Public Safety Ctr, 275 Harrison St

Tues. Apr. 3
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Thurs. Apr. 12
Economic Devlp. Comm. — 7:30 am

Mon. Apr. 9
Housing & Redevlp. Authority — 5 pm

Tues. Apr. 10
Heritage Preserv. Comm. — 5 pm

Bethel

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

Call City Hall for information

Blaine

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

Thurs. Mar. 15
City Council — 7:30 pm

Tues. Mar. 20
Natural Resource Conserv. Bd — 7 pm

Tues. Mar. 27
Park Board — 7 pm

Thurs. Apr. 5
City Council — 7:30 pm

Tues. Apr. 10
Blaine Historical Soc. — 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. Mar. 28 & Apr. 11
City Council — 6:30 pm

Tues. Apr. 3
Planning & Zoning Comm. — 6:30 pm

Wed. Apr. 4
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. Mar. 19 & Apr. 16
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Wed. Mar. 21 & Apr. 18
Utilities Comm. — 7 pm

Tues. Mar. 27 & Apr. 10
City Council — 7 pm

Tues. Apr. 3
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

Mon. Mar. 26 & Apr. 9
City Council — 7 pm

Wed. Mar. 28
Parks & Rec. — 5:30 pm, Murzyn Hall

Mon. Apr. 2
Traffic Comm. — 5:30 pm
Economic Devlpmt Authority — 6:30 pm
City Council “work session” — 7 pm

Tues. Apr. 3
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Wed. Apr. 4
Library Board — 6:30 pm, Library

Columbus

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

Thurs. Mar. 15
Park Board — 6:30 pm

Wed. Mar. 21 & Apr. 4
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Wed. Mar. 28
City Council — 7 pm

Wed. Apr. 11
EDAB — 5 pm
Economic Devlpmnt Authority — 6 pm
City Council — 7 pm

Coon Rapids

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

Thurs. Mar. 15
Planning Comm. — 6:30 pm
Historical Comm. — 7:30 pm

Tues. Mar. 20 & Apr. 3
City Council — 7 pm

Mon. Apr. 2
Park & Rec. Comm. — 6:30 pm

Thurs. Apr. 5
Bd of Adjustment & Appeals — 6:30 pm

Thurs. Apr. 12
Safety Comm. — 7:15 pm

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

East Bethel

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

Wed. Mar. 21 & Apr. 4
City Council — 7:30 pm

Tues. Mar. 27
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Wed. Mar. 28
Econ. Develop. Auth. — 6:30 pm

Tues. Apr. 10
Road Commission — 6:30 pm

Wed. Apr. 11
Park Commission — 7 pm

Spring Town Hall Meeting — Thurs. Apr. 26, 6 pm Open House; Q & A starts at 7 pm

Fridley

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

Wed. Mar. 21
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Mon. Mar. 26
City Council — 7 pm pre-agenda; 7:30 pm meeting

Mon. Apr. 2
Charter Comm. — 7 pm
Parks & Rec. Comm. — 7 pm

Thurs. Apr. 5
HRA — 7 pm

Mon. Apr. 9
City Council — 7 pm pre-agenda; 7:30 pm meeting

Mon. Apr. 16
City Council Conference Mtg. — 6 pm

Ham Lake

Ham Lake City Hall
15544 Central Ave NE
Ham Lake, MN 55304
Ph: 763-434-9555
www.ci.ham-lake.mn.us
Hours: M-Th 7 AM - 4:30 PM
Fri: 7 AM-12 NOON

Mon. Mar. 19 & Apr. 2
City Council — 6 pm

Wed. Mar. 21
Park & Tree Comm. — 6 pm

Mon. Mar. 26
Planning Comm. — 6 pm

Wed. Mar. 28
Charter 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. Mar. 15
City Council — 7 pm (workshop after the meeting)

Mon. Mar. 19
Fire Relief Mtg — 6:30 pm, Fire Hall

Mon. Apr. 2
Park Board — 6:30 pm

Thurs. Apr. 5
City Council — 7 pm

Wed. Apr. 11
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Lino Lakes

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

Mon. Mar. 26
City Council “work session” & mtg — 5:30 pm

Wed. Mar. 28
Environmental Board — 6:30 pm

Mon. Apr. 2
Park Board — 6:30 pm

Mon. Apr. 2
City Council “work session” — 5:30 pm

Thurs. Apr. 5
EDAC — 8 am

Mon. Apr. 9
Board of Appeals — 6 pm
City Council — 6:30 pm

Wed. Apr. 11
Planning & Zoning Bd — 6:30 pm

Mon. Apr. 23
City Council “work session” & mtg — 5:30 pm

Wed. Apr. 25
Environmental Bd — 6:30 pm

Linwood Township

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

Mon. Mar. 26
Fire Department — 7 pm

Tues. Apr. 3
Road & Bridge Cmte. — 7 pm

Wed. Apr. 4
Fire Department — 7 pm

Tues. Apr. 11 & 25
Town Board — 6 pm

Tues. Apr. 17
Planning & Zoning Comm. — 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

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. Mar. 20
Public Works Cmte — 5 pm
City Council “work session” (budget) — 7 pm

Tues. Mar. 27
City Council “work session” — 5:30 pm; meeting — 7 pm
HRA after meeting

Mon. Apr. 2
EPB — 6:30 pm

Tues. Apr. 3
City Council “work session” — 5:30 pm; City Council — 7 pm, followed by HRA mtg

Thurs. Apr. 5
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Mon. Apr. 9
Mayor’s Town Hall Mtg — 7 pm

More meeting listings on next page

SOUND OFF!

All letters, columns and announcements welcome!

E-mail them to:
editor@anokacountyrecord.com

NEXT ISSUE: MARCH 29
Deadline: March 24

Anoka County RECORD

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SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Anoka-Hennepin ISD #11

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

Mon. Mar. 26 & Apr. 30
School Board — 6:30 pm
Mon. Apr. 9 & May 7
School Board “work session” — 6 pm

Centennial ISD #12

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

Mon. Apr. 2 & May 7
School Board “work session” — 5:30 pm
Mon. Apr. 16 & May 14
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. Mar. 20 School Bd work session — 5:30 pm
Tues. Mar. 27 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 meeting: **Tues. 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. Mar. 27 — 6:30 pm “work session”
Tues. Apr. 10 — 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. Mar. 12 — 7 pm
Mon. Mar. 26 — 5:30 pm “work session”

916 Intermediate School District

2540 Cty Rd F, White Bear Lake
Board meetings at Bellaire School, District Office Board Room
Ph.: (651) 415-5562
nemetrol.k12.mn.us
Tues. Apr. 3 & May 1 — 6 pm

St. Francis

St. Francis City Hall
23340 Cree St. NW
St. Francis, MN 55070
Ph: 763-753-2630
stfrancismn.org

M-Th 7AM-5:30 PM (Closed Fri)
Meetings held at ISD #15 offices
4115 Ambassador Blvd NW

Sun. Mar. 18 City Council “Visioning Retreat-Work Session”, 23340 Cree St NW — 1 pm

City Council
1st & 3rd Mondays — 6 pm

Planning Comm.
3rd Wednesday — 7 pm

Spring Lake Park

Spring Lake Park City Hall
1301 81st Ave NE
Spring Lake Park, MN 55432
Ph: 763-784-6491
slpmn.org

Mon. Mar. 19 & Apr. 2
City Council — 7 pm

Mon. Mar. 26
Planning Comm. — 7 pm

Mon. Apr. 12
City Council “work session” — 7 pm

ANOKA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

Tues. Apr. 16 — 5 pm

Meetings listed on this page are subject to change — call ahead to verify

CITY OF ST. FRANCIS PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the St. Francis City Council will be conducting a **Public Hearing on March 19, 2012 at 6:00 pm** or shortly thereafter. The Public Hearing will be conducted at the Independent School District #15 Offices located at 4115 Ambassador Blvd. St. Francis, MN 55070.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to consider the proposed amendments to the current City Charter as follows: Section 7.16. Capital Improvement Program. The Council shall direct the preparation and submission to it of a recommended five year capital improvement program no later than June July first (1st) of each year. The capital improvement program shall include a list of all capital improvements proposed to be undertaken during the next five (5) fiscal years, with appropriate supporting information as to the necessity for such improvements; cost estimates, method of financing and recommended time schedules for each such improvement; and the estimated annual cost of operating and maintaining the facilities to be constructed or acquired. This information shall be revised and extended each year for capital improvements still pending or in process. The Council shall hold a Public Hearing on the capital improvement program and adopt it with or without amendment no later than August fifteenth. and;

Section 5.01. Amend the language as follows: Subdivision 2. Filing and Nomination. Not more than twelve (12) nor less than ten (10)

weeks before the date of the primary election, an individual who is eligible and desires to have his name placed on the official ballot as a candidate for an office to be voted for at the primary election or general election, depending upon the number of candidates that actually file for each office, shall file his affidavit of candidacy with the City Clerk. The City Clerk shall also accept an application signed by not less than five (5) voters and filed on behalf of an eligible person whom they desire to be a candidate, if service of a copy of the application has been made on the candidate and proof of service is endorsed on the application being filed. Upon receipt of a filing fee in the amount of five dollars (\$5.00) the City Clerk shall place the name of the candidate on the official ballot without partisan designation.

Subdivision 3. Notice. At least two (2) weeks before the first day to file affidavits or applications of candidacy, and at least two (2) weeks prior to each primary election, general election, and special election, the City Clerk shall publish and post in the Clerk's office a notice thereof.

Subdivision 7. Primary Elections. Primary elections shall be held on the same date as prescribed by the Minnesota Statutes, which establishes the statewide primary election date. The primary election shall be for the selection of two nominees for each elective

office at the regular municipal election, unless two nominees or fewer file for each elective office. In the event two nominees or fewer file for an elective office, the names of such nominees shall be placed on the municipal general election ballot as the nominee for that office and no primary election shall be held for such elective office.

All interested parties are encouraged to attend the Public Hearing. Verbal and written testimony regarding the request will be accepted during the Hearing. A copy of the proposed amendments to the City Charter may be obtained by contacting the City of St. Francis, 23340 Cree St. NW 55070 or by calling 763-753-2630.

Barbara I. Held
City Clerk

CITY OF ANOKA SALARY NOTICE

Chapter 156 of the Session Laws of 2005 – 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 Anoka, titles and salaries as of January 2012 are: City Manager - \$122,824.00, Public Services Director - \$107,140.00, Finance Director, Electric Utility Director, & Police Chief - \$102,918.00. Date of Publication: February 2012.

Free Admission

14th Annual North Suburban Home Improvement Show

Date: Saturday, March 24, 2012
Time: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
Place: Andover YMCA Community Center
15200 Hanson Blvd. NW
Andover, MN 55304

100+ Exhibitors and City Representatives

Forestry/DNR & Master Gardener Demonstrations

Prize Drawings

Cub Scout Pack 609
Accepting Food Shelf Donations for the ACBC Food Shelf

The North Suburban Home Improvement Show is sponsored by the cities of Andover, Anoka, Coon Rapids and Ramsey and the Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce.

The Minnesota Watchdog

Keeping government accountable to the citizens it was created to serve

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