

The “Odd-Year” Election: Low voter turnouts, new faces, new spending approved

Five school districts and two cities in Anoka County held their elections on Tuesday, in the odd year, and the turnouts were very low. Not a single race cracked the 20% mark for voter turnout.

The council race in **Circle Pines** had the largest of these turnouts, at 19%. Mayor Dave Bartholomay ran unopposed and two city council incumbents regained their seats, Deborah O’Brien and Richard Runbeck, who were first elected to the council in 2005 and 2009, respectively. O’Brien was the top vote-getter with 380 votes; Runbeck had 323. Challenger Richard Whitney had 298 and was only 2 votes away from being the top vote-getter in the city’s precinct #1. Former mayor Keith Perlich had 148 votes. There were 13 new registrations and 658 total votes cast.



It was a similar race in **Lino Lakes** as mayor Jeff Reinert also ran unopposed for a third term. Two council seats were on the ballot. Incumbent Rob Rafferty won a second term with his first place finish of 866 votes. The second seat was an open seat and the results were a nail-biting 2-vote win for William Kusterman who had 785 votes over Melissa Maher’s 783. Whether there will be any efforts to conduct a recount was not known at press time. Byron J. Roland had 238 votes, and there were 28 write-ins. For the mayor’s seat, there were 123 write-ins. The voter turnout was 13% (1,575 voters) and there were 47 new registrations.

Coon Rapids officials asked voters this question: “APPROVAL OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND TRAIL SYSTEMS BOND ISSUE. Shall the City Council of the City of Coon Rapids be authorized to borrow money and issue general obligation bonds, in one or more series, in the amount not to exceed \$17,400,000 for the purpose of renovation, acquisition, betterment and improvements of parks, open space and trail system infrastructure in the City. BY VOTING “YES” ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION, YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.

The parks improvement spending was narrowly approved — 2,637 for and 2,490 against. Eight out of the city’s 22 precincts voted against the bond issue but only by handfuls of votes in each. Coon Rapids voters are used to voting in the even year for city offices, so there were only two items on their ballots. The other was an Anoka-Hennepin school board contest. In part of the city, the District 6 seat held by Jeff Simon was on the ballot but unopposed, and the remainder of the city’s voters found the Baltich-Harvey school board race on their ballot.

ELECTION RESULTS *continued on page 6*

ANOKA COUNTY LIBRARIES TO LAUNCH IPAD PROGRAM

by Bryan Olson — Special to the *Anoka County Record*

The Anoka County Library Board took about two and a half hours to conduct the business of its Oct. 21 meeting.

At the forefront of the agenda was the implementation of a program being funded by LSTA federal grant funding — the same source that helped fund the kiosk-locker library services installed a few months ago in Ramsey and Andover.

32 Apple iPads have been purchased for \$525 each, including a \$175 cost for custom cases for each unit. The cases, with a USB power port, are made by Tech Logic of White Bear Lake, which manufactures and sells various computer technologies for library systems. The cases are expected to help the iPads withstand rough handling.

Half of the iPad supply will be made available for check-out at the Ramsey Municipal Center’s “Library-On-the-Go” vending machine. Access is available when the building is open for business (Monday through Friday, 7 am to 5 pm).

The other 16 iPad units will be available for use at the Mississippi Branch Library in Fridley, but cannot be checked out. Library Director Marlene Moulton Janssen explained that the branch lacks the wiring capabilities and space to add more computers and so the iPads are seen as a stopgap to provide patrons more computers. Library staff believe the iPads will be used mostly for internet access at the Fridley branch, however the iPads can be used for reading electronic books.

IPADS IN THE LIBRARIES *continued on page 3*

Anoka County
RECORD

Previous Coverage
Sept. 26, 2013
July 4, 2013

PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION ESTABLISHED BY ORDINANCE IN COLUMBIA HEIGHTS

The Columbia Heights City Council at its Oct. 28 televised meeting passed Ordinance 1613, establishing a Public Arts Commission (PAC). No citizen has spoken against the city having such a commission at any televised council meeting, but there have been a few to speak for the idea.

Another in this vein was Ed Greacen, a 2-year resident of Columbia Heights who said he had previously been a 20-year resident of New Brighton and was on its Parks Commission. Greacen gave praise to Fridley’s Banfill-Locke Arts Center, where he is involved in a writers’ group. He said that one of the first things the Columbia Heights Public Arts Commission will be asking for is a home — and that the city council ought to be thinking about finding them a location now.

City Councilor Bruce Nawrocki then commented, “I would speak against creating the commission as a part of the City . . . it’ll just be a matter of time before we’ll be asked to participate financially.” Nawrocki went on to say that he felt the commission should be a private organization; its members would have the ability to make their own decisions and raise private funding.

Columbia Heights’ council meetings, as officiated by its mayor Gary Peterson, are run in an unusual manner, where comments from the peanut gallery are seemingly allowed at any time, and in fact members of the audience are often invited to make two or three appearances at the speakers’ podium — that is, when they have something to say that the council majority wants to hear.

So Mr. Greacen was invited back to the podium to take some shots at Nawrocki. Greacen made his points that government should play a role in the arts, was fully supportive of the city’s initiative, and thought it would provide “opportunity” to residents for social interaction. “Someday we’ll catch up with Fridley,” he said

Nawrocki repeated his past comments about the financial health of the majority of the city’s residents, while Peterson claimed that the arts and music “are virtually free” in cost and that “we shouldn’t starve our residents from the finer things in life just because they have lower per capita incomes.” Peterson then condensed some of his past speeches about the virtues of the arts and the economic activity that will be harvested from same. Peterson described Nawrocki as a person who is “looking at it from the wrong end.” Gushing with enthusiasm, councilor Donna Schmitt rattled off a sing-song list of some of the city’s recent arts events and accomplishments and said the goal of the commission is to “get community members working together and to celebrate our community.”

Nawrocki made more comments about city hall’s spending habits. Peterson was firm: “I see no connection between the arts commission and the city spending money.”

The roll call vote was a predictable 4-1 with Nawrocki against establishing the commission.

How the commission would be run was not discussed at the meeting. Would the open meeting laws be followed or will the commission be as loosely run as the Library Task Force was? Will the meeting packets be posted on the city web site? Would the new commission be meeting in a public building and open to the public? Would all meetings be properly noticed per state law? If the Arts Commission’s meeting packets are not made available on the internet (as the Library Task Force packets were not), where will those materials be kept and available for public inspection? Also left unsaid were the number of commission seats to be established and their term lengths. The ordinance language on these points was broad, not specific. Nawrocki asked about the advertising for commission applicants and wanted some assurance that newspapers would be informed. The councilman’s query was made in reference to his past charges that the application process for the Library Task Force was improperly handled in early 2012.

The 10-year bond issue discussed at the previous meeting — \$2,775,000 of General Obligation Improvement and Utility Revenue Bonds — was passed unanimously. United Bankers’ Bank of Bloomington was the low bidder, offering an interest rate of 1.85%, which tickled the council to no end. City Manager Walter Fehst praised Finance Director Joseph Kloiber for “being on the phone with Chicago for an hour and a half” to achieve such a feat. The city’s Standard & Poor’s rating is currently AA. There were seven bidders for the bonds, the highest of which had a 2.175% interest rate.

“The City Manager’s Report” is a regular agenda item that often becomes a jousting match between Fehst and Nawrocki, since he is the only council member asking questions of him. The rest of the council members sit back and enjoy the show.

This time around Nawrocki brought up an old chestnut — the city newsletter and its lack of information for the public about the next year’s budget. Fehst and Nawrocki traded barbs as the councilman contended that Fehst’s claim that all properties in the city would see a reduction in taxes, was hard to believe since the council is proposing a maximum levy increase of 3.7%.

Fehst retorted, “As you know, and it was explained to you over countless

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS COUNCIL ACTION *continued on page 3*

Observations from the Field Bryan Olson



Rep. Runbeck: Few Will Escape Dayton's New Taxes

So "taxing the rich" is another broken DFL promise. Tax increases coming in 2014 from Gov Dayton and the DFL-led legislature show most Minnesotans will feel the hit. The latest revelation? Over \$300 million in new taxes because the DFL rejected conformity with federal tax changes! Here are the tax deductions which will disappear:

- **Marriage Penalty:** An estimated 650,000 Minnesota couples filing jointly will pay an average \$120 more per year.
- **Foreclosure Tax:** Federally, you are not taxed on the principle sale amount of a home in foreclosure, but a MN taxpayer who had this type of debt forgiven now will pay on the full amount.
- **Homeowner Tax:** The cost of home mortgage insurance premiums is deductible on federal tax returns, but is no longer deductible on the state tax return.
- **Employer-provided benefits lose deduction:** Popular employer benefits losing their deductibility are the adoption assistance tax credit (you could exclude up to \$12,970 in employer-provided benefits). Now, there will be no state credit for adoption. Also, employer-provided transit or parking benefits will lose deductibility as will education assistance benefits.
- **Child care tax:** Families who deduct the federally-approved amounts for child care (\$3000 for one child and \$6000 for two or more) on their federal return will only be able to deduct \$2400 and \$4800 respectively on their state return.
- **Tuition Taxes:** Those who claim an above-the-line deduction for tuition and fees on federal forms will need to add that amount back onto their income on state filings.
- **Education Savings Tax:** Particularly bad faith on the part of the DFL - folks who'd set up a Coverdell Education Savings Account could deduct distributions from the account. Now, Minnesota taxpayers must add these distributions to the income if used for K-12 education expenses!
- **Student Loan Tax:** Minnesota taxpayers will not be able to deduct this interest when it's paid either voluntarily or after the first 60 months that interest payments are required on the loan.
- **Teacher Expense Tax:** Teachers can no longer deduct the first \$250 in out-of-pocket expenses for classroom supplies.
- **Scholarship Tax:** Awards from a number of national scholarship and financial assistance programs - including some for military veterans - must be included as income on state forms.



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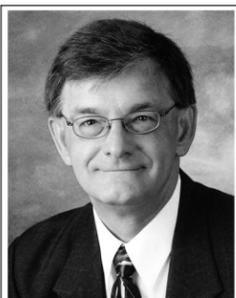
MNSURE ROLL-OUT

The StarTribune and Fox 9 both reported last week that 140,000 Minnesotans will lose their current health plans as a result of ObamaCare. If you have a personal experience with ObamaCare's Minnesota version, please contact me — also don't hesitate to contact Gov. Dayton's office - 651-201-3400.

Rep. Hackbarth: Coal-Fired Energy

I attended a groundbreaking last week that will implement new technology in coal-fired energy. That project will create hundreds of jobs in Minnesota, protect our environment and ensure competitively priced energy for decades.

The event was hosted by Minnesota Power at the Boswell 4 coal-burning power plant in Cohasset, just west of Grand Rapids. Legislation I authored and led to passage in Minnesota several years ago spurred the technological advancements at Boswell. It was a bill called the Minnesota Mercury Reduction Act and it allows our coal plants to continue operating by upgrading their operations to clean up emissions.



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There was strong concern that if we did not pass legislation like the MMRA, environmentalists would have created regulations so stringent that places like Boswell would have been put out of business. This retrofit will allow Boswell to comply with current state and federal mercury regulations, using modern technology to help protect our environment.

The Boswell project will cost around \$430 million and provide jobs for an estimated 500 construction workers over the next few years. The modernization follows a similar \$240 million project at the adjacent Boswell 3 coal burner, which was completed in 2010. Compared with 2005 levels, the work will eliminate around 90 percent of the mercury released into the air when coal is burned, while also reducing sulfur and other emissions by more than 70 percent.

Officials say this latest advancement will make Boswell — Minnesota Power's largest coal-fired unit and largest electric generating station — one of the nation's cleanest operations.

Will Elected Officials "Think Big Picture" About 2014 Legal Notices?

In January, most county, city, and school elected officials have to go through the annual process of selecting a newspaper to publish their legal notices. That means NOW is the time to have the public discussion about the cost and purpose of publishing legal notices, and how a majority of citizens actually receive this information in today's technological age. Or in other words, "Think Big Picture."

Every year, we hear elected officials complain about the cost of publication, but then turn around and refuse to look at alternatives. In January 2013, over 20 cities and school districts in Anoka County actually selected the more expensive option available to them for publishing legal notices. In these communities, subsidies to corporate owned newspapers in the form of overpriced legal notices won out over new playground or band equipment.

The most popular excuse given for choosing the more expensive newspaper for publication was that it had better print circulation in their area. They completely ignored the question of whether anyone was actually reading them. It isn't like the answer is hard to come by. Several local governments in Anoka County have hired companies like Decision Resources to ask these questions. In survey after survey, the answers have been the same. The answers should surprise no one.

The surveys have concluded that the overwhelming majority of us receive an overwhelming majority of our local government information online and through local government newsletters. Printed newspapers are a distant third on the list at best. What residents want to know is how they can get this information via text alert, tweet, email, or Facebook message? They are not clamoring for more newspapers to be thrown onto their front yards.

Another excuse we heard was that they had to support the hometown newspaper that has been in their community for a century. What they apparently are unaware of is that the family ownership ended decades ago. Most of Anoka County has been taken over by big mega-newspaper conglomerates who have actively worked to buy out competitors and eliminate price competition. And when a new newspaper comes to town like the *Anoka County Record*, these conglomerates threaten the new newspaper's clients and attempt to use the courts to litigate them to death, ensuring that the monopoly continues.

So why is it that elected officials are all worked up about how many newspapers are printed on paper or where they are distributed? Why do they choose to pay more for publishing legal notices, when they could take the savings and add an additional newsletter or two? Why do they want to essentially provide a massive taxpayer subsidy through the overpayment of legal notices to big mega-newspaper conglomerates that eliminate competition and drive up rates? Good question. Certainly seems counterproductive.

Ramsey County has been "Thinking Big Picture" about legal notices for years. They recognize that the majority of their citizens receive county information from their website and newsletters. They could have chosen to pay the big money to publish their legal notices in the big newspaper that prints tens of thousands of copies a day. Instead, they chose to publish in a paper that prints around 600 copies a week, in a county of over 500,000 residents. Instead of paying the near \$10 a column inch that Anoka County was paying last year, Ramsey County paid under \$2 a column inch. You can argue that the savings went into a better website, newsletter, and forms of communications that residents want to use.

Elected officials throughout Anoka County will have a higher cost and a lower cost option for publishing legal notices in 2014. Votes will occur in January, and excuses will follow soon afterward.

Anoka County Tree Sale — Now taking pre-orders

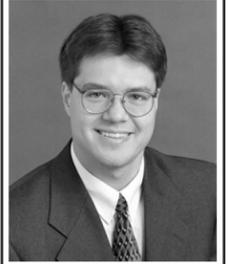
The Anoka Conservation District is now accepting pre-orders for the annual tree and shrub sale. The District offers a wide variety of native stock, including black cherry trees, mixed oak trees, red maple trees, and white pine trees. The trees and shrubs are sold in bare root seedlings or transplants and are approximately 12" to 24" in height. They may be purchased in bundles of ten for \$17, or twenty-five for \$30. Native prairie seed and tree aides are also available.

If you are interested, go online and check out the Anoka Conservation District website at www.AnokaSWCD.org. Once there, you can go to the tree sale products section of the website and click on the species title which contains links to detailed descriptions and photographs of each of the varieties being offered. The website also contains information about the kinds of trees and shrubs to plant in your particular situation along with planting directions. If you would prefer you may talk directly to Anoka Conservation District staff by calling 763-434-2030.

RAMSEY CITY COUNCIL TENTATIVE FUTURE TOPICS

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>November 12, 2013
Finance/Review of 2014 General Fund Budget & 5 Year Budget
Personnel – Fire Marshal Replacement
Personnel – Authorization to Hire Economic Development Manager
Personnel – Adopt Resolution to End a Patrol Officer's Probation (S Schlender)
CCWS/Newsletter Advertising Contract
CC - Real Estate Broker Services
CC – Authorization to Hire Economic Development Manager
CC – Fire Marshal Replacement
HRA – Real Estate Broker Services</p> <p>November 19, 2013
Joint Meeting – City Council –</p> | <p>Charter – Tentative
No Public Works Committee - Tentative</p> <p>November 26, 2013
Personnel/Part-Time IT Tech
Personnel/Job Reclassifications
CCReg/Adopt Resolution to End a Patrol Officer's Probation (S Schlender)</p> <p>No tentative date assigned
CCWS/Code Enforcement
CCWS/Happy Days Update – Meghan Mathson
Engineering and Final Design Services – Mississippi Skyway
CCReg/Adopt Resolution to Join Mayors along the Mississippi River
CCReg/Approve Request for Pro-</p> | <p>posals for Permitting, Geotechnical CCWS/Discuss Authority/Duties of City Administrator
CCWS/Presentation by Ed Reynoso
CCWS/Discuss Building Design
CCWS/Proposal from North Fork Inc. to Convey Certain Parcels Adjacent to Lake Itasca to the City for Park Purposes
CCWS/Finalize Discussion re Conflict of Interest
CCWS/Highway 10 Commercial Signage Standards
HRAReg/Review Draft of Housing Assistance Policy
HRAReg/Consider Policy on Community Sign Tenant Panels
Personnel/Update the Personnel Policy</p> |
|--|--|--|

Publisher's Column



John Kysylyczyn

iPADS IN THE LIBRARIES *continued from page 1*

There was much discussion and skepticism over making such an expensive item available for a one-week check-out (and the units have to be returned to the same location from whence they came).

The Library Board and library staff expressed disappointment that Tech Logic's planned program that would allow the checkout of iPads by using a credit card is still not available. A lien for the value of the iPad could have been placed against the user's credit card account. This technology however may become available in the coming year, staff said.

A large part of the meeting was devoted to talking over the possible theft problems and all agreed that this was their major source of trepidation — yet for all the unfavorable discussion regarding the iPad program, the Library Board voted unanimously to approve its implementation, which may occur by the end of this month.

The Library Board's approval was contingent upon the program being discontinued after two iPads go missing. The motion was made by Board Chair Robert Thistle. All Library Board members were in attendance except Cathy Montain of Ham Lake.

Director Janssen said the Anoka County library system will be the first in the state to start an iPad program. Only one other library system in the country, in suburban Cleveland, has begun the federally-funded program. She also said, as an aside, that the documentation and audit reports required by the federal government for grants made of \$50,000 or more are voluminous (the grant for the "On-the-Go" locations was \$117,000). She said she would have reservations about applying for such a grant again because of the staff work involved.

To gain the approval of the Library Board, Janssen promised to prepare monthly reports on the iPad program's progress. She also said that the use of federal tax dollars for this program allows the library system to experiment with ideas that may or may not work, and budgeted monies from the county did not have to be used.

Another item on the agenda was an update to the Northtown Library remodeling project, which was approved unanimously by the Anoka County Board at its Oct. 8 meeting.

Of the 12,000 square feet left unused on the second floor of the library building, it's now been estimated that only 2,900 square feet is usable. As said at the Oct. 8 County Board meeting, officials have the opinion that the expense of making any portion of the second floor usable and code-compliant would be far more than the value of the space. The restrooms on the first floor however will be situated so that a use for the second floor could still be conceivable in the future. Using the second floor however would have necessitated widening the existing elevator shaft and installing a much larger elevator, now required by the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act).

Library Director Janssen said she submitted a grant request to the state for \$395,000, which was due Oct. 17. She said the state's grant pool now being offered for library construction projects is only \$600,000, not the \$1.6 million as previously thought. Janssen said that over \$1 million of grant requests have been made by Minnesota libraries and that the competition for the \$600,000 will be keen. She expects to know whether the Northtown request has been granted or not by the end of November. About one-third of the request would be used for handicapped-access aspects of the project. For the purposes of making the grant application, the project cost was given as \$1,031,800, and many of the "wish list" items were included in that figure. Janssen's projected timeline would be a 10-week construction schedule to start March 1, allowing for a mid-May opening.

The project's architects, MS&R, requested and were granted another \$12,000 on top of their \$65,000 contract for additional design work on the restrooms. The Library Board also discussed again the possibility of adding a coffee shop that would be on the frontage road side of the building. Board chair Robert Thistle said he feels that the costs of such an addition should be borne by the coffee shop operator. At this point the coffee shop is being thought of as an addition to the project and that a separate contract could be given to MS&R for design services which may cost \$15,000 to \$18,000. Janssen said that letters of interest from potential coffee shop operators would be sought before any plans for an addition would be made.

A detailed report was handed out at the meeting, which provided statistics as to the popularity of the "On-the-Go" kiosks and lockers. The Andover location has been a resounding success but the response at Ramsey has been tepid. The statistics included only the program's first four full months of operation, June through September.

A joint meeting between the Library Board and the Anoka County Board of Commissioners has been scheduled for Nov. 18 at 5:30 p.m. in the Northtown Library's meeting room.

Blaine Resident Elected to National Office

On Saturday, October 26, Blaine resident Chris Tiedeman was elected by the Republican Party of Minnesota State Central Committee to represent Minnesota on the Republican National Committee as the National Committeeman. Tiedeman begins his new job immediately and will fill the remainder of Jeff Johnson's term on the committee after Johnson stepped down to run for governor.

"I am pleased to welcome Chris' energy and ideas to the Republican National Committee," said Keith Downey, Chairman of the Republican Party of Minnesota. "He has earned the respect of Republicans across the state because he has worked with us in the trenches as a party leader, consultant, and candidate."

Chris Tiedeman is a longtime Republican activist and campaign strategist. He got his start in politics at St Olaf College as State Chairman of the Minnesota College Republicans and Treasurer of the College Republican National Committee. In 2000 he was a candidate for the Minnesota State House of Representatives. He is a Principle and part owner of Weber Johnson Public Affairs, a Public Affairs and Political Consulting firm located in St Paul where he focuses on grassroots and strategic consulting. Chris serves on the Board of Directors of the Minnesota Adoption Resource Network, a non-profit focused on advocating for kids stuck in the system looking for forever families.



Tiedeman

"I am excited to get going in this new role with the MNGOP to keep growing the party and help communicate a compelling message of conservative solutions and ideas," said Tiedeman regarding his election.

In describing the state of affairs in Minnesota, Tiedeman stated, "The DFL monopoly in St. Paul has made Minnesota uncompetitive with higher taxes and out of control wasteful spending. I'm looking forward to working with Republicans across the state and country to bring back growth and opportunity policies for working families."

Approximately 400 voting members were in attendance at the convention which also conducted a straw poll for Governor. The results of the straw poll for Governor were 35% for Hennepin County Commissioner Jeff Johnson, 27% for State Senator Dave Thompson, 18% for former House Minority Leader Marty Seifert, 8% for State Representative Kurt Zellers, 6% for Hibbing school teacher Rob Farnsworth, and 4% for businessman Scott Honour.



Remembering The King is a family-run organization featuring Steve and Tommy Marcio, award-winning Elvis tribute artists that have performed in such places as Branson, MO and Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines. Steve and Tommy will take you through the many different eras of Elvis Presley's career!

LINWOOD COMMUNITY CENTER

proudly presents

Remembering The King

Veterans' Day Tribute Show

November 11 2 PM

\$10 admission at the door

Snacks and beverages will be served

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS COUNCIL ACTION *continued from page 1*

hours to get you to understand the information from our finance director, we have a surplus of Fiscal Disparities coming in which will offset our budget to the point where the average decrease for every household in town will be six and a half percent — that's a fact, everyone will be paying less."

Nawrocki received no answer when he asked what the lowest amount of decrease was and the highest amount of decrease, rather than the average.

One of Nawrocki's regular complaints is about the city newsletter and its lack of hard information content. At this meeting, he said the newsletter used to be a document of the City Council, communicating to the residents. Now, he says, it's been taken over by staff. (Take a look at a cross section of city newsletters and you will find very few that even mention the City Council.) On past occasions, Nawrocki has said the council once had input into the newsletter's content, but for a number of years now, the council doesn't see the newsletter until it hits the streets. No other councilors seem to be concerned about this.

Fehst made an announcement that Scott Clark, the city's Community Development Director, would be retiring in April.

Nawrocki asked about the county's broadband internet project that was recently completed — is the city using it and has there been any cost savings? Fehst said city buildings were still using Comcast for internet service although the city paid for "hook-ups" installed by the county project, which he described as a "back-up."

Fridley resident Nile Harper, a member of the Columbia Heights Library Task Force, asked hard and determined questions of the council during Public Comment. They couldn't be answered frankly due to state statutes effectively putting a gag order on the content of conversations government may have regarding the sale or acquisition of property.

He wanted to know if the council majority still has "an ongoing commitment" to "vigorously pursue" the acquisition of the bank building property at 40th and Central for a new library.



Large piles of dirt are to be used to fill in the hole once the former Mady's bowling alley building is demolished. That work was expected to have been completed by early November. This photo was taken Nov. 1. As of press time, the project had not progressed. (ACR photo)

SNAP MATH

SNAP, the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, is the latest catchy name for food stamps.

The Star Tribune, in a surprise to no one, this week ran an article vilifying Republicans, who want to pare back the explosive growth of this welfare program.

You know, because we're \$17 trillion in debt and really don't have the cash to finance the massive expansion of yet another entitlement program.

This week, the Star Tribune headline blared, "Food stamp demand rises in Minnesota as budget shrinks."

The article then went on to crucify Republicans for wanting kids and the elderly to starve by "cutting" a program that provides a mere \$1.29 per meal in assistance.

Here's what the legacy media don't want you to know about SNAP and it's explosive growth.

In inflation adjusted dollars, the SNAP program doubled under President George W. Bush from \$20 billion to \$40 billion.

Under President Obama, that figure has gone from \$40 billion to \$78 billion. In other words, the program has nearly quadrupled in the past 13 years, just like most federal spending programs.

These numbers were left out of the Star Tribune story and are obviously relevant in helping readers form an opinion.

Democrats are willing to cut \$4 billion from the program while Republicans want in the neighborhood of \$20 billion.

Moving to the GOP number would still leave the program nearly three times as large as when Bush took office.

This is typical of the Democrats in pillorying "cuts" when the real issue is merely paring back a fraction of the growth.

What Republicans are really talking about is leaving the program \$18 billion larger than when Obama took office.

The number isn't so unreasonable in that light, is it?

THE BUSINESS CLIMATE IS BAD

It's always a bit amusing to hear a variety of people spout off regarding the state of jobs and the economy, when the real barometer of economic health is those who create the jobs.

So what are they saying about the economy and the business climate here in Minnesota?

Glad you asked, because the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce a couple of weeks ago released their business climate survey, and the news isn't real good.

In fact, the survey respondents' attitude towards the state's business climate registered a record low.

In a typical survey, somewhere between 45 and 55% say that the state has a good business climate while 10% say it's bad.

This year, only 37% stated that there is a good business climate while a record 26% said the business climate was bad.

The results are really no surprise, given that Governor Dayton-Boomhower and his DFL cronies absolutely pummeled job creators this past legislative session with a raft of tax increases, including a new top marginal income tax rate that directly hits those businesses that are "pass through" and file their taxes as individuals.

In fact, 55% of respondents said the new income tax will negatively impact their ability to add jobs.

This number absolutely confounded the Boomhower administration, which double checked their figures and confirmed that they think "only" 6% of job creators will be sacrificed on the altar of more government.

Still no word on whether the governor actually knew he signed an income tax increase into law.

Did you ever think, governor, that businesses project into the future? Every smart business owner understands that anticipating the future is a key to success. No job creator was ever successful by being reactive.

The 55% number reflects job creators looking into the future, including the optimism that defines job creators, with them thinking that in the near future, perhaps they will be in that top income tax bracket. It's that kind of ambition and self-assurance that one needs to be an entrepreneur.

In another blow for the Party of Big Government, 25% said a lack of trained workers was a major obstacle to job creation.

Paging Education Minnesota and our public schools.

When you have a school system run by the teachers' union for the benefit of the teachers' union, it's no surprise that the system is unresponsive, slow, and lacking in results.

Look up "monopoly" in the dictionary.

Finally, only 67% of respondents thought Governor Boomhower and the legislature were clueless regarding how to run a business.

So who are the 33% who think the governor knows a damn thing about running a business?

Well, more than 33% of businesses fail within the first five years. Now we know why.

If you believe the governor knows how to run a business, you probably also can't read a balance sheet or construct a cash flow analysis.

The bottom line is that business owners are like the animals in the forest. They can sense the coming storm long before others.

These folks aren't necessarily concerned about the business climate at this moment.

They can see the havoc that will be visited upon tomorrow's economy by today's political actions.

And the liberals won't care because they have never cared about or understood basic economics.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT



Court of Appeals to decide whether school districts are 'promoting' levies or 'informing' voters

By Tom Steward | Watchdog Minnesota Bureau

ST. PAUL — A citizen watchdog group hopes a challenge to a 2011 referendum will redefine how far school boards can go in supporting levies posed to voters through ballot referenda.

The Minnesota Court of Appeals heard arguments on the case October 25.

"This could impact every school district in Minnesota," said Andy Cilek, executive director of the group, Minnesota Voters Alliance. "We think the court's going to have to draw a line between what's informational and what's promotional. And if the court doesn't, then all these other people trying to fight referendums in Minnesota have nowhere to go. There's no guidelines."

It's the first high-stakes challenge under a 2012 Minnesota Supreme Court ruling that committees spending more than \$750 to promote a ballot initiative must follow state campaign finance reporting rules. That includes school districts.

The case involves a complaint by the Minnesota Voters Alliance over a 2011 campaign by Minnesota's largest school district, Anoka-Hennepin, in which residents approved two of three levy questions raising \$500 million over 10 years.

The controversy largely focuses on the contents and timing of a district-produced "informational" Stable Schools brochure sent to 83,000 residents outlining the potential impact of the proposed levies.

"The brochure encouraged residents to vote, but did not urge voters to vote 'yes' or otherwise support the levy referenda," according to court papers filed by the school district.

The flier presented various scenarios for each proposed levy: If Question 1 passes? Count on reasonable class sizes, specialist teachers, academic support programs, rigorous courses, full array of athletics, speech, debate and marching band, according to the four-page pamphlet.

If Question 1 does not pass? Get ready for high school class sizes in the 50s, 550 fewer teachers, 137 fewer principals, administrators and custodians, closing five schools, significant reduction of academic support programs and elimination of many high school athletics and/or dramatic increase in fees.

The Minnesota Voters Alliance complaint alleges A-H officials crossed the legal line from informational to promotional campaign material "intended to influence voting on the ballot question during an election."

MVA also alleges the mailer — it holds this disclaimer: "This brochure is not circulated on behalf of any candidate or ballot question" — contained factual inaccuracies on the level of state financial support for districts.

"Most people expect it to be neutral, when actually it's not," said Don Huizenga, a taxpayer in the A-H school district and party to the lawsuit. "And they're paying for it with dollars that come out of the general fund. There's no real accountability for it. Yet I don't think it's ever really been challenged to any extent."

MVA claims the school district was required to file a state campaign finance report for groups that spend more than \$750 for advocacy electoral efforts. Anoka-Hennepin spent about \$60,000 creating and disseminating the brochure, a required legal notice, "informational" videos and numerous fliers, including one addressing rumors and another translated into four languages.

A-H officials dismiss and flatly deny all of the citizen group's allegations. "The governing statute did not require the District to report the printing and mailing expenses because the brochure was informational, not promotional," said Mary Olson, A-H director of communications and public relations, in an email.

While acknowledging A-H had "an interest in the passage of the ballot questions," court documents state "in order for voters to make informed decisions and give school districts clear direction, a school district must tell voters about the consequences of approving or rejecting a levy question on taxes, school services, and programs."

"The District presents a realistic, factual picture of the consequences of voting 'no' on one of the 2011 Levy Questions. The factual consequences of voting 'yes' on that question are also presented in the Stable Schools brochure. The brochure does not urge the reader to vote 'yes'."

But it may be too late.

The school district claims the complaint was filed a few days after the one-year statute of limitations on such cases, though MVA disputes it. Despite finding merit in some of the citizen group's claims, an administrative law judge dismissed the complaint earlier this year on statute of limitations grounds, triggering an appeal and the Oct. 25 hearing.

"We feel our case is very strong for holding the school board accountable and requiring them to publicly disclose their self-serving expenditures," said Cilek in a news release. "Such a decision would mark the end of school boards' successful stonewalling of all other attempts to increase their transparency."

Contact Tom Steward at tsteward@watchdog.org



Huizenga

Coon Creek Watershed District selected as County's Outstanding Conservationist of the Year

The Anoka Conservation District selected the Coon Creek Watershed District as the 2013 Anoka County Outstanding Conservationist and they will be honored at the annual convention of the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) in Bloomington on December 3rd with CCWD District Manager Tim Kelly and CCWD President Byron Westlund attending on behalf of the Organization. The Coon Creek Watershed District has simultaneously taken the lead in a watershed restoration and protection project, completed multiple stormwater retrofit assessments and installed large numbers of practices. Their recent and ongoing work has included five stormwater retrofit



Anoka Conservation District Vice Chair, Jim Lindahl, presents an award certificate to Coon Creek Board President Byron Westlund, at the Coon Creek Watershed District Board Meeting Oct. 14.

assessments, two stormwater pond modifications, one new stormwater pond and over twenty rain gardens.

MASWCD sponsors the Outstanding Conservationist Award, with support from The Farmer magazine.

For more information on the program, contact Chris Lord (chris.lord@anokaswcd.org) at the Anoka Conservation District, phone 763-434-2030.

BUNKER LAKE BLVD RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING
Tuesday, NOV. 12
4:30-6:30 PM
 An open house will be at the Anoka County Highway Department to collect public input on the reconstruction of Bunker Lake Blvd. from Crane St. to Jefferson St. Representatives from Anoka County, the Cities of Andover and Ham Lake as well as TKDA will be in attendance.
Anoka County Highway Department
1440 Bunker Lake Blvd
Andover

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All back issues can be found at
AnokaCountyRecord.com

FREE Thanksgiving Day Dinner

Monetary or Food Donations Cheerfully Accepted

At the Linwood Senior Center
22817 Typo Creek Dr., Stacy MN
Thursday, Nov. 28, Noon to 2 pm
Please R.S.V.P. 651-462-5565

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GOVERNMENT MEETINGS CALENDAR

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

Thurs. Nov. 7
 Anoka Co. Workforce Council mtg, 7:30 am, Blaine Human Service Ctr. Rm 202, 1201 89th Ave. N.E., Blaine

Mon. Nov. 11
 County offices closed — Veterans' Day (county offices will also be closed Thurs.-Fri. Nov. 28-29)

Tues. Nov. 12
 Management Cmte, 8:30 am, Rm 772, ACGC
 County Board, 9:30 am, Rm 705, ACGC, followed by "work session" in Rm 772 Bunker Lake Blvd Reconstruction project Open House mtg, Anoka Co Highway Dept, 1440 Bunker Lk Blvd, Andover, 4:30-6:30 pm; 763-862-4223

Wed. Nov. 13
 Waste Mgmt & Energy Cmte, 8:15 am, Rm 772, ACGC

Mon. Nov. 18
 Transportation Cmte, 9 am, Rm 772, ACGC
 Library Board, 5:30 pm, Northtown Library mtg room, joint mtg with County Board

Tues. Nov. 19
 Human Services Cmte., 8:30 am, Rm 710, ACGC
 Information Technology Cmte., 10:30 am, Rm 772, ACGC
 Finance & Capital Improvements Cmte., 1 pm, Rm 772, ACGC
 Intergovernmental & Community Relations Cmte., 1:30 pm, Rm 710, ACGC

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

Wed. Nov. 6
 Appeals Comm. — Cancelled

Thurs. Nov. 7
 HRA, 7 pm

Tues. Nov. 12
 Environmental Quality & Energy Comm., 7 pm

Mon. Nov. 18
 City Council, 6:30 pm "workshop", meeting 7 pm

Wed. Nov. 20
 Planning Comm., 7 pm

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

Tues. Nov. 12
 Planning Comm., 6 pm

Mon. Nov. 18
 City Council, 6 pm

Wed. Nov. 20
 Park & Tree Comm., 6 pm

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

Tues. Nov. 12 & 26
 Town Board, 6 pm

Tues. Nov. 19
 Planning & Zoning Cmte., 7 pm

Mon. Nov. 25
 Park & Rec. Cmte., 6 pm

OAK GROVE
 Oak Grove City Hall
 19900 Nightingale St. NW
 Oak Grove, MN 55011
 Ph: 763-404-7000
 www.ci.oak-grove.mn.us

2nd and last Monday of month
 City Council, 7 pm (EDA follows council mtg on last Monday)
 Note: No 2nd Monday City Council meeting in November, only Nov. 25

3rd Wednesday
 Parks Comm., 6 pm

3rd Thursday
 Planning Comm., 7 pm

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

Thur. Nov. 7
 Planning Comm., 7 pm

Tues. Nov. 12
 City Council "work session" 5:30 pm, reg mtg 7 pm, followed by HRA

Thur. Nov. 14
 EDA, 7:30 am

Park & Rec. Comm., 6:30 pm

Tues. Nov. 19
 Public Works Cmte, 6 pm, City Council "work session" may follow

Thurs. Nov. 21
 Future Business Park Location Mtg, 6 pm

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

Mon. Nov. 18
 Board of Supervisors, 5 pm

CENTENNIAL ISD #12
 4707 North Rd
 Circle Pines, MN 55014
 Ph.: (763) 792-6000
 isd12.org

Mon. Nov. 18
 School Board, 6:30 pm

FRIDLEY ISD #14
 6000 W Moore Lake Dr
 Fridley, MN 55432
 Ph.: (763) 502-5000
 fridley.k12.mn.us

Tue. Nov. 19
 School Bd "work session," 5:30 pm,
 Public Comment, 7 pm, Business Mtg 7:30 pm, Fridley City Hall

SPRING LAKE PARK ISD #16
 1415 81st Ave NE
 Spring Lake Park, MN 55432
 Ph.: (763) 786-5570
 springlakeparkschools.org

Tue. Nov. 12
 School Board, 6:45 pm

QCTV Cable Commission
 Ramsey, Andover, Champlin, Anoka

Thurs. Nov. 21
 Cable Commission, 10 am, Anoka City Hall

North Metro TV Cable Commission
 Ham Lake, Blaine, Spring Lake Park, Lino Lakes, Lexington, Centerville, Circle Pines

Wed. Nov. 20
 Cable Commission, 6 pm, Spring Lake Park City Hall

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

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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CITY OF OAK GROVE
COUNTY OF ANOKA
STATE OF MINNESOTA

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Oak Grove Planning Commission's Regular Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 21, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at the City Hall, 19900 Nightingale St NW, to hear the following public hearings in the order that they appear:

PUBLIC HEARING to consider a preliminary plat to be named *Westwood 2nd Addition* platting three approximately 2.5 acres lots within the following legally described property: Lot 3, Block 1 Westwood; further described by PID #18-33-24-13-0005.

All written and oral comments will be heard.

The hearings of this request are not limited to those receiving copies of this notice, and if you know of any neighbor or affected property owner who for any reason, has not received a copy, it would be appreciated if you would inform them of this public hearing.

Hearing impaired persons planning to attend who need an interpreter or other persons with disabilities who require auxiliary aids should contact City Hall at 404-7006 no later than Wednesday, November 13, 2013.

Sheryl F. Fiskewold
City Clerk

(Published Nov. 7, 2013 Anoka County Record)

ELECTION RESULTS *continued from page 1*

The turnout for the city as a whole was 14%; 5,129 voters came to the polls out of 36,237 that were on the registration rolls at the start of election day; and there were 163 same-day registrations.

The District 3 **Anoka-Hennepin school board** seat was retained by Bill Harvey, who was appointed to the school board to take John Hoffman's place after he won a state senate seat a year ago. Harvey received 61% of the vote. Opponent Grace Baltich ran unsuccessfully for a state house seat last year. The district is made up of 8 precincts: four in Coon Rapids and four in Champlin. The Champlin side had a turnout that averaged only 6%, while the Coon Rapids precincts averaged nearly 16%. Overall, the race's turnout was 9.2%. There were 17 new registrations in the Champlin precincts and 37 on the Coon Rapids side. 2,218 voters showed up, out of 24,158 that were registered.

The third and last Anoka-Hennepin school board seat was for District 4, which covers Ham Lake, Andover and Ramsey. William Fields of Andover received 53% of the votes in a three-way contest for the open seat. Former Ham Lake mayor and state senate candidate Paul Meunier had 36% and Janelle Kirkeide 10%. The turnout however was only 6.6% — 1,544 voters out of 23,426 registered. There were 36 same-day registrations. Fields carried all 5 precincts with 820 votes; Meunier 559, and Kirkeide 159.

The turnout for the **ISD #15 St. Francis school board** election was not much better, but there was a sliver of improvement compared to the 2011 election. 7.4% of registered voters returned David Roberts and Marsha Van Denburgh to the school board, as well voting in newcomer Barbara Jahnke, a retired former school counselor for ISD 15. Roberts had been appointed to fill the vacancy the school board created when it removed Matthew Rustad earlier this year. Roberts was the top vote-getter with 879; Jahnke 688 and Van Denburgh 615. Juanita Reed-Boniface received 577 votes, Malcolm T. Vinger II (521) and Shannon Collier (267) rounded out the 6-candidate race for three seats, all of which are 4-year terms.

Due to the Rustad vacancy, the remainder of his term (2 years) was put on the ballot. Since Roberts chose to run for one of the 4-year seats, this special election was for an open seat. Betsy Roed won with 751 votes to Scott Schwarz's 621.

1,412 voters came to the polls out of 19,092 that were

on the registration books. There were 42 new registrations. The 2011 election had a 6.7% turnout, with 1,165 voting out of 17,308 registered. The 2009 election however had nearly 6700 people voting, when there were two levy increase questions on the ballot.

Despite there being nothing to vote on in ISD 16, the Spring Lake Park school district, 253 voters showed up at two polling places to put a 1.4% turnout into the history books. Only the incumbents filed for the four seats on the ballot. Returning to the school board will be John Stroebel, Jodi Ruch, Kelly Delfs and Marilyn Forsberg. There were 26 write-ins and 11 new voters registered at the polls.

The **Fridley (ISD 14) school board** contest for three seats only managed a very anemic 4.6% turnout (411 voters).

Incumbent Gordon Backlund, a former state legislator who has been on the Fridley school board since 1989 lost his bid for re-election as he placed fourth with 193 votes.

Returning to the school board is Mary Kay Delvo (216 votes), winning her first election after having been appointed to the board a year ago. Marcia Lindblad was the top vote-getter (237 votes) and has been on the school board since 2005 when she was appointed to fill the term of Sandra Rudolph.

Former Columbia Heights school board member Joseph A. Sturdevant, who ran for a seat on the Fridley school board in 2009, was successful this time out and placed second with 221 votes. He is the son of Joseph S. Sturdevant, former mayor of Columbia Heights and former Columbia Heights school board member as well.

Jay R. Lowinske came in fifth with 158 votes. There were 14 new registrations.

The **White Bear Lake school district (ISD 624)** had a \$13.7 million 10-year levy proposal on the ballot, which was approved by 61% of the voters. The question stated, "The money raised by the proposed capital project levy authorization will provide funds for the acquisition, installation and support of curriculum and improved technology and technology systems in various school district facilities and the purchase of instructional equipment that includes textbooks, library books, science equipment and large musical instruments."

Voters also returned three out of four incumbents to the board: George Kimball (3,455 votes), Kim S. Chapman (2,676) and Janet Newberg (also 3,455 votes). Taking the fourth seat was Donald Mullin (2,607 votes). Narrowly missing the 4th spot by 15 votes was Christine Morrison (2,592) while incumbent Bob Shevik came in 6th place with 2,400 votes. There were 155 write-ins.

Three precincts in Lino Lakes represent the Anoka County portion of ISD 624. In those precincts, the top four vote-getters in order were, Newberg (88), Morrison (77), Chapman (72) and Kimball (67 votes). Lino Lakes residents voted for the levy, 96-79.

For more background on the candidates, see the *Anoka County Record's* candidate coverage in the June 20, August 15 and August 29th issues.

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Melissa Kay Aho, 9532 Lexington Ave., Lexington MN 55014

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FILED: October 1, 2013 #703921000026

/s/ Melissa Kay Aho, Owner

(Published Oct. 24, 2013 & Nov. 7, 2013 Anoka County Record)

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Deanna Marie Photography

2. Principal Place of Business:

4638 Third St. N.E., Fridley MN 55421

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Deanna Marie Casale, 4638 Third St. N.E., Fridley MN 55421

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FILED: October 11, 2013 #706449800026

/s/ Deanna Casale

(Published Oct. 24, 2013 & Nov. 7, 2013 Anoka County Record)

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FILED: October 9, 2013 #705708000027

/s/ Tammy Donner

(Published Oct. 24, 2013 & Nov. 7, 2013 Anoka County Record)

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9182 Coral Sea St NE, Blaine, MN 55449

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Nick Karpen, karp13@gmail.com

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FILED: June 21, 2013 #678505400022

/s/ Nick Karpen, Owner

(Published Nov. 7 & Nov. 21, 2013 Anoka County Record)

ANOKA COUNTY BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The Anoka County Board met on October 8, 2013. Standing county committee information reports and action items were considered, and action was taken as necessary. The following resolution was adopted: #2013-119 regarding Northtown Library Remodel. A full copy of the agenda, minutes, accounts, and claims greater than \$2000 may be found on the Anoka County Web site: www.anokacounty.us

(Published Nov. 7, 2013 Anoka County Record)

**Help Wanted
Linwood Senior Center
Coordinator**

Linwood Township is seeking a PT Senior Center Coordinator to manage the day-to-day operation of the Linwood Senior Center. Plan and implement senior activities, recruit and supervise volunteers, schedule senior center use. We are looking for a friendly, conscientious professional with great customer service and organizational skills. Exp. with seniors, volunteers, HS graduate, BA preferred, computer skills, and willing to obtain a food managers cert, 20-25 varied hrs. Please send letter and resume to: Linwood Township Town Hall, 22817 Typo Creek Drive Stacy MN 55079. By 4:30pm, November 12, 2013. Call Judy at 651-462-5565 or 651-462-2812 for more information. Linwood Township is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



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