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County

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Nowthen Mayor & City Council

Issues: Lot Sizes, Sewer & Water, Internet, Property Developers

Mayor's Office

Mayor Jeff Pilon's Answers

1. For how many years have you made the city your primary residence?

My wife Sue and I have lived in Nowthen 31 years. We moved from Minneapolis to a small hobby farm to raise our family and to enjoy the benefits of life in a wonderful country community.



Mayor Jeff Pilon

2. Please list your volunteer involvement in the city.

I have volunteered and participated in several activities in Nowthen over the years. I was part of the group that formed the Nowthen Heritage Festival in 2008 and continue to be on the volunteer committee. I volunteer at the Spring Pancake Breakfast, the booth at the Nowthen Threshing Show and have been involved in the planning, set up and cleanup of the festival every year. I voluntarily attend many activities in our city including Park & Rec meetings, Road & Bridge meetings, the Spring and Fall Recycling events, the Nowthen Farmer's Market and several events held by the Nowthen Lions. I also volunteer at our church and on the Nowthen Internet Research Committee.

3. What kind of experience and training do you have for this leadership role?

Leadership is the ability to lead people or an organization. Leadership is more than having experience with the clerical duties of the city; processing paperwork for years doesn't qualify as leadership experience necessary for the responsibilities of mayor. The role of the mayor includes a multitude of leadership responsibilities.

Among these, the mayor is the presiding officer at City Council meetings and is the only one authorized to declare city emergencies. The mayor also represents the city in an official capacity in a variety of instances.

I have applied my business experience and training from my 30+ years in Management, Quality and customer satisfaction in my role as the current Mayor of Nowthen. I have been able to negotiate competing interests in the city budget, work effectively with the

city staff, work with residents to resolve a variety of problems and creatively use our limited city resources most efficiently. I have the experience of setting a budget, controlling costs and going through the budget line by line to justify every expense. I've also taken training classes from the League of Minnesota Cities to give me additional background in city management. I currently serve as the Chairman of the joint Ramsey-Nowthen Fire Board, the liaison to the Sheriff's department, the City Representative on the Anoka County Fire Protection Council, member of the Anoka County Local Government Officials, member of the Minnesota Mayors Association and participate in the Anoka County Emergency Management leadership and training exercises.

4. What is your position on reducing lot sizes in the city?

I believe our 5-acre and larger lot size is one of our most valuable assets as a city. Most of our residents moved to Nowthen to live in the country, just like I did, to raise their families on large lots with an abundance of open space. They want large gardens, room for animals, space to enjoy (and store) their "toys". What I often hear when I meet with people in Nowthen is "please don't let Nowthen become like other cities; that's why I moved from there to here." I take offense at the misrepresentation by some who are taking things totally out of context to support their own agenda, claiming that I proposed a 1.25-acre minimum lot size, which is untrue. (If you would like any additional information or clarification on this issue, please contact me at 763-639-9151.)

5. Have you accepted contributions or other campaign assistance from property developers?

I have not accepted contributions or campaign assistance from any property developers. I have provided my own funds to finance my campaign so I have no obligation to anyone who might expect anything in return for their financial contribution. I've tried to provide a model of fiscal responsibility in my campaign that reflects how I would like to see the city managed; limit the amount of money spent, reuse materials, communicate with residents and enlist their support and work with volunteers to achieve a goal.

6. Do you support the installation of Met Council sewer and City water in the city?

I do not support the Met Council telling us how to run our city. The Met Council, an unelected Board appointed by the governor, does not actually "install" sewers. The Met Council can require cities to limit the way property owners can utilize their land until sewer connections reach their community (often decades out.) At that time, cities would be required to restrict development density to at least three housing units per acre. The city would be responsible to develop and pay for a complete sewer system to support these new high density developments. As a member of the previous City Council, we worked hard to limit the impact the Met Council would have to restrict how property owners could use their land and ultimately impose excessive costs on the city to fulfill the Met Council's unfunded mandates. I'm proud to say Nowthen will

Nowthen Mayor *cont. on page 2*

Anoka County Commissioner District 1:

Look Speaks At Oak Grove Forum

See Online & Library Editions for Oak Grove City Council Candidate Forum Responses

On Tuesday, October 25th, the Oak Grove Lions Club hosted a candidate forum at City Hall. Over 50 residents were in attendance for the event. All candidates for County Commissioner District 1 and City Council were invited.

Commissioner Matt Look and all three city council candidates, Scott Lawrence, Weston Rolf, and Paul Tradewell chose to participate.



Due to space limitations, only a portion of Commissioner Look's comments will be provided in most print editions. Online and Library editions will contain all statements made by Commissioner Look and Oak Grove City Council Candidates. See www.AnokaCountyRecord.com

Commissioner Matt Look's Responses

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Matt Look, and it has been my privilege and honor to serve as your County Commissioner in District #1. My constituents are well represented with the 14 boards and committees that I serve on.

I'm a 40 year resident of Anoka and Ramsey. I'm married with two terrific kids. I'm a graduate of Bethel University. I have a degree in political science and a minor in economics, and I'm a small business owner.

Prior to owning my small business, I worked in corporate America in marketing and sales. The largest company I worked for was 3M, and I find my experience in business to be my greatest asset. I have survived the recession because of my belief in needs versus wants, and I've translated those lessons learned to the County Board. As a result, the County's financial standing is stronger today, while we are one of the lowest taxed counties in the Metro.

I'm a member of First Baptist Church in Anoka. I've managed their softball team. I serve on the Board of Youth First, a disadvantaged youth organization. Our family serves on the Board of Anoka Ramsey Athletic Association, and as a former college level soccer player, I coached an undefeated boys' soccer team for the Northern Lights Soccer Association. In all, I've donated endless hours to my community.

I am the only candidate in this election for County Commissioner with experience as being a county commissioner and the only one with a successful track record of getting things accomplished quickly and respectfully at this level of government, while continuing to protect the taxpayer. I'm in my sixth year as a County Commissioner in Anoka and was a Ramsey City Councilmember prior to that for four years. I've served ten years in all.

I was elected Vice Chair of the Board and Chair of the Regional Rail by my peers. I also was appointed Chair of the Finance Committee and Chair of the Facilities and Maintenance Construction Committee. As Regional Rail Chair, we shut down the NLX boondoggle to

Commissioner Look *cont. on page 4*

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Nowthen Mayor *continued from page 1*

no longer be included in the Met Council's property restricting sewer requirements.

7. What work have you done to improve internet access in the community?

I have been working to improve the internet access in Nowthen for the past several years, unlike those who just recently discovered Nowthen's need for high speed internet service and claim to be starting their research. I have been working with Anoka County Officials, the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development, researching the success stories in other communities, investigating state grant opportunities and contacting multiple "last mile providers" (companies that bring the service into homes.) Last spring, I starting working with a group of Nowthen residents to continue the research into options for obtaining high-speed internet service to all areas of Nowthen. We have been meeting regularly to determine the best of what is currently available and what steps are necessary to improve our internet services. We believe high speed internet service will be critical to the future of Nowthen, for residents who want to work from home, for our students doing their schoolwork and for businesses throughout the city.

8. Please share networking experience and connections you have with neighboring city, school, and county leaders.

Networking plays a critical role in providing effective and efficient use of resources by city leaders. Meeting with leaders from other communities and businesses allows us to learn from their experience. Nowthen has only been a city for eight years; it's important that we hear what's worked well and what hasn't from leaders who have been through the challenges that are before us. I've met with the mayors, council members and school board members in neighboring communities. As a member of the Minnesota Mayors Association, I meet with mayors from across the state on a regular basis. Through the Local Government Officials meetings, I meet with elected and appointed officials from Anoka County cities and school boards as well as county and state leaders. I also network with the business community as the city representative Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce.

Contact information:

Jeff Pilon; 18959 Nowthen Blvd. NW, Nowthen
Mayorpilon@gmail.com

Debbie Mahutga's Answers (Mayor)

Editor's note: Ms. Mahutga confirmed receipt of our list of questions by USPS Certified Mail and chose not to respond by the deadline.

City Council Office (Vote for two)

Councilmember Mary Rainville's Answers

1. For how many years have you made the city your primary residence?

My husband and I have resided in Nowthen since July of 2004. We treasure our neighborhood, the country atmosphere, and have truly enjoyed becoming active participants in this community.



Councilmember
Mary Rainville

2. Please list your volunteer involvement in the city.

Nowthen Heritage Festival Committee: 2008 – present, Co-Chair & Executive Board

Nowthen Spring and Fall Recycle Clean Up Days: 2013 - present

Nowthen Lions: 2011 – present, Director and Vice President, Event chair

Nowthen Farmers Market: 2010 – present

Park and Recreation Earth Day Clean Up at Twin Lakes Park: 2015-2016

Attend the monthly Park & Recreation, Planning and Zoning and Road and Bridge Committee meetings

3. What kind of experience and training do you have for this leadership role?

I bring the experience gained during my current council term and from serving two terms on the Planning and Zoning Commission. In addition, prior to running for office I attended years of council meetings in order to educate myself on the issues before the council.

In my first term, my goal was to introduce ideas which enhance services provided to the residents and within the budget, or reduce expenses without compromising services. I successfully acted on resident requests' to require city council, commission, and committee meeting packets, agendas, and minutes be posted on the city website. I also introduced the extension of the operating hours of the city administrative office for the benefit of the residents.

As a community, Nowthen has a history of low property taxes and it is my goal to continue in that tradition. That is why, along with Mayor Jeff Pilon, I voted against the 8.71% increase in the 2016 Tax Levy. And during the 2017 budget discussions we presented the overwhelming majority of the budget reductions which have us at under a 1% increase in the 2017 Tax Levy with money dedicated to the Road and Equipment funds.

Additionally, along with residents I support the selection of a lower cost option for our official newspaper and a policy which requires sealed bids for construction, road and other projects.

During my term I've questioned expenses and voted against items when I didn't have sufficient information or felt the expense was unwarranted such as the \$23,500.00 hockey boards.

My opponent is critical of my vote when she accuses me "of not supporting some current expenditures, which could and should bring additional business to Nowthen."

Leadership includes making decisions which are in the best interest of the residents and I truly believed based on my research and input from the residents the purchase of indoor hockey boards to be used outdoor wasn't a prudent expenditure. There were, and still are, too many unanswered questions regarding the long term cost associated with the purchase and maintenance of a hockey rink. A rink which based on weather may or may not be operational for more than a month each year.

She also states that "I failed to mention that the funds came from out of the Park and Recreation funds, which can only be spent on parks and did not affect either the general or road and bridge funds." My opponent doesn't understand that it matters not where the \$23,500 comes from as in the end it is still tax payer's money. Money many residents feel was misspent. Money which could be used to purchase other amenities for our parks for which a greater number of residents could benefit from.

I also didn't support the change in the salary structure for the mayor and council as it compensates members whether or not they attend workshops or committee and council meetings.

Before moving to Nowthen I was active in my neighborhood association and the Minneapolis 4th Precinct Police Advisory Committee where I served as chair for many years.

I am currently employed by the City of Minneapolis in Policy and Research Development and have served as the Assistant to the Chief of Police, Police Support Technician and 911 Operator. I have also worked for a residential concrete contractor where I was responsible for all administrative, estimating and permit functions. Prior to that I worked for US West supervising the administrative staff in the Public Relations Division and managing business and residential accounts.

4. What is your position on reducing lot sizes in the city?

I support the residents' wish to maintain larger lots sizes. My husband and I live on 40 acres and appreciate the beauty of our surroundings. However I've heard

from residents who have been forced to move from Nowthen as they reached a time where maintaining acreage and a large home became burdensome. It is prudent to prepare for the future as it allows Nowthen to determine their future, not others.

Recently mayoral candidate Mahutga distributed a flyer stating that I was supportive of clustering later referred to as Rural Open Space Preservation stating this would bring 1.25 acre lots to the City of Nowthen. I was supportive of discussions regarding allowing an exception to the standard 8 lots per 40 acres to possibly 10 lots per 40 if a property fit the criteria and the owner was interested in participating. As it was explained numerous times by the City Engineer and Planner the 1.25 was used as a reference for the smallest size a pristine lot could be in order to provide for a structure, septic system and a back-up septic location. It was never the intention of the council to reduce lot sizes to 1.25 acres and Ms. Mahutga knows that.

An unfortunate aspect was an unsigned flyer providing misleading information meant to scare residents. What is most important is that no changes could be made without the council holding public hearings to receive additional input from the residents. Another factor Ms. Mahutga is fully aware of.

I am more than happy to answer questions regarding the ROSP and can be reached at 612-964-5228, 763-753-6919 or maryfornowthen@gmail.com.

5. Have you accepted contributions or other campaign assistance from property developers?

No. My campaign is self-financed. The only outside support is from residents who personally agreed to show their support by hosting my lawn sign.

I do find it troublesome when an opponent expresses her wish to work with developers to provide more opportunities in the city and to promote growth in our residential and business sector.

Or a candidate who public records show has received contributions from a developer. A developer who at the March and May City Council meetings publicly stated their upset that Nowthen was removed from the Municipal Urban Sewer Area and that there are only six lots on the market, no new neighborhoods or Developments.

6. Do you support the installation of Met Council sewer and City water in the city?

No I do not. I served on the Planning and Zoning Commission when the Met Council dictated our involvement with the Municipal Urban Sewer Area and believe the final decision was one which had the least effect on our city.

I agree with the residents who have made it clear that they prefer we not have city sewer and water and the expenses associated with them. Residents were pleased when the Metropolitan Council removed Nowthen from the Municipal Urban Sewer Area, as they fear the housing developments they see being built in our neighboring cities which include such services.

7. What work have you done to improve internet access in the community?

Other than attending the residents meeting hosted last spring by Mayor Pilon and referring residents to the committee I have had limited involvement in the issue. I do believe bringing faster internet service to the city is important so I support the efforts of the committee in initiating conversations with providers regarding our needs. Although not a city responsibility these efforts will help our commercial businesses, home based businesses and residents who work from home.

8. Please share networking experience and connections you have with neighboring city, school, and county leaders.

As a council member I attend the Anoka County Local Government Officials meetings and sessions hosted by the MN League of Cities. These meetings facilitate the ability for elected officials and city staff to meet and discuss issues common

Nowthen Council *cont. on page 4*



ANOKA COUNTY WATCHDOG

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Always on the lookout for governmental waste, fraud, and abuse in Anoka County

October 28, 2016

Quote of the Week: "Following a review of both the Complaint, and the documents Mr. Field submitted in support of the Complaint, the undersigned Administrative Law Judge has determined that the Complaint sets forth a prima facie violation of Minn. Stat. §§ 211A.02 and 211A.12 (2016). For the reasons detailed in the Memorandum below, Mr. Field should be permitted to proceed to a probable cause hearing on these claims."

- Administrative Law Judge Eric Lipman, regarding a campaign practices complaint filed against **Marsha Van Denburgh**

BUSTED?

Well, it looks like not every candidate for office gets away with breaking the law.

Over the course of the past six weeks, the Watchdog has been following a campaign practices complaint filed by a citizen of Anoka County District 1, Joe Field, against **Marsha Van Denburgh**, who is running for a seat on the Anoka County Board.

At the outset, it should be noted that a final determination of guilt has not been reached as the case is still working its way through the system to final adjudication.

Therefore, like on "Cops," we note that all subjects, including **Van Denburgh**, are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

First, let's get readers up to speed on the procedural posture of the case, or what normal people call the chronology.

On September 12, 2016 Mr. Field filed a complaint with the Minnesota Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) regarding a number alleged violations of Minnesota campaign laws.

On September 14th, 2016, Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Eric Lipman issued a finding of "probable cause" with respect to some of the alleged violations and ordered a probable cause hearing for October 6th, 2016.

Sources tell the Watchdog that the ALJ at the probable cause hearing found enough evidence of wrong doing to schedule the matter for an evidentiary hearing on October 31st.

In order to move a case to this step, the ALJ must determine the following:

At the conclusion of the probable cause hearing, the Administrative Law Judge will either: (1) dismiss the complaint based on a determination that the complaint is frivolous, or that there is no probable cause to believe that the violation of law alleged in the complaint has occurred; or (2) determine that there is probable cause to believe that the violation of law alleged in the complaint has occurred and refer the case to the Chief Administrative Law Judge for the scheduling of an evidentiary hearing. Evidentiary hearings are conducted pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 211B.35 (2016).

According to our sources, the ALJ on October 6th found the latter to be true: (2) determine that there is probable cause to believe that the violation of law alleged in the complaint has occurred and refer the case to the Chief Administrative Law Judge for the scheduling of an evidentiary

hearing. Evidentiary hearings are conducted pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 211B.35 (2016).

In other words, it's not looking good for **Marsha Van Denburgh**.

So, what was in the complaint that led to the upcoming evidentiary hearing?

Below is a summary of the violations that the ALJ initially found to be valid at the first hearing.

Count One: Required Financial Reports

Mr. Field maintains that the information provided in Ms. **Van Denburgh's** most recent campaign financial report is inaccurate. The accounting of the costs of the printed tee-shirts, or the rental arrangements for the events at the Fountains of Ramsey Event Center and the New Life Church, are not clear from the campaign finance report dated July 25, 2016. The Administrative Law Judge finds that, although Mr. Field did not specifically identify a violation of section 211A.02 on the complaint form, the gravamen of the complaint is that sums for these items are not reflected on the required financial report. The complaint has alleged sufficient facts to support a prima facie violation of Minn. Stat. § 211A.02, subd. 2.

Count Two: Limitations on Contributions

Limitations on Contributions (Minn. Stat. § 211A.12) Minn. Stat. § 211A.12 provides in relevant part: A candidate or a candidate's committee may not accept aggregate contributions made or delivered by an individual or committee in excess of \$600 in an election year for the office sought and \$250 in other years; except that a candidate or a candidate's committee for an office whose territory has a population over 100,000 may not accept aggregate contributions made or delivered by an individual or committee in excess of \$1,000 in an election year for the office sought and \$250 in other years. Mr. Field maintains, by pointing to the contribution schedules accompanying Ms. **Van Denburgh's** July 29, 2016 campaign finance report, that Pamela Deal made two contributions of \$600 during the reporting period - one on June 9, 2016 and another on June 23, 2016. The Administrative Law Judge finds that the complaint has alleged sufficient facts to support a prima facie violation of Minn. Stat. § 211A.12.

Note the name of the contributor, Pamela Deal.

The Watchdog noted the \$1,200 donation at issue back in our August 19th edition.

Here's what we reported:

Van Denburgh has also claimed Republican credentials. Curiously, she also reports \$1,200 in donations from Pamela Deal.

Deal and her husband, Jim, are uber wealthy DFL donors who have contributed enormous sums to support Democrats.

For example, a search of the Minnesota Campaign Finance web site lists \$567,800 in contributions from James Deal to DFL candidates and allied groups since 2006.

The same search for Pamela Deal lists \$118,000 in the same type of donations.

A search of the Federal Election Commission (FEC) database also reveals big donations to Democrats at the federal level.

James and Pamela Deal aren't the only partisan DFLers to get behind **Marsha Van Denburgh**. Betsy O'Berry, who has run as an endorsed Democrat in the past, is also listed as a donor.

Stay tuned.

The Watchdog will be closely following this important and emerging story.

If the facts as alleged are found to be true, we will have a full-blown campaign finance scandal on our hands here in a county commissioner race.

TOO MANY TOWNS

An article in the Star Tribune recently noted that a shocking 66% of all local offices on the ballot this fall have either one or no candidates running at all.

While theories as to why this problem exists are many, one reason is that there are surely far too many counties and cities in Minnesota.

When you have a city of 25 people, it can be hard to convince 20% of the populace that they should serve on the city council.

Minnesota is ranked 21st among the states, measured by population.

Yet we have over 800 cities and 87 counties.

The state has 23 cities with fewer than 25 residents.

Fully 20 of the state's 87 counties have fewer than 10,000 residents.

These local units of government are wholly the creation of the state and can thus be adjusted by the state.

This is yet one more reason why the state should become more proactive in encouraging the merging of counties and cities or the unincorporation of cities back into townships.

The primary reason, of course, is government finance. These small cities and counties lack the tax base and population density to provide services with any great degree of efficiency because of high marginal costs.

This manifests itself primarily in the need/desire for buckets of state aid for everything from school busses to water treatment facilities to maintenance garages to public golf courses and swimming pools.

In short, the state has too many cities and counties to serve 5.5 million residents, who are clustered primarily in the seven county Metropolitan Area (nearly 3 million).

The inefficiencies inherent in so many units of government serving so few people is another issue receiving little attention this election cycle.

No worries. Let's spend another few weeks discussing groping allegations from the Jimmy Carter era or what was said on a hot mic over 10 years ago.

That's the state of our republic and our public discourse.

The Anoka County Watchdog is a place where concerned taxpayers can find fact-supported information and other resources about governmental waste and abuse in Anoka County.

My intent is to provide you, the taxpayer, with the information you need to hold your local politicians accountable.

Visit my website and sign up for free weekly e-mail updates at:

www.AnokaCountyWatchdog.com

or contact me personally at:

harold@anokacountywatchdog.com

Sincerely,

Harold E. Hamilton, owner.

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Nowthen Council *continued from page 2*

to our communities. And to share their success and failures which allows cities to benefit from those experiences.

I've been honored to serve as a Nowthen Council Member and respectfully ask the residents for their support to continue to serve this community.

Contact information:

Email: Maryfornowthen@gmail.com
Phone: 612-964-5228, 763-753-6919

Dan Breyen's Answers
(Council)**1. For how many years have you made the city your primary residence?**

I was born and raised in Burns/Nowthen and have lived here for 37 years, most of my life. My wife and I moved back to Nowthen to raise my family on the same Century Farmland that I grew up on.

2. Please list your volunteer involvement in the city.

I have volunteered for Heritage Fest in the past. I am on a volunteer committee of Nowthen residents to discuss internet options in our city.

3. What kind of experience and training do you have for this leadership role?

My experience involves managing people and projects. I work with people every day on issues they may have. Working together, we come up



Dan Breyen

with solutions that are agreeable to all parties.

4. What is your position on reducing lot sizes in the city?

I don't see a need to reduce lot sizes. Having 5+ acres was one of the reasons I moved back home. I like seeing all the farms and wildlife roam. After talking to many residents they like having the extra elbow room too.

5. Have you accepted contributions or other campaign assistance from property developers?

No, my campaign is self funded.

6. Do you support the installation of Met Council sewer and City water in the city?

Nowthen residents are going to make the best decisions about what's good for Nowthen. Nowthen is a rural community, and I have a difficult time giving that control over to a Metropolitan Council that is making decisions for Minneapolis and St. Paul.

7. What work have you done to improve internet access in the community?

As I mentioned, I'm working with about a dozen residents who volunteered to identify internet options for our community. Finding better options for residents without spending tax payer dollars would be my preference.

8. Please share networking experience and connections you have with neighboring city, school, and county leaders.

I am an officer for the Republican Senate District 31, and represent Nowthen as a Delegate. I have been endorsed by MN Senator Michelle Benson as well as Mayor Mark Korin of Oak Grove.

Contact information:

Dan Breyen; dnbreyen@gmail.com
(612) 470-2234

Neil Halbach's Answers
(Council)

I lived in Nowthen 40 plus years. I help with the Nowthen historical society and Nowthen heritage festival.

When your a city leader the only position you can have is what the people of Nowthen have. Most of the people I talked to would like to see the lots stay at five acres.

I have accepted NO contributions or campaign assistance from anyone.

The people I talked to in Nowthen seem to think they don't want Met Council sewer and water . Most of them went on to say they don't want the met council because they have unchecked power and only care about the met council.

Internet access was never discussed.

Jim Scheffler's Answers (Council)

Editor's note: Mr. Scheffler was sent a list of our questions by USPS Certified Mail and also USPS First Class mail. He chose not to respond by the deadline.

Geraldine Sharp's Answers (Council)

Editor's note: Ms. Sharp confirmed receipt of our list of questions by USPS Certified Mail and chose not to respond by the deadline.



Neil Halbach

Commissioner Look

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Duluth. As Finance Chair, we created a cash in lieu of bonding for known expenses, ending the need to borrow money for those known expenses, and, as a result, our financial rating has gone from stable to strong at the county.

I'm running again to continue the good work that we've accomplished and utilize the experience I have to deal with the upcoming challenges, all with the idea of protecting the taxpayer. Because the people elected a majority of fiscal conservatives in Anoka County, we were able to cut our spending, reduce our budget. We were able to lower our county property taxes, all without cutting services. And since being elected, we stopped unnecessary spending on lunches and trips, and we found \$40 million in waste, all of which has enabled us to levy the amount of money we tax at 2010 rates, making us again one of the lowest taxed counties in the Metro.

We've invested money in roads and bridges within our county, and we did all of this without the wheelage tax, which we got rid of. Bringing together federal, state, county, and city, our largest success story was the Armstrong Interchange on Highway 10.

Each year we score our roads before winter and after winter, and it's called a Pavement Index, and so far, our Pavement Index right now is in the 70th percentile, which is very, very high, and we're very happy about that, because we have been investing significantly in those — in those roads. That's the good news, but there's still work to be done on Highway 10, on Highways 47 and 65, all of which are state owned roads, and it's critical we continue to advocate that these roads be upgraded to meet the needs of our communities.

Four years ago, I said our most urgent need was debt reduction. We inherited \$190 million in debt from prior county boards, but since focusing on debt reduction, we've paid down \$50 million and now are scheduled to pay down 77.7 percent of our debt in the next ten years. That's something you will not hear from any other county out there today. We've done all this by maintaining our reserves. We, as I said, eliminated unnecessary expenditures, focused on

managing our known expenses, paying cash in lieu of bonding, as mentioned, and holding tight on spending by evaluating the requests that we get from our various departments and evaluating that on a needs-versus-wants basis.

Today we export 70 percent of our labor force down our highways. Jobs are hard to find in our community, and I believe that if we stay this course, this course of low taxation, we will continue to attract business, we will build roads to today's standards, pay down debt, which will lead to financial security, community stability, commercial development, and job growth.

I'm very passionate about representing my constituents, and I'm passionate because I try and represent them to the best of my ability with honesty, integrity, and respect. And I want to thank everyone for coming here this evening.

MODERATOR: What is your view on tax increases at the county, and would you vote for one, and why?

MATT LOOK: This year we voted on a 2.5 percent levy increase. That's a preliminary vote at this point, so, essentially, you have to set a preliminary levy, and then in November — it would be the December timeframe, you'd set the final levy. So in between now and December, we're actively trying to find ways where we can reduce that 2½ percent, okay? One of the reasons why we set it higher at 2½ percent is because, as I mentioned, we had three to four union contracts that were unsettled as of yet, which would have a financial ramification on where that levy needed to be.

So as those are starting to come in, we gain a better understanding of what sort of dollars we need. My goal has always been to come in flat, but it's important to understand that government will grow at 2 to 6 percent every single year — standard inflation, okay? So you're talking about raises, you're talking about cost of electricity, you're talking about gas for vehicles, you're talking about cost of salt for your roads. All these things go up every single year incrementally, and so if you keep a budget flat, you've actually reduced between 2 to 6 percent, okay, because you didn't raise to account for those increases.

And so my goal is to try and find

efficiencies, and that's one area this Board has been very strong in, is trying to introduce new technologies so that our employees have more efficient tools to do their job. We've gone paperless, so they don't have to chase files around different desks. It's all on the computer now. They can access it. It saves a tremendous amount of time. We're paperless, you don't have to have as many copiers, you don't have as many reams of paper being copied. It's been a fantastic implementation, but the reality is that to give our employees a 2½ percent raise, it's \$4½ million. Four-and-a-half million dollars to the county, that's what it costs, straight across the board.

And we want to keep competitive with all the other counties that are out there. As I mentioned, we have a below average turnover than the other counties, but, still, we would like to be better positioned than other counties, because turnover costs money. There's no question about it. For training, for trying to bring people up to speed, mistakes that they're going to make while they're coming up to speed, it's a cost of training. And so we want to make sure that we try and keep at least pace with the other counties that are out there. Now, Hennepin County is the highest paid county out there, okay, the highest paid, also the highest turnover in human services, so it's not always about the money. And I want to say that our benefits package is tremendous. We have a great benefits package. People recognize that. If you live in the area and you can drive to work in the morning and it's — as opposed to driving to Hennepin County, I know that your quality of life is better because of the close proximity that you work. So, anyways, we want to continue to make sure that we're as efficient as possible and keep the levy as low as possible.

See www.AnokaCountyRecord.com for the remainder of Commissioner Look's comments.

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**ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA
PUBLIC NOTICE OF ELECTION**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a General Election will be held in Anoka County, Minnesota, on Tuesday, November 8, 2016 at the polling locations listed below for the purpose of voting for candidates of the offices specified below. The polls for said election will be open at 7:00 AM and will remain open until closing at 8:00 PM.

FEDERAL OFFICES

- US President and Vice President
- US Representative District 3, 5, 6

STATE OFFICES

- State Senator District 31, 35, 36, 37, 38, 41
- State Representative District 31A, 31B, 35A, 35B, 36A, 36B, 37A, 37B, 38A, 41A, 41B
- Supreme Court Associate Justice, Seat 6
- Court of Appeals Judge, Seats 5, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19
- District Court Judge District 10, Seats 2, 3, 8, 13, 18, 19, 20, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45

COUNTY OFFICES

- County Commissioner District 1, 2, 3, 6
- Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor District 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

The voting places are as follows:

<u>Precinct Name</u>	<u>Voting Location</u>	
ANDOVER P-1	HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH	16180 ROUND LAKE BLVD NW ANDOVER MN 55304
ANDOVER P-2	GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH	13655 ROUND LAKE BLVD NW ANDOVER MN 55304
ANDOVER P-3	RIVERDALE ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH	3210 BUNKER LAKE BLVD NW ANDOVER MN 55304
ANDOVER P-4	CROOKED LAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	2939 BUNKER LAKE BLVD NW ANDOVER MN 55304
ANDOVER P-5	ANDOVER CHRISTIAN CHURCH	16045 NIGHTINGALE ST NW ANDOVER MN 55304
ANDOVER P-6	PRAIRIE OAK COMM CHURCH	1657 161ST AVE NW ANDOVER MN 55304
ANDOVER P-7	ANDOVER COMMUNITY CENTER (P7)	15200 HANSON BLVD NW ANDOVER MN 55304
ANDOVER P-8	ANDOVER COMMUNITY CENTER (P8)	15200 HANSON BLVD NW ANDOVER MN 55304
ANDOVER P-9	BUNKER HILLS ACTIVITY CENTER	550 BUNKER LAKE BLVD NW ANDOVER MN 55304
ANDOVER P-10	ANDOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	14950 HANSON BLVD NW ANDOVER MN 55304
ANOKA P-1	GREEN HAVEN GOLF COURSE & EVENT CENTER	2800 GREENHAVEN RD ANOKA MN 55303
ANOKA P-2	GREEN HAVEN GOLF COURSE & EVENT CENTER	2800 GREENHAVEN RD ANOKA MN 55303
ANOKA P-3	GREEN HAVEN GOLF COURSE & EVENT CENTER	2800 GREENHAVEN RD ANOKA MN 55303
ANOKA P-4	ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH	1601 4TH AVE ANOKA MN 55303
ANOKA P-5	LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	540 SOUTH ST ANOKA MN 55303
ANOKA P-6	ANOKA CITY HALL	2015 1ST AVE ANOKA MN 55303
ANOKA P-7	ANOKA COVENANT CHURCH	752 GRANT ST ANOKA MN 55303
ANOKA P-8	WILSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1025 SUNNY LN ANOKA MN 55303
BETHEL P-1	SANDHILL CENTER FOR THE ARTS	23820 DEWEY ST BETHEL MN 55005
BLAINE W-1 P-1	UNIVERSITY AVE SCHOOL	9901 UNIVERSITY AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-1 P-2	MARY ANN YOUNG SENIOR CENTER	9150 CENTRAL AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-1 P-3	ST TIMOTHY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH	707 89TH AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-1 P-4	CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH	641 89TH AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-1 P-5	NATIONAL SPORTS CENTER WELCOME CENTER	1750 105TH AVE NE BLAINE MN 55449
BLAINE W-1 P-6	MINNESOTA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS	3680 PHEASANT RIDGE DR BLAINE MN 55449
BLAINE W-1 P-7	OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH	9185 LEXINGTON AVE CIRCLE PINES MN 55014
BLAINE W-1 P-8	CENTENNIAL SR HIGH PERFORMING ARTS CTR	4707 NORTH RD CIRCLE PINES MN 55014
BLAINE W-2 P-1	KING OF GLORY CHURCH	10103 UNIVERSITY AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-2 P-2A	MADISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	650 TERRITORIAL RD NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-2 P-2B	HOPE CHURCH	1264 109TH AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-2 P-3	JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	11331 JEFFERSON ST NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-2 P-4A	ABUNDANT LIFE COM CHURCH	1105 117TH AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-2 P-4B	NATIONAL SPORTS CENTER - THE WELCOME CENTER	1750 105TH AVE NE BLAINE MN 55449
BLAINE W-2 P-5	OAK PARK COMMUNITY CHURCH	12050 ABERDEEN ST NE BLAINE MN 55449
BLAINE W-2 P-6	BLAINE CITY HALL (W2P6)	10801 TOWN SQUARE DR BLAINE MN 55449
BLAINE W-3 P-1	BLAINE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH	621 115TH AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-3 P-2	FIRE STATION #3	11920 ULYSSES ST NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-3 P-3	ROOSEVELT MIDDLE SCHOOL	650 125TH AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-3 P-4	WAY OF THE LORD CHURCH	804 131ST AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-3 P-5	JOHNSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	991 125TH AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-3 P-6	NORTHPOINT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	2350 124TH CT NE BLAINE MN 55449
BLAINE W-3 P-7	BROOKHALL	11930 CENTRAL AVE NE BLAINE MN 55434
BLAINE W-3 P-8	BRIDGEWOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH	11670 LEXINGTON AVE NE BLAINE MN 55449
CENTERVILLE P-1	ST GENEVIEVE'S COMMUNITY CENTER	6995 CENTERVILLE RD CENTERVILLE MN 55038
CIRCLE PINES P-1	CENTENNIAL FIRE STATION #1	2 EAST RD CIRCLE PINES MN 55014

CIRCLE PINES P-2	CIRCLE PINES CITY HALL	200 CIVIC HEIGHTS CIR CIRCLE PINES MN 55014
COLUMBIA HGTS P-1	JOHN P MURZYN HALL	530 MILL ST NE COLUMBIA HEIGHTS MN 55421
COLUMBIA HGTS P-2	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH	4030 JACKSON ST NE COLUMBIA HEIGHTS MN 55421
COLUMBIA HGTS P-3	COLUMBIA HEIGHTS LIBRARY	3939 CENTRAL AVE NE COLUMBIA HEIGHTS MN 55421
COLUMBIA HGTS P-4	HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (P4)	1500 49TH AVE NE COLUMBIA HEIGHTS MN 55421
COLUMBIA HGTS P-5	FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH	1555 40TH AVE NE COLUMBIA HEIGHTS MN 55421
COLUMBIA HGTS P-6	HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (P6)	1500 49TH AVE NE COLUMBIA HEIGHTS MN 55421
COLUMBIA HGTS P-7	VALLEY VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (P7)	800 49TH AVE NE COLUMBIA HEIGHTS MN 55421
COLUMBIA HGTS P-8	VALLEY VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (P8)	800 49TH AVE NE COLUMBIA HEIGHTS MN 55421
COLUMBUS P-1	COLUMBUS PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY	16345 KETTLE RIVER BLVD NE COLUMBUS MN 55025
COON RAPIDS W-1 P-1	ANOKA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE (W1 P1)	13301 HANSON BLVD NW ANDOVER MN 55304
COON RAPIDS W-1 P-2	ANOKA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE (W1 P2)	13301 HANSON BLVD NW ANDOVER MN 55304
COON RAPIDS W-1 P-3	MORRIS BYE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	11931 CROOKED LAKE BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-1 P-4	REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH	2135 NORTHDALE BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-2 P-1	TRUE NORTH CHURCH	12691 HANSON BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55448
COON RAPIDS W-2 P-2	BUNKER HILLS GOLF CLUB	12800 BUNKER PRAIRIE RD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55448
COON RAPIDS W-2 P-3	SAND CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	12156 OLIVE ST NW COON RAPIDS MN 55448
COON RAPIDS W-2 P-4	SORTEBERG	11400 MAGNOLIA ST NW COON RAPIDS MN 55448
COON RAPIDS W-2 P-5	FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH	11115 HANSON BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-3 P-1	HOOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	2369 109TH AVE NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-3 P-2	COON RAPIDS CIVIC CENTER	11155 ROBINSON DR NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-3 P-3	COON RAPIDS VFW POST 9625	1919 COON RAPIDS BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-3 P-4	SPIRIT OF GRACE CHURCH	10110 WOODCREST DR NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-4 P-1	RIVERWIND RECREATION CENTER	2701 NORTHDALE BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-4 P-2	ANOKA RAMSEY CC PROF TRAINING CENTER	11200 MISSISSIPPI BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-4 P-3	COON RAPIDS ICE CENTER	11000 CROOKED LAKE BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-4 P-4	UNITED METHODIST CHURCH	10506 HANSON BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
COON RAPIDS W-5 P-1	CROSSPOINT CHURCH	10936 FOLEY BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55448
COON RAPIDS W-5 P-2	PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH	20 NORTHDALE BLVD NW COON RAPIDS MN 55448
COON RAPIDS W-5 P-3	WORD OF LIFE CHURCH	10730 UNIVERSITY AVE NW COON RAPIDS MN 55448
COON RAPIDS W-5 P-4	EMMA B HOWE YMCA	8950 SPRINGBROOK DR NW COON RAPIDS MN 55448
COON RAPIDS W-5 P-5	ADAMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	8989 SYCAMORE ST NW COON RAPIDS MN 55433
EAST BETHEL P-1	E BETHEL SR CTR/COMM RM	2241 221ST AVE NE EAST BETHEL MN 55011
EAST BETHEL P-2	OUR SAVIOUR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH	19001 JACKSON ST NE EAST BETHEL MN 55011
EAST BETHEL P-3	EAST BETHEL FIRE STATION	2751 VIKING BLVD NE EAST BETHEL MN 55092
FRIDLEY W-1 P-1	GRACE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH	755 73RD AVE NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-1 P-2	HAYES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	615 MISSISSIPPI ST NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-1 P-3	FRIDLEY MUNICIPAL CENTER	6431 UNIVERSITY AVE NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-1 P-4	FRIDLEY COMMUNITY CENTER	6085 7TH ST NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-2 P-1	WOODCREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	880 OSBORNE RD NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-2 P-2	MICHAEL SERVETUS UNITARIAN CHURCH	6565 OAKLEY DR NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-2 P-3	ST PHILIP'S LUTHERAN CHURCH	6180 HIGHWAY 65 NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-2 P-4	NORTH PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (W2P4)	5575 FILLMORE ST NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-3 P-1	SPRINGBROOK NATURE CENTER	100 85TH AVE NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-3 P-2	REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH	61 MISSISSIPPI WAY NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-3 P-3	STEVENSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	6080 E RIVER RD FRIDLEY MN 55432
FRIDLEY W-3 P-4	FRIDLEY COVENANT CHURCH	6390 UNIVERSITY AVE NE FRIDLEY MN 55432
HAM LAKE P-1	GLEN CARY LUTHERAN CHURCH	15531 CENTRAL AVE NE HAM LAKE MN 55304
HAM LAKE P-2	HAM LAKE SENIOR CENTER	15544 CENTRAL AVE NE HAM LAKE MN 55304
HAM LAKE P-3A	OAK HAVEN CHURCH	1555 CONSTANCE BLVD NE HAM LAKE MN 55304
HAM LAKE P-4A	HORIZONS COMMUNITY CHURCH	1503 157TH AVE NE HAM LAKE MN 55304
HAM LAKE P-5	SPIRIT OF CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH	2749 BUNKER LAKE BLVD NE HAM LAKE MN 55304
HAM LAKE P-6A	ST PAUL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH	1740 BUNKER LAKE BLVD NE HAM LAKE MN 55304
HILLTOP P-1	HILLTOP CITY HALL	4555 JACKSON ST NE HILLTOP MN 55421
LEXINGTON P-1	LEXINGTON CITY HALL	9180 LEXINGTON AVE LEXINGTON MN 55014

(List Continued to Next Page)

LINO LAKES P-1	LINO LAKES SENIOR CENTER	1189 MAIN ST LINO LAKES MN 55014
LINO LAKES P-2	LINO LAKES FIRE STATION #1	7741 LAKE DR LINO LAKES MN 55014
LINO LAKES P-3	ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH	171 ELM ST LINO LAKES MN 55014
LINO LAKES P-4	LINO LAKES CITY HALL	600 TOWN CENTER PKWY LINO LAKES MN 55014
LINO LAKES P-5	RICE CREEK COVENANT CHURCH	125 ASH ST LINO LAKES MN 55126
LINO LAKES P-6	LIVING WATERS LUTHERAN CHURCH	865 BIRCH ST LINO LAKES MN 55014
LINO LAKES P-7	RICE LAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	575 BIRCH ST LINO LAKES MN 55014
LINWOOD P-1	LINWOOD TOWN HALL	22817 TYPO CREEK DR NE STACY MN 55079
LINWOOD P-2	LINWOOD COVENANT CHURCH	6565 VIKING BLVD NE WYOMING MN 55092
NOWTHEN P-1A	NOWTHEN FIRE STATION (P1A)	19888 NOWTHEN BLVD NW ELK RIVER MN 55330
NOWTHEN P-2A	NOWTHEN FIRE STATION (P2A)	19888 NOWTHEN BLVD NW ELK RIVER MN 55330
OAK GROVE P-1	OAK GROVE CITY HALL (P-1)	19900 NIGHTINGALE ST NW CEDAR MN 55011
OAK GROVE P-2	ABUNDANT LIFE CHURCH	3840 197TH AVE NW ANOKA MN 55303
OAK GROVE P-3	PUBLIC WORKS GARAGE	815 VIKING BLVD NW CEDAR MN 55011
OAK GROVE P-4	OAK GROVE CITY HALL-SENIOR CENTER (P-4)	19900 NIGHTINGALE ST NW CEDAR MN 55011
RAMSEY W-1 P-1	PATHWAYS COMMUNITY CHURCH	6341 167TH AVE NW RAMSEY MN 55303
RAMSEY W-1 P-2	CROSS OF HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH	5730 179TH LN NW RAMSEY MN 55303
RAMSEY W-2 P-1	PARK CENTER @CENTRAL PARK	7925 161ST AVE NW RAMSEY MN 55303
RAMSEY W-2 P-2	INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCH	15650 SUNFISH LAKE BLVD NW RAMSEY MN 55303
RAMSEY W-3 P-1	RAMSEY MUNICIPAL CENTER	7550 SUNWOOD DR NW RAMSEY MN 55303
RAMSEY W-3 P-2	RAMSEY FIRE STATION #1	15050 ARMSTRONG BLVD NW RAMSEY MN 55303
RAMSEY W-4 P-1	FIRE STATION NO. 2	5650 ALPINE DR NW RAMSEY MN 55303
RAMSEY W-4 P-2	LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH	14501 NOWTHEN BLVD NW RAMSEY MN 55303
SAINT FRANCIS P-1	ST FRANCIS WARMING HOUSE	3948 229TH AVE NW ST FRANCIS MN 55070
SAINT FRANCIS P-2	RUM RIVER NORTH COUNTY PARK	23100 RUM RIVER BLVD NW ST FRANCIS MN 55070
SPRING LAKE PARK P-1A	SPRING LAKE PARK CITY HALL	1301 81ST AVE NE SPRING LAKE PARK MN 55432
SPRING LAKE PARK P-2	SPRING LAKE PARK HIGH SCHOOL	1100 81ST AVE NE SPRING LAKE PARK MN 55432
SPRING LAKE PARK P-3	PARK TERRACE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	8301 TERRACE RD NE SPRING LAKE PARK MN 55432

Cindy Reichert, Elections Manager

(Published 10/25, 11/1, 2016 Anoka County Record) #537

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANOKA COUNTY SUMMARY OF BIDS

Bid #2016-24

Description of Bid/RFP: Advertisement for Bids for 2017 Legal Publications

Bid Opening: November 29, 2016

For more information regarding the above published bids/RFPs, please visit the Anoka County Web Site at: www.AnokaCounty.us/bids.

(Published 10/25, 11/1, 2016 Anoka County Record) #539

ANOKA COUNTY BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

The Anoka County Board met on October 11, 2016. Standing

county committee information reports and action items were considered, and action was taken as necessary. The following resolutions were adopted: #2016-122 Lights on After School Program, #2016-123 Conveyance of Property, and #2016-124 Accept Donation. 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 11/1, 2016 Anoka County Record) #545

CITY OF HAM LAKE COUNTY OF ANOKA STATE OF MINNESOTA NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TAKE NOTICE, that pursuant to the requirements of Minnesota Law, a Public Hearing shall

be held before the Ham Lake Planning Commission on Monday, November 14, 2016 at 6:01 p.m. at the City Hall located at 15544 Central Avenue NE for the purpose of considering the application of Armino Perez requesting a Conditional Use Permit to operate Armino's Auto Body Inc. at 17159 Highway 65 NE, Suite A, a parcel of land situated in the City of Ham Lake, Anoka County, Minnesota and which is described as follows to wit: PIN #08-32-23-13-0005 UNPLATTED HAM LAKE TWP TH PT OF THE SW1/4 OF THE NE1/4 SEC 8-32-23 ANOKA CNTY, MN THAT IS DESC AS FOL-COM AT A PT ON THE FOL DESC LINE WHICH IS 1168 FT NLY OF THE S LINE OF SD SW1/4 OF NE1/4 AS MEASALONG SD LINE BEG AT A PT ON THE S LINE OF SD SEC 8 DIST 225.2 FT E OF THE S 1/4 COR THEREOF-TH RUN NLY AT AN ANGLE OF 92 DEG 9 MIN WITH SD S SEC LINE(MEAS FROM W TO N) FOR 4100 FT AND THERE TERMINATING PROCEEDING -TH E AND PRL WITH THE S LINE OF SD SEC 8 FOR A DISTOF 275 FT PROCEEDING-TH N AND PRL WITH THE E LINE OF SD SW1/4 OF NE1/4 TO THE N LINE OF SD SW1/4 OF NE1/4 PROCEEDING-TH W ALONG SD N LINE OF SD SW1/4 OF NE1/4 AND TO THE LINE FIRST DESC HEREIN AS SAME IS EXTENDED N TO INTERSECT THE SD N LINE OF SAID SW1/4 OF THE NE1/4 PROCEEDING-TH S ALONG SD LINE FIRST DESC HEREIN AND THE EXTENSION THEREOF N TO THE SD N LINE OF SD SW1/4 OF NE1/4 TO THE PT OF COM (SUBJ TO AND RESERVING AN EASE FOR RDWAY PURPOSES OVER THE N 3 3 FT THEREOF) (SUBJ TO ANY EXISTING EASERESTRICTIONS OR RESERVATIONS) At such hearing both written and oral comments will be

CAROL MARIE ENGLUND

STATE OF MINNESOTA DISTRICT COURT COUNTY OF ANOKA TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT Estate of Carol Marie Englund, aka Carol Englund, Carol M. Englund, and Kay Englund Decedent NOTICE OF AND ORDER FOR HEARING ON PETITION FOR DETERMINATION OF DESCENT

Patricia Therese Englund has filed a Petition for Determination of Descent. It is Ordered that on December 6, 2016, at 9:00 AM, a hearing will be held in this Court at 325 E. Main Street, Anoka, Minnesota 55303, on the petition.

The petition represents that the decedent died more than three (3) years ago leaving property in Minnesota. The petition requests the Court probate the decedent's Will, determine the descent of such property and assign the property to the persons entitled.

Any objections to the petition must be raised at the hearing or filed with the Court prior to the hearing. If the petition is proper and no objections are filed or raised, the petition will be granted.

Notice shall be given by publishing this Notice and Order as provided by law and by mailing a copy of this Notice and Order to each interested person by United States mail at least 14 days before the set time for the hearing.

Dated: October 17, 2016; /s/ Todd Schoffelman, Judge of District Court /s/ Lori Meyer, Court Administrator Sykora & Santini, PLLP; Jennifer Santini; MN# 03904787; 125 Main Street SE, Suite 339; Mpls, MN 55414; Tel: 612-492-1844; email: jen@sykorasantini.com (Published 11/1, 11/8, 2016 Anoka County Record) #542

heard.

DATED: November 1, 2016 Dawnette M. Shimek Zoning Official / Building Clerk, City of Ham Lake (Published 11/1, 2016 Anoka County Record) #523

CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME STATE OF MN MN STATUTES CHAPTER 333

The undersigned, who is or will be conducting business in the State of Minnesota under an assumed name, hereby certifies:

1. Assumed Name: **Save A Sloth**
2. Principal Place of Business:

183 Appaloosa Ct. Lino Lakes, MN 55014

3. Nameholder(s): **Brocz LLC 183 Appaloosa Ct. Lino Lakes, MN 55014**

4. I certify that I am authorized to sign this certificate and I further certify that I understand that by signing this certificate, I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Minnesota Statutes section 609.48 as if I had signed this certificate under oath.

FILED: 10/26/2016 # 911801000029 /s/ Coleman Iverson (Published 11/1, 11/8, 2016 Anoka County Record) #543

CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME STATE OF MN MN STATUTES CHAPTER 333

The undersigned, who is or will be conducting business in the State of Minnesota under an assumed name, hereby certifies:

1. Assumed Name: **SnaFit**
2. Principal Place of Business:

620 85th In NW Unit 8 Coon Rapids, MN 55433

3. Nameholder(s): **Kirsten Elizabeth Anderson 620 85th In NW Unit 8 Coon Rapids, MN 55433**

4. I certify that I am authorized to sign this certificate and I further certify that I understand that by signing this certificate, I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Minnesota Statutes section 609.48 as if I had signed this certificate under oath.

FILED: 7/5/2016 # 894154800023 /s/ Shelly J Till (Published 11/1, 11/8, 2016 Anoka County Record) #544

CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME STATE OF MN MN STATUTES CHAPTER 333

The undersigned, who is or will be conducting business in the State of Minnesota under an assumed name, hereby certifies:

1. Assumed Name: **till tax**
2. Principal Place of Business:

17446 Hiawatha Beach Dr NE Ham Lake, MN 55304

3. Nameholder(s): **Shelly JoAnn Till 17446 Hiawatha Beach Dr NE Ham Lake, MN 55304**

4. I certify that I am

authorized to sign this to the penalties of perjury FILED: 10/7/2016 certificate and I further as set forth in Minnesota # 907252800020 certify that I understand Statutes section 609.48 /s/ Shelly J Till that by signing this as if I had signed this (Published 10/25, 11/1, 2016 certificate, I am subject certificate under oath. Anoka County Record) #540

Notice of General and City Election November 8

To the citizens of the City of Oak Grove in the County of Anoka and State of Minnesota: NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that a General and City Election will be held in all of the election precincts of the City of Oak Grove at:

Precinct 1 – Oak Grove City Hall; 19900 Nightingale St NW
Precinct 2 - Abundant Life Church; 3840 197th Ave NW
Precinct 3 - Public Works Garage; 815 Viking Boulevard NW
Precinct 4 - Senior Center; 19900 Nightingale St NW

On Tuesday, November 8, 2016, at which time the polls will be open from the hours of 7:00 a.m. to the hour of 8:00 p.m. of the same day, for the purpose of electing the following in the City election: Two (2) Council Members for four year terms each: Weston Rolf, Paul M Tradewell, Scott Lawrence

Sherry F. Fiskewold, City Clerk

(Published 10/25, 11/1, 2016 Anoka County Record) #524

JASON D. NEEL and SARA L. NEEL

NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT LIEN FORECLOSURE SALE

THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION.

Date: October 25, 2016

YOU ARE NOTIFIED THAT:

1. Default has occurred in the terms and conditions of the Amended and Restated Declaration of Parkway Estates Townhouse Association, Inc., a Minnesota non-profit corporation, dated October 9, 2004, and recorded in the Office of the Anoka County Registrar of Titles on November 12, 2004, as Document No. 480524.001. An Assessment Lien Statement evidencing the lien created by such default, dated September 28, 2016, and with Jason D. Neel and Sara L. Neel as Lienees, was filed with such office on or about October 3, 2016, as Document No. 542438.001.

Date of Declaration (Amended): October 9, 2004

Lienees: Jason D. Neel and Sara L. Neel

Lienor: Parkway Estates Townhouse Association, Inc.

Date Recorded: November 12, 2004

Document No.: 480524.001

Where Recorded: Registrar of Titles of Anoka County, Minnesota

Assignment(s) of Mortgage: N/A

2. The original amount of the Assessment Lien was: \$1,830.00.

3. No action or proceeding at law is now pending to recover the debt secured by the Assessment Lien, or any part thereof, and no Lienee has been released from liability on the Assessment Lien.

4. The holder of the Assessment Lien has complied with all conditions precedent to the foreclosure of the Assessment Lien, and all notice and other requirements of applicable statutes.

5. At the date of this notice, the amount due on the Assessment Lien, and taxes, if any, paid by the holder of the Assessment Lien is \$2,067.00.

6. Pursuant to the power of sale in the Declaration and Minn. Stat. Ch. 515B, the Assessment Lien will be foreclosed, and the land described as follows:

Legal Description:

Lot 22, Block 2, Parkway Estates, CIC No. 190, Anoka County, Minnesota (Torrens property as evidenced by Certificate of Title No. 106679).

Property Address: 1076 122nd Ave. NE, Blaine, MN 55434

Parcel No(s): 08-31-23-23-0054

will be sold by the Sheriff of Anoka County, Minnesota, at public auction on Wednesday, December 28, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. at the Anoka County Sheriffs Office, 13301 Hanson Blvd. N.W., Andover, MN, 55304, to pay the debt then secured by the Assessment Lien and taxes on said land, if any, paid by the holder of the Assessment Lien, and the costs and disbursements, including attorneys' fees, allowed by law.

7. The time allowed by law for redemption by Lienees or Lienees' personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months after the date of sale. Each holder of a junior lien may redeem in the order and manner provided in Minnesota Statutes Chapters 580 and 582, beginning after the expiration of Lienees' redemption period.

8. THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE LIENEES, THE LIENEES' PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

9. If the Assessment Lien is not reinstated under Section 580.30 or the property redeemed under Section 580.23, and the subject real estate is an owner-occupied single family dwelling, the Lienees must vacate the property subject to the Assessment Lien by 11:59 p.m. on June 28, 2017.

PETERSON HABICHT, PA

Attorneys for Parkway Estates Townhouse Association, Inc.

/s/ Norman I. Taple (Atty. No. 331090); 33 South Sixth Street, Suite 3900

Minneapolis, MN 55402; (612) 836-5518; 21444-0001 (Neel)

THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR

(Published 10/25, 11/1, 11/8, 11/15, 11/22, 11/29, 2016 Anoka County Record) #536

CHARLES LEE KRUEGER

STATE OF MINNESOTA DISTRICT COURT COUNTY OF ANOKA TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT Estate of Charles Lee Krueger, a/k/a, Charles L. Krueger NOTICE OF INFORMAL PROBATE OF WILL AND APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND CREDITORS:

Notice is hereby given that an Application for informal probate of the above-named Decedent's last Will, dated September 13, 2001, has been filed with the Registrar herein, and the Application has been granted informally probating such Will. Any objections may be filed in the above named court and the same will be heard by the Court upon notice of hearing fixed for such purpose.

Notice is hereby further given that informal appointment of Nancy M. Krueger whose address is 13980 Butternut Street NW, Andover, MN 55304, as personal representative of the Estate of the above-named Decedent, has been made. Any heir, devisee, or other interested person may be entitled to appointment as personal representative or may object to the appointment of the personal representative, and the personal representative is empowered to fully administer the Estate, including, after 30 days from the date of issuance of letters, the power to sell, encumber, lease, or distribute real estate, unless objections thereto are filed with the Court (pursuant to Minn. Stat. Section 524.3-607), and the Court otherwise orders.

Notice is hereby given that ALL CREDITORS having claims against said Estate are required to present the same to said personal representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this notice or said claims will be barred.

Dated: October 24, 2016; /s/ Peggy Zdon, Registrar

/s/ Lori Meyer, Court Administrator

CHANDLER AND BROWN, LTD.

Jesse C. Beier; MN# 0391095; 332 Minnesota Street, Suite W2610; St. Paul, MN 55101; Telephone: 651-228-0497; Facsimile: 651-228-9237 e-mail: jbeier@chandlerandbrown.com

(Published 11/1, 11/8, 2016 Anoka County Record) #541

Anoka County Commissioner District 1:

Look Speaks At Oak Grove Forum

Complete Transcript

On Tuesday, October 25th, the Oak Grove Lions Club hosted a candidate forum at City Hall. Over 50 residents were in attendance for the event. Both candidates



Commissioner Matt Look

for County Commissioner District 1 were invited. Commissioner Matt Look was the only candidate who chose to participate.

Commissioner Matt Look's Responses

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Matt Look, and it has been my privilege and honor to serve as your County Commissioner in District #1. My constituents are well represented with the 14 boards and committees that I serve on.

I'm a 40 year resident of Anoka and Ramsey. I'm married with two terrific kids. I'm a graduate of Bethel University. I have a degree in political science and a minor in economics, and I'm a small business owner.

Prior to owning my small business, I worked in corporate America in marketing and sales. The largest company I worked for was 3M, and I find my experience in business to be my greatest asset. I have survived the recession because of my belief in needs versus wants, and I've translated those lessons learned to the County Board. As a result, the County's financial standing is stronger today, while we are one of the lowest taxed counties in the Metro.

I'm a member of First Baptist Church in Anoka. I've managed their softball team. I serve on the Board of Youth First, a disadvantaged youth organization. Our family serves on the Board of Anoka Ramsey Athletic Association, and as a former college level soccer player, I coached an undefeated boys' soccer team for the Northern Lights Soccer Association. In all, I've donated endless hours to my community.

I am the only candidate in this election for County Commissioner with experience as being a county commissioner and the only one with a successful track record of getting things accomplished quickly and respectfully at this level of government, while continuing to protect the taxpayer. I'm in my sixth year as a County Commissioner in Anoka and was a Ramsey City Councilmember prior to that for four years. I've served ten years in all.

I was elected Vice Chair of the Board and Chair of the Regional Rail by my peers. I also was appointed Chair of the Finance Committee and Chair of the Facilities and Maintenance Construction Committee. As Regional Rail Chair, we shut down the NLX boondoggle to Duluth. As Finance Chair, we created a cash in lieu of bonding for known expenses, ending the need to borrow money for those known expenses, and, as a result, our financial rating has gone from stable to strong at the county.

I'm running again to continue the good work that we've accomplished and utilize the experience I have to deal with the upcoming challenges, all with the idea of protecting the taxpayer. Because the people elected a majority of fiscal conservatives in Anoka County, we were able

to cut our spending, reduce our budget. We were able to lower our county property taxes, all without cutting services. And since being elected, we stopped unnecessary spending on lunches and trips, and we found \$40 million in waste, all of which has enabled us to levy the amount of money we tax at 2010 rates, making us again one of the lowest taxed counties in the Metro.

We've invested money in roads and bridges within our county, and we did all of this without the wheelage tax, which we got rid of. Bringing together federal, state, county, and city, our largest success story was the Armstrong Interchange on Highway 10.

Each year we score our roads before winter and after winter, and it's called a Pavement Index, and so far, our Pavement Index right now is in the 70th percentile, which is very, very high, and we're very happy about that, because we have been investing significantly in those — in those roads. That's the good news, but there's still work to be done on Highway 10, on Highways 47 and 65, all of which are state owned roads, and it's critical we continue to advocate that these roads be upgraded to meet the needs of our communities.

Four years ago, I said our most urgent need was debt reduction. We inherited \$190 million in debt from prior county boards, but since focusing on debt reduction, we've paid down \$50 million and now are scheduled to pay down 77.7 percent of our debt in the next ten years. That's something you will not hear from any other county out there today. We've done all this by maintaining our reserves. We, as I said, eliminated unnecessary expenditures, focused on managing our known expenses, paying cash in lieu of bonding, as mentioned, and holding tight on spending by evaluating the requests that we get from our various departments and evaluating that on a needs-versus-wants basis.

Today we export 70 percent of our labor force down our highways. Jobs are hard to find in our community, and I believe that if we stay this course, this course of low taxation, we will continue to attract business, we will build roads to today's standards, pay down debt, which will lead to financial security, community stability, commercial development, and job growth.

I'm very passionate about representing my constituents, and I'm passionate because I try and represent them to the best of my ability with honesty, integrity, and respect. And I want to thank everyone for coming here this evening.

MODERATOR: What role does government play in county government? What specifically do you believe is the function of the county government?

MATT LOOK: The county government is called an arm of the state, so essentially what happens is the state says, "We want the county to do the following area of work," and in some cases they fund us and in some cases they don't. It's called mandates. We receive them from the state, and it's either a funded mandate or an unfunded mandate, which it's commonly referred to. So the role of the county government is to enact what the state wants, but also we represent the constituents. We serve the same people. I serve District #1, which includes the City of Oak Grove. The councilmembers and the mayor serve the same people within this area, so it's incumbent upon us as city and county to work together to serve those same constituents, to make sure that the work we're doing is efficient, productive, not wasting time, that we're able to work together seamlessly and get the work done.

I think the role of government is also to — to

protect people. Right now we have a tough economy. People are not doing as well as — as they would hope to do, you know, and I think from the federal level, we've rebounded, and we're flying, you know, in tall, tall sails, but that's just not the case. And so from a — from a government standpoint, we need to make sure. One of the roles we need to make sure is that we spend money where money needs to be spent and not on foolish expenditures. Prior to coming to the County Board, there were — the county boards prior were chasing Viking stadiums, they were chasing, as I mentioned, the NLX train to Duluth, they were chasing projects that would ultimately cost these taxpayers significant money, ongoing money, and — and so making sure that the role that we have as government is right and good is then part of how the constituents decide during an election time but making sure that it's appropriate to — to the needs of the people.

MODERATOR: "It's the season of mudslinging. What's the misinformation about your race that you'd like to clear up if there is any?"

MATT LOOK: Well, it is a season of mudslinging, and there's been a lot of it. I want to start out by saying that our campaign, we have taken a position of being only positive. There is plenty to say about the opposition, but we don't want to bring that up. It's none of our issues, but we will defend ourselves, okay? If there's untrue statements, we will defend ourselves. But the reality is that we shouldn't approach this campaign season with, "What are you going to bring to the table?" as opposed to they are this or they are that, and isn't that horrible?

So that's the first deal, but, you know, some of the things that really, I think, are troubling is that all the information, votes we've taken, positions we've held on particular votes, it's all public information. You can access that information by simply doing a public data request or call me — that's fine. And yet sometimes that's harder to do than to make it up, and that's the unfortunate side of it. One thing is that — one of the rumors is that we've dangerously spent down our reserves at the county. In 2013, we had \$62 million in reserves, and these are dollars that in the event of a catastrophe, you still have enough money to operate government. In 2013, we had \$62 million in reserves. In 2017, we're slated to have \$75 million in reserves, so, in fact, we haven't spent down reserves. We have not touched reserves, but we have set up accounts that we're spending down for building maintenance, for example. You put money into it, you expect to spend that down, and there's been some confusion on that.

There's — there's a misconception about debt. We supported — I'm running on a concept of — somewhat of pay as you go or pay in lieu of borrowing, and in instances such as the county courthouse, where we did a — just recently did a remodel there that was \$8.8 million, we had to take out a debt on that, but as it relates to parking lots and roofs and carpeting and things like this, that used to all be built into one big — one or two big debts every single year that were taken out at the county. We've eliminated that part of it, so we don't — we don't take out debt any longer on that.

So, yes, I do — I have campaigned against not adding debt unless we have to. If we do a road project, for example, a very expensive road project, you know, \$10 [million] to \$20 million, you're going to have to take out debt on that, but that's a 50 year type of a lifespan to that, and so our Board has been very clear that we're willing to — willing to, you know, take debt out on those type of expenses. So hopefully that's covered some of the topics.

Look Forum *cont. on page B*

Commissioner Look

continued from page A

MODERATOR: How would you address low morale in turnover amongst county employees, specifically, MPCE Department and Highway Department?

MATT LOOK: This has been a topic of this campaign. There's certainly been a lot of conversation around it, and there's been — I think any time there's a campaign, there's always those that want to bring these type of topics up. First of all, I believe, first and foremost, that you don't have a right to work anywhere. You have a right to allocate your skills where your skills will allow you to work, so, in other words, if you want to work for one company, you can go work there, and if it's not working for you there, you can certainly leave and go work somewhere else. I think that's a reasonable approach to things.

But the reality is that there has been some disagreement. I know that in very stressful areas, such as human services, stressful areas such as 911, there's been some turnover there. People have been taxed to the limit. And especially in human services with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, our people have been put to a lot of additional stress, and quite honestly, they have chosen to leave. But what I will say is this. Our turnover rate is lower than other Metro counties. We've done analysis on this, and we are below average of other Metro similar size counties. What I will say, though, is in an area such as highway, some of our engineers, I don't know what's going on in engineering school out there, but they're not turning them out as fast as we need them, and these people are in high demand. And the reality is that they're being recruited from various different entities, and they're being recruited from us as well, so there's turnover there. It's creating a lot of stress in our highway department.

As it relates to the highway department, there is two or three contracts that have not been resolved yet. Union contracts, they were waiting for a mediation to be concluded. They want to see what the mediator came up with on that, see how, then, they wanted to structure their contract. There's been some disagreement. As a matter of fact, they requested a certain criteria in a contract, we offered that, their membership voted it down, so from that standpoint, I'm not sure what they're looking for, but we do hire professionals to handle that part of the negotiating. The county commissioners do not get involved. We kind of set the criteria. In other words, we'll give non union employees X amount of a raise. That will be the same amount for the union, and so we do control it from that standpoint, because we don't want a disparity between the two groups. We are a county with the lowest number of unions that I'm aware of, not as many as other counties, but we certainly want to keep the levels the same.

So as it relates to morale issues, we want to address them. We certainly want to address them. We want to be competitively priced in terms of what we pay people. We want to make sure that people feel respected, and I'll tell you this, from our highway department alone; a great job they do.

MODERATOR: Lake George is one of the most important natural resources in Oak Grove. For over nine years the Lake Improvement District has provided oversight to preserving the quality of life — or preserving the quality of the lake, including the control of invasive species. If elected, what actions would you take to support the LGID, Anoka County Conservation District, and the DNR in this effort?

MATT LOOK: I think we've already been

working with the Lake George Improvement District. There's a dam that is nearing failure at this point, that's owned by the DNR. We've been working with the DNR to try and correct that problem by replacing this dam. It's about a half a million dollar proposition. We've actually reached out to Ron Schara, who's very concerned about this, and sits on the Clean Water Legacy Act dollars, the three eighth cent sales tax that we pay, and has given us some ideas on how we can apply for these dollars. And upon receiving those dollars, we will certainly try and get this project underway.

The DNR does hold money aside in case there's a failure on this dam, and, keep in mind, if it fails, people on the lake are going to get a lot more lakeshore, because the water level's going to go down. So we want to prevent that from happening. We have a county park, obviously, which has a 330,000 some visitors annually, a large number of visitors come to this county park, and it's heavily used, and we want to make sure that we continue to maintain this recreational opportunity. Now, with that, comes invasive species, whether it comes on the trailers or boats or livewells or however these things are transported, I think we continue to find ways of how they're transported, so there's been educational dollars to help people understand that when you pull your boat out, you want to make sure that you pull your plug, you want to make sure that you empty your livewells, you want to make sure that if you see vegetation hanging off the side of your trailer, that you pull that out, because that, if transferred to a different body of water, will, in fact, start that growth.

And so from that standpoint, I think that — I'm hoping that that's been effective, but the DNR specifically controls the amount of acreage that can be treated every single year. I believe they gave the whole lake treatment this year, which was done, so hopefully from an evasive species standpoint, the Improvement District has gotten a handle on some of the invasive species and can control that. But it's one of our largest bodies of water in Anoka County — beautiful lake. If you have an opportunity to fish on it, it's just a lot of fun. I know that my boys enjoy going out there and fishing, and one of them fell overboard while fishing, but we'll have to remember that as he gets older to tease him, but there's a lot of fun on the lake, and a lot of people use it, and we certainly want to protect the resource and allow future generations to be able to recreate on it, while protecting the landowners as well that have a vested interest in that.

MODERATOR: What is your view on tax increases at the county, and would you vote for one, and why?

MATT LOOK: This year we voted on a 2.5 percent levy increase. That's a preliminary vote at this point, so, essentially, you have to set a preliminary levy, and then in November — it would be the December timeframe, you'd set the final levy. So in between now and December, we're actively trying to find ways where we can reduce that 2½ percent, okay? One of the reasons why we set it higher at 2½ percent is because, as I mentioned, we had three to four union contracts that were unsettled as of yet, which would have a financial ramification on where that levy needed to be.

So as those are starting to come in, we gain a better understanding of what sort of dollars we need. My goal has always been to come in flat, but it's important to understand that government will grow at 2 to 6 percent every single year — standard inflation, okay? So you're talking about raises, you're talking about cost of electricity, you're talking about gas for vehicles, you're talking about cost of salt for your roads. All these

things go up every single year incrementally, and so if you keep a budget flat, you've actually reduced between 2 to 6 percent, okay, because you didn't raise to account for those increases.

And so my goal is to try and find efficiencies, and that's one area this Board has been very strong in, is trying to introduce new technologies so that our employees have more efficient tools to do their job. We've gone paperless, so they don't have to chase files around different desks. It's all on the computer now. They can access it. It saves a tremendous amount of time. We're paperless, you don't have to have as many copiers, you don't have as many reams of paper being copied. It's been a fantastic implementation, but the reality is that to give our employees a 2½ percent raise, it's \$4½ million. Four-and-a-half million dollars to the county, that's what it costs, straight across the board.

And we want to keep competitive with all the other counties that are out there. As I mentioned, we have a below average turnover than the other counties, but, still, we would like to be better positioned than other counties, because turnover costs money. There's no question about it. For training, for trying to bring people up to speed, mistakes that they're going to make while they're coming up to speed, it's a cost of training. And so we want to make sure that we try and keep at least pace with the other counties that are out there. Now, Hennepin County is the highest paid county out there, okay, the highest paid, also the highest turnover in human services, so it's not always about the money. And I want to say that our benefits package is tremendous. We have a great benefits package. People recognize that. If you live in the area and you can drive to work in the morning and it's — as opposed to driving to Hennepin County, I know that your quality of life is better because of the close proximity that you work. So, anyways, we want to continue to make sure that we're as efficient as possible and keep the levy as low as possible.

MODERATOR: Can you explain the tax comparison chart, and what is it based on? The chart that says Oak Grove is the lowest taxed city in all of Anoka County. There's also a county chart that references all the relationships of every single county in Minnesota. Can you explain what that chart means, and what is it based on?

MATT LOOK: Counties are compared to each other. There's levy rates, there's the amount of taxes that you're charging, but that's based on the amount of people that are in there, so that's not necessarily a fair comparison. So essentially there's certified levies, there's non certified levies, and I'll tell you what, it is absolutely confusing, no questions about it.

So essentially what we do is we look at our chart of what we've charged in previous years, and, like I said, in 2010, they were climbing up, but we brought it back down, and we're level now with 2010. That means six years of inflation didn't happen at the county. But aside from that, your certified levy includes what you're charging, it includes any additional debt that you have out there. That's included in there for payment of that, and, essentially, you're stacked according to other counties, but that's not necessarily a fair comparison, because we have 330,000, people in our county. Other counties have so many more people, but so you have to kind of leverage your base on that. You really want to look at what's the difference or increase that they've seen or reduction that they're planning in the next years, and that gives you a snapshot of whether the commissioners are cutting spending or if they're increasing spending.

Forum Concludes

Oak Grove City Council:

Candidates Speak at Forum

Complete Transcript

MODERATOR: Please give us your opening statement

WESTON ROLF: I want to thank you guys for coming tonight. There's a lot of people, while I've been door knocking, that have really no idea what's going on within our city, and I sometimes think that's sad, because at the local level, we decide so many things for all of us when it comes to just, you know, the basic things within our community.

I have been married to my wife, Sarah — that's her in the back there — for 12 years. We've lived in Oak Grove for nine of them. We have three amazing children, Weston, Ashland, and Anniston, and they attend Cedar Creek Community School, and my boys actually play football for St. Francis, and we lost the playoff's game last night, so that was a little bit of a bummer.

I've been in law enforcement for 16 years, 12 of which I've been a licensed police officer, and I don't actually work for Anoka County, but I work for a suburb outside of Anoka County. My current rank is sergeant. My wife and I have owned a photography business called Agape Moments, which we actually have out of our home, and we've owned that for 12 years. I'm also a member of the Planning Commission for Oak Grove here, and I was nominated last month to be the Co chair of that. My family and I also attend Prairie Oak Community Church in Andover.

A couple of things here that I would say are my goals. One is public safety for the city here. I think it's important for the city to be involved, obviously, in public safety, which they are, but to make sure that people in our community are safe and feel safe while you're here. I also want to protect our property rights. One of the things that I really enjoy about this city is that we do have a business and we're able to do it out of our home, and I'd like to continue on with things like that for people within our city that it works for. Obviously, there's going to be some businesses that that's not going to work for, because it may decrease property values and other things like that, and those, obviously, we're going to have to say no to, but ones that really don't affect anybody except for yourself, I'd like to continue on with those. Also, when it comes to property rights, I'd like to continue on with the way the current council has done it. You're able to do a lot of things on your property here that you're not always able to do, for example, in Southern Andover. A lot of us moved here for the same reason, and that's something that I want to continue to — continue to go forward.

I also want to work on keeping the taxes down. Again, I'll commend the current council for the job that they've done on that. I want to continue on with that same path; however, I want to make sure we're not jeopardizing things, for example, like public safety while doing that. And then, lastly, I just kind of want to throw out there, I'm not a true politician. I never have said I am. There's some things that I don't know, some things tonight, questions maybe to be answered that I'm just really not sure about. The one thing I do know is I do know how to come up with those answers, obviously within a reasonable period of time to move forward with that. I could go on forever tonight, but obviously there's a couple of other people here who need to have that opportunity as well, so with that, Mayor, I'll be done.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: Good evening. I'd like to thank everybody for coming as well. I'd like to thank the Oak Grove Lions for giving us the opportunity tonight and in years past. I have had the honor and privilege of representing the residents of Oak Grove over the course of my past two terms.

Before being elected to City Council, I saw our local government, like so many government entities, operating in a way that seemed to be counteractive to the very residents it served. Spending increased every year, seeing that residents' voices weren't heard, residents who came to participate in council meetings weren't always treated well, and there seemed to be little transparency. I knew we as a city could do better than that. I decided to run for City Council with the

promise of doing just that. I promised to take what I have learned while running a business and use those strategies to help better Oak Grove.

I'm happy to report that I made good on my promises and have helped produce positive results for the city of Oak Grove. I'm the only candidate sitting up here with experience, and along with this experience comes a track record for all to see, and I'm proudly running on that record. Before being elected, Oak Grove had never seen a year without a tax increase. Since I have been elected, there hasn't been a tax increase in eight years. In fact, we as a council have actually reduced the city budget and subsequently the tax levy over 33 percent. You might ask how we could accomplish this after Oak Grove had continuously increased taxes since its inception. It's the result of running operations as you would in a business or even your own household. We reviewed and reassessed every part of the city's operations and never took this as "This is the way we've always done it," as an answer. We combined positions, we renegotiated contracts, changed accounting software, outsourced some operations, and continuously asked if there was a need before we were spending money. As a result, I helped turn a \$3.2 million city budget into a \$2.1 million budget, while the city is still providing for the same or better core services, funding our capital improvement plan for future expenditures, and continuing to pay cash for large projects as opposed to bonding as many communities do.

At the same time, I've helped the city of Oak Grove progress in other ways. During my tenure, this council has listened to our residents' concerns and experiences. An example of this is the stoplight currently being installed at Viking Boulevard and County Road 9. This decision was not made overnight. Because of our due diligence, our costs were lowered, and to help grow our sense of community, Acorn Day was brought back. Licenses and fees have been lowered in an effort to stimulate business and residential growth. In addition to these changes, we continue to maintain and improve our streets and fully fund our police and fire services. So with your support, I hope to continue down this new path.

PAUL TRADEWELL: I'll echo what Scott and Weston said to thank you all for taking the time out to come here tonight. Myself, I've been a part of Oak Grove for 44 years. We actually moved to Champlin for three to four years and then moved back, and we raised our two children, Brian and Bryce, here. They went to St. Francis High School. They're — they're out of school. One's 26, one's 23, so we're becoming empty nesters.

I've been married with my wife for 27 years. And I too draw from business experience. I've been working for corporate America since I was 19 years old. The way you look or attack things in corporate America can be a lot different than you do in — in businesses or even in your own businesses, which I'm also a co owner of a small consulting business that we do computer work, and so I understand those differences, and I understand what it — what it takes to look at a project, understand how to lay out that project, how to look at what kind of monies you have available or don't have available, what kind of funding you're going to need to complete that project and come up with a complete plan from start to finish before executing, so to have a good understanding whether or not it's something you're going to be able to afford to do or have the time to do it.

I like — I like the phrase we just — we're starting to learn it down at work, which is The Oz Principle. Some of you have heard it. "You see it, you own it, you solve it, you do it." And I didn't even know it, but that's pretty much how my whole life has been. I don't like living below the line, I like living above the line, so if there's something that needs to be done, I don't say, "Ah, it's somebody else's problem," I'll jump in, I'll help, I'll assist, I'll give whatever I can to assist in that — whatever that situation is.

Many people wonder — or have asked me, friends and stuff, "Well, why are you doing this?" A few years back there was something that came up in Oak Grove that was going to affect our area and would have affected all of Oak Grove, and my wife and the neighbors around — all around us, we became very involved and brought a lot of additional information, I think, to the — to the City Council, and I think, obviously, the outcome was very favorable for us, and so I found that doing something, whether it's at this level or even as a

resident, it's very important to become involved with the city. It's easy to say, "Well, I don't understand why they're doing that," or, "I didn't know that the road was going to be re tarred," or, "I didn't know that this was going to happen," but if you want to know those things, you need to be involved. I also think, though, we as a city can probably do more to notify our residents, so if something is happening, if there is a public meeting, only people within a thousand feet are notified, which I understand. We don't want to send out self addressed mailings to everybody in the city. That would just be prohibitive, but, as you know, today, you go to the dentist or you go to a doctor's, and they'll ask you, "Would you like to be reminded?" Well, "Yeah." "Can we text you?" "Absolutely." "Would you like emails on information, you know, once a month that we send out?" "Absolutely." So that's one thing I'd like to see, is that communication being opened up even wider, and at least offer that type of thing up on the website so that you can subscribe to it, and when there is a public meeting, you can be notified if you want to, and now you can't sit there and say, "Well, I didn't know." Well, you did know, and you just made a choice to mow the lawn instead of coming up and listening to what was going on in your community, which is fine, we're all busy.

So a couple of other goals I have was I would just like to continue to go on and bring that up that the current council in place is doing a wonderful job. This is a — we're not up here because they're doing a horrible job. We're up here because we want an opportunity to be part of something, to be part of the community, and be able to possibly lend something that would be helpful, different, a different perspective, a catalyst for different ideas. I don't have the experience in government politics, I don't have that kind of experience, but I can tell you I learn quick and I learn fast, and I'm very much frugal with my money, so I don't like to spend a lot of money, but I also know to save a dollar sometimes can cost you ten, so you've got to look really closely at what you're doing and not try to cut corners, because that can end up costing you a lot more money. I'm sure many of you go to Batteries Plus and reload your DeWalt batteries, and they last one year. You buy them from the store, and they last five. Well, how much money did you save? Twenty bucks? No, it just cost you \$100. So we've got to be smart in the way we look at things like that and, you know, make sure that we continue what the — the approach is that has served us so well. I guess I'm coming up on my time, so I'll stop there. Thank you.

MODERATOR: What things would you change if you got reelected?

SCOTT LAWRENCE: I think to continue on with what we've been doing, I think, would be great. And to tell you the truth, notifications to people, I think what Paul mentioned, I think is a great idea, to be able to actually sign up online or sign up with — with the City Hall and be able to be notified even if you're outside of the city for a public meeting.

WESTON ROLF: My big push, which most people know, is obviously public safety for the city. Right now we have a contract with one deputy on 20 hours a day. I don't think we need a lot more than that, but I would like to, I guess, investigate further into that to figure out if we should have one deputy on 24 hours a day, or maybe there should be — during rush hour, there should be two for a couple of hours or what, but I think that we need to, rather than just keep going with the same contract year after year after year, I think we at least need to look into it. The city is growing more and more every year, not a lot, but a little bit, and I just don't want us to get to a point that one day we're thinking, "Uh oh, we've really got to add a lot now, because we didn't worry about it for a few years." So that's something that I don't know if I'd exactly say needs to be changed, but I think, you know, we just need to investigate further.

PAUL TRADEWELL: Well, it's easy to sit here and think you know what needs to be changed. I think one of the things I've been hearing through different people in the community is right now building permits can take an awful long time to get, and I was just reading over our contract today and that, and there's a three to five day window that they're supposed to get back in, and, on average, it's taking two and a half to four weeks, and working in a corporate environment, we call them SLAs, service level agreements. I think we should hold

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them accountable for you will return a building permit, if everything is provided properly to you, in X amount of days. If you don't, then part of that money you were going to get, you're not going to get it anymore, because you're not doing your job. If you aren't doing your job, you would be let go or you'd be given — written up or whatever else. I don't know that we should continue to let them do that. It seems like we're at the back of the list. So that's one thing I'd like to see changed. I'm not saying we need to re-insource it. I'm saying we need to look at it — and better to serve our community and — and the builders in our community that are bringing homes into our community.

MODERATOR: What volunteer groups do you already belong to?

PAUL TRADEWELL: Not a lot at this time. My kids have moved on, so I haven't been doing a lot with that. The work that I do down at — where I'm employed, we do a lot of things in fundraisers, so I've been involved at that level, but currently I have not — I used to coach for football, but, again, all my children have outgrown that. I volunteered my time with the Lake George Conservation Acorn Days. So right now I would have to say I haven't been doing a lot of that, to be honest.

WESTON ROLF: I'm not involved with a lot of volunteering at this time. I have a full time job at our business and our kids and everything else. I'm pretty busy. For the department I work for, we have a program called the Police Explorers, which is kids that — from the age of 14 to I guess it's adults, or the age of 21 — don't let that fool you. I do get paid for that an hourly rate, but that is something that we volunteer for. We definitely put in more hours than we get paid for, but I would say I probably — at least currently in my life, that's — would be about the only volunteer work that I'm currently doing.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: As far as volunteer work, I've chaired multiple ad hoc committees with the city earlier on when I started. I've also volunteered for the Utility Commission here. I've also volunteered with my church of St. Patrick's, their annual fish fry, and I've coached multiple youth sports teams with my kids.

MODERATOR: What role does government have?

WESTON ROLF: I would say that government has a role of protecting all of us, obviously; providing roads for us, having building inspectors make sure that things are built properly, to have parks for kids, and to basically keep our lives, I guess — I don't want to say to keep them more organized, but to have services out there that some of us need. We don't always need it every day, but to have those services out there, obviously every day, because some people need them more often than others. When you kind of put it all together, it's — government is just there for, again, our safety and to provide roads and services that — that we need to have sometimes.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: I think the role of government should be limited. I think it should operate in the background, doing things for the greater good that people can't do on their own — infrastructure, police, fire, that sort of thing. I don't think it should be operating front and center in people's lives every day. I don't think we should necessarily have roving ordinance enforcement running around the city or anything like that. Obviously, if we get a complaint, we definitely will address it, so, as I said, it should be limited and take care of the things that people can't put together themselves as far as streets and police and fire.

PAUL TRADEWELL: It's hard being at the end of the line. Less is more, right? I agree with that sentiment that Scott had said, but, obviously we do need services. So that's was one of the things, providing services, protecting us from other government entities like the Met Council. I know that Oak Grove is actively pursuing and trying to — there's a corner of Oak Grove that has been deemed high density, meaning some day there's going to be city sewer and water at home, and, in fact, my line was affected by it, so where everyone else in Oak Grove can split lots down to two and a half acres, I cannot do that with some land that we have, so I think government, such as at this level, should step in at those points in time and try to protect their residents for those types of things, but less is more, which is — that's exactly what you guys have been doing for the

last four or five years, is less is more, but I think you still have to have enough to maintain your services.

MODERATOR: How will you preserve our reasonably low property taxes for our residents?

PAUL TRADEWELL: Well, I guess I would use the resources around me, such as the mayor, such as other council members, such as staffing, and continue to work with them to understand how it's been accomplished in the past. I don't have a lot of that experience at the government level, so the only thing I can do is leverage the people around me who have a better understanding of it, come up to speed on it, and, you know, I learn — I believe that you should first come in and zip the mouth, listen, understand, get an understanding before you start coming in with guns blazing and saying, I'm going to change all this stuff. Well, you can't do that. You first have to have an understanding of why things were done the way they were done before you can interject or maybe have some positive influence on those different things.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: I think I would continue doing what we've done. I think we have quite a track record of it. You know, I believe I'd like to see the residents keep as much of their own money in their pockets that can be. They entrust us with the money that we need to run government, and I — I don't like to look at the residents as just a — a bottomless pocket of money. It's quite the opposite, so I think we do that by keeping our government the right sized, doing things efficiently, and doing them well, and I always look at the best way to do things, just like you would in the private sector.

WESTON ROLF: You know, the — like I say, the city — I'm not trying to pat everybody on the back here, but I guess I am — is — is the current council has done a good job here with trying to keep spending low, and they've made some tough choices, which I respect as a resident in the city myself. The thing that always concerns me, you know, like Paul said, you know, I'm not on the council, and there's certain things that I'm not aware of that kind of go on within the city here behind the scenes, though I can tell you from other cities and knowing other people who live in other cities or work for other cities — I'm sorry — is I hear often that, you know, "This is the budget. We need to spend it all, or else we won't get it next year." And I've heard that so many times. I look at it and say, well, there are times that those items need to be purchased, and there's times that they don't, and I would like to, you know, look into those things more often and figure out what actually needs to be purchased and what doesn't, and if it does, then I guess it does, but if it doesn't, maybe it can wait another year, maybe it can wait a couple of years. You know, the same managed kind of a balancing act to that that you don't want to have — I mean, I guess we said a fire truck, for example. You don't want to have to buy three of them in one year, because the city would be broke. So I think it's kind of a balancing act and also being involved and paying attention to what — what is being purchased and so forth.

MODERATOR: Would you be working to create your own legacy or work for the good of the city during your term?

SCOTT LAWRENCE: Well, I think my record shows I've been working for the good of the city. A lot of times we have consensus up here. At the same time, I'm not one to come up and just go along to get along. If there's something I feel strongly about that is an opposing opinion, I definitely voice that, and, at that time, usually we can have a good discussion up here, which works well, but I think my record speaks for itself, and I definitely work for the residents of the city.

WESTON ROLF: I would say the same thing. I think anybody who is interested in running for council or is elected to the council, I think they always have their own ideas and a couple of little tweaks, and that's kind of how I look at the current council. I mean, I don't want to keep repeating myself, but overall, they're doing a good job, and my own opinion is I'd like to come in and just tweak a couple of little things or at least work towards doing that. I'm not looking to come in and turn the place upside down, because I don't think that's necessary. There might be a time and place where that is, but currently, right now, I don't think that's the case.

PAUL TRADEWELL: I echo what the two gentlemen to my — to my right just said, and that is I'll definitely work for the community. It's in my article that

you read and all that. I don't see myself as a politician. I like to see myself as a public servant. I'd like to see myself as somebody that would help other people in need, and I would take that exact same approach to wherever I'm at, whether it's the City Council, on the Planning and Zoning, and if I'm not on any of these, sitting out — out in the audience, which can be almost as helpful. So definitely for — for the citizens of Oak Grove, and I almost kind of want to be that — the eyes and ears right now. I want to get more people involved, and I've been coming up here for two years with — my wife and I have been coming up here for two years on and off and a lot of this last year, and there's not a lot of people, and I want to see more people, not just when there's going to be a problem — just somehow figure out how we're going to get more people involved, whether that's through communication or other — other methodologies.

MODERATOR: Would you vote to increase taxes, and, if so, why?

WESTON ROLF: I'm a fiscally responsible person. I have a hard time looking at my tax statement every year, and some of it going up, some of it going down, sometimes the percentage says my house is worth less, yet the taxes went up. I don't quite understand how all of that works, but I'm not going to say I never would, because there just are certain things like cost of living and additional services that cities need sometimes, but I also think it's worth looking everything over. You know, for example, if we're building 40 some houses in the city, that's going to be more tax revenue, so can that offset the increases that there are within the city? So I guess to answer your question, it's hard for me to even say this, but if need be to make sure that the citizens in the community have the services which they need or are required by the city to provide, then I guess I would — I'd have a difficult time, but I would have to say yes.

PAUL TRADEWELL: I think it's a fact of life. Unfortunately, everything we do, the cost of living. Even though we've been flatlined for four years or eight years, there are things that had to be cut, there's things that had to be done. Most of them probably are okay to do, but at some point, we're going to have to raise taxes to either retain talent to better our first responders. We're going to have to do it, so am I for it? Absolutely not. Will I have to do it in this position? Absolutely, I will, because it's part of our duty, but it's to be smart about how we're doing it and to spend as little as possible with also providing that service. That's what I feel. Obviously, I'm not there yet, so I don't know, but that's what I feel.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: I would never say never, but I — after being up here for eight years, I have never raised taxes or voted to raise taxes. In fact, we've lowered them over 33 percent, so I think we're at a much better starting point at this point. I voted along to keep the levy flat again this year already, so I'm committed to that, and I would commit to keeping it flat next year, looking at how we are — how we're sitting right now, so in the next two years, so that would be a total of ten years of either reduction or — or keeping it flat. So at least for those two years, but as I said, I'd never say never.

MODERATOR: As you know, we don't have an internal building department anymore. We outsourced that. What's your position on hiring a building official instead of sending money out to East Bethel?

PAUL TRADEWELL: I think it needs to be looked at. I don't know what the answer is. Bringing it internal? I do think we need to look at it, and, as you heard my earlier comment, whatever it will take to make that process better, I would be in favor of. I think currently the — the SLAs on it and we've got to be much tighter if we're going to continue to outsource it to another city, whether it's East Bethel or wherever it is. I think we have to have some controls and we have to have some measurements in place to make sure that whoever we contract is meeting — if you're spending hard earned money, you want to make sure you're getting your service, not a "maybe this," or "maybe that," or whatever else, so definitely I think that needs to be taken a look at. I don't know that bringing it back in is the answer. I just know that we need to look at it and correct or fix or whatever we need to do to correct it.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: Well, we've recently started a discussion on the council. As of right now, residents

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are spending less to get their building permits because of what we've done. It sounds like right now there may be a lack of communication. I think we definitely need to let them know what our expectations are, and they need to meet those expectations to keep going that way. If building increases significantly, obviously I would be much more apt to look at bringing it back in house, because as of right now, I guess I think that we should make sure they know what our expectation is and know that they need to live up to that.

WESTON ROLF: Well, I guess my opinion is I would like the city to look into it. I don't have enough information to say one way or the other whether that should happen or not. To be honest with you, I don't know what a building inspector would cost the city or who benefits from those types of things, but on the same hand, the turnaround time in the building department needs to be quicker, if you ask me. And I guess what I'm more or less getting at is I do think that the city should look into it, and I think they should look into it now, but I wouldn't say that, yes, let's go out there and hire somebody, because, again, I don't have enough information to know what that would actually cost the city.

MODERATOR: What is the comprehensive plan for the city of Oak Grove? And define its role in the city operations.

PAUL TRADEWELL: Well, I don't know a lot about it yet. Obviously, that's one of the things I want to learn. In fact, it's one of the things I want to be — I don't know if I can be a part of that or not on the Planning and Zoning. If I don't make it to the City Council, regardless of — if I can be involved, I want to be involved. I just — I know it's kind of like laying out a plan in the future and then — so that we have someplace to go, but it's kind of like going out to the future and looking back and saying, "Okay, how did we get to here, to this point?" That's my take on what it is. If it's incorrect, you can, please correct me. So I would like to be as involved as possible with it, and, like I said, I not only have a personal interest in it, I just — I don't like feeling — you know, and I've talked to the council, and they've actually, you know, educated me on it. I don't — I feel like we're hostage to this Met Council. I mean, they — I shouldn't say like bad words, so I just feel like we're a hostage to them, so I — I definitely would like to be part of it — anything, any way, any new shape or form.

WESTON ROLF: Well, I do know that it's basically in the city's plans to gather every decade, and I think I would agree with just about everybody that the southeast portion of the city, the Met Council's coming in and we need different rules for them than for the rest of us in the city. And that's something that I would like to be a part of and something I would like to see the city continue to try and fight in order for everybody in our city to be able to have the same — same rules and opportunities as three fourths of our city. If I remember right, I do believe it's due, I think it's 2018, which means next year or so, the city's going to start developing that again, and I would hope we continue on with two and a half acres of the rest — the rest of the city.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: You know, I'll be working on the 2040 Comp Plan coming up. It's basically a plan that we're required by the Met Council to come up with land designations, that sort of thing. I think it's a straight up overreach by a — by an appointed group who has no accountability, and every chance I've had to fight that, I have. I voted no to the last comp plan they had that they wanted to force the high density, small lots in the Southeast corner of the city.

MODERATOR: What's your opinion of the Met Council, and what would you do for the betterment of the Oak Grove residents?

SCOTT LAWRENCE: I don't think I'd mince words too much. It's an overreach, and it's an appointed group who has no accountability. Truthfully, I don't think they should just be revised or changed. I think they should be disbanded. I think they're trying to mandate things, unfunded mandates most of the time, and they've been shown to make terrible projections and terrible choices, so I think we're better having the control here at the local level.

PAUL TRADEWELL: I just think — I'd have to

echo, like I said, most of my education on it has come from the council, and I would just echo 100 percent what Scott is saying and I agree 100 percent. Sorry, but it's one of those times when I'm trying — my wife says, "Count to ten," I'm trying to count to ten before I say something I'll regret.

WESTON ROLF: You know, Scott, I think you hit the nail right on the head. I don't know what I can say that would add anything to that except kind of like the last question, that the city needs to continue to try and fight that until the end.

MODERATOR: If you were asked to define the city of Oak Grove, Minnesota, in your words.

WESTON ROLF: The city of Oak Grove is a great city, and I think it's a great place for myself, who lives with my family, and all of us. There's a ton of opportunities here to be doing a lot of different things, and there's very little crime, and there's, you know, a great lake, Lake George, and just, you know, if I had to just throw it out there, I'd just say, you know, it's a great place to live and to be, and there's really not much I would change about it.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: I think it's the greatest city in Minnesota to live. I think we have government in the background as I was alluding to before, a limited government that's fiscally conservative, which I think helps out the residents in the end. And it's a place where you can enjoy your property and pursue your family life and liberty and be prosperous.

PAUL TRADEWELL: I just think of youth, I think of open, I think of maple and oak trees. I love them both. I think of family when I think of Oak Grove, and, obviously, since I grew up here and I love Oak Grove. I will probably end up dying here and being buried here, although I want to go South for the winter, but — at some point, but, yeah — no, it's a great city, and I think all of the people in this community are really friendly, and I can't think of any other place I'd rather live. So plain and simple.

MODERATOR: Water has been in the news statewide for the past year and a half, whether it's polluted lakes, rivers, buffer zones, lakeshore management, urban runoff, or private wells. The Upper Rum River Watershed District is the key agency in the management of water throughout Oak Grove. What role should Oak Grove play in supporting the work of the district?

SCOTT LAWRENCE: I think probably priority, or number one, and I've brought it up before, and we've spoken about it in the council, is to, I think, solicit the county and DNR for a little more assistance. I think at present Matt Look is doing a great job, and I would definitely hit up the county since they have a county park there to maybe contribute or help out with that a little more. So I think we could advocate better for us with the different entities.

PAUL TRADEWELL: I don't have a lot of knowledge yet on this. My wife and I just joined — we have a seasonal over in Wisconsin, and we were just allowed this year, and we signed up immediately, for the Webb Lake Association, and so I'm starting to learn that. There's not a lot of meetings, so I haven't been able to gather a lot of information, but obviously we need to prepare our resources and, obviously, with that being one of the only lakes in Oak Grove, we need to work at every different angle to try to preserve that. So I just can't speak at the government level on that yet at this time, and if you give me a homework assignment, I'll certainly come back and tell you, but I don't have anything further.

WESTON ROLF: You know, I would agree with both of them that I think the county needs to be involved in that. Obviously, the DNR — and I think the city can be involved at some level. You know, it's such a large part of our city, but, on the same hand, at the local level, I think there's only so much that we can do in order to, you know, preserve all of that. But I think the county and DNR need to — need to be involved in that quite a bit.

MODERATOR: What is your role as a City Council member? Tell us the job description in your own words.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: I think it's to be a good steward of the residents' money. They pay taxes, they entrust us with their money to do what's right. I think that's number one, to make good choices and run the government as efficiently and as effectively as we can.

PAUL TRADEWELL: Well, one, to inform; two, to

look and spend money as if it were your own which means, for me, don't spend it unless we have to spend it. I would hope it would be to better inform the community. That's where I feel I've been left out as a resident, is unless I come up and do a better part of being part of it, which we have now, I just think there should be more information given to us. So that's one of the roles and, obviously, to just continue making this one of the better cities to be living in, so whatever that takes. I don't know what that is today, but whatever that would take.

WESTON ROLF: Oh, my thought of the role would be to represent the city, all the citizens within the city. Obviously, not everybody can be sitting up here and making all the decisions, but it's to represent everybody and to listen to people and to decide what I think is best for the community, whether that's public safety or roads or Lake George or all those different items. I think it's just my job to listen and to represent all of us.

MODERATOR: Have you ever dealt with or are you good at dealing with difficult situations? And define a personal situation and the outcome of that situation.

PAUL TRADEWELL: At my job, I'm the senior systems engineer. I develop processes for us to deploy workstations so anything around client technologies and supporting those workstations. Like anything, you come up with things every day that you don't know anything about. The way I attack it is first to understand it but then come up with a plan and then to execute on it. I mean, that's all you can do. You have to first fully understand whatever that problem is, and that's the best way, and then once you've calmed down, then you come up with how you're going to go about executing and correcting that issue or problem. That would be a work related problem. Obviously, there's a lot of examples, personal and other things, but look at the situation, assess the situation, come up with a plan, and then execute.

WESTON ROLF: Well, I've been in law enforcement for 16 years, so I've had a few situations daily. But more of a personal one would be the Planning Commission. We talked about a cell phone tower, putting it in about a mile from here, and one particular gentleman, I don't see him in the audience tonight, he's definitely against it, and I understand. I've listened to him, I've stopped out at his house. It just so happens he's our neighbor on our cabin, so I've heard he's knocked on my door, he's come to the cabin, I mean, I've heard it from every which direction, and I did what I could to try to help him out, but at the end of the day, I had to vote — or, rather, vote for a recommendation to the council to approve it based on it fit the ordinance, the statutes, it fit everything. But it was rather difficult, and I started thinking is my \$69 a month really worth dealing with these situations when now it's kind of a unique situation with him, being that, again, we're neighbors at the cabin? But when it was all said and done, I voted to recommend it, and we actually had a good sit down conversation about it afterwards, and we're both older, but it took a few months to kind of work through those things, but that would be probably the most personal thing. Again, at my job, I deal with those situations daily, but that would be more of a personal situation somewhat related to the city.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: I would say maybe my role as a business owner, I've had some great employees, I've had some difficult employees that can prove to be tough. And I guess what I've found — I've turned around some employees who started to be fairly poor producers and maybe spilling over into the rest of the people there — by sitting down and communicating with them. I think communication is key, of course, and I always make sure to listen instead of waiting just for my turn to talk when I already know what I'm going to say. I want to make sure that I know that both on the same page and then I hear what their concerns are and maybe what troubles they're having, so then I can respond to them and try to get us both on the same page.

MODERATOR: How would you preserve the rural footprint of the city?

WESTON ROLF: To back up just a little bit, when I was young, I had a friend who had always told me, "When I grow up, I am moving to the Cities," and I said, "When I grow up, I am moving out here." And I love that everybody has acreage and there's just a lot of things going on, and the crime is down, and just,

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you know, if you wanted to know your neighbor, you could, and if you didn't want to, you didn't really have to, but when you kind of put all that together, that's why I moved here, and that's the way I want to keep it. You know, I hear often that, "Oh, it's great, there's more building, there's more things going on, and that's great," or, you know, the tax base, but I look at it that I don't want Oak Grove to really develop, because this is why I moved here. You know, I have a new house on each side of me now, and — which is great, they're good people, but it was nice when it was just open, and, unfortunately, the way the world works, it's going to continue to keep growing. There's not anything that really we can do to prevent that, but I would do what I could to try and keep it — keep Oak Grove the way it is, because I do believe that's why the majority of us moved here.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: Well, I don't think anybody wants to stay stagnant, nor could we. We want to grow, but at the same time, I think the number one trait to keep Oak Grove the way it is is that two and a half acre designation for the majority of the city, which is why — which is why I fought against the Met Council like I have, because I think that really keeps the feel of the city of Oak Grove. It's unlike many other cities, so I think that's a big part of it.

PAUL TRADEWELL: I live on acreage myself, but I also understand there's sections to our north, and they're contributing a large tax base to us also, and there's more high density. To keep what we have is going to come at a cost at some point in time, because if you have four people on two and a half acres versus one person, as infrastructure continues to build, you've got to be able to support that. So I think it's a balance. I want to see what we have. I want to keep the acreage that I have. I like that. I think the residents of Oak Grove like that, but I think we have to continue to balance between the two, because businesses and some high density places do help offset and keep our taxes lower like we like them. So it's kind of like you can't have your cake and eat it too, so you can have a — nibble a little of the cake, and, you know, we can hopefully keep our — our bigger lots and that type of thing. But I think in the end, it's going to have to be a balance, or it could become really costly to try to maintain that.

MODERATOR: What is the city levy, and how is that related to your yearly tax savings?

WESTON ROLF: Well, I know the city sets a levy, and they do what they can to kind of reduce things down, it's kind of hard to explain here. You have all the homes, you have all the expenses, and basically the levy is what more or less determines what your property taxes are going to be. I guess if you increased the levy, that's obviously going to increase your taxes, but I think that's about the best way I can explain it.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: Well, specifically, as I said, our city tax levy's about \$2.1 million, but it's the amount the City Council sets to cover its operating expenses, so the better we are at running things efficiently, the better, generally, we're going to be able to keep that levy lower. But the tax levy covers the operating expenses, and that of course is divided up between the households in the city.

PAUL TRADEWELL: I think they've answered it. I just know it costs me money. That's what I know, so that's about the only thing I could add, so it's what we pay.

MODERATOR: What are your plans to keep the city's costs in line so that our taxes don't increase?

PAUL TRADEWELL: I think that once you see the operating expenses, you would have to go over those numbers. I mean, to sit here and say that I wouldn't know what that answer is, I don't know what that answer is. I know that you have to take a look at all costs. When we've come up here, even last year, it's pretty stressed. There's all these line items. We don't have the privilege to question them as you guys are up here talking about them, but we do have the ability to look through them, so obviously if there's items in there that I don't think are important or don't think need to be there, then obviously I would have to consult with the city staff and with Council to find out if it's something that we can do — change, make adjustments to, but to sit here, I mean, other than possibly Scott, I don't know what the answer to that really is right now. I'd have to

see the budget. We'd have to go over that budget. We'd have to then have discussions around certain items. If I didn't have an understanding of why we're spending that money and then, you know, based on five people making a decision, we'd do whatever's best for the city. Obviously, you guys have been trying to hold down costs, so, but obviously that would still be the direction when we'd try to increase costs.

WESTON ROLF: Well, I mean, my goal would be just to keep things the way they are, always keep them as low as we can, but I don't think we're going to be able to sit here and guarantee that things will not go up. It hurts me to say that, but I would say, you know, you've got to look at the budget every year, and things obviously go up in price. And sometimes there's more staff and sometimes there will be less staff. You know, there's houses being built, this is the turnaround part of it. Now, the houses being built will help offset the budget rather than just having, you know, the open land, but I think just by looking at things line by line and deciding if it's necessary or not, then, unfortunately, in government, there's a lot of things that are, but there's also a lot of things that are not. You know, what I told residents within the city — I've been out door knocking — is that I'm not going to sit here and say that this thing should be bought or shouldn't be bought, but I'm definitely going to ask the questions, and, after asking the question, if it needs to, then maybe it does, but maybe it doesn't. So my goal would be — is that I would try to run this just like we run — my wife and I run our business, and that if it needs to be purchased, it does, and if it doesn't, then you don't purchase it. And we've done very well with that, and I would hope to kind of bring that same direction here.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: I would say too, I think we've done a lot of things. I mentioned some of the things we've done, but always never rest, always look for a better way to do things. Don't necessarily just do it the conventional way. Run it like a business. Always look for cost savings, and I can use one example that we did while I was in Council. We had a finance director here that was salaried but was working well over 40 hours, making well over \$100,000 plus benefits. We chose to look for other options. We looked to outsource to a financial firm. As they got comfortable, as they came in, they were able to do — they said "We definitely don't need five days to be here. We can actually be here a couple of days a week," and they're doing it for a third of what it was when it was being done in house. And at the time when we had a finance director, we were getting high level accounting reports that most of us could barely decipher and go through as it was. Our new firm gives us reports that we can act on and decipher, and it's a win/win. It works great. I think there's a lot of opportunities to do that.

MODERATOR: Why should the residents of Oak Grove vote for you to be the City of Oak Grove — as it's City Councilmember?

PAUL TRADEWELL: That's a great question. I ask myself that question. No, in all seriousness, if you want somebody that will go after — ask the questions that sometimes people don't want to ask, because they're afraid they'll look dumb when asking them, they're afraid that, you know, you already know the answer, that's me. I'm not afraid of that. It doesn't bother me to ask those questions. Sometimes you look a little dumb asking them, because they're like, "Well, it's right there," and you're like, "But, you know what, I asked, because I had a question," so my philosophy on anything in life is to ask questions. If I don't understand, ask it, and if the person can't answer the question, ask another person so you can get the answer that you need to better understand the situation.

If you want somebody that's, you know, going to work on your behalf, that is going to be a public servant to you — and I will just work as hard as I can. I'm going to continue, regardless if I make it or not, I'm going to continue to come up here, and I'm going to continue to work for you even if I'm not on the City Council. So that's what I'm going to do as long as I'm here in Oak Grove, because I think it's not that anyone's done anything wrong, but there's just always room for improvement. So let me be your eyes, let me be your ears, let me help you help us communicate better to you, and that's the base principle of why I want to be up on the City Council. I just want to be able to get that information out to all the residents so that you — when the things matter to you, that you are informed. So vote for me if you want to be better informed. And there's — like you said, you can go on and on and on, there's a

million things, but that's the number one thing. That's what's been driving me here. It was I didn't feel I was informed enough in that situation that happened a few years ago. I was thankful to be appointed onto the Planning and Zoning commission by the current council, so I appreciate that, and I'm learning more and more every day and every time I'm up here, so let me go get it and I'll do it for you and if you don't like it, that's fine too. We don't all have to — my brother always says, "Some things we've just got to agree to disagree," but I'm here to work for you.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: Well, as I said, I'm proudly running on my record. In my case, our past results are indicative of future performance. I take it very seriously, and I look at the residents more as stakeholders of a corporation. I want the best return for the lowest investment, so I think I've done that in the past, and I would definitely continue to do that going forward.

WESTON ROLF: I'm not going to sit here and say that I'm the right person for everybody here, but if you want somebody who's fiscally responsible, who's going to ask the questions and decide if it really needs to be purchased or not or if there's different ways that we can do things, then I'm your guy. If you want public safety to be a priority, I'm your guy. If you want to have your property rights protected, I'm your guy. I will admit that I'm probably not everybody's in here, and I can respect that. If I had everybody's vote in here, that would be great, but if those are things that are a priority to you, those are the things that I am going to work for — or work towards. If they're not, then I can respect that too.

MODERATOR: Closing statement if you wish.

PAUL TRADEWELL: I don't know what more could be said, I mean, without going on and on and on.

WESTON ROLF: What I would say to all the residents of the city, the good news is I don't think there's a person up here who's unfit to do this position. I think everybody up here could do a fine job. If you vote for me and I'm elected, that's great, and if you don't, I'll find something else to do. But either way, the city is going to continue moving forward. There's nobody up here that I feel is like, "Oh, we've really got to do what we can to get him out," or — I shouldn't point to you. But, again, at the end of the day, kind of like I just said in the last question, if there's some things that are important to you, then I'm your guy, and if they're not, then I understand that too. But either way, I think we're in a good position to keep moving forward, and that definitely makes me happy.

SCOTT LAWRENCE: My priorities are now as they were when I was elected to the City Council eight years ago. So often we hear people disappointed in their elected officials after they voted for them and they were voted into office. Time after time, you hear about candidates saying one thing and doing another when they get there. I'm proud to say that I'm running on my record, and I've done and continue to strive to do what I have promised the residents of Oak Grove. I've fought to keep our large lots despite Met Council's desire for the opposite. I have been a strong advocate for property owner rights. I've focused the city priorities on delivering essential core services, such as police, fire, and roads at the best possible value for the taxpayer dollars. This ensures our tax levy stays low while still being able to provide good costs — good core services to which our residents are accustomed.

When I was elected, we, the Council, looked for and examined the ways to do things more efficiently and cost effectively. Instead of business as usual, I'm proud to report these measures have contributed to a rare trend of the city's tax levy and the first in Oak Grove's history. As I said, we, the Council, reduced our operating budget over 33 percent. Implementing these efficiencies and private sector ideas has allowed us to offer equal services at the same or higher level than before, with substantial savings to our residents. Utilizing my business acumen and sense of community, I believe my approach to growth and planning has helped to shape our community for the better, allowing for growth while protecting our heritage. This way we all may prosper.

I'm a parent, a spouse, a business owner, and your neighbor. It's an honor to serve, and I will continue to take the residents' trust very seriously. I look forward to ongoing success for the city of Oak Grove.

Forum Concludes