



Hennepin County Commissioner Linda Higgins

The Very First Issue

In Touch With District 2

Commissioner Linda Higgins Sworn In



Commissioner Linda Higgins was elected in the November election with approximately 60% of the votes cast. She was sworn in on November 20 to fill the term of Commissioner Mark Stenglein, who left the position in June to head the Minneapolis Downtown Council.

Commissioner Higgins then was sworn in again on January 8, 2013, along with the four other commissioners who stood for election in 2012.

After the swearing-in ceremony, the board then organized itself for the next two-year period.

Commissioner Mike Opat, who represents District 1, which includes Robbinsdale, Crystal, New Hope, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, and other nearby communities, was elected chair of the board. Jan Callison, who represents the Lake Minnetonka area, is the vice chair.

The board also chose chairs and vice chairs of its various committees. Commissioner Higgins is the new chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, and she co-chairs the Intergovernmental Relations Committee with Commissioner Peter McLaughlin. Commissioners serve on all committees.

Commissioners also were chosen for many outside boards that have county representation. Commissioner Higgins will represent the board on the [Association of](#)

[Minnesota Counties](#) board and its Health and Human Services Committee. She also will be on the boards of [Community Action of Suburban Hennepin](#); the Joint Committee on Community Corrections; [NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center](#); [St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board](#); and starting in March, the [Hennepin Healthcare System](#) (the HCMC hospital board).

All commissioners also serve as [Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority](#) and [Housing and Redevelopment Authority](#) commissioners. Commissioner Higgins is the secretary of the HCRRA and will represent Hennepin on the [Bottineau Transitway PAC](#), the [Northern Lights Express](#), the [Northstar Corridor Development Authority](#), and the [Red Rock Corridor Commission](#).

To Contact Our Office

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Location

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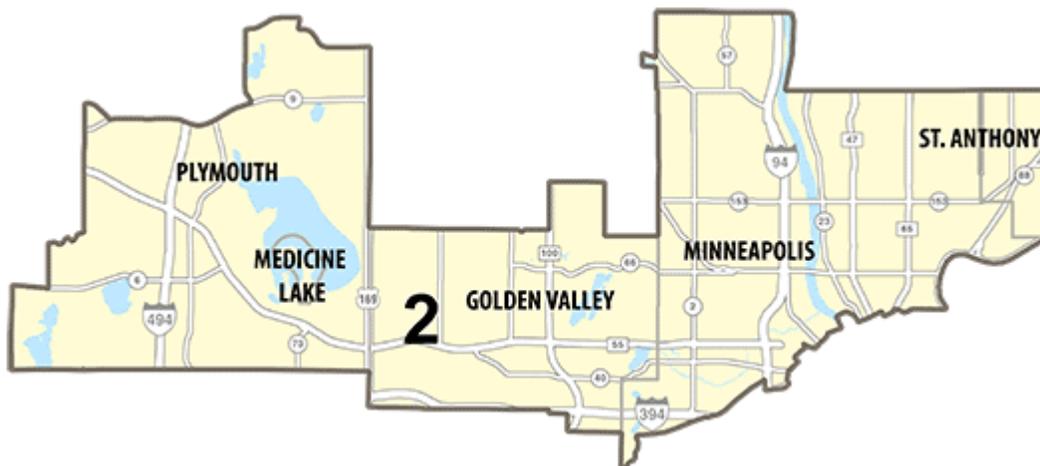
[Map It!](#)

Did You Know?

You can subscribe to many online services on the county website: Click [here](#) and see what information is interesting or useful to you.

Enter your email or cell phone number and then select which items interest you, such as tax-forfeited real estate auctions, public health updates, even property tax due date reminders.

Hennepin County District 2



Commissioner Higgins works with County Attorney Freeman to increase advocates at Domestic Abuse Center

Domestic abuse cases are very complicated. Language and cultural issues shouldn't be barriers to effective help at Hennepin County's Domestic Abuse Center.

Commissioner Higgins teamed up with County Attorney Mike Freeman to add two much-needed advocates in the Domestic Abuse Center. A Latina advocate and a Somali advocate will be providing critical services to victims of domestic violence in the Victim Services Division of the Hennepin County Attorney's Office.

These services will be focused on domestic violence victims in the Adult and Juvenile areas as well as providing critical emergency services at the Domestic Abuse Service Center.

Domestic violence cases are very complicated. They require a great deal of support and information about the criminal justice system, but just as important is the day-to-day support on issues such as housing, finances, and custody. Developing an effective

safety plan is also essential.

Advocacy is a critical component of intervention and prevention. This support is especially critical for underserved communities and communities of color. These communities have many challenges. Victims struggle with language and cultural barriers as well as issues of isolation, even sometimes within their own community where many times domestic violence is not addressed. These advocates will provide a critical service to victims of domestic violence in our community because they will be bilingual and their advocacy will be focused on the identified challenges that these victims face.

New District 2 staff ready to work



There are two new people working in the District 2 office, ready to help our constituents. If you call, you will probably first talk with Roshonda Royston, pictured left. Roshonda, administrative secretary in the office, has worked for Hennepin County for seven years.

Tina Sanz, pictured right, is the District 2 principal aide. Tina worked many years at Minneapolis City Hall. They will do their best to help with whatever issues are presented. Their direct contact information is located on page 1 of this newsletter.



Golden Valley 911 service

One of the first projects on Commissioner Higgins's plate was a resolution to the longstanding issue of whether Golden Valley could be provided 911 service through the county. There has been a moratorium for many years on including new cities in the county service. Mayor Shep

Harris and the Golden Valley City Council wanted to change to county-provided service.

Working closely with the mayor, Commissioner Higgins was able to get the county board to agree to include service to Golden Valley when the new 911 call facility is built, expected to be next year.

Youth sports equipment grants available

Consider applying for the spring round of the Hennepin County Youth Sports capital equipment grants if your organization needs things like field maintenance equipment, nets, or backboards. Grant requests must include a local government partner.

Applications are due by 4 pm on Monday, March 11. Hennepin County has operated the program since 2009, awarding up to \$2 million each year in capital grants to build, repair,

renovate or expand youth sports facilities in the county.

Grants are awarded in two rounds and are based on these criteria:

- Partnership between sports organization and local government units.
- Number of youth served and their population characteristics.
- Ratio of matching funds to the amount requested.

For more information:

www.hennepin.us/youthsports

Staff changes at Hennepin County

The county board appointed Deputy County Administrator David Hough to serve as acting county administrator, effective December 29. County Administrator Richard Johnson retired after many years overseeing Hennepin County work. The county is conducting an executive search to fill the position, for which Hough will be a candidate. Hough has served as deputy county administrator since 2008. Before that appointment, he was a deputy county attorney in the Hennepin County Attorney's Office, where he served as the board's chief legal

counsel as well as representing the county in both civil and criminal matters.

Assistant county administrator of HSPHD, the county's human services and public health department, Dan Engstrom, also is retiring at the end of January. Rex Holzemer, currently the area director of Protection, Assessment, and Regional Site Development, has been selected to succeed Engstrom.

Work for Hennepin County

The county website shows 29 positions currently available at Hennepin County. There are positions open at our libraries, at the hospital, in the forensic science lab, IT, the sheriff's office, and more! If you're looking for a job or know someone who is looking, please check out this resource.

Click [here](#) to see the list of positions that are available.

Hennepin County is a great place to work!

Lowry Avenue bridge opens, and it's gorgeous!

The Lowry Avenue bridge over the Mississippi River, which was closed for four years after dangerous structural problems were discovered, opened in October.

The bridge is 1,600 feet long and boasts a basket-style, tied-arch design. It has an anti-icing system and a stormwater system that filters runoff from the bridge. The open deck on the old bridge let salt and other crud from cars fall right into the Mississippi River.

The bridge, built by Lunda Construction, originally was designed as a 900-foot river crossing. However, commissioners decided to extend the west end of the bridge, which increased the costs but also avoided having to close the bridge later to build the land bridge.

It is capable of displaying many color combinations because of the high efficiency LED lights. Did you notice the red, white, and blue lights for Election Day and Veterans Day? Or maybe the orange bridge with a green spot at the top for Halloween? The default color, of course, is Hennepin County blue.

Funding for the bridge is an excellent example of various levels of government working together. Funding came from county bonds, state bonds, city funds, federal funds, and Xcel Energy.

Commissioner Higgins, then Senator Higgins, said at the grand re-opening that the bridge would unify once-separated communities in North and Northeast Minneapolis. "There once was a time when people said North and Northeast did not mix. Anyone who has spent any time on the Broadway bridge in the past four years knows that we are growing together. We are neighbors, coworkers and we are now bridge builders too."



Upcoming Events in District 2

St. Anthony: *Friday, Feb. 1,* 6 to 9 pm. Date night at Silverwood Park. Connect with nature and wrap up the evening by the fireside. \$25/couple. Reserve your spot at 763-559-6700 or www.threeriversparks.org.

Monday, Jan. 28, noon to 7 pm. Friends of St. Anthony Village Library book sale. 2941 Pentagon Dr. NE in St. Anthony Village Shopping Center. Most books \$1 or less. Info: 612-543-6075.

Northeast: *Thursday, Feb. 7,* 11:30 am to 1 pm. Senior Appreciation Valentine Luncheon, Eastside Neighborhood Services. \$3. 612-781-6011.

Saturday, Feb. 16, 10 am. We Love Our Presidents Walk. Walkers, bikers, even pets will gather at Edison High School, 700 22nd Ave. NE and walk along the presidential streets. End with light lunch and program. Info: David Warnest, 612-668-1515 or david.warnest@mpls.k12.mn.us.

Sunday, Feb. 10, 7:30 am to 6 pm. St. Charles Borromeo Mardi Gras. Fun for kids of all ages. Hot breakfast till 9:30. Spaghetti dinner noon to 4. Live auction at 4 pm. Info: 612-781-6529 or www.stchb.org.

North: *Saturday, Jan. 26,* 8 to 11 am, Police Athletic League's Tech Dump, 4119 Dupont Ave. N. Drop off any unwanted electronics. PAL will make sure they get disposed of properly; all proceeds go to PAL for continued free programming for youth. Questions: 612-673-3447.

Tuesday, Jan. 29, 10 am to noon. Winter nature walk on snowshoes, North Mississippi Regional Park. \$5. Reservations required. 763-559-6700.

Saturday, Feb. 2, noon to 3 pm, Camden Winterfest and Chili Cookoff, Bohanon Park warming house, 4917 Bryant Ave. N., www.lindbohanon.org

Thursday, Feb. 21, 8 to 9:30 am. West Broadway Coalition membership breakfast. Farview Park, 621 29th Ave. N. RSVP: shaina@westbroadway.org

West Broadway Coalition is looking for people to serve on the Farmers Market Advisory Committee. One-hour monthly meetings. Contact market manager Alicia Uzarek at Alicia@westbroadway.org if interested.

Saturday, Mar. 2, 10 am to 2:30 pm. Defensive driving class, Folwell Park, 1615 Dowling Ave. N. \$12 for AARP

members, \$14 for others. Register at 612-240-9086.

Bryn Mawr: *Wednesday, Feb. 13,* 7 to 9 pm. Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association monthly board meeting. Bryn Mawr elementary school cafeteria.

Saturday, May 4. Bryn Mawr yard sales. Don't miss this!

North Loop: *Wednesday, Jan. 30,* 7 pm. North Loop Neighborhood annual meeting. Target Field. Enter at administrative entrance. info@northloop.org.

Saturday, Feb. 2, 10 am to 2 pm. Sweet Saturday: Local Arts Showcase and Sale at Local D'Lish, 208 N. 1st St.

Golden Valley: *Friday, March 1,* 7 pm to midnight. 28th Annual Twin West Gala, Passage to India. DoubleTree by Hilton Park Place. Proceeds go to TwinWest Foundation scholarship fund. www.twinwest.com.

Plymouth: *Saturday, Feb. 2,* 2 to 7 pm. Fire and Ice: 24th Annual Winter Celebration, Parkers Lake Park, Co. Rd. 6 and Niagara Ln. Free. Hayrides, ice fishing, petting zoo, hockey, more! Fireworks at 6:30 pm.

Tuesday, Feb. 12, 7:30 to 9 am. Plymouth State of the City Address by Mayor Kelli Slavik. Plymouth City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Blvd.

Medicine Lake: *Saturday, Feb. 2,* 1 to 4 pm. Holes for Heroes ice fishing tournament, Medicine Lake. Advance registration \$5, walk-up registration \$10. <http://www.fishingforlife.org/>

If you have events you would like to promote in our newsletter, drop an email to tina.sanz@co.hennepin.mn.us.

Fix-it clinics are a creative resource for Hennepin County

Sewing machine won't sew? Toaster won't toast? Don't throw them out! Take it to one of Hennepin County Environmental Services' Fix-It Clinics, and volunteers will help you repair and reuse them.

As part of our waste reduction efforts, the county is asking residents to sort through basements, closets and garages for clothing and household items that need repair. At the clinics, skilled volunteers will help you learn to disassemble, troubleshoot and fix your items.

Click [here](#) to see the places, days, and times of the clinics.

Environmental Services is also looking for volunteers to help make the events successful. If you have skills in soldering, electronics and electrical repair, sewing, woodworking or general tinkering, please volunteer.