



## Hennepin County Commissioner Linda Higgins

Issue One

### In Touch With District 2

## Happy New Year!

### Looking back at 2013

As I look back at my first year with Hennepin County, I wanted to share with you some highlights. Major projects include:

- A new *human services hub* at Plymouth and Emerson Avenues North now under construction;
- *Penn Avenue Community Works* and *Lowry Avenue Northeast Community Works*;
- *Lowry bridge* lighting policy;
- *Bottineau* and *Southwest LRT* lines;
- improved Hennepin County *tax forfeit land sale procedures*;
- a new *911 call center* being built in Plymouth;
- a temporary library when the *Webber Park library* was closed because of structural defects and funding to build a replacement library;
- Opening of the long-awaited *Van White bridge*;
- A pilot project called *Workforce Incentive Network (WIN)* to try to reduce the number of people in North Minneapolis on public assistance;
- An *innovation grant* from the state for WIN;
- *New pedestrian and bicycle bridge* on the Luce Line Trail to safely cross over Xenium Lane (CSAH 61);
- *Recycling grants* to businesses, schools, and apartments;
- Funding for the *Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission* for *water quality improvements* in Golden Valley;
- *Job training* and jobs for formerly incarcerated individuals;
- *Foster homes* and *adoptions*;
- A new *sister counties* program;
- A new *Target Field Station* (formerly

- Interchange) *transit hub* to be open before the All-Star Game;
- Added *bilingual staff* to the Domestic Abuse Center;
- *Youth sports grants*;
- Breaking ground on first natural public *swimming pool* in North America at Webber Park.



Breaking ground for the 911 center in Plymouth

I also have represented the county on the:

- Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership;
- St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board;
- Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) board of directors;
- AMC health and human services policy committee;
- Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (I was sworn in as chair this week);
- NorthPoint board;
- Northern Lights Express board;
- Northstar board;
- Red Rock Corridor commission;
- National Association of Counties human services and education committee.

Thanks for your help in 2013. I look forward to another productive year in 2014. Happy New Year!

*Linda Higgins*

### To Contact Our Office

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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.

## County board approves 2014 budget

### 2014 Hennepin County budget calls for 0.57 percent decrease in spending

On December 17, 2013, the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners approved a 2014 county budget of \$1.78 billion – a 0.57 percent decrease from the 2013 budget, and a 0.98 percent increase in the net property tax levy from 2013.

In addition, the board, acting as the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA), approved an HCRRA budget of \$27.7 million, with a proposed property tax levy of \$24.0 million – a \$3 million increase from 2013. The HCRRA seeks to improve rail modes of transportation to reduce traffic congestion and improve mobility.

The board, acting as the Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HCRA), approved an HCHRA

budget of \$15.2 million, with a proposed property tax levy of \$6.97 million – an increase of approximately \$535,000 from 2013. The HCHRA authorizes strategic planning and community engagement to serve the housing and economic development and redevelopment of Hennepin County.

Hennepin County has maintained a top triple-A credit rating from all three rating agencies for 38 years. The top rating reflects strong county management overall, as well as sound financial condition.

To learn more about Hennepin County's budget, visit the [budget and finance webpage](#).

## AN INVITATION

Webber Park



### Grand opening of the Webber Park Library temporary location

Saturday, January 11  
1 to 3 p.m.  
Camden Center,  
4203 Webber Parkway,  
Minneapolis, MN 55412

### Join me for the grand opening of the Webber Park Library temporary location Saturday, January 11

Please join Hennepin County Commissioner Linda Higgins, Library Director Lois Thompson, Friends of the Webber Park Library and other distinguished guests to celebrate the opening of a new temporary location for Hennepin County Library – Webber Park.

The books are on the shelves, the computers are in place, and the open sign is on! Join us at this community celebration including local musicians, light refreshments and a scavenger hunt for kids.

## Get help paying your heating bill

Utilities Xcel and CenterPoint Energy have affordability programs to help qualifying customers lower their monthly heating bills and pay past due balances. If customers make their monthly installment payments, they will only be paying up to 4% of their annual household income toward their past due balance.

To qualify for the program, customers must have received a Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) grant for the current heating season. Households who are at or below 50 percent of the state median income are eligible. Click here for [eligibility guidelines](#) and further information about applying for LIHEAP. [Click here](#) to read the Hennepin County fact sheet, which further explains emergency assistance. Questions? Contact your utility or [Energy Cents Coalition](#) (651-774-9010).



## Looking for something new? Volunteer with Hennepin

**Are you looking for something new to try in the new year? There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer with Hennepin County.**

Volunteering provides an opportunity for people of all ages and interests to get involved in the community. Volunteer opportunities exist in Corrections, Human Services, Environmental, the Library and elsewhere.

If you can contribute a few extra hours each month to help, Hennepin County needs your enthusiasm, your time and your willingness to make a difference.



Lisa volunteers with her therapy dog Bridget

Visit [hennepin.us/your-government#get-involved](http://hennepin.us/your-government#get-involved) or call 612.348.9900.

## Work for Hennepin County

Our website shows 29 positions currently available at Hennepin County. Positions include civil engineer, developer, human services representative, office specialist I (Spanish bilingual), veteran services rep., IT positions 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. The Library also has help at [www.hclib.org/pub/search/SubjectGuides.cfm?Topic=Jobs/Careers](http://www.hclib.org/pub/search/SubjectGuides.cfm?Topic=Jobs/Careers) Hennepin County is a great place to work!

## Job assistance is as close as your computer

Job seeking assistance is available as close as your computer from the Hennepin County Library.

Many tools are available at [hclib.org/pub/search/subjectguides.cfm?topic=jobs/careers](http://hclib.org/pub/search/subjectguides.cfm?topic=jobs/careers).

For online resume and interview coaching and career advice from job help professionals, visit [hclib.org/pub/search/RefDetails.cfm?DBAbbrev=JobNow&Topic=databases&Display=&SubTopics\\_Display=](http://hclib.org/pub/search/RefDetails.cfm?DBAbbrev=JobNow&Topic=databases&Display=&SubTopics_Display=).

A tool to create and save resumes and cover letters (including tools to help you prepare for a job search) is available at [http://www.hclib.org/pub/search/RefDetails.cfm?DBAbbrev=OptimalResume&Topic=databases&Display=&SubTopics\\_Display=](http://www.hclib.org/pub/search/RefDetails.cfm?DBAbbrev=OptimalResume&Topic=databases&Display=&SubTopics_Display=) (note: Subscription purchased with funding from Hennepin).

## Tips to prevent identity theft

Here is a link from County Attorney Mike Freeman to some [good tips and resources](#) to help prevent identify theft.

If you think you might be a victim, contact the police. Report every incident to your local police department or the department where the fraudulent transaction occurred. See also [hennepinattorney.org/IdentityTheft.aspx](http://hennepinattorney.org/IdentityTheft.aspx).

## Community Informational Sessions for Seniors and People with Disabilities

Community informational sessions are offered to keep families, clients and providers informed about service options and application processes. These sessions are free and open to the public (registration requested and/or required). See [hennepin.us/~media/hennepinus/residents/human-services/docs/InfoSessionBooklet\\_January%20through%20April%202014.pdf](http://hennepin.us/~media/hennepinus/residents/human-services/docs/InfoSessionBooklet_January%20through%20April%202014.pdf) for dates, time, and locations of sessions and for other information such as:

**Long term care services** including developmental disabilities waiver, waivers for individuals under 65, and services for seniors.

**Developmental disabilities services**, including adult housing and transitional services.

**Consumer directed options** (this service is for those who want to hire, train, and supervise their own staff, write their own plans, and have more flexibility to purchase generic community supports).

**Financial information**, including health care in financial/homecare programs for assisted living/nursing home placement; spenddowns; financial and medical programs for children-TEFRA; and financial and medical for adults.

**Non-Hennepin County Agency Services.** Organizations operated independently.



## Fill Up Your Calendar With These Upcoming Events in District 2

**St. Anthony:** *Saturday, January 11, 3 to 5 pm.* Citizens for Sustainability one-year anniversary celebration and update. SAVCC Council Chambers, 3301 Silver Lake Rd. Refreshments and entertainment provided.

*Starting the week of Jan. 13, morning and evening classes.* St. Anthony-New Brighton School District's Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) program offers classes for parents and children birth to age five. Space is still available for families to enroll in the eight-week session. Register online at [stanthony.ce.feepay.com/#-/search/ecfe](http://stanthony.ce.feepay.com/#-/search/ecfe) or call 612-706-1166. ECFE class fees are on a sliding fee scale; scholarships are also available for families.

**Northeast:** *Saturday, Jan. 11, 5 to 8 pm.* Hops for Hunger II, a craft beer tasting fundraiser, will take place on at the Solar Arts Building, 711 15th Ave. NE, in Northeast Minneapolis. All proceeds will go to the Southern Anoka Community Assistance (SACA) food shelf. Last year, this fundraiser raised enough money to provide 70,000 pounds of food for SACA. For more information or to purchase tickets (\$40), visit [neneews.com](http://neneews.com).

**North:** *Saturday, Jan. 11, 1 to 3 pm.* Grand opening of the Webber Park Library temporary location. See page 2.

*Volunteer by shoveling snow for seniors.* Help a senior citizen remain independent in their home by volunteering to shovel walkways and driveways this winter. Locations in North or Southwest Minneapolis. Work alone or as a group; one time or on an ongoing basis. Contact Jeanne the NIP Seniors Program, 612-746-8549, email [svolunteer@neighborhoodinvolve.org](mailto:svolunteer@neighborhoodinvolve.org) or visit [neighborhoodinvolve.org](http://neighborhoodinvolve.org) for more information.

*Wednesdays, Jan. 15, 4 to 7:30 pm. (for 4 weeks).* Wirth Wild Winter Wednesdays. Youth ages 4 to 17 get free snow tube rental (tow rope currently not working). First come, first served. Wirth recreation area, 1301 Theodore Wirth Parkway, Minneapolis. [minneapolisparcs.org](http://minneapolisparcs.org).

**North Loop:** *Weds., Jan. 29, 7 pm.* North Loop Annual Board meeting at Aria, 105 1st St. N, Mpls. [northloop.org](http://northloop.org).

**Golden Valley:** *Wednesdays, Jan. 22 through Feb. 26, 10:30 am.* Family storytime for children of all ages and their parent or caregiver. Talk, sing, read, write and play together. Share books, stories, rhymes, music and movement. [Golden Valley Library](http://GoldenValleyLibrary), 830 Winnetka Ave N.

*Tuesdays for seven weeks starting Jan. 28.* The Golden Valley Police Department (GVPD) is taking applications for its 2014 Citizens' Police Academy, Classes are held from 6 to 9 pm in the GVPD at 7800 Golden Valley Rd. You'll get a first-hand look at how things work behind the scenes at your local police department. Registration and background check required, space is limited. [goldenvalleymn.gov](http://goldenvalleymn.gov).

**Plymouth:** *Saturday, February 1, 2 to 7 pm.* Plymouth will hold the 25th annual Fire and Ice Festival at Parkers Lake Park, off of County Road 6 and Niagara Lane. Festivities will commence with recycling bin races, a youth ice fishing contest, goofy hat contest, petting zoo, hayrides, pony and sled-dog rides, miniature golf on the ice, snow bowling, a bonfire with s'mores and hot chocolate, and recreational skating. Activities will be held until 5:30 pm. Food trucks (for a charge) will be present. Information at [plymouthmn.gov](http://plymouthmn.gov).

*Sunday, Feb. 2, 9 am to 12:30 pm.* All-you-can-eat (from scratch with toppings) [waffle breakfast](http://wafflebreakfast) to raise funds for senior programming. \$7 ages six and older, \$4 ages five and younger. Plymouth Creek Center, 14800 34th Ave N.

**Multiple Communities:** Southwest LRT meeting. *Thursday, Jan. 9, 5 to 7:30 pm.* St. Louis Park Recreation Center, 3700 Monterey Drive, St. Louis Park (map at [goo.gl/maps/waC5T](http://goo.gl/maps/waC5T)). The Metropolitan Council will host public community meetings focused on studies now underway of freight rail, water resources and landscaping / greenscaping in the Kenilworth area of Minneapolis for the SW LRT line. Future updates/information at [swlrt.org](http://swlrt.org).

*Second Saturdays, through April, 10 am to 1 pm.* Mill City Farmers Market indoors including 40 vendors with local and specialty food products. Market dates: Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 8, and April 12. Mill City Museum, 704 S. 2nd St., Minneapolis. [millcityfarmersmarket.org](http://millcityfarmersmarket.org).

*Saturday, Jan. 20, 7 am.* Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. breakfast. Keynote with Donna Brazile. Convention Ctr., Ballroom A, 1301 2nd Ave. S., Mpls. Tickets \$30. [mlkbreakfast.com](http://mlkbreakfast.com).

*Tuesday, Jan. 28, 6:30 to 8 pm.* Self-defense workshop with MPD and Mary Brandl, a 4th degree black belt with Midwest Karate Association and Self Defense PE instructor at the University of MN. Learn to recognize a possible attack in the making, and how you can use distance, body language, and tone of voice to avert a potential attack. Pratt School, 66 Malcolm Ave SE, Door 3 from the parking lot. FREE, but registration is requested, Call 612-673-2874/e: [Susan.Webb@minneapolisismn.gov](mailto:Susan.Webb@minneapolisismn.gov).

*Tuesday, Feb. 4 (various locations).* Precinct caucuses are meetings organized by Minnesota's political parties, typically on the first Tuesday in February of a statewide election year. It is the first step for the party to select candidates and choose the party's goals and values. Visit the Secretary of State's web site for party contact and other information [sos.state.mn.us/index.aspx?page=886](http://sos.state.mn.us/index.aspx?page=886).

*If you have events you would like to promote in our newsletter, drop an email to [tinga.sanz@hennepin.us](mailto:tinga.sanz@hennepin.us).*