



9th Ward E-News

From Minneapolis Council Member Gary Schiff

December 26, 2006

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Council withholds funds, three libraries close

A sharply divided City Council voted Dec. 11 to withhold ongoing additional funding and a debt reduction plan for the Minneapolis Library system. The vote was 7 in favor 6 against, with Council Member Gary Schiff voting no. An



Roosevelt library will close for 2007

additional \$1.2 million in one-time funding was approved. "Ongoing funding is important because the predictability of funds has an impact on how many libraries can be supported long-term," said Kit Hadley, Minneapolis Public Library Executive Director. "Because of the budget adopted by the City Council on December 11th the Library Board had to remove even more from its budget, which means closing 3 neighborhood libraries temporarily."

As a result of the budget actions and long-standing financial problems, on Wednesday, December 20, the library board voted to close Roosevelt, Southeast and Webber libraries. "I am disappointed for my constituents and my city but the fight is not over", Council Member Gary Schiff said. "The 2007 legislative session will convene January 3, 2007 and I am hopeful that with new leadership at the State Capital we can get our Local Government Aid restored and reverse the corporate property tax cuts that have harmed all city budgets over the past four years. "

State offers property tax refunds

Minneapolis homeowners are encouraged to apply for property tax refunds from the State of Minnesota. There are two refunds available. The regular refund is based on income. The special property tax refund is for people whose property taxes increased by more than 12 percent in 2006.

Continuing a trend that began a decade ago, property tax burdens will continue to shift from commercial to residential property owners in 2007 due to State law. In 2007, residential

properties will be responsible for 55% of all collected taxes, up from 32% in 1997. "The Legislature must address the inequity it created in our property tax system. While most homeowners will see an increase of over \$100 in their property taxes this year, the wealthiest commercial property owners will see tax cuts, resulting in loss of revenue for local governments," said Council Member Schiff.

For information on how to appeal your City of Minneapolis property taxes contact the City of Minneapolis Assessor's Office at (612) 673-2382. For more information on State of Minnesota Property Tax Refund eligibility, please visit http://www.taxes.state.mn.us/taxes/prop_refund/index.shtml.

Pet licenses half price through end of month



Minneapolis now offers a lifetime license for cats and dogs. Until the end of 2006, a lifetime license will cost \$100. In January the license fee will increase to \$200. A lifetime license means pet owners will never have to pay the yearly renewal license. Yearly license renewal fees are \$30 for neutered or spayed cats and dogs or \$50 for unaltered cats and dogs.

Licensing your pet has a number of benefits for you and your pet. A properly licensed animal is much easier to return to its owner if it gets lost. Also, you won't have to worry about paying fines if your unlicensed pet goes missing and turns up at Animal Control. Pet owners can get a lifetime license by calling 311 or visiting [Minneapolis Animal Care and Control](#) and clicking on "Pet Licenses."

City pursues green public works facility

A rebuilt public works facility at 26th Street E and Hiawatha Ave. will aim to be one of the highest certified environmental projects in the city when it opens in 2009. The City Council has directed its public works department to strive for the [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design](#) (LEED) certified Gold standard. LEED is the nationally recognized standard for energy efficient buildings. LEED offers different levels of certification, ranging from silver to platinum, depending on the

level of number of credits the project earns through energy efficiency, reuse of materials, storm-water management and other environmentally responsible practices.

Buildings use approximately 39% of primary energy in the United States "As elected officials, we have a responsibility to use resources wisely, whether it's energy, land or taxes", Council Member Gary Schiff said, "It is crucial for the city to receive a return on investments, they will pay for themselves over time through energy and maintenance savings."

Ninth Ward Award Nominations Open

January's Breakfast with Gary will feature the fifth annual State of the Ward Address and 9th Ward Awards. Awards will be given for the Citizen of the Year, Block Club of the Year, Neighborhood Project of the Year and Youth Leader of the Year.



The highly coveted 9th Ward Award

To nominate a block club, neighborhood project or leader in your community, please write a description of the accomplishments that you think deserve recognition. Please submit your Ninth Ward Award nominations via [email](#), fax (612-673-3940) or by mail (350 S. 5th Street, Room 307, Minneapolis, MN 55415) by Friday, January 5th.

Breakfast with Gary will take place Friday, January 26, 2007 from 7:30 to 8:45 a.m. at the Café of the Americas (3019 Minnehaha Avenue South). Food is \$7. RSVP encouraged: (612) 673-2209 or via [email](#).

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