

# 11

## NEWSLETTER



Council Member Scott Benson

DIAMOND LAKE, FIELD, HALE, KINGFIELD NORTHRUP, PAGE, TANGLETOWN, WINDOM, and WENONA

### PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE MINNEAPOLIS CITY CHARTER

Three proposed amendments to the City Charter have been proposed which may appear on November's ballot. Residents will be asked to comment on these proposed changes at four public hearings to be held later this spring at various locations throughout the city. Meeting dates, times and locations are included at the end of this article.

#### ***Proposed Amendment Number One***

This amendment would create the position of City Administrator. The City Council would retain its authority to approve the appointment and re-appointment of department heads, including the "City Administrator". The Mayor would continue to have a role as chair of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee would evaluate the performance of the City Administrator. All department heads would report to the City Administrator who would also have sole authority to discipline or terminate department heads.

#### ***Proposed Amendment Number Two***

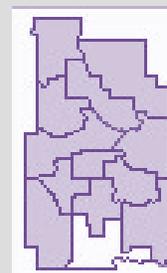
This amendment would eliminate the Board of Estimate and Taxation. The current Board sets maximum tax levy rates for all funds involved in the budget of both the City Council and the independent boards. If approved, the City Council will set the tax levy, thus eliminating the need for the Board of Estimate and Taxation.

#### ***Proposed Amendment Number 3***

This amendment would eliminate the elected Park Board. The Park Board would then become an advisory body to a new Parks Department. The Parks Department head would, along with other department heads, report to the City Administrator. The current Park Board is comprised of nine commissioners, three of which are elected at-large. Commissioner's responsibilities include the development of park policies, approval of the budget and operation of the park system, and governing the use of neighborhood and regional parks, parkways, beaches and lakes.

Volume 8 Issue 4

April 2009



#### Inside this issue:

<i>Inexpensive trees available to residents</i>	2
<i>Create a rain - garden</i>	2
<i>Proposed Charter Amendments (continued)</i>	3
<i>Earth Day Events</i>	3
<i>Clean-a-Thon</i>	3
<i>Habitat for Humanity—assistance for homeowners</i>	4
<i>Monthly Community Meetings</i>	4
<i>Open Appointments</i>	4

## Help grow Minneapolis' urban forest: Inexpensive trees available for residents

A thousand trees are being made available to city residents for planting this spring. The trees cost \$25 each, and are approximately six feet tall with a one-inch trunk. Residents can order one tree per household, and all trees will be made available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Varieties of trees include Black Hills spruce, Korean mountain ash, prairie fire crab, accolade elm and bur oak. There are also 50 Mount Royal plum trees, which produce edible fruit that's great for jellies, jam, sauces or for eating straight off the branches. (Note: residents who wish to purchase the plum tree must attend a workshop on Saturday, June 20 to learn about fruit tree care and to pick up the tree.)

Orders for trees can be done online starting on April 3 by visiting Tree Trust at [www.treetrust.org](http://www.treetrust.org). You can also order a tree by picking up an order form from your neighborhood group or local library.

Trees can be picked up at Franklin Middle School East parking lot, 1501 Aldrich Avenue North, in Minneapolis at the following times:

**Saturday, May 9 – 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Sunday, May 10 – 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Monday, May 11 – 3 to 7 p.m.**



Volunteers will be on hand to help load your new tree and complimentary bag of mulch in to your vehicle. Research has proven that trees are a valuable investment and improve urban quality of life. Healthy trees increase property values, help improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gases by absorbing carbon dioxide, save energy, keep the city cooler, provide homes for wildlife and help manage storm water. The City Trees program is a partnership between the City of Minneapolis and Trust, a local nonprofit that works to improve the community environment.

For more information on how to order a tree, contact Tree Trust at 651-644-5800.

## Learn how to make your own rain garden

Want a garden that attracts birds and butterflies, helps protect our water resources and may even help reduce your monthly stormwater utility fee? Build a rain garden! Rain gardens allow rain and melting snow to seep naturally into the ground. This helps recharge groundwater and keeps contaminants from being washed into storm drains and carried to our lakes, rivers and creeks.

The Metro Blooms rain garden workshops will teach you how to install a rain garden using native plants that don't require fertilizers or pesticides. Participants will also learn about downspout redirection and more eco-friendly lawn care. Workshop attendees can get a \$65 native plant reimbursement grant.

Register in advance for the \$10 rain garden workshop of your choice. Space is limited. Find a complete listing of workshop dates and locations, and register at [www.MetroBlooms.org](http://www.MetroBlooms.org) or contact Noelle Hechtman at (651) 699-2426.

The workshops are sponsored by Metro Blooms with support from the City of Minneapolis, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, Mississippi Watershed Management Organization, Hennepin County Environmental Services, Minneapolis Public Works Storm Water Education Fund, and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

**What is the process to consider these changes?**

The City Council will vote on whether to place the three charter changes on the November ballot. If the City Council votes against the changes the amendments can still be placed on the ballot if 10,000 signatures of Minneapolis residents are collected.

**PUBLIC HEARING DATES**

Thursday, April 23, 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
Minnesota Transitions School  
2872 26th Avenue S.  
Phone: 612-722-9013

Thursday, April 30 – 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
Northeast Library  
2200 Central Av NE  
phone: 612-630-6900

Tuesday, April 28, 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
North Regional Library  
1315 Lowry Av N  
Phone: 612-630-6600

Thursday, May 7 – 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
St. Joan of Arc Church (lower level)  
4500 Clinton Av S  
phone: 612-823-8205

**CELEBRATE EARTH DAY AT THESE EVENTS ON SATURDAY APRIL 18**

Field, Regina, Northrup Neighborhood Group (FRNNG)  
Meet at 12th Av S and E Minnehaha Parkway—9:30-Noon  
Minnehaha Creek Cleanup—bags & gloves provided  
Contact: 612-721-5424

Hale, Page, Diamond Lake Neighborhood Group (HPDL)  
Meet at Pearl Park, 414 E. Diamond Lake Road—9:30-Noon  
Cleanup at various locations  
Refreshments, bags & gloves provided  
Contact: 612-824-7707

Tangletown Neighbors Together (TNT)  
Meet under the Nicollet Avenue Bridge—9:00-Noon  
Minnehaha Creek Cleanup  
Refreshments, bags and gloves provided



**7TH ANNUAL CLEAN-A-THON APRIL 25**

The Nokomis Healthy Seniors Program’s 7th Annual Clean-a-thon will be held April 25. This event is an important fundraiser for the Nokomis program, as well as a key outreach into the Nokomis community and directly helps seniors to stay in the home they love. Several teams of three to five volunteers arrive at registered seniors’ homes and provide a thorough cleaning to the area requested by the seniors ready for the arrival of Spring!

## Monthly Community Meetings

<p><b>Field Regina Northrop</b>  <b>FRNNG.org</b>  Meets Third Wednesday  6:30 PM  Lake Nokomis Presb.</p>	<p><b>Hale Page Diamond Lake</b>  <b>HPDL.org</b>  Meets Fourth Monday  7:00 PM  Emmanuel United Methodist</p>	<p><b>Kingfield</b>  <a href="http://Kingfield.org">Kingfield.org</a>  Meets Second Wednesday  7:00 PM</p>
<p><b>NENA</b>  <b>Nokomiseast.org</b>  Meets Fourth Thursday  7:00 PM  NENA Office</p>	<p><b>Tangletown</b>  <a href="http://Tangletown.org">Tangletown.org</a>  Meets Third Monday  7:00 PM  Fuller Community Center</p>	<p><b>Windom</b>  <a href="http://Windomcommunity.org">Windomcommunity.org</a>  Meets Second Thursday  7:00 PM  Windom Community Center</p>

## Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity Preserves & Creates Homeownership Opportunities



### *Home Ownership Program*

TC Habitat builds homes in partnership with qualifying families and community, then sells the homes at no profit with zero percent interest mortgages to partnering families. If you are interested in becoming a first time home buyer with Habitat go to [www.tchabitat.org](http://www.tchabitat.org) for information.

### *A Brush With Kindness*

ABWK is a program that helps preserve home ownership by partnering volunteers with home owners struggling to restore & maintain a safe and decent place to live. Low income home owners are eligible for volunteers groups to assist with completing minor repairs, painting and other home maintenance projects. If you or someone you know could use assistance call 612-788-8169 or go to [www.tchabitat.org](http://www.tchabitat.org).

### *Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention Program*

NFPF helps any Minneapolis home owner regardless of income level who is at risk of losing their home to foreclosure. The program provides counseling, advocacy and referrals free of charge to families who have fallen behind in their mortgage payments. To reach a counselor call 612-331-4090 x3 or email [adade.amenounve@tchabitat.org](mailto:adade.amenounve@tchabitat.org).

## OPEN APPOINTMENTS

Minneapolis Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee (CLIC) Vacancy (open until filled)

Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC) Vacancy (Closes 04/10/09)

Minneapolis Rental Dwelling License Board of Appeals Vacancy (closes 4/24/09)

For more information: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions/open/>

Or call the City Clerk's office at 612-673-3358

## Electronic Newsletter

Council Member Benson publishes an electronic newsletter to keep you up to date on what is happening at City Hall. If you would like to receive this update, please e-mail me at [scott.benson@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:scott.benson@ci.minneapolis.mn.us) and put the words "E-mail Update" in the subject line.