

MINNETONKA MEMO

A publication from the City of Minnetonka



ELECTION 2023

Absentee voting begins Sept. 22

Starting in September, Minnetonka voters can cast their ballots for the upcoming 2023 Election. Four ward councilmember seats will be up for election. There is also a ballot question to return Minnetonka municipal elections to a primary and general election.



How to vote absentee

- In-person: Minnetonka City Hall, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., during regular business hours, Sept. 22-Nov. 6
 - Watch for extended hours leading up to Election Day.
- By mail: Hennepin County oversees all absentee voting by mail. Residents can request a ballot at hennepin.us/residents/elections/absentee-voting.

Ranked choice voting

Minnetonka voters will use ranked choice voting (RCV) to elect their ward councilmembers. RCV allows voters to rank their candidates in order of preference – first choice, second choice and third choice. Find more info on how to vote with RCV at minnetonkamn.gov/rankedchoicevoting.

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 7. Learn more at minnetonkamn.gov/elections, call 952-939-8205 or email elections@minnetonkamn.gov.

Voters to weigh in on ranked choice voting

In addition to the four ward seats, Minnetonka voters will see a ballot question this fall regarding ranked choice voting.

The question, which was approved by the city council in July after receiving a petition from voters, essentially removes ranked choice voting from future municipal elections.

The question reads:

“Shall the Minnetonka City Charter be amended to repeal ranked choice voting as the method for electing the mayor and city council and reinstate the use of a primary (if needed) and general election?”

What your vote means

A yes vote means you are in favor of:

- Eliminating the use of ranked choice voting to elect the mayor and council members, beginning in November 2025.
- Using primary elections whenever more than two candidates run for mayor or a particular city council seat.

A no vote means you are in favor of:

- Continuing to use ranked choice voting to elect the mayor and council members by ranking candidates in order of preference at the general election and without using a primary election.



Fire Department and City **OPEN HOUSE**

**Tuesday, Oct. 10
5 p.m.**

Minnetonka City Campus
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

Help the city create the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP)

The month of July was the hottest month ever recorded on earth, according to the World Meteorological Organization. From heatwaves to shorter winters, climate impacts are also apparent in Minnetonka. We're inviting residents to share their thoughts at minnetonkamatters.com/climate-action-plan. The Climate Action and Adaptation Plan survey will be available throughout the fall.



Open house

Join us for an open house from 6:30-8 p.m. on Sept. 14 at the Minnetonka Community Center. City staff and the project consultant, LHB, will be there to visit with residents and get feedback for the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan.

Pop-up events

City staff will travel throughout the community this fall, interacting with residents and business owners to gather data for the CAAP. Find out about upcoming events by following the project on Minnetonka Matters.



Energy Smart program offering business savings for energy efficiency

The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce's Energy Smart Program is helping local businesses identify potential energy savings. Whether it's lost heating, improper venting or old appliances, the program looks for ways to improve efficiency without impacting a company's bottom line.

"What makes our program unique is that we take a holistic approach to evaluating efficiency, so we're looking at buildings as a whole system" said Alex Christensen, energy efficiency specialist with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce.

Energy Smart helps business owners find rebates for efficiency programs and products. In competitive industries like hospitality where margins are thin, some owners might believe that efficiency may be unobtainable.

"The old adage 'low bid wins the job' is completely respectable," said Christensen. "What Energy Smart is here to do is to influence that decision making process and encourage participants to collect a bid for high performance, high efficiency equipment." Leveraging rebates and grants, he said, can offset costs making projects as cost competitive as standard equipment.

Energy Smart doesn't just find products and rebates. The program helps businesses identify structural changes that can directly reduce energy use or help businesses source their energy from renewable sources.

Best of all, the program is free of charge. To learn more, or schedule a visit, check out mnchamber.com/your-opportunity/energy-smart



Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
ENERGY SMART

Did you know? The Minnetonka Sustainability Commission has spent the summer visiting businesses around the city to help them get started with Energy Smart.

Minnetonka police break up contractor scam

An alert homeowner helped Minnetonka police break up a ring of traveling contractors deliberately damaging homes to drum up business. Cases popped up across the west metro during the peak of the storm season. The crews posed as local contractors, used phony business cards and provided photos of damage they insisted needed to be repaired.

"The [homeowner] in this case did what we want people to do," said Minnetonka Police Capt. Andy Gardner. "She asked the work crew for identification and more information."



The homeowner called police when she found damaged chimney bricks laying in her backyard after an inspection. Minnetonka detectives set up a sting and waited for the suspects to return, at which time they were arrested. The defendants are in federal custody facing deportation.

Homeowner checklist

- Beware of unsolicited construction inspections.
- Ask to see company information and a state license.
- Don't sign any contracts before you have verified the information.
- Don't pay for any repairs in cash.



Join the Minnetonka Police Explorers



Are you a young adult (age 14-21) interested in law enforcement and serving our community? The Minnetonka Police Explorers are recruiting new members for 2023-24.

Join us for an information session:

Wednesday, Sept. 27

6:30 p.m.

Central Fire Station, 14550 Minnetonka Blvd.

Visit minnetonkamn.gov/police-explorers for more information.

City receives more than \$500k in public safety grants

Minnetonka's city council has accepted grants totaling \$587,683 to support police and fire operations across the community. The grants will assist with preventing and tracking stolen vehicles and increased DWI enforcement. Firefighters will also have access to the latest gas detection equipment.

Auto Theft Prevention

The multi-year grant from the state of Minnesota supports a full-time investigator and equipment necessary to track stolen vehicles.

DWI Traffic Safety

This Minnesota Department of Public Safety grant allows for increased enforcement of DWI violations.

Community Safety

The CenterPoint Energy matching grant supports the purchase of two advanced multi-gas leak detectors.

Alexander hired as senior diversity, equity and inclusion coordinator

When Jayce Alexander looks back at his formative years in Minnetonka, he has fond memories. Summers at Shady Oak Beach, classes at Glen Lake Elementary and spending time with his grandparents, just to name a few.

Minnetonka has always been important to me. It feels good to get reacquainted.

—Jayce Alexander

In June, Alexander was hired as Minnetonka's senior diversity, equity and inclusion coordinator. He will be tasked with getting the city's DEI Commission off the ground, along with leading the Internal Equity Committee, a group of employees working to improve diversity, equity and inclusion within the organization.

His background is in education, spending the last seven years as a social studies teacher at Blake Middle School in Hopkins. Beyond regular classes, Alexander was key to DEI efforts within the school.

"I started seeing the impact that [it] was having on older folks," Alexander said. "The connections I was building there, and really seeing those people move was really special."

Alexander brings that experience to Minnetonka where he'll work with city staff to build equitable programs and practices both internally and externally. Alexander says that process begins within each of us.

"Speaking from the 'I perspective' is imperative to this work," he said. "And being open to hearing the experiences of others is where I want us to start."

Alexander is eager to meet with staff and residents to advance equity in the city. "I want people to know I will advocate for them in any way I can," he said.

"Getting to do this here is exciting," he explained. "It means I get to do this important work for a place that is very special to me."

Residents will see Alexander at city functions and in engagement opportunities.



Read more of Jayce Alexander's story at minnetonkamn.gov/news.

Youth basketball registration now open

Join the recreation youth basketball league for all playing levels (grades 2-6).

- Games begin in December and are on Saturdays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Practices start the week of Nov. 6 for grades 3-6
 - Grade 2: Saturdays before each game
 - Grades 3-6: Once each week

Registration deadline is Oct. 2. Visit minnetonkamn.gov/register or call 952-939-8203 to register for the league or volunteer to coach. This league is in partnership with Plymouth Parks and Recreation.



Help plan the future of Minnetonka's recreational facilities



The City of Minnetonka offers a vibrant array of indoor recreation facilities to meet our community's needs. However, as needs evolve, the city's recreation facilities face challenges as they age related to operations, programming and physical infrastructure. With the purchase of The Marsh in February, the city commissioned a facilities study to create a road map for the future of indoor recreation.

The study will analyze current uses and explore future opportunities of four city recreation facilities: The Marsh, Williston Fitness Center, Minnetonka Community Center and Glen Lake Activity Center.

Pop-up events



Share your ideas at a community pop-up event around town this fall.

Take the survey

Visit [MinnetonkaMatters](https://minnetonkamatters.com) this month to take the community facility survey.



Watch for event dates and times at minnetonkamatters.com/community-facilities-study

Participate in the 2023 Minnetonka

PHOTO CONTEST

From Sept. 25 to Oct. 13, the Minnetonka Photo Contest will be open for submissions. We're looking for images to celebrate and promote all Minnetonka has to offer.

Check out the October Minnetonka Memo or visit minnetonkamn.gov/photocontest for timeline and details. Winning photos will be featured on the city's website, social media accounts and in the Minnetonka Memo.



2022 photo contest winner, "Angry Bird with Ruffled Feathers" Marlene Smith

Fall Fitness

at The Marsh

Find unique classes at The Marsh! The Marsh offers a variety of group fitness classes, including aquatics, yoga, cycling, Tai-Chi, Reiki and much more. Most classes are free with a Marsh membership. Specialty fee-based classes include a Pilates Reformer class and an 18+ Ballet class that explores strength, flexibility and balance.



Explore all of The Marsh offerings at minnetonkamn.gov/themarsh or call for more information 952-908-7000.

Minnetonka Farmers Market runs through Sept. 26

Summer may be ending, but the farmers market is still going strong! Join us at Ridgedale Commons every Tuesday from 3-7 p.m. to pick up fresh produce, baked goods, homemade crafts and more.



Ridgedale Commons
12590 Ridgedale Drive

More information at
minnetonkamn.gov/farmersmarket

Join us for MOVIES IN THE PARK

Bring your family and friends for a fun night of cinema under the stars! Movies take place approximately 15 minutes after sunset.

Civic Center Park | 14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

Thursday, Aug. 31

(approximately 8:15 p.m.)
Lyle, Lyle, Crocodile



Friday, Sept. 8

(approximately 7:55 p.m.)
Puss In Boots: The Last Wish



Friday, Sept. 15

(approximately 7:40 p.m.)
Minions: The Rise of Gru



Don't forget to call the weather hotline at 952-939-8355 or visit minnetonkamn.gov for weather-related updates.

Drought warning issued in Minnesota

An especially dry summer has caused the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to move into its Drought Warning Response Phase. Cities are being called upon to replenish the aquifer that feeds water supplies.

To conserve water, the city has cut back on irrigation around town, including on sports fields. In addition to seasonal watering restrictions, residents are asked to water outside the hours of **8 a.m. and 8 p.m.** to prevent evaporation.



Lawn watering restrictions remain in effect between May 1 and Sept. 30.

- Even/odd watering is still in effect.
- Watering of new sod, seed or shrubs can take place outside of restricted times with a permit. Contact Public Works at 952-988-8400 to obtain a permit.
- Watering new seed, sod or shrubs can be done with hand-held hose at any time.
- Penalties may be imposed for each day of violation.

Learn more at minnetonkamn.gov/water

NATURAL RESOURCES HAPPENINGS

Managing Buckthorn workshop

**Wednesday, Sept. 13 or Thursday, Oct. 5
6:30-8:30 p.m**

Minnetonka Community Center
14600 Minnetonka Blvd

Advance registration is required at
minnetonkamn.gov/NRevents.

Building Healthy Soils workshop

**Thursday, Sept. 28
6:30-8 p.m.**

Ridgedale Library
12601 Ridgedale Drive
Ladyslipper Room

Join entomologist and soil health evaluator, Dr. Ann Marie Journey, to learn about soil ecology in the urban environment.

Advance registration is required at bit.ly/healthy-soils.



Urban Soils: Challenges and Opportunities workshop

**Saturday, Oct. 7
1-3 p.m.**

Minnetonka Community Center
14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

Take a walk with experts at Minnetonka's Civic Center Park to see how soils are impacted by development and steps you can take to build healthier soil.

Advance registration is required at
minnetonkamn.gov/NRevents.

Volunteer with us!

Visit minnetonkamn.gov/NRevents for dates, locations and registration.

City of Minnetonka Calendar

- 4** Labor Day, city offices closed
- 6** Joint City Council/Park Board Study Sessions, 5:30 p.m.
- 7** Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 9** Special Community Drop-off Day, 8 a.m.
- 11** City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.
- 12** Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m.
- 18** City Council & Economic Development Authority, 6:30 p.m.
- 21** Economic Development Advisory Commission, 6 p.m.
- 26** Sustainability Commission, 6:30 p.m.
- 28** Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.

City meetings are held in person. Visit minnetonkamn.gov/participate to learn how to also take part remotely. Watch meetings live and on-demand at minnetonkamn.gov/tv.

For up-to-date information, visit minnetonkamn.gov/calendar or call 952-939-8200.



14600 Minnetonka Blvd.
Minnetonka, MN 55345
952-939-8200 | minnetonkamn.gov

Mayor

Brad Wiersum 612-723-3907
bwiersum@minnetonkamn.gov

Council

At Large: Deb Calvert 612-205-5399
dcalvert@minnetonkamn.gov

Kimberly Wilburn 952-222-8142
kwilburn@minnetonkamn.gov

Ward 1: Brian Kirk 952-451-6251
bkirk@minnetonkamn.gov

Ward 2: Rebecca Schack 612-590-3735
rschack@minnetonkamn.gov

Ward 3: Bradley Schaeppi 612-770-7447
bschaeppi@minnetonkamn.gov

Ward 4: Kissy Coakley 952-486-9670
kcoakley@minnetonkamn.gov

City Manager

Mike Funk 952-939-8200
mfunk@minnetonkamn.gov

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CITY OF MINNETONKA

**ECRWSS
POSTAL PATRON**

Fall leaf drop-off begins Sept. 16

Leaf drop-off at the Public Works Compost Site begins on Saturday, Sept. 16.

- Saturdays from 7 a.m.–3 p.m.
- Mondays and Tuesdays from 11 a.m.–7 p.m.
- Special expanded hours
 - Friday, Nov. 3 & 17 | Noon–6 p.m.
 - Saturday, Nov. 5 & 12 | Noon–4 p.m.

More information is available at minnetonkamn.gov/leaf-drop

SPECIAL COMMUNITY DROP-OFF DAY

Get rid of all the junk you accumulated over the summer. Dispose of your unwanted appliances, carpet, furniture and more at Minnetonka Public Works.

**Saturday, Sept. 9
8 a.m.–3 p.m.**

**Minnetonka Public Works
11522 Minnetonka Blvd.**

More information at
minnetonkamn.gov/dropoffday

