

# minnetonka memo

A Newsletter from the City of Minnetonka  
December 2006

## Sign up for the 2007 Citizen Academy

**H**OW IS THE FIRE DEPARTMENT HELPING RESIDENTS PREPARE FOR emergencies? What recreational opportunities does the city offer? Where, exactly, is the siren button on a police car? Learn the answers to these pressing questions and more at the 2007 Minnetonka Citizen Academy!

This free program takes place over five Tuesday evening sessions — Jan. 30 and Feb. 6, 13, 20 and 27 — at Minnetonka City Hall. Throughout the sessions, you'll hear from various city departments including police, fire, administration, community development, engineering, public works, recreation, legal and finance. Graduates receive special city council recognition upon completion of the program.

To enroll, email Jacque Larson, community relations manager, at [jl Larson@eminnetonka.com](mailto:jl Larson@eminnetonka.com) or call (952) 939-8207. Please provide your name, address, phone number and email address. Registration deadline is Jan. 9, 2007. ☺

## It's ice skating season!

**S**IGN UP FOR WINTER SKATING LESSONS WITH THE MINNETONKA Ice Arena's All Season Skating School! Endorsed by the Ice Skating Institute, this lesson program offers instruction for beginning and advanced skaters, both adults and children (age 3 and up). Classes are held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Saturdays, depending on the skater's age and class level. Take advantage of the daytime tot program held Tuesdays, Hockey Skating Skills and Power classes Saturday mornings, Wednesday night adults-only classes, and much, much more!

For class information, fees, and a lesson brochure, call the Minnetonka Ice Arena at (952) 939-8310, or download a registration form at [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com). The 12-week fall session begins January 6, 2007, with registrations accepted until Jan. 5 at 4 p.m., or until classes are full (late fee will be added after Jan. 5).

### Outdoor rinks open soon

Weather permitting, skating rinks and warming houses will open at eight locations Saturday, Dec. 16, and will remain open through Feb. 19, 2007. Call (952) 939-TELL for conditions, closings and update.

Locations include Boulder Creek, Covington, Gro Tonka, McKenzie, Meadow and Spring Hill parks and Gatewood and Glen Lake schools. Hours are weekdays 4:30-9 p.m.; Saturdays, 12-9 p.m.; and Sundays, 12-5 p.m. ☺



## Don't miss these holiday performances!

**L**OOKING FOR SOMETHING FUN TO DO THIS HOLIDAY season? Consider attending a performance by a local music or theater group!

By popular demand, Minnetonka Community Theatre is restaging its production of *The Wizard of Oz* for the holiday season. Performance dates and times are: Dec. 14, 15, 16, 18 at 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 16 and 17 at 1 p.m.; and Dec. 17 at 5 p.m. All performances are at the Arts Center on 7, 18285 Hwy. 7. Reserved seats are \$10. For tickets call (952) 401-5898 or visit [www.minnetonkatheatre.com](http://www.minnetonkatheatre.com).

The Music Association of Minnetonka (MAM) offers many holiday concerts throughout December, listed below. Unless otherwise indicated, tickets are \$10 at the door. For more information about MAM, visit [www.musicassociation.org](http://www.musicassociation.org) or call (952) 401-5954. New ensemble members are welcome for the next season, which begins Jan. 2, 2007.

❁ Saturday, Dec. 9, 3:30 p.m.

*27th Annual Messiah Community Sing-Along*

Ridgewood Church, 4420 Hwy. 101 S. Free. Please bring your own score if you have one.

❁ Saturday, Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m.

*Sounds of Youth, featuring the Minnetonka Capella, Concert, and Chamber Choirs*

❁ Sunday, Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m.

*The Many Moods of Christmas: Minnetonka Symphony Orchestra Chorus and Chamber Choir*

❁ Saturday, Dec. 16

*4th Annual Toast to the Holiday* Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd.

Join Choral Reflections of Minnetonka for food, fun and holiday music. Event is by reservation only — \$20 per person; \$140 for a table of eight. Call (952) 401-5954 for reservations. ☺

## Truth in Taxation hearing set for Dec. 4

**M**INNETONKA RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS ARE invited to participate in the city's annual Truth in Taxation budget hearing, set for Monday, Dec. 4, at 6:30 p.m. in the city council chambers, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka. For more information about the proposed 2007 budget, please see pages 4 and 5 of this edition of the *Minnetonka Memo*, or see the October and November *Minnetonka Memos*, which also contained budget information. ☺

## Senior center hosts December events

**I**F YOU'RE 55 OR OVER, YOU'RE INVITED TO join in the fun at the Minnetonka Senior Center! Events take place at the Minnetonka Community Center, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd., Minnetonka, unless otherwise noted. Call (952) 939-8393 for information or to register for programs. The senior center will be closed Monday, Dec. 25, and Monday, Jan. 1.

### Learn About Medicare Part D

*Monday, Dec. 4, 10 a.m., free*

### Lefse Making Class

*Monday, Dec. 11, 10:30 a.m., \$2*

Lefse-making demonstration and tasting. Registration required.

### Senior — Student Interviews

*Monday, Dec. 11, 10:15 a.m.*

Students from Minnetonka Middle School West are looking for seniors to interview. Contact the senior center to register. Refreshments served.

### Holiday Party

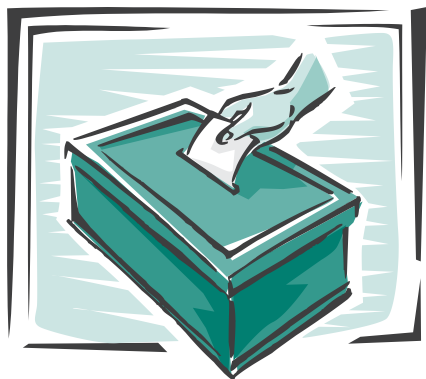
*Monday, Dec. 18, noon, \$7*

Enjoy a special holiday lunch and entertainment provided by the Skip Moore Combo. Register early! ☺

## Minnetonka residents turn out to vote

**T**HE GENERAL ELECTION WAS HELD Tuesday, Nov. 7, and 69% of Minnetonka's registered voters visited the polls, casting just over 27,000 ballots. In addition, 2,746 new voters were registered, and approximately 3,500 absentee applications were processed. To ensure the integrity of voting system, 240 election judges volunteered throughout the day at the city's 25 voting locations.

Look for an updated list of city, county, state and federal local officials, including contact information, in the January 2007 *Minnetonka Memo*. ☺

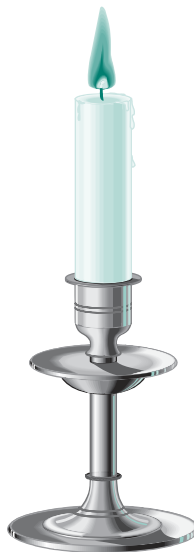


## Keep your holidays free of fire

**H**ELP PREVENT A VISIT FROM THE Minnetonka Fire Department this holiday season by following these fire prevention tips!

### Keep trees fresh

- Don't buy a tree that is dry and dropping needles. To check for freshness, loosely grip the end of a branch and pull your hand over it—only a few needles should fall off.
- If you buy your tree early, keep it outside away from the wind and sun and keep the bottom in a bucket of water.
- A fresh tree can drink up to a gallon of water a day! Ensure your tree stays hydrated by making a fresh cut at least an inch from the bottom, then watering the tree every day. The tree stand should hold plenty of water and not be allowed to run dry. If the tree dries out, remove it promptly from the home.
- Keep your tree away from furnaces, radiators and fireplaces, and don't place it where it may block exits. Always unplug your Christmas tree before leaving or going to bed.



### Avoid lighting mishaps

- Never use interior holiday lights outdoors.
- Don't use electric lights on a metal tree.
- Discard any strings of lights that look old, frayed and worn.

### Keep fire in the fireplace

- Don't hang stockings from the mantel when the fireplace is in use.
- Never burn gift wrap and boxes in the fireplace—they burn too rapidly and generate far too much heat.
- Always use a screen or glass door in front of the fireplace to protect against flying sparks. Never leave the fire unattended or let it smolder.
- Never use gasoline or any other flammable liquids to start a fire. Use only seasoned and dried firewood. Don't use Christmas trees for firewood.
- Always place ashes in a metal container and store outside. Never empty ashes into a combustible bag or container, no matter how old the ashes.
- Make sure smoke detectors are in working order.

### A word about candles

- Place candles securely in non-tip candle holders on a stable surface, well away from drafts, curtains, children and pets. Burn them only when a responsible adult is overseeing the flame.
- Snuff out candles out before leaving the room or going to sleep. Never leave burning candles in the bathrooms. ☺

## Recreation registration starts Dec. 6

**T**HE 2006-07 RECREATION SERVICES winter/spring brochure will be delivered the first week in December to Hopkins and Minnetonka residents, local libraries, and community education offices. Registration begins December 6 for residents and December 20 for non-residents.

Register by telephone Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. by calling (952) 939-8203. Visa or Master Card is accepted.

Register or view the brochure online at [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com) (click on "Destination Recreation"). A household personal identification number (PIN) and client barcode is required to register online. For a PIN or barcode, call Recreation Services at (952) 939-8203. ☺

## Thank you for removing diseased trees

**T**HE CITY OF MINNETONKA'S NATURAL resources division thanks the many residents who removed elm trees with Dutch elm disease and red oak trees with oak wilt this year, and also to the residents who treated their trees to prevent these diseases. Your diligence is appreciated, and since these tree diseases spread across many property lines, your role in protecting Minnetonka's community forest is crucial! For more information about the shade tree disease control program, call Emily Barbeau, city forester, at (952) 988-8400. ☺

# MINNETONKA'S 2007 BUDGET

## Quality services at a reasonable price

Our citizens consistently rank Minnetonka's services as a **good value for the money**. The city manages your tax dollars with the future in mind to ensure our ongoing ability to provide residents and businesses with the quality services they have come to expect, and at a reasonable price.

Like all service businesses, the city is experiencing **budget pressures**. Unfunded state mandates, soaring energy and health costs continue to challenge our ability to provide basic services. To meet our citizens' expectations for both service quality and taxes, the city council directed that roads and public safety continue as the city's **highest priorities**, and that projected 2007 budget growth be reduced by \$300,000 through the reallocation of resources.

In response to citizen concerns, a new **traffic management** program will work with neighborhoods to reduce speeding violations. Firefighters will help residents and businesses better deal with emergencies with a new **ReadyMinnetonka** program.

The city's **natural resources** program is being refocused to strengthen development oversight, restore natural areas and enlist residents in our efforts to maintain the health of Minnetonka's urban forest. A new program will reduce stormwater **infiltration and inflow** into the city's sanitary sewer system to avoid overloading regional treatment plants and Met Council surcharges.



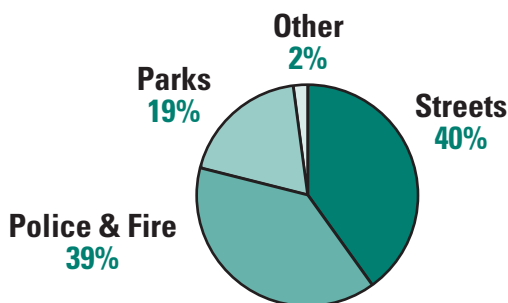
## City budget hearings

New opportunities were available this year for residents and businesses to provide input as the city's 2007 budget was being developed. Three public sessions were held in October and information was provided on the city's Web site so that interested residents could learn more about the city's budget and property tax system. A formal **city budget hearing** is set for Monday, December 4 at 6:30 p.m. in the city council chambers, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd. Questions may be sent to Minnetonka Mike at [mike@eminnetonka.com](mailto:mike@eminnetonka.com) or (952) 939-8586, or to Finance Director Merrill King at [mking@eminnetonka.com](mailto:mking@eminnetonka.com) or (952) 939-8200.

## Property taxes support basic city services

Eight out of every ten dollars of your city property taxes goes to maintain streets and provide police and fire protection. Since user fees fund many city services, most of the remainder of your city tax bill is for parks. Total city tax revenue will increase three percent in 2007 for public safety and parks, with an additional 6.3 percent dedicated to roads.

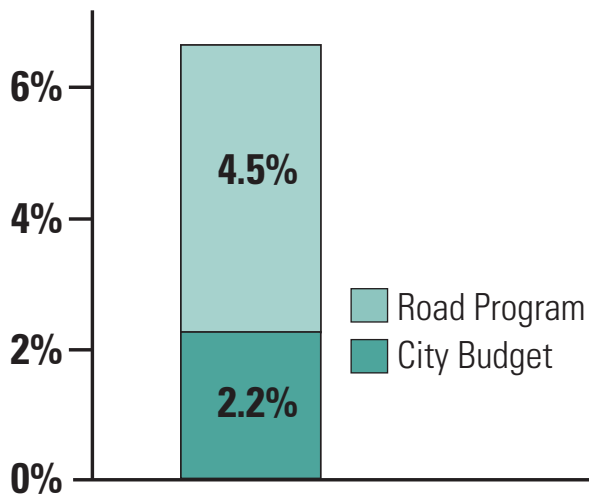
### What city property taxes pay for



## Two-thirds of city tax increase is for roads

City taxes will increase 6.7 percent for the average homeowner, with two-thirds dedicated to road maintenance. In response to growing resident concerns, **funding will more than double for the city's road revitalization program**, which will stabilize, repair and maintain our 250 miles of local streets. More local road funding is needed, since the state has not raised the gas tax for 18 years.

### 2007 City Tax Increase (average \$353,100 home)

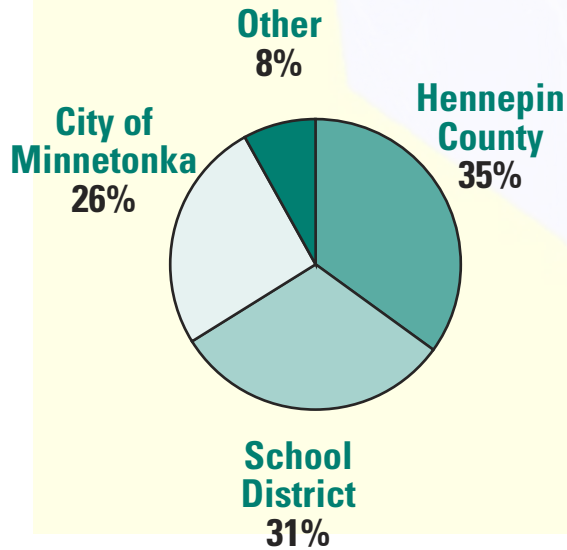


# YOUR 2007 PROPERTY TAXES

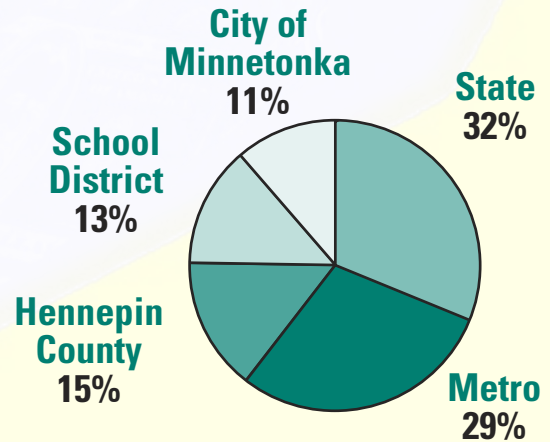
## Where your property taxes go

The city of Minnetonka accounts for about one-fourth of a **homeowner's** total property tax bill. Hennepin County and local school districts make up two-thirds of the total. Only 11 percent of property taxes paid by Minnetonka **businesses** go to the city. More than 60 percent of business property taxes leave the community for a state property tax and the fiscal disparities program that benefits other metro area communities.

### Homeowner property taxes



### Business property taxes



### Property taxes vary by location

Property tax notices list taxes for the city of Minnetonka, Hennepin County, various metro districts and either the Hopkins, Minnetonka or Wayzata school district. Because school district taxes vary, average homeowner taxes will increase 2.9 percent for residents who live in the Hopkins district (about 60 percent of the community), 6.9 percent for Minnetonka school district residents (30 percent) and 3.6 percent for Wayzata district residents (10 percent).

### Proposed 2007 Property Taxes

(average \$353,100 Minnetonka home)

	2006	2007
<b>County</b>	\$1,323	\$1,359
<b>City</b>	964	1,029
<b>School (based on Hopkins School District)</b>		
<i>Voter approved</i>	890	855
<i>Other</i>	304	308
<b>School Total</b>	1,194	1,163
<b>Metro Districts</b>	94	94
<b>Other Districts</b>	166	203
<b>Solid Waste Fee</b>	52	56
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,793</b>	<b>\$3,904</b>



# News for Neighbors

## From the Minnetonka Police Department

**N**EW FOR NEIGHBORS APPEARS quarterly in the *Minnetonka Memo*, with news for you about happenings in the Minnetonka Police Department. If you have questions about these items, call Nicole Nelson, crime prevention analyst, at (952) 939-8546.

- In conjunction with National Night Out, the Minnetonka Police Department hosted a **coloring contest** for students in kindergarten through sixth grade. Winners received a visit from a Minnetonka police officer, and, if they wished, a ride to school in a patrol car. In the K-3 category, third-grade student Hannah Eide was the winner and was driven to Groveland Elementary School Sept. 19 by Minnetonka Officer Terri Swanson. In the 4-6 category, sixth-grade student Izzy Lott was named the winner, and she received a visit from Officer Swanson the afternoon of Sept. 19. Winners were chosen by a panel of judges from the Minnetonka Senior Center.



*Hannah Eide with  
Officer Terri Swanson*



*Izzy Lott with  
Officer Terri Swanson*

- Four members of the police department's **crisis negotiation team** recently participated in a variety of training exercises, critical incident scenarios and role playing during the Upper Red River Valley Crisis Negotiations Competition and Conference in Grand Forks, N.D.
- On Sept. 22, **Heather Olson was sworn in** as the police department's newest officer. Officer Olson is a graduate of Hamline University and Minnetonka High School, and participated as a Minnetonka Police Department Explorer.
- In late October, as part of the statewide "Click It or Ticket" effort, the Minnetonka Police Department conducted enhanced patrols targeting

seat belt use. Previous targeted patrols have helped increase Minnesota's seat belt use rate from 79 percent to 84 percent over the last four years.

### Chief Joy Rikala announces retirement

Joy Rikala, chief of police for the city of Minnetonka since 1998, has announced her decision to retire effective Dec. 31, 2006. She will be succeeded by Mark Raquet, currently a captain with the Minnetonka Police Department.

"After carefully considering the needs of both the department and the community, I am pleased to announce that Capt. Raquet will serve as our next chief of police," said City Manager John Gunyou, who appointed Capt. Raquet to the position effective Jan. 1, 2007.

"In her time with the department, Chief Rikala has done a fine job of creating community partnerships and involvement to promote a safe environment for our residents, and I am confident that Capt. Raquet will continue this tradition," Gunyou concluded.

Capt. Raquet, 48, has been with the Minnetonka Police Department for 22 years, starting as a patrol officer. He was promoted to sergeant in 1998 and appointed lieutenant in 2002. His job title changed to captain in 2004 due to department restructuring.

Capt. Raquet earned a bachelor's degree from Metropolitan State University and a master's degree from Concordia University. He has also completed the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Va., an invitation-only professional course of study for U.S. and international law enforcement leaders.

"Chief Rikala leaves behind an exceptional organization," Capt. Raquet said. "I'm very fortunate to take over such a professional department with excellent people." ☺

## Holiday safety tips

### If you're away from home:

- Set an automatic timer for lights. Turn on lights and a radio or TV so it appears someone is home.
- Ask a trusted neighbor to watch your home, shovel walks, pick up newspapers and mail, and park in the driveway occasionally.
- Keep gifts out of sight while you're gone.
- Lock doors and windows while you're out, even if it's just for a few minutes.

### If you're shopping:

- Stay alert and be aware of everything around you at all times. Report suspicious activity by calling 911.
- Park in well-lit spaces and as close to the store as possible and lock your car doors.
- Be certain to place packages in your trunk before reaching your destination — avoid making a trip to your vehicle to place items in your car and then return to the mall. If you must put items in your car while at one shopping destination, move your vehicle to another parking spot.
- Don't carry large amounts of cash. Pay with a check or credit card if possible. If they don't ask for it, tell the clerk to check ID. Don't discard receipts until you get home — thieves like to collect receipts then use them to return items that were stolen from the store.

Get to know your neighbor—join or start your own Neighborhood Watch today! Call Nicole Nelson, crime prevention analyst, at (952) 939-8500 for information.

# Calendar

City of  
Minnetonka

December  
2006

Call (952) 939-8200  
for more  
information.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

4 City Council (Truth in Taxation hearing), 6:30 p.m.  
6 Park Board, 7 p.m.  
7 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.  
12 Senior Advisory Board, 10 a.m., Economic Development Authority, 6 p.m.

18 City Council, 6:30 p.m.  
25 Christmas, city offices closed  
28 Planning Commission, 6:30 p.m.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The following items are tentatively scheduled to come before the Planning Commission in December. Please call (952) 939-8200 for updated information or visit the city Web site at [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com). Meeting agendas are posted on the site the Friday prior to each commission meeting.

- 1 Parking variance for the existing Jimmy's Restaurant at 11000 Red Circle Drive. (87075.06b)
- 2 Preliminary plat to divide the existing property at 3140 County Road 101 into two lots. (Ward 3)
- 3 Items concerning Tonka Town Commons (rezoning, preliminary plat, site and building plan review with variances) for a new, two-story commercial building at 15400 and 15306 Hwy. 7, and a new house at 15409 Highwood Drive. (Ward 3)

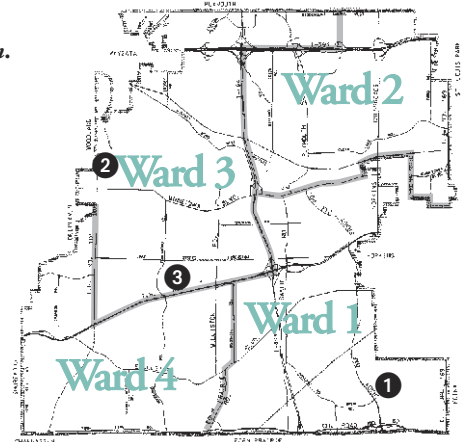
## Storm water meeting set for Jan. 22

RESIDENTS ARE INVITED TO THE CITY OF Minnetonka's annual storm water informational meeting Monday, Jan. 22, 2007, at 5 p.m. in the Boards and Commissions room, Minnetonka City Hall, 14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka.

After a brief presentation about the city's Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program (SWPPP), staff will

answer questions and take comments regarding the city's current programs and future plans for storm water. Copies of the WRMP and SWPPP may be examined at the engineering department in city hall during regular business hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday).

For more information call Steve Lillehaug, assistant city engineer, at (952) 939-8234. ☺



Protect  
Our  
Water  
Quality!

minnetonka  
memo December 2006



PRESORTED  
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CITY OF MINNETONKA

A publication of the city of Minnetonka  
14600 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, MN 55345 • (952) 939-8200  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday–Friday

### Mayor

Janis Callison ..... (952) 939-8389  
..... Home: (952) 935-7010  
..... [jcallison@eminnetonka.com](mailto:jcallison@eminnetonka.com)  
Meetings with the mayor may be  
scheduled by calling (952) 939-8211.

### City Manager

John Gunyou ..... (952) 939-8200

### Newsletter Editor

Jacque Larson ..... (952) 939-8200

E-mail: ..... [comments@eminnetonka.com](mailto:comments@eminnetonka.com)

Internet: ..... [www.eminnetonka.com](http://www.eminnetonka.com)

### Council

At Large: Dick Allendorf... (952) 933-6231 [dallendorf@eminnetonka.com](mailto:dallendorf@eminnetonka.com)  
Terry Schneider..... (952) 934-9529 [tschneider@eminnetonka.com](mailto:tschneider@eminnetonka.com)  
Ward 1: Bob Ellingson ... (952) 931-3065 [bellingson@eminnetonka.com](mailto:bellingson@eminnetonka.com)  
Ward 2: Tony Wagner.... (952) 512-1817 [twagner@eminnetonka.com](mailto:twagner@eminnetonka.com)  
Ward 3: Brad Wiersum... (612) 817-3713 [bwiersum@eminnetonka.com](mailto:bwiersum@eminnetonka.com)  
Ward 4: Al Thomas ..... (952) 949-9027 [athomas@eminnetonka.com](mailto:athomas@eminnetonka.com)

Minnetonka Mike ..... (952) 939-8586 [mike@eminnetonka.com](mailto:mike@eminnetonka.com)

POLICE-FIRE: Emergency ..... 9-1-1

Non-emergency ..... (952) 939-8500 or 9-1-1

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