



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Second Ward

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Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Longfellow, 11-21-13

Cam's next Cooper/Seward Office Hours:
Tuesday, November 26nd, 9:30-11:00am
Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St

Items:

- 1) Thank You
- 2) Election Results
- 3) Huge Success for Ranked Choice Voting
- 4) Plain Language Charter
- 5) Community Solar Comments
- 6) Target Center
- 7) Change the Name
- 8) Minnehaha Design Approval Postponed
- 9) Yard Waste
- 10) Public Building Energy Use
- 11) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) I feel both proud and humbled to have been reelected to a third term as Second Ward Council Member. I want to thank all of the voters of the Longfellow and Cooper areas who live in Ward 2 for your continued confidence. As I have over the last eight years, I will work hard to do my best to represent you on the City Council, and work to make Minneapolis a more just, more democratic, more sustainable and more peaceful city for everyone. I consider it an honor and a great joy to be able to continue to serve the residents of greater Longfellow and I look forward to working with The Longfellow Community Council, Longfellow Business Association and others to help make this a better community for years to come.
- 2) Betsy Hodges will be our next Mayor. In addition to me, the Council Members representing wards 1 (Kevin Reich), 4 (Barb Johnson), 7 (Lisa Goodman), 8 (Elizabeth Glidden), and 11 (John Quincy) have been reelected. Challengers have won races in wards 3 (Jacob Frey), 6 (Abdi Warsame) and 10 (Lisa Bender), and new Council Members have been elected in Ward 12 (Andrew Johnson) 5 (Blong Yang), 9 (Alondra Cano) and 12 (Linea Palmisano). Scott Vreeland was reelected Park Commissioner for the district that includes the West Bank.
- 3) From all reports, Ranked Choice Voting was a huge success in the election. Turnout increased from both 2009 and 2005, the last municipal general election that used the old voting system. Turnout was 31% in 2005, and **34%** this year. More than **9,000** more people voted this year than in 2005. In the mayor's race, a huge supermajority of voters - **87.7%** - used their second ranking. From what I have heard, most voters entered their polling places with a firm grasp on how to use RCV. I want to thank Minneapolis Elections staff for a fantastic job educating the public about RCV and the election in general. I am especially thankful to them for the great Voter Education Guide that was mailed to every household in Minneapolis, and believe that this is a precedent we should follow for all elections. I also want to thank FairVote Minnesota for their work educating voters all through the year and on Election Day. Everyone's work certainly paid off.
- 4) Both Plain Language Charter amendments passed by wide margins. This is a good thing, in my view, as it will make our most fundamental document easier for the public to understand and use. It will not go into effect until January of 2015 so this will now give us an opportunity to continue to address concerns and pass ordinances where it might be appropriate to replace a provision removed from the charter.

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may call 311 or 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

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Hmong - Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800;

Spanish - Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llama 612-673-2700;

Somali - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500.

- 5) The City Council has approved comments expressing serious concerns to the Public Utilities Commission regarding Xcel's proposed rules for implementing the Community Solar legislation that passed earlier this year. These include concerns about the proposed bill rate compensation that is inadequate, the unjustifiable 10 megawatt annual cap and the 2.5 megawatt per quarter cap for the first 24 months of implementation will only constrain the market and should be completely removed. Additionally, the 5-7 different fees paid in advance – no matter the size of the system – is neither fair nor reasonable. The City Council does commend Xcel for stating in their filing that they plan to upgrade and provide adequate resources and staffing to manage the community solar garden program. This was not the case for their previous management of solar programs.
- 6) The City Council, despite my opposition, has approved a plan to use city sales taxes to renovate the downtown sports and entertainment arena. The proposal calls for extensive renovations and updating of the arena and fitness center that will cost a total \$97-99 million. The renovation costs will be divided 50/50 with Public/Private investment. All of the public investment of approximately \$48.5 million will come from the City of Minneapolis. The Timberwolves team owners will pay \$43M (44.3%) and the company (AEG) contracted to operate the facility will pay \$5.5M (5.7%). All of the city's debt for the proposed renovation and for the ongoing capital improvements is projected to be paid for through local sales taxes – the same source of revenue to be used to pay off our football stadium debt beginning in 2021. We will also have to continue using separate revenues from some tax increment financing districts, and other funds to pay off the existing debt we took on when we bought the arena and to cover ongoing capital and operating expenses. This totals roughly \$8-\$10 million a year and will likely be paid off in 2025. I opposed this plan primarily because I believe that the use of these funds should be subject to the charter provision that calls for a referendum before more than \$10,000,000 is spend on a professional sports facility and that the costs associated with improving and maintain this statewide, regional asset should be shared the state and region and not the sole responsibility of the city.
- 7) I was proud to initiate and co-author an open letter from six Minneapolis City Council Members to National Football League Commissioner Roger Goodell and *Washington Redskins* team owner Dan Snyder expressing our disapproval of the team's racist name in advance of the November 7th game against the Minnesota Vikings in Minneapolis and the march and rally sponsored by the national Coalition on Racism in Sports and Media <http://www.aimovement.org/ncrsm/>. You can find the full text of the letter on the Second Ward blog.
- 8) The Council's Transportation and Public Works Committee has voted to postpone the approval of the county's Minnehaha Avenue reconstruction design. Council Member Colvin Roy moved a postponement in order to have additional study done including considerations of a design that would allow a separated bike way to be constructed in the future.
- 9) The final yard waste pickup will be one week later than originally planned, to give folks extra time to rake up leaves which have fallen late this year. That means the last pickup for residents will be your regular trash day on the week of Nov. 25. Please note that because there's no collection on Thanksgiving, the pickups for Thursday and Friday of that week will happen on Friday and Saturday. People can set compostable bags of yard waste, bundles of brush and reusable yard waste containers next to their garbage cart by 6 a.m. on their garbage collection day. Branches and leaves must be tied with string or twine, bagged in a compostable bag or placed loose in a reusable container. Branches must be less than three inches each in diameter and less than three feet long and weigh less than 40 pounds. All compostable bags and reusable containers must be 33 gallons or less and weigh less than 40 pounds.
- 10) Minneapolis has released the first annual report (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/%40citycoordinator/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-117371.pdf>) on energy use in public buildings. The City will use this information to prioritize investments in its buildings to save energy and money. The City sought voluntary agreements with Hennepin County, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and Minneapolis Public Schools to include selected buildings from those entities in the report. The report includes benchmarking information from 102 public buildings, including over 21 million square feet.
- 11) Applications are now being accepted for open positions on the following City boards and commissions: Board of Appeal and Equalization, Ethical Practices Board and Telecommunications Network (MTN), Minneapolis. For a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions, go to www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings