



# FALL 2024 NEWSLETTER

## MAYOR JOHNSON'S LETTER

The time has come! I announced at the July 16<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting that I would not be filing for the Mayor's elected position again. I have been blessed with good health, but mobility issues limit what I can do, and age has a way of saying, Stop! I'll review some of my experiences in the next newsletter. Filings for City positions and School Boards are now open and close on August 13<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm.

It is hard to believe that most summer events and county fairs are a thing of the past. School sports teams and some colleges have

already begun their fall programs, and "The Great Minnesota Get Together" time is here. Thanks to those who hosted a "Night to Unite" event.

On our farm, the job of putting up hay is a never-ending job, but this year with all the rain we were unable to finish some of the first cutting of hay until it is ordinarily third cutting time. Some because of the continuing rain and other fields because they were too wet to drive in. And the hay was so thick! Soybeans where not drowned out seem to be thriving with all this rain, and some corn fields look worse than I have seen in years.

Since our last newsletter, Council received our official financial audit report for the City for calendar year 2023. Again, we received the best rating possible. Thanks to our City Staff and consultant partners!

As soon as the audit is done, staff and council began work on the next budget which is for 2025. That budget must be semi finalized by the end of September with a levy notification to the County. The City can reduce that levy amount through December of 2024 but cannot increase it.

It was nice not to have major road construction and detours in the City this summer. The construction in other cities did change the traffic patterns for some, however. Some local roads saw limited delays because of Midco's broadband work, road tiling, or even some minor flooding issues. Thank you for your patience!

November 5<sup>th</sup> is General Election day. Be sure to vote. The ballot will cover positions in the City of Independence, our local school boards,



Marvin D. Johnson  
Mayor

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### MEETINGS

#### City Council

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

#### Planning Commission

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

#### Workshops are

posted as scheduled.

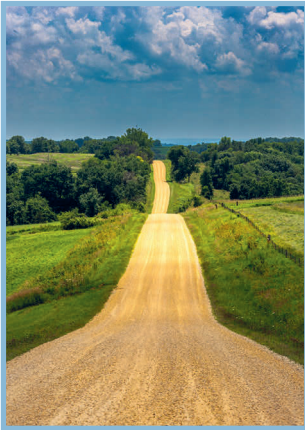
[www.ci.independence.mn.us](http://www.ci.independence.mn.us)

county, state, and federal officials. Plenty of opportunities are available to vote early if you cannot make it to the polls on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

Have a great rest of Summer and Fall!

*Marvin D. Johnson, Your Mayor*

## Independence Five Year Gravel Road Capital Improvement Planning



The city is in the process of finalizing a 5-year capital improvement plan for all gravel roads in Independence. This plan will consist of two phases and will ultimately result in the improvement of all gravel roads within the city. The initial phase will occur in 2025 and will focus on improving drainage, replacing culverts, correcting known impaired base areas, and recapping high traffic roads with new gravel. The second phase will be carried out over 5 years and will focus on similar improvements to the remainder of gravel roads not wholly improved with the initial phase.

The improvements will require a significant investment by the city; however, the city has committed to making this investment without individual property assessments. The city has also secured state and county road funding to offset a portion of the total project cost.

## MIDCO Expansion in Independence Continues!

Midco began construction in April 2024 to bring fiber internet and phone services to previously underserved portions of Independence, thanks to a partnership with the Minnesota Office of Broadband Development and Hennepin County. The majority of the residents in this project area will have access to Midco services by the end of 2024. Midco has also informed the City of Independence of its plan to expand fiber to the remainder of Independence in the coming years!

As construction progresses, residents in the construction area will receive communications from Midco before the contractor starts working, including a door tag at your home or business. If you have questions or concerns during the construction process, [Midco.com/ConstructionSupport](https://Midco.com/ConstructionSupport) shows helpful information for each stage of the project.

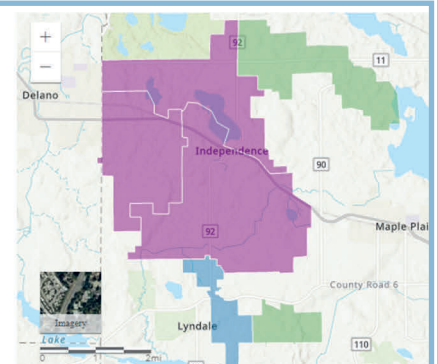
Once services are activated, you'll have access to up to 5 gigs of symmetrical internet speeds backed by a best-in-class customer experience. For more information on the products Midco offers, service preregistration, and to view a live map of the construction progress, visit [Midco.com/Independence](https://Midco.com/Independence).

### See for yourself.

Zoom in and discover what's happening in your neighborhood right now with our interactive construction map.

#### Map Legend

- Future Construction
- Construction in Progress
- Construction Complete, Awaiting Activation
- Construction Complete, Services Available





## The 2024 Lake Stewardship Award Presented at the Lake Sarah Improvement Association July 15, 2024 Summer Meeting

Awarded for “Exceptional Volunteer Efforts to maintain the Sarah Creek Outlet Channel” during this year’s exceptionally rainy spring/summer.



L-R: Independence Councilmember Brad Spencer, recipient Joe Slavec, recipient Jon Arneson, recipient Steve Balinski, recipient Scott Walsh, Independence Mayor Marvin Johnson

By their continuous efforts in physically clearing the outlet channel of debris and floating vegetation, the Lake Sarah outlet was able to function such that Lake Sarah crested just below flood stage water levels and no-wake boating restrictions for this season to date have not reached implementation thresholds.

With water levels now returning to near normal

for the season, Lake Sarah’s residents and recreational visitors can enjoy this summer on the lake thanks to volunteers like these.

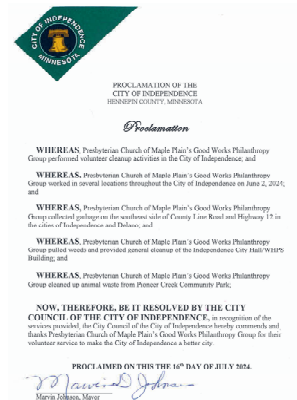
Volunteers like these are hard to find and often go unnoticed. The City of Independence formally recognizes these volunteers and all those who have helped and supported them.



## Good Works Philanthropy Community Service Group Proclamation

Thanks to First Presbyterian Church of Maple Plain’s good works community service volunteers, the City of Independence benefited from getting several large contractor bags of trash collected from the County Line Road and Hwy 12 intersection which allowed our Public Works crew to mow the ditch. Sometimes seemingly little things make a huge difference in our communities. Much appreciation to the diligent trash-collection crew (pictured below) and to Jeff and Sue Potter for weeding City Hall flowerbeds among other projects in the area.

**Sunday, October 13<sup>th</sup> will be their Fall service day, and all are invited to join in! See page 7 Community Events for details or their website [catchourspirit.org](http://catchourspirit.org) to register.**



Fall Service Day will be Sunday, October 13<sup>th</sup>



L-R: Mark Anderson, Todd Barkus, Pat Hasse, Blair Voigt, Soren Voigt, Natalie Voigt





## First Responder Updates



West Hennepin Public Safety is proud to introduce the newest member of our team, Micah Vorderbruggen, as our new Patrol Officer. Micah recently graduated with a Law Enforcement degree from the Hennepin Technical College in 2024. Micah previously worked at West Hennepin Public Safety Department as a Community Service Officer and a Reserve Officer.

Chief Kroells stated, "Our agency is honored Micah joined our team. Finding such a well-rounded law enforcement candidate who has a passion to serve is hard to find these days. Officer Vorderbruggen is a top candidate which will have an immediate impact on our agency and the citizens we serve."

Officer Vorderbruggen stated, "I am honored to start my Law Enforcement career at West Hennepin Public Safety Department. I am excited to serve and make a difference in Maple Plain and Independence."



Officer Micah Vorderbruggen



West Hennepin Public Safety Department would like to thank our citizens for making Night to Unite a tremendous event for Independence and Maple Plain this year.

West Hennepin Public Safety, Maple Plain Fire Department, and West Suburban Fire District will continue to work with our communities and its neighborhoods to promote crime prevention using National Night to Unite. By getting our neighbors together we can proactively prevent crime from occurring in our communities. Together we are a safer community.



Holden Mohs, Brian Doyle, Joe Doyle, and Coach Chris Doyle!

**Congratulations** to Holden Mohs, Brian Doyle, Joe Doyle, and coach Chris Doyle!



Maple Plain Fire Department won the Delano Fourth of July waterball championship. Twelve fire department teams participated in the tournament. MPFD has won the Delano tournament four out of the last seven years. The traveling fire ax trophy is back at the Maple Plain Fire Station for the year.



## INDEPENDENCE LOCAL CANDIDATES GENERAL ELECTION - NOVEMBER 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

LMCC-TV will be giving local candidates an opportunity to share their video statements allowing residents to better know them & their priorities. If a candidate chooses to give LMCC-TV a statement, their video will become available October 7<sup>th</sup> although each candidate may have his or her video earlier.



Check LMCC's YouTube channel, scan the QR codes below or the City's website - Government>Elections >Important Election Dates tab for all details.

## 2024 GENERAL ELECTION TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5<sup>th</sup> 7 AM – 8 PM AT INDEPENDENCE CITY HALL

**Absentee Voting – Friday, Sept. 20 - Monday, Nov. 4.**  
*Vote absentee in-person at Independence City Hall or vote by mail. (See [www.MNVotes.gov](http://www.MNVotes.gov).)*

• **Monday–Thursday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m, Friday 8 a.m.-noon**

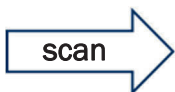
• **Direct Balloting - Friday, October 18<sup>th</sup> – Nov. 4**  
(Voters place their ballot directly into the tabulator.)

• **Extended Hours:**

- **Saturday, October 26 (9 a.m. - 3 p.m.)**
- **Tuesday, October 29 (8 a.m. - 7 p.m.)**
- **Saturday, November 2 (9 a.m. - 3 p.m.)**
- **Sunday, November 3 (9 a.m. - 3 p.m.)**
- **Monday, November 4 (8 a.m.–5 p.m.)**

**Being in line at 8 pm allows you to vote on Election Day!**

**New Independence Residents or those who did not vote in the last election** can pre-register to vote through Tues., Oct. 15 at 5pm or online at [MNVotes.gov](http://MNVotes.gov) by 11:59 pm. After this date, you may still register while voting early or on Election day with proof of residence. Those not yet 18 but will be 18 years old on Election Day may also pre-register to vote. Being pre-registered speeds up your Election Day voting by having your name on the roster of registered voters. Pre-register on-line at [MNVotes.gov](http://MNVotes.gov) or stop in at City Hall to pre-register.





# GET HELP TO LIVE A LOWER WASTE LIFESTYLE



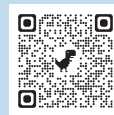
Many people are interested in taking steps to prevent waste, recycle, and compost more but aren't sure where to start.

## Zero Waste Challenge Programs

Hennepin County's Zero Waste Challenge programs will help you learn more, connect you with resources to help you reach your goals, and provide support and motivation along the way. There are three opportunities to get involved:



- A personalized, eight-month **Zero Waste Challenge** is open to approximately 50 households per round. This challenge offers one-on-one support and accountability from trained waste experts.
- A fully online, month-long **Plastic-Free Challenge** has unlimited participation and directs households to focus on actions to reduce single-use plastics.
- A fully online, month-long **Stop Food Waste Challenge** has unlimited participation and directs households to focus on actions to prevent wasting food.



Learn more about each challenge at [Hennepin.us/zerowastechallenge](https://hennepin.us/zerowastechallenge). Testimonials are available upon request.

## BACKYARD COMPOSTING

If you're curious about [backyard composting](#) and would like to join in Hennepin County's class, the dates are:

- Friday, September 13 from noon - 1 p.m.
- Tuesday, September 24 from 7 -8 p.m.

## Managing yard waste in Hennepin County



Yard waste—such as grass clippings, leaves and branches—is a valuable resource that can add nutrients into your yard or be recycled into compost.

It is illegal to put this kind of waste in your household garbage.



## What Would Bruce Do / WWBD

If you haven't met the City of Independence's beloved Building Official, Bruce Satek, homeowners appreciate his practical insights, love of motorcycles, veterans, and more! He's been a faithful asset for 20 years!

**Bruce's Fall Reminders include:**

### SEPTIC

1. Keep long grass on septic to help prevent from freezing.
2. Keeping it pumped every 3-5 years allows it to be compliant and helps homeowners avoid costly repairs.

### CHIMNEY FIRES

Chimney fires can be dangerous if the flue is not kept clean. Creosote can build up in chimney and cause fires. Burning Creosote logs doesn't work as well as brushing does for getting the creosote out of the chimneys.

## 25th Annual Loretto Fun Fest September 14, 2024

LORETTO LIONS PARK

STARTING AT 3 PM



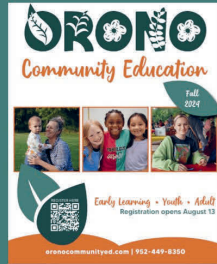
- FOOD DRIVE
- FREE KIDS PLAY 3-7 PM
- MEDALLION HUNT 3 PM
- MARKET- BUSINESS EXPO 3-7 PM
- POLICE VS. FIRE DEPT SOFTBALL REMATCH 7 PM
- FIREWORKS 8:30 PM



Community Education

Early Learning • Youth • Adult

Many opportunities to choose from!  
Fitness & Recreation - Aquatics - Arts - Science & Technology  
ECFE - Preschool - Child Care & Much More



Registration opens August 13  
oronocommunityed.com  
952-449-8360



## West Suburban Fire Open House

Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024  
4-8 pm

At Station 2 - 92 Hamel Road, Hamel, MN 55340

A free will donation pork dinner will be served!  
Activities: Fire truck rides, bounce houses,  
face painting, spray house, CPR training,  
and fire prevention handouts.



**October Coat Drive** collecting new and gently used coats and new hats and mittens throughout the community all month. Distribution will be on **Nov. 5-6** at the WeCAN office, 5213 Shoreline Dr., Mound, MN 55364. Visit [wecanmn.org](http://wecanmn.org) for details.

### Open House - Thursday, Oct. 10, 4 - 6 p.m.

Celebrating 35 years of service plus 10 years of their Mobile Market! Enjoy refreshments, meet the staff, tour the facility, and enjoy the celebration!



### "Give to the Max" Day - Thursday, Nov. 21.

Watch for updates on how to participate in this statewide day of giving!



"We are connecting members with the community and each other every day!"

Gillespie Center  
2590 Commerce Blvd.  
Mound, MN 55364  
(952) 472-6501  
Info@GillespieCenter.org



10:30 Tues., Oct. 10 -

Author Doug Ohman Doug will be sharing about Minnesota's Vanishing Landmarks!

Tickets: \$5 in advance, \$7 at the door.  
Snacks and refreshments provided.

Fri., Nov. 29 - Sun. Dec. 8  
Holiday Boutique

Sat., Dec. 14 - Cup of Christmas Tea  
Tickets available at the Gillespie Center.



COMMUNITY SERVICE DAY  
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13

### Interested in volunteering?

Let's make a difference together  
Specific volunteer opportunities still coming!



Previously done: Litter pickup | Weeding | Painting | Making sandwiches to help fight hunger

For more information and to register, visit [catchourspirit.org](http://catchourspirit.org)  
Free continental breakfast for volunteers hosted by First Presbyterian Church of Maple Plain



Sat., Oct. 26<sup>th</sup> "Trunk or Treat" sponsored by West Hennepin Chamber of Commerce. Details coming!

Mon., Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> - 8:30 am Veterans Day Ceremony at Orono High School, Orono Rotary Club sponsored.



Sat. Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual WHPS Reserves' View Santa Local Food Shelf Fundraiser  
3:30 pm at Independence City Hall.



**Art in the Park**

Save the Date  
Free art event for the community!  
**Tuesday, October 1**  
5 - 7 PM  
Veterans Memorial Park  
5190 Independence Street, Maple Plain

Community Education  
in partnership with

**Open House**  
OCTOBER 7TH, 2024  
5-7:30 PM

FIRE TRUCK RIDES!  
MEET FIREFIGHTERS!  
GAMES FOR KIDS!

Maple Plain Fire Station  
1645 Pioneer Ave  
Maple Plain, MN

FOLLOW US:

## CITY OF INDEPENDENCE

1920 County Road 90  
Independence, MN 55359

Ph: 763-479-0527

Fax: 763-479-0528

[asimon@ci.independence.mn.us](mailto:asimon@ci.independence.mn.us)

[csolien@ci.independence.mn.us](mailto:csolien@ci.independence.mn.us)

[ljohnson@ci.independence.mn.us](mailto:ljohnson@ci.independence.mn.us)

### HOURS:

Monday-Thursday: 8-4:30, Friday: 8-noon

PRSRT STD  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #32324  
Twin Cities, MN

### CITY OFFICIALS

#### Mayor

Marvin Johnson

#### City Council

Brad Spencer

Lynn Betts

Ray McCoy

Steve Grotting

### Planning Commissioners

Robert Gardner, Chair

Anita Volkenant

Leith Dumas

Hal Tearse

Steve Thompson

Jon-Paul Story, Alternate

Timothy Usset, Alternate

### CITY STAFF:

Administrator/City Planner

Mark Kaltsas

Public Works Supervisor

Shawn Bode

Building Official

Bruce Satek

Admin. Services Dir.

Amber Simon

Administrative Asst.

Linda Johnson

Carrie Solien

## Important Responsibilities for Property Owners

### CULVERTS— Why should I be concerned about the ones near my property?

Fall is the time that the ends of culverts located on or near your property must be cleaned out. Doing so now allows for proper water flow when the spring thaws. Uncleared culverts potentially prevent drainage allowing water to flow as it should and avoids ponding up.

### What are my landowner responsibilities?

You are responsible for driveway culvert maintenance. Culvert maintenance involves keeping both the inlet and outlet of the pipe free of debris so that it works properly, including removing snow and ice during the winter months whenever possible. To further clarify who is responsible for what, this image shows which are the landowner's, adjacent landowner's, and Independence Public Works' responsibilities.

