

2012 Primary Voters Guide

Written by

Wednesday, 08 August 2012 00:00

Tuesday, August 14 is the Minnesota primary. The primary election is important because it allows voters to choose the candidate that they think is the best choice to be in the general election on Tuesday, November 6. Below are statements submitted by candidates who are running in some of the races where the primary will have a heavy impact on how the ballot will look in November.

Joy Marsh Stephens

Candidate for Hennepin County Commissioner District 1

www.Joyfordistrictone.com

"For the last 20 years, the economic and social disparities that impact the poor and communities of color in Hennepin County have only grown worse. The incumbent has ignored his role in spearheading solutions to these challenges at the expense of those residents who struggle in poverty as well as the property tax payers who bear the burden of a shrinking tax base. The demographics have changed, but the vision and policy have not changed with it. After three years of community organizing and over seventeen years of professional experience, I will bring this visionary, responsive voice to Hennepin County.

Chris Rains

Candidate for Hennepin County Commissioner District 1

www.Voteforchrisrains.com

Hennepin County must prioritize and focus on the core services of public safety, transportation, and providing a social safety net to those most vulnerable and in need. We are struggling through a recession, yet the county has not acted to lessen the burden on taxpayers. This especially hurts the working-class and seniors on fixed-incomes. I will work to lower your property taxes. This can happen by prioritizing spending, evaluating county programs against specified criterion of success and reducing the bureaucracy of government. Accountability must return to all public offices again. Remember, they work for you, not the other way around.

Jim Koepke

Candidate for Hennepin County Commissioner District 5

www.JimforHennepin.com

I am a fiscal conservative who promises to cut wasteful, needless spending in order to lower property taxes. As a longtime Hennepin County employee who has worked in the areas of social services and mental health, I am committed to maintaining those services care as well as all basic services. My experience includes extensive budget and financial work. I have been recognized for my work with numerous awards.

Jan Callison

Candidate for Hennepin County Commissioner District 6

www.jancallison.org

I currently serve as the Hennepin County Commissioner for the Sixth District. As commissioner, I have focused on advocating for the residents and communities of my district, promoting public outreach, implementing reforms and efficiencies so that Hennepin County can reduce its level of spending while meeting increased needs, and championing projects that will assure Hennepin County's economic vitality. My commitment is to consider the issues that may come before me thoughtfully on a non-partisan basis.

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Dave Wahlstedt

Candidate for Hennepin County Commissioner District 6

www.daveforcommissioner.org

I believe that home ownership is sacred and that property taxes that drive people out of their homes are one of the most harmful forms of taxation, yet for decades they have been going up faster than any other tax. Current leadership has expanded Hennepin County government to fill their huge headquarters and in 2012 bought another new building so they can continue to expand - paying \$26 million for a building assessed at \$11 million. Elect me and I will go into office with a commitment to Prioritize, Economize and Downsize county government and begin to roll back property taxes.

Sara Wyatt

Candidate for Hennepin County Park Commissioner District 1

www.wyattforparks.com

Providing great parks for you and your children WHILE keeping taxes low is my priority. The following are a few of the projects completed in my two terms: Dakota Rail, Luce Line, Medicine Lake & Lake Independence Trails; Eastman Nature Center; 36th Avenue Pedestrian Bridge; Eagle Lake Mini-golf; Elm Creek Mountain-Bike Course; and Fish Lake Dog-park. For the past three years I've proposed a 0% increase in the tax levy, yet we have used available resources and partnering to make sure our parks keep improving. My Commissioner experience successfully guiding Three Rivers through tough times makes me the best candidate to represent you.

Janice Meyer

Candidate for Hennepin County Park Commissioner District 1

www.jan4parks.com

Having never held an elected office, I may not have the same credentials as my opponents. However, I do have a strong passion and interest in serving and helping to preserve our fabulous Three Rivers Park System. Each of the parks holds unique opportunities for all walks of life and I believe that to be one their most valuable assets. My differences from the other candidates may just be that I'm fresh, new, and passionate.

Bob Fletcher

Candidate for Ramsey County Commissioner District 1

Bob.fletcher@fletcherforcommissioner.com

"Maintaining and improving our quality of life in Ramsey County is my reason for seeking office. My priorities include, public safety, quality county services, economic development, youth education and fiscal restraint. As a 35 year law enforcement professional and former Public Housing Commissioner, I am keenly aware of the challenges facing our community. Helping our youth succeed educationally will continue to be a primary focus of my service. Early literacy assistance, after-school programming and drug addiction prevention & treatment strategies are essential in our fight to reduce crime. I would be honored to have your support."

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Sue Jeffers

Candidate for Ramsey County Commissioner District 2

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www.suejeffers2012.com

No other candidate brings my unique background in small business, government and politics. I am committed to reasonable taxes and spending, low debt service and efficient, effective delivery of core services while maximizing resources, maintaining county assets and building a flourishing community.

Voters tell me the decline of home values and increasing property taxes is their biggest concern. Voters know that meeting the needs of the county is not easy but they are demanding commissioners be responsible stewards of our precious tax dollars. A vibrant, prosperous business sector will expand the tax base and is essential for financial stability and economic growth.

Mary Burg

Candidate for Ramsey County Commissioner District 2

maryburg2012@gmail.com

I am a qualified candidate because I have comprehensive perspective including 3rd term City Council 35years business ownership, management of municipal enterprises, and currently an Employment Specialist in which I link clients who live with mental illness to potential employers. This gives me daily exposure to local business. I have an outstanding track record in operational improvement; identifying and managing risk; and creating a profitable bottom-line through a commitment to excellence in quality and performance. I have a reputation for identifying and solving complex problems; being a diplomatically assertive and a goal-oriented leader able to make hard decisions; proven record of being highly sensitive community needs.

Victoria Reinhardt

Candidate for Ramsey County Commissioner District 7

commissionerreinhardt@gmail.com

I am honored to serve as Ramsey County Commissioner, District 7. I understand the complex issues facing Ramsey County and work hard to get great results. I have worked to maintain our triple A bond rating, bring private, public and non-profit sector partners together, and faced historic budget challenges with a true desire to find cost-effective solutions. If re-elected, I will continue to use my experience, education, and problem-solving skills to keep Ramsey County a great place to live, work, and enjoy life. Age: 59.

Married; Two sons, one grandson. Education: Doctorate in Public Administration; Masters in Business Administration.

Jennifer DeJournett

Candidate for Hennepin County Park Commissioner District 2

www.jendejournett.com

As a mom of 4 young kids, I want a fiscally secure, responsible park system that can maintain our community assets. My work experience as a civil engineer and my perspective as an active volunteer and member of the community could be of service if elected to the board. I have lived throughout our district, and can connect with our communities and leaders for the benefit the District. I will communicate Park Board activities to our community.

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I will bring a fresh perspective to make the most of our resources for the benefit of the district while respecting the taxpayer's pocketbook.

Marilynn Corcoran

Candidate for Hennepin County Park Commissioner District 2

corcdayton@yahoo.com

My tenure with Three Rivers Park District has been a fulfilling and rewarding experience. As economic challenges continue, every level of government must explore ways to provide needed and wanted services within financial constraints. Water quality is a priority for the Park District, as is invasive species. With so many water bodies, streams and rivers within, nearby and flowing thru Park District resources we are committed to making a difference thru initiating Best Management Practices and good public education. In addition, I have extensive community and local government experience, and have been a proven asset when it comes to collaborations.

Daniel J. Freeman

Candidate for Hennepin County Park Commissioner District 3

DFreeman@dsb-cpa.com

As a father, sportsman, conservationist and active outdoorsman, I am running for the Three Rivers Park District Board to help protect and conserve our great parks for future generations. Our parks are a true asset to our community. We need to ensure that we are operating them efficiently and effectively, acting as good stewards of our resources. I'll work to minimize additional impact on our property tax levy, while maximizing additional funding from sources like state legacy funds. I look forward to this opportunity to serve my community, and I ask for your vote on November 6th.

Matthew Laue

Candidate for Hennepin County Park Commissioner District 3

mattlaue@usinternet.com

Along with my beautiful wife I am the proud parent of two young boys. I am a past Olympian who grew up using numerous Three Rivers Parks' and park programs to train and enhance my sporting ability. I want to be the Park Commissioner for the 3rd District because it is very important to me that the park district continues to grow and evolve thru its current and future vision plan offering rewarding programs to residents within our district and throughout the park system. I want my children and future generations to have even better opportunities to experience the Three Rivers Park District.

John Gunyou

Candidate for Hennepin County Park Commissioner District 4

www.johngunyou.com

My dad taught me long-ago that we don't plant trees for ourselves; we plant them for our grandchildren. I take those words to heart, and have worked hard for 40 years to permanently preserve acres of open space, forests, lakes and wetlands, and to enhance the parks and trails that make our communities special.

If elected to serve as Three Rivers Park Commissioner, I pledge to continue that commitment. Through careful, responsible stewardship, we can and must sustain our quality parks and trails for future generations. Please check out my track record on my Facebook page and website at:

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www.johngunyou.com

Leigh Harrod

Candidate for Hennepin County Park Commissioner District 4

www.harrod4parks.com

I am a registered professional geologist with over 30 years work experience in the environmental field. I have always enjoyed work and study in natural sciences. I have a strong interest in the large regional parklands managed by the Three Rivers Park District. My education, history, and work experience as environmental manager of natural resources is a great fit to serve as a County Park Commissioner.

These park lands, scattered throughout the metro area, are very important to the quality of all of our lives. I promise to protect and manage them sensibly for all of us.

Joe Mullery

Candidate for State Representative District 59A

joemullery@gmail.com

Joe Mullery, State Representative (incumbent). Endorsements: Congressman Ellison, Governor Dayton, DFL, Minnesota AFL-CIO, Outfront, many more. Background: lifelong Northsider; Board Member, Council on Black Minnesotans and Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans; Attorney; DFL District Chair and State Central Committee. I am the legislative leader on many issues facing the Northside: foreclosure prevention; education, job training and opportunities for jobs, especially minorities and disabled; youth development and juvenile justice reform; and public safety. For over a decade I've let the fight to get state government to hire, and contract with, minorities. I pledge to lead the fight to revitalize the Northside.

Marcus Harcus

Candidate for State Representative District 59A

marcus@marcusharcus.org

"I am a Northside native son, a writer, activist and social entrepreneur running for State Representative in House District 59A. I've studied public policy, community development and practiced legislative advocacy. I've worked as a community relations manager, coalition organizer, community organizer and youth program coordinator. I'm running to demonstrate the kind of political leadership Minnesota deserves, more equitable, engaging and effective representation. I'm running to advocate for a fair economy, housing justice, education equity, affordable healthcare and criminal justice reform. We're at risk of not having a single Black man in the House if I don't win the Primary Election."

Doug Mann,

Green Party endorsed candidate for the citywide school board seat

Dougmann99@cs.com

Education is a right, not a privilege! A quality, public education should be available to all on an equal basis. However, most students of color get an education of inferior quality due to factors like being placed in watered-down curriculum tracks and overexposure to inexperienced teachers. Teachers are arbitrarily fired and replaced during their 3 year probationary period. Inexperienced teachers hired through Teach for America are on 2 year contracts. Demand low teacher turnover rates in all schools. Eliminate watered-down curriculum tracks. Let's fix the

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public schools instead of herding students into charter schools. Green Party endorsed.

Janice Mae Harmon

Candidate for Minneapolis School Board Member at Large(SSD #1)

Dragonv02@msn.com

I have the goal to educate ALL of our children. We must be #1 to give our children the best possible chance at a good future, with that level of teaching, in MATH, SCIENCE, and all other educational goals, will our children lead the way into the 21st century. We cannot allow even one child to drop out as that could be the child that finds the way to world peace.

Josh Reimnitz

Candidate for School Board Member District 4 (SSD #1)

josh.reimnitz@gmail.com

As a 4th grade teacher Josh's students made significant gains in the classroom through fun and interactive lessons, especially in reading and science. Josh currently serves as Executive Director of the national youth leadership nonprofit Students Today Leaders Forever, founded in Minneapolis, serving nearly 4,000 students annually. As an Executive Director of a multi-state, multi-million dollar organization, Josh understands systems administration, policy governance, budgetary and strategic planning, and relationship building. STLF fosters leadership through service, relationships, and action by helping students become effective leaders and active community partners; giving Josh an intimate knowledge of what it takes to both train and inspire future leaders of our community.

William Lange

Candidate for School Board Member District 4 (SSD #1)

William.lange88@gmail.com

Excellence in education requires an improvement in test scores and graduation rates, but also requires that we pay attention to the retention of students in the Minneapolis Public Schools. I will work to improve communication between the district and parents on school readiness. discipline policies, transportation and grades. As a life long resident of the Twin Cities I know high performing schools are the key to the future of our community. As an African American male I am personally aware of the need to create positive expectations for academic achievement for all students. Together we can transform our schools.