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December 11, 2013

Hennepin County Commissioners

Re: UN Flag Issue originated March 27, 2012

Commissioners:

Best I know this is my **9th request** for the following information since April 2013. My first letter to you about this issue was late December, 2012 (copy enclosed).

The request:

**REGARDING THE MARCH 27, 2012 ACTION:**

**QUESTIONS FOR EACH HENNEPIN COUNTY BOARD MEMBER:**

- 1. Specifically what constitutes Mr. Opat's "slightly out of compliance" statement? I'd like to know exactly what was "out of compliance".\***
- 2. Who, specifically, first raised this issue with the Hennepin County Board, and when did this happen?**
- 3. What public hearings were advertised and held on this matter before the March 27, 2012 action was taken?**
- 4. Which of the flags currently flying on the Plaza replaced the UN Flag?**
- 5. If you voted on this issue on March 27, 2012 (presumably "aye"), why did you vote as you did?**
- 6. There are costs to this action, more than the cost of a flag. Have you even thought about these costs, such as cost to reputation of the County?**

Last month I referred to the 1965 Declaration of World Citizenship signed by then-President Lyndon Johnson. (<http://www.outsidethewalls.org/blog/2013/11/09/>) Recently I asked 92-year old Mr. Lynn Elling, Minneapolis, about the history of this document. He recalled it originated within the Twin Cities community, particularly Stan Platt and others in business, like himself, and he was directly involved in the initiative. He was a downtown businessman at the time, and you'll note he signed the document.

So, I now have a "trail" from about 1965-2013, and as for the last year and a half, your lips are sealed. For shame....

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**www.amillioncopies.info** - note Lynn Elling

December 29, 2012

TO: Members of Hennepin County Board

Yesterday, unsolicited and totally unexpected, I learned of the Hennepin County Board action noted on the reverse of this letter.

This came as a shock to me, since for a number of months, culminating within the last couple of weeks, I was attempting to ferret out the history of the Minneapolis/Hennepin County Declaration of World Citizenship March 5, 1968, and trying to find out the date the UN flag flew proudly beside the U.S. flag at the City Hall. That turned out to be May 1, 1968. Many of the details are in the enclosure. The keynote speaker that day was Gov. Elmer L. Andersen, who thought his speech on the importance of the UN and World Citizenship was so important that he included it in his book, "I Trust to be Believed", edited by Lori Sturdevant and published shortly before his death in 2004. The speech in question is at pages 151-152 in the brief chapter on World Citizenship.

In your action a few months ago you essentially destroyed the essence of a bipartisan and very carefully discussed decision for Minneapolis and Hennepin County to become, most likely, the first community in the United States to declare themselves World Citizens.

It appears that you relied on erroneous interpretation of the U.S. Flag Code as well. I can see nothing in that code that renders what was first done May 1, 1968, in front of Minneapolis City Hall, to be improper by even the strictest reading of the code (the violation of which, by the way, carries no penalty. The issue is freedom of speech.)

I am not a scholar of parliamentary procedure, but it appears that four of you continue on the Board who voted for the Resolution last March. It would be a simple matter to bring this matter up for reconsideration and reverse your earlier decision. Cynically, you could essentially hide it from public view, as you apparently did last March as well.

As for myself, while I've lived in Minnesota for 49 of my 72 years, including 39 in the Twin Cities, I have never been a resident of either Minneapolis or Hennepin County. So I have no formal standing. At the same time, I am not naive, either, and in my limited spheres, I am going to do my best to call this matter to public attention. I have much more to say about this history, with or without your interest.

Reverse your decision.

c: Minneapolis City Council  
Mayor R. T. Rybak

(over)



**BOARD MINUTES**

**BOARD OF HENNEPIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

Tuesday, March 27, 2012

1:30 PM

The Board of County Commissioners of Hennepin County, Minnesota, met in the Hennepin County Government Center in the City of Minneapolis, at 1:34 PM.

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Opat, Chair, and all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners McLaughlin and Jeff Johnson.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 375.12 and Hennepin County Board Resolution No. 04-5-232, the County Board has directed the Clerk of the Board to publish the board proceedings in a summary manner that conforms to Minnesota Statute 331A.01. The following includes item descriptions, resolution numbers and final disposition of each item dealt with at the meeting. The full text of the board proceedings is available in the Clerk of the Board's office located at A2400 Government Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota and also is available at [www.hennepin.us](http://www.hennepin.us), the County's website.

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Last of many items on what appears to be a consent agenda of the Board.

12-0167

Display of Flags at the Government Center North Plaza

Resolution No. 12-0167

The following Resolution was moved by Commissioner Opat, seconded by Commissioner Stenglein

BE IT RESOLVED, that Resolution 86-7-539 is hereby rescinded; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Property Services is directed to fly at the Government Center North Plaza solely the flags of the United States, Minnesota and Hennepin County, in compliance with the U.S. Flag Code.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED ON 3/27/12

On motion, the County Board adjourned at 2:01 PM, until Tuesday, March 27, 2012.

Minneapolis City Council  
Mayor R. T. Rybak