
Our Mission: To provide quality public services in a cost-effective manner through innovation, leadership, and the cooperation of dedicated people.

Washington County, Secretary of State will provide information for Minnesota precinct caucus involvement

Now that the first precinct caucuses are over in Iowa, and the political primary season is in full swing, planning is underway for the Minnesota political party precinct caucuses Feb. 7.

Precinct caucuses are meetings organized by Minnesota's political parties. At each caucus, the party begins its process of selecting candidates for the 2012 election and policy positions to shape its party platform.

All political parties in Minnesota – Constitution, Democratic-Farmer-Labor, Green, Independence, and Republican – will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7. The Grassroots and Libertarian parties will not be caucusing in Minnesota this year.

The meetings are on the precinct level, but participants will gather with others at regional locations selected by the parties, which more than likely will not be your normal polling locations. The Minnesota Secretary of State's Office has a free, online service at mnvotes.org that will become active at the end of January that can be used to find the location of caucus meetings. Until the site is active, voters may contact the individual parties for caucus locations. On Feb. 7 staff at the Washington County Property Records and Taxpayers Services office will be available to answer telephone calls at 651-430-6175 until 8 p.m. for individuals trying to find their precinct caucus location.

Caucus attendees discuss public policy issues and pass resolutions, vote in a straw poll, elect precinct officers, and elect delegates. Attendees must be eligible to vote in the 2012 general election, live in the precinct represented at the regional meetings, and be in general agreement with the principles of the political party with which they are caucusing.

Contact information for those parties that will be caucusing Feb. 7 is:

- Constitution Party, 507-644-3183, info@cpmn.org, or www.cpmn.org.

- Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, 651-293-1200 or 1-800-999-7457, caucus@dfi.org, or www.dfi.org.
- Green Party, 651-288-2820, caucus@mngreens.org, or www.mngreens.org.
- Grassroots Party, 651-280-7922 or tc_wright38@yahoo.com.
- Independence Party, 651-487-9700, karijohnson.robinsonip@gmail.com, or www.mnip.org.
- Libertarian Party, 763-561-8038, info@lpmn.org, or www.lpmn.org.
- Republican Party, 651-222-0022 or 1-877-467-6466, caucus@mngop.com, or www.mngop.com.

Most caucus locations should be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Anyone needing interpretive services or caucus materials in alternate formats should call, write or e-mail the political party's state office in advance for further assistance.