

# OPINION

Editorial

## Flood mitigation should not be a bargaining chip

By Rachel Miller

Editor

It is not often I take time to pen editorials for this paper. It isn't that I don't have opinions or perspectives I want to share; but rather, the regular news and feature articles that fill these pages every week, along with the design of the paper consume most of my time.

So I save my opinions for in-person conversations and issues that are very near and dear to my heart, and this week is no exception.

It is 2020, and as you all know we are in the midst of a global pandemic. I find myself thinking we should borrow Barack Obama's 2008 Presidential slogan, "Change We Need."

Now, there isn't much I can do about the COVID-19 pandemic, except spend my hard-earned journalism dollars at local small businesses to help them weather these uncertain times, but there IS a big change that NEEDS to come to Henderson:

### FLOOD MITIGATION.

Lord knows I don't need to preach to our local subscribers, readers and advertisers about the dire need for flood mitigation. You have seen it and lived with it far longer than I have been your faithful newspaper editor (2.5 years, but who is keeping track?).

This is the third "summer of floods" I have weathered, and like many of you I am fed up with road closures and the economic impact to our businesses.

I have been hearing our representatives talk about how this is a priority of theirs to get funded at the state legislature, and how flood mitigation is "on the 5-yard line, we just need to kick it in."

I appreciate that getting a majority of politicians to agree on anything is no small task, but I confess that I am pretty fed up with the political games that appear to be keeping Henderson from getting flood mitigation.

Gov. Tim Walz's visit to town was reassuring in that our governor is still aware of our plight and it is on the minds of those at the Capitol.

But the fact that political games over how the COVID-19 pandemic is being handled is now keeping Henderson from meaningful flood mitigation that impacts our residents, businesses and the community's long-term survival is pitiful.

Do I agree with every directive the governor has passed down since the pandemic started?

Nope.



Do I think that House Republicans should be holding passage of a bonding bill — and by extension flood mitigation for Highway 93 — hostage until their demands are met?

Nope.

Would I feel a lot better about the situation if our local representatives voted for a bonding bill, even if it still failed?

You betcha.

I honestly don't understand how an elected official can tell his or her constituents that an issue matters to them, then turn around and vote against it.

Integrity is what you do when nobody is watching.

Well right now, our entire community is watching, waiting and praying for a fix for flooding.

And even though I don't live in Henderson, I am here hoping and praying with all of you. Like all of you, I don't enjoy having my 20 minute commute become an hour, one way, when Highways 19, 93 and County Road 6 are all flooded. Even if Highway 19 is open, I don't enjoy the detour when I need to drive to Le Sueur.

I think back to my high school and college days, when I had to work on group projects with people of different backgrounds.

Sometimes working together meant giving up my dream or ideas and listening to someone else, or doing something I wasn't particularly interested in.

I was TOLD that the lessons I learned during my K-12 experience would be valuable in the real world, but as I watch our elected leaders, it seems that "compromise" or "sacrifice" is not in their vocabulary. Are we really the country that sets higher standards for high school students than elected officials?

Highway 93 has flooded five times so far this year. We need elected officials who will work for the betterment of their constituents.

The general election is less than three months away. One lesson I learned as a young girl was, "Talk is cheap, actions speak louder than words." Don't TELL me you will do something. Show me.

The time is now. Flood mitigation and the health and safety of this community's citizens should not be a bargaining chip to so flippantly toss aside.

Funding flood mitigation isn't just a "Change We Need," it is a change we can enact, provided we have leaders who put our citizens' wellbeing above political bickering. If not...well, then maybe another change is needed.

United we stand. Untied we fall.

## Letters to the Editor

### Voting during COVID-19

Voting will look different this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, it is still our right to fill out a ballot. With this being a presidential year, the expectation, as history has shown, is that voter turnout will be higher than

non-presidential election years.

We will most likely still be affected by the pandemic in November, so what are our options for voting? Well, there are quite a few options, according to the Minnesota Secretary of State Office. Regardless of your political persuasion or feelings about voting, here are some options to consider:

Vote in person at your local polling place on Nov. 3;

Vote early by mail using an absentee ballot;

Vote early in person using an absentee ballot — contact your county election office for more information; or,

Agent delivery — this final-seven-days-before-election option is for individuals who reside in a nursing home, assisted living, group home or other similar types of residence or who are homebound.

Elections offices will be working on outreach to educate the public on different forms of voting. They are encouraging people to vote early using an absentee ballot.

If you have questions on voting, you can review information at MNVotes.org or contact the Secretary of State's elections line at 651-215-1440. Once again, this is a right that we have, and we

encourage everyone to get out to vote.

**Jason W. Swanson, HSE  
Executive Director, MNRAAA**

### PAID LETTER

#### Chad Tschimperle is DFL challenger for Senate District 12 seat

This year voters are hearing lots about national news but almost nothing about local politics so you probably haven't heard much about Chad Tschimperle, but local Democrats endorsed him for the Minnesota Senate in July.

Normally, Chad would have started door knocking in May and marching in parades in June, but due to COVID-19, that hasn't happened. Fair booths, art fairs and ice cream socials aren't operating either, so it's difficult for challengers like Chad to meet people face-to-face, which is the best way to campaign.

That's too bad, because if you got to meet Chad, you'd really like him. He's a solid working guy tired of bickering and attempts to "one-up" those on the other side of the aisle. That's especially true now with COVID-19 turning the

world upside down. As a member of construction crews, Chad knows you can't build a solid wall without listening and working together, and he doesn't understand why members of the State Legislature can't do the same.

Despite Chad's inability to meet people in person, he has been reaching out to them on the phone. He sets aside time every day to call voters, finding out

how they are doing and addressing their concerns. Chad and his wife, Suzanne, moved to Cokato 28 years ago to raise their family. He spent those years working in construction, which made him a natural at building things up, not tearing them down. If you feel the same, vote for Chad Tschimperle for Senate on November 3.

**Nancy Larson  
Dassel, MN**

### The Indy's political letters policy

The Henderson Independent charges \$25 for endorsement letters or election-related letters that advocate for or against a candidate or political party, up to 250 words, or \$8 per inch charge for letters exceeding 250 words. Payment must be made prior to the letter running in the paper.

This policy does NOT affect letters written in regards to ballot measures, like referendums.

Letter writers need to identify themselves if they are part of the candidate's campaign. It is also policy not to publish political or election-related letters the week before the election, however paid political advertising is accepted.

Writers of political letters must include the writer's name, address, phone number and email. Letters can be emailed to hendersonmnnews@gmail.com. The deadline is Monday at noon.

All letters to the editor and advertising content submitted are published at the sole discretion of the Editor who also reserves the right to verify information before publication. If you have any questions regarding this policy, you can contact the Editor, Rachel Miller, at the Independent office at 507-248-3223. The Henderson Independent does not endorse candidates for local, state or national office.

### HENDERSON INDEPENDENT

Dan Townsend, Publisher  
Rachel Miller, Editor

Published every Wednesday  
at 407 Main Street  
Henderson, Minnesota 56044  
Phone (507) 248-3223  
E-mail: hendersonmnnews@gmail.com

Periodicals Postage Paid  
At the Post Office at  
Henderson, Minnesota 56044

POSTMASTER: Send change of  
address to Henderson Independent,  
P.O. Box 8, Henderson, MN 56044.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:  
In State.....\$30.00  
Out of State.....\$35.00  
Single Copies.....\$1.00

Advertising Deadline:  
Golden Galaxy Insert: 1 p.m. Friday  
Display and Classified Ads,  
Henderson Independent: 12 Noon Monday