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St. Cloud Times

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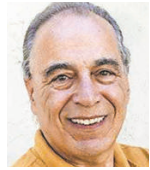
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

City Council's secret vote may violate the law

Private ballots used to censure colleague

Jenny Berg St. Cloud Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

St. Cloud City Council may have violated Minnesota's Open Meeting Law on Monday when members voted to censure a colleague using private ballots. The council approved censuring



Hontos

George Hontos on a confidential 4-2 vote after Hontos wrote a letter to the editor in the St. Cloud Times criticizing changes to the public comment procedure at council meetings.

Some members said writing the letter was a violation of the council's rules of conduct because they said it undermined a majority vote of the council.

Mark Anfinson, an attorney for the Minnesota Newspaper Association, said the law is clear that a public body cannot vote by secret ballot.

Anfinson cites a decision of the Minnesota Court of Appeals in which the Mankato Free Press sued the city of North Mankato after the city refused to provide the names of job finalists for city administrator, conducted closed interviews with job finalists, and took a written straw vote to narrow the field of

candidates; the results of that straw vote were not made public until later.

In its decision, the Court of Appeals wrote: "Secret voting denies the public an opportunity to observe the decision-making process, to know the council members' stance on issues, and to be fully informed about the council's actions."

"The Court of Appeals opinion

See **SECRET VOTE**, Page 4A

IMPROVING EDUCATION IN MINNESOTA

Check out new Tech, Sartell



Districts plan open houses with tours, ribbon-cutting ceremonies for new schools

Jenny Berg St. Cloud Times | USA TODAY NETWORK

Together, St. Cloud and Sartell-St. Stephen have spent nearly \$200 million to build two state-of-the-art high schools that opened this month.

And now that teachers and students have made the transition to the new schools, it's the residents' turn to see how their tax dollars were spent.

Both districts are hosting community events in the coming days: Sartell-St. Stephen

school district will host an open house at Sartell High School beginning at 11 a.m. Saturday and St. Cloud school district will host a grand opening at Tech High School beginning at 6 p.m. Monday.

Sartell is also planning a community tour at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 9, according to Sarah Kleppe, communications specialist with district.

Voters in both districts approved

See **SCHOOLS**, Page 2A

Common spaces are set up within each of the school's three learning neighborhoods on Aug. 15 at Sartell High School. Each learning neighborhood symbolizes a part of Sartell's past and has a different color scheme.

ZACH DWYER / ST. CLOUD TIMES

MN lawmakers discuss medical aid in dying for terminally ill

Christopher Magan Pioneer Press

Should Minnesota become the 10th state to allow people with terminal illnesses to end their lives with medical help?

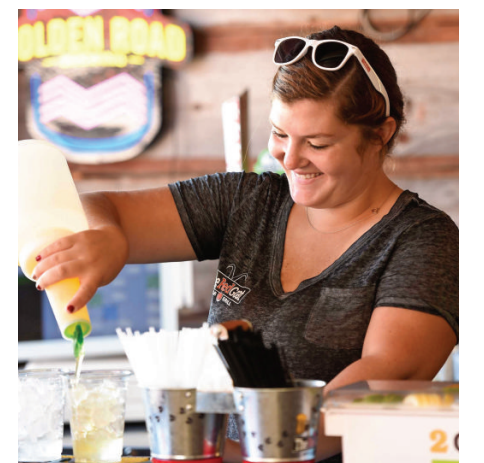
That's what lawmakers from the DFL-led Minnesota House considered Wednesday at an unusually packed informational hearing at the Capitol.

State Rep. Mike Freiberg, DFL-Golden Valley, is hoping to build support for medical aid in dying legislation for which he is chief sponsor.

The bill is modeled after an Oregon law Freiberg and other supporters say has led to better discussions about end-of-life options and better care.

See **MEDICAL AID**, Page 8A

BEST OF CENTRAL MN



The votes are in for the Best of Central Minnesota. Did your favorite win? See inside.

Pictured: Ashley Anderson of The Red Goat. ZACH DWYER/ST. CLOUD TIMES

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USA TODAY

Blueprint to impeach: Democrats are divided, but Judiciary panel chairman says vote's intent is clear. 5A

Up to the task

Sartell senior Brady Schmidt optimistic about home opener. **Sports**, 1C

Weather

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