

## Keep public notices in newspapers!

From time to time, boards, councils and commissioners, along with other elected officials, bring up the idea that they could 'save money' by not publishing legal notices and/or minutes of their meetings in the local newspapers in their communities.

Of course, newspapers are very emphatic in their efforts to have government bodies continue to publish their information in official newspapers. The option that is being discussed most often is that the proceedings of the meetings and notices could be put on the website. That way, citizens would have to have a computer and be hooked up to internet in order to find out what is going on in their cities, townships, counties and state. We believe that is not a very good option. Many people, especially the elderly, do not have computers, let alone internet service. We realize that more and more computers are found in homes — but there is still the time needed to "log on," etc. Even if everyone had the technology, most would forget about looking for the notices. Notices in a newspaper appear right before your eyes — you

don't have to hunt for them.

According to a survey conducted by the Minnesota Newspaper Foundation, nine out of 10 Minnesota adults, or 90 percent, believe that cities, counties, townships and school boards should be required to publish public notices in newspapers, and 92 percent believe that keeping the public informed of such government activities is a worthwhile expenditure of funds.

Are those notices read? The survey showed that 88 percent of Minnesota adults read public notices in local newspapers either regularly or sometimes; and 72 percent of them rated the continued publishing of public notices in newspapers as very important or important.

While all meetings are open meetings, most people do not take the time to attend meetings unless they have a specific agenda or reason, otherwise citizens are expecting to learn about their city, county and school board actions through the stories and legal notices in their local newspaper. This needs to be continued.

