

RESOLUTION

Board of Hennepin County Commissioners

RESOLUTION: 25-0325

At a meeting of the Board of Hennepin County Commissioners, a motion was made by Commissioner Fernando, and seconded by Commissioner Greene, that the Resolution be adopted. The motion passed.

WHEREAS, David J. Hough is retiring as County Administrator after 43-years of dedicated service to Hennepin County and its residents; and

WHEREAS, David worked for 25 years in the County Attorney's Office beginning his career as a law clerk in the appellate and civil divisions in 1982. He worked in the Juvenile Prosecution Division for six years where he tried over 135 adult and juvenile cases. David then moved to the Civil Division where he represented the County in litigation, provided advice to dozens of departments, negotiated thousands of contracts, led the contracts team for 10 years, and specialized in the areas of prevailing wage, affirmative action, data practices, open meeting law, Information Technology contracts, and government procurement and bid law; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, David began serving as counsel to the County Board, a role he performed for more than 11 years. He advised the Board on a wide range of matters including the transition of the Hennepin County Medical Center to a subsidiary corporation, and complex and controversial issues including: the Hennepin County Smoking Ordinance, the Hennepin County Weapons Policy, and the merger of the Minneapolis Library system with Hennepin County's system; and

WHEREAS, during this time, David also assumed various leadership positions within the County Attorney's Office. He served on the County Attorney's management team under County Attorney Amy Klobuchar, and then under County Attorney Mike Freeman. He served as the Civil Deputy under County Attorney Amy Klobuchar in 2006, where he oversaw all civil divisions in the office, in partnership with then-Criminal Deputy and now retired Judge Peter Cahill. He also served as a Managing Attorney from 2007-2008 under County Attorney Mike Freeman, where he oversaw the Civil Division, a team of 50 attorneys and professionals who represented Hennepin County in a broad range of legal matters; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, David was appointed Deputy County Administrator where he provided executive leadership for the County's vision and strategy and oversaw 13 departments including those that are now within the Law Safety and Justice line of business, as well as areas of Operations and Resident Services, including Information Technology, Taxpayer Services, Property Services, County Assessor, Examiner of Titles, Computer Forensics, and the Medical Examiner's Office; and

WHEREAS, as Deputy County Administrator, David led many efforts to improve policies and programming and save tax dollars including: the Juvenile Out-of-Home Placement Redesign; the development of STS Homes/Summit Academy Carpentry Certification Program and the "100 Hard Hats" Program which provided training and job placement to individuals on probation and in underserved communities; the consolidation of the Hennepin, Dakota, and Scott county medical

examiner offices into a shared service model that created a regional center of excellence; and the Crossover Youth Initiative with Human Services and Community Corrections, that improved outcomes for children in the Juvenile Court System by reducing duplicative services between partners and reducing out of home placements; and

WHEREAS, David was appointed as the interim Hennepin County Administrator in 2012 and permanently took on the role in early 2013. During his 13-year tenure as County Administrator, David was an innovator, a steady and trusted leader, a mentor, a changemaker, and led many successful strategies, including:

- Created and implemented the county's Northstar directional path of "Serving Residents" and advanced the county's mission, vision and strategic focus on Disparity Reduction.
- Organized Hennepin County's workforce to ensure efficient, effective, and transformative service to residents, including re-organizing county departments into seven coordinated lines of business, including the creation of the Disparity Reduction line of business.
- Maintained the County's strong financial standing through preserving our Triple A bond rating, guarding taxpayer dollars through restrained property tax increases, and responsibly managing the county's now \$3.1 billion budget through such recent challenges as the COVID-19 pandemic, an economic downturn, and federal cuts to state and county programs and grants.
- Oversaw significant capital investments to support service delivery to residents including the Lowry Avenue Bridge project, NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center campus expansion, 1256 Penn Ave project, Sheriff's Office Public Safety Services Headquarters in Plymouth, Southdale Library and Service center remodel, and the development of Target Field Station and Green Line Extension.
- Made Hennepin County an employer of choice by advocating and implementing the change to \$15 dollar/hour minimum wage in 2015 and advancing the current \$22/per hour minimum wage for County employees; implemented the \$5,250 tuition reimbursement program for County employees in 2017; implemented the student loan forgiveness program connecting employees to resources to help borrowers take advantage of better repayment or loan forgiveness options in 2023; and implemented the County's paid parental leave program and expanded the program to its current benefit of 12 weeks.
- Led the creation of the County's Pathways program in 2013, which has trained more than 1,000 graduates and resulted in county employment of over 440 people with average wages of \$27 per hour in 11 different fields, while also contributing to employment growth in the private sector.
- Advanced the Behavioral Health, Maternal Health and Heart Health Initiatives focused on improving outcomes and resident experiences through a broad range of investments in direct services and infrastructure, programs, partnerships, and community-initiated solutions.
- Adopted the Complete and Green Streets policy as an approach to environmentally sustainable roadway design that reduces environmental impact, improves air and water quality and balances the needs of all roadway users including people walking, rolling, biking, riding transit and driving.

- Launched a series of initiatives to address climate change, served as a founding member of Cool Counties, and created the NACo Award-winning Climate and Resiliency Department that coordinates countywide work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, advance clean energy consumption and build communities that are more resilient to adverse climate impacts.
- Championed the successful embedded social worker program which equipped law enforcement and 911 Dispatch with another tool to improve outcomes for residents experiencing mental health or substance use issues. The program has achieved incredible results, including more than 7,500 referrals in 2024, which resulted in more than 5,000 connections to community services across 31 police departments and municipalities.
- Led the County's coordinated approach to housing by investing in the full spectrum of housing needs from emergency homeless response to affordable and supportive housing to homeownership programs.
- Led the County's crisis response and recovery operations during the COVID-19 pandemic and created Hennepin's incident command structure to navigate the early months of the pandemic which included the immediate transition of 6,300 county employees to remote work after a Declaration of Local Emergency by the County Board and ensured county functions remained operational to serve residents during the transition.
- Led the allocation and distribution of \$225M in federal Coronavirus Relief Funds and \$245M in federal American Rescue Plan Funds (ARPA) to support communities and residents navigating the crisis, including COVID-19 testing, contact tracing, vaccinations and personal protective equipment, violence prevention efforts; food distribution, distribution of computers to families for internet connectivity and improvement of connectivity infrastructure; tutoring for county-involved youth, job training and creation; maternal health, mental and behavioral health supports, and a national model in the Hotels to Housing program that housed those in need during the pandemic and then developed County purchased properties to create long term housing solutions; and rental assistance to landlords on behalf of tenants.
- Advanced small business relief and economic development support and revitalization including the development of the Elevate Hennepin program to support entrepreneurs and business owners by creating a business support ecosystem to provide 25 hours of no cost consulting and advisory services for residents that own or are starting a business; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career at the County, David was a trusted colleague, a mentor to many across Minnesota and the nation, a source of knowledge and expertise, a fierce advocate for the County, unflappable in a crisis, and always acted with integrity and in the best interest of the county and its residents.

Resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners acknowledges David J. Hough's storied 43-year career and many accomplishments, honors his commitment and dedication to public service and to serving residents, supports him in seeking the next chapter of a fulfilling career in phased retirement, and wishes him good health and a long retirement.

Recommendation from County Administrator: Recommend Approval

RESOLUTION ADOPTED ON 8/12/2025

The question was on the adoption of the resolution with the votes as follows:

Aye: 7 Commissioner Fernando, Commissioner Greene, Commissioner Conley, Commissioner Lunde, Commissioner Edelson, Commissioner Anderson, and Commissioner Goettel

Maria Rose



Maria Rose