

Video Production



In March, Municipal Producer Trevor Scholl completed work on the Lino Lakes Police Department Recruitment video. The thrilling new video features numerous action shots, including dynamic footage of the Lino Lakes K-9 unit and some eye catching drone footage from TJ Tronson. Trevor also produced a fun look at the Animal Humane Society’s annual Walk for Animals fundraiser. He assisted on numerous projects also airing on city channels and continues to work on the Blaine Community Outreach video, a project he describes as seven videos in one! TJ Tronson once again produced the month’s Anoka County Board Meetings and found the time to create a highlight video for Guns-N-Hoses. Thanks to our new emphasis on short form videos, Trevor, TJ, news producers Eric Nelson and Danika Peterson, studio manager Eric Houston, and sports producers Kenton Kipp and Ted Leroux all contributed several short videos to city channels this month.

March Completed Videos Playing In-Between Scheduled Programming on City Cable Channels and Streaming

Title	Producer	Runtime
Animal Humane Society Walk for Animals	Trevor Scholl	3 minutes
Anoka-Ramsey Hoops	Danika Peterson and Eric Nelson	3 minutes
Anoka-Ramsey Women's Basketball	Danika Peterson and Eric Nelson	3 minutes
Do You Have a Great Story to Share?	TJ Tronson	1 minute
Dorcas Aroloye: Student of the Month	Danika Peterson and Eric Nelson	3 minutes
Circle Pines Celebrates a “Golden” Comeback	Danika Peterson and Eric Nelson	4 minutes
Guns-N-Hoses Highlights	TJ Tronson	2 minutes
Girls Basketball Semi-Final Blaine and Centennial Highlights	Kenton Kipp and Ted Leroux	4 minutes
Lino Lakes Police Department Recruitment	Trevor Scholl	2 minutes
North Metro Wildfire Potential High Despite Snow	Danika Peterson and Eric Nelson	3 minutes
Pi Day	Eric Houston	3 minutes
Pi Day (Twitter Edit)	Eric Houston	2 minute

School Resource Officers Return to Schools in Blaine	Danika Peterson and Eric Nelson	2 minutes
Spring Has Sprung at Wargo	Danika Peterson and Eric Nelson	2 minutes

Equipment Consulting/Technical Support



Blaine

- No assistance required.

Centerville

- 3/19/24 – Installed new, temporary equipment at city hall to allow staff to present Power Point slides on multiple screens at once throughout city hall.

Circle Pines

- 3/13 – Replaced the battery in the control room uninterrupted power supply, a device which provides power to the equipment even during a blackout. Matt’s foresight made this repair an easy one, as he already had a backup battery on hand.

Ham Lake

- No assistance required.

Lexington

- No assistance required.

Lino Lakes

- No assistance required.

Spring Lake Park

- 3/3 – 3/11/24 – Matt met with Dan Buchholtz and Freddie from Z Systems over several sessions to discuss the quote for the new Spring Lake Park video control room. Matt worked aggressively to lower the bid, which he was concerned had swelled with unnecessary equipment and work hours. In the end, he managed to get the quote down by more than \$100,000. A significant savings came from eliminating the installer service contract, an unnecessary \$17,000 expense that simply is not needed as Matt can provide these same services himself.
- 3/4 – 3/19/24 – Went to the Able Park Building and attended city meetings to ensure that the temporary video set up for recording and streaming city meetings worked adequately.



Additional City Support

From time to time, one of our cities requires help with a special project. In these cases, the one or two members of staff best suited to the job step up and help out however needed.

This month, TJ Tronson offered support to the City of Ham Lake. City Administrator Denise Webster reached out looking for help finding a suitable photograph for the cover Ham Lake’s 2024 edition of the North Metro Guide. Over the course of the past year, TJ had taken hundreds of photographs of Ham Lake parks. He organized the images and sent them to Ms. Webster to choose the best one.

Eric Houston responded to a request from Patrick Antonen at Circle Pines. Mr. Antonen requested a watershed district presentation on Golden Lake be excerpted from a city council meeting and placed online in such a way that it could be easily linked to from the city website. Eric retrieved the requested footage and posted it to the North Metro TV YouTube channel and provided the city with a link.

Channel Management



Programming Coordinator Michele Silvester, along with help from Eric Houston and Trevor Scholl, is responsible for processing and scheduling the programming on the City channels. There are three categories of programs that are scheduled on the City channels: live and replayed meetings, NMTV staff created video content, and informational graphics pages. All categories of programming must be encoded, scheduled, and entered into the Tightrope playback system or uploaded to our CG servers, formerly known as Carousel. As each live meeting is being recorded at City Hall, it is routed to the North Metro TV head-end and then sent out live over the cable system. It is also simultaneously encoded on a server for future playbacks. The following meetings were processed in January:

Title	Producer	Runtime
Blaine City Council Meeting (3/4)	TJ Tronson	1 hour 36 minutes
Ham Lake City Council Meeting (3/4)	Payton Nelson	10 minutes
Spring Lake Park City Council Meeting (3/4)	Ray Flint and Matt Waldron	1 hour 1 minute
Centerville Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting (3/4)	Trevor Scholl	1 hour 23 minutes
Blaine City Workshop (3/4) (Not Televised)	TJ Tronson	1 hour 30 minutes
Centerville Park and Recreation Committee Meeting (3/7)	John Murphy	1 hour 28 minutes
Lexington City Council Meeting (3/7)	City Staff	6 minutes
Lino Lakes City Council Meeting (3/11)	Ann Serwe	12 minutes
Anoka County Board Meeting (3/12)	TJ Tronson	1 hour 35 minutes
Circle Pines City Council Meeting (3/12)	Ray Flint	1 hour 11 minutes
Blaine Planning Commission Meeting (3/12)	Trevor Scholl	1 hour 41 minutes
Centerville City Council Meeting (3/13)	John Murphy	1 hour 31 minutes
Lino Lakes Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting (3/13)	Ann Serwe	1 hour 13 minutes
Spring Lake Park City Council Meeting (3/18)	Ray Flint	1 hour 15 minutes
Ham Lake City Council Meeting (3/18)	Payton Nelson	11 minutes
Blaine City Council Meeting (3/18)	Trevor Scholl	18 minutes
Blaine City Workshop (3/18) (Not Televised)	Trevor Scholl	1 hour 30 minutes
Blaine Natural Resources Meeting (3/19)	TJ Tronson	1 hour 34 minutes
Centerville Economic Development Authority (EDA) Meeting (3/20)	John Murphy	1 hour 11 minutes
Lexington City Council Meeting (3/21)	City Staff	27 minutes
Spring Lake Park Planning Commission Meeting (3/25)	Ray Flint	25 minutes
Lino Lakes City Council Meeting (3/25)	Ann Serwe	32 minutes
Anoka County Board Meeting (3/26)	TJ Tronson	1 hour 35 minutes

Circle Pines Utility Commission Meeting (3/26)	Ray Flint	17 minutes
Circle Pines City Council Meeting (3/26)	Ray Flint	1 hour 6 minutes
Centerville City Council Meeting (3/27)	John Murphy	58 minutes
26 Meetings		27 Hours

Meetings are scheduled for replay based on schedules requested by each City. Additional, full length video programs, produced by NMTV staff, are also scheduled on the channels. Shorter videos and promos are loaded onto the CG servers, rather than being scheduled as separate playbacks. These short videos play back in a repeating cycle, along with graphics pages, and air on the channels between scheduled programs, 24 hours a day. The table below outlines how many times a regular length video program was entered into the Tigtrope system and played back on each City channel.

City	Number of Times Programs Played	Hours Programmed on Channel
Blaine	191	223 hours 23 minutes
Centerville	74	90 hours 23 minutes
Circle Pines	158	127 hours 41 minutes
Ham Lake	79	38 hours 17 minutes
Lexington	111	45 hours 24 minutes
Lino Lakes	88	52 hours 46 minutes
Spring Lake Park	140	135 hours 51 minutes

The last category of programming on City channels consists of a bulletin board, or graphics pages, that display information about the City, local events, and other issues of interest to citizens. With the installation of the CG servers, Eric Houston updates the information on all seven channels. He works closely with City staff to ensure that all requested informational slides are created and posted to the satisfaction of the City. Even though Eric is doing the work of creating the informational pages, the Cities maintain editorial control. In addition to the graphics pages, the CG units play video. Each video's producer is responsible for posting any short videos that are displayed. The following work was done for City CG servers in January:

Blaine

- Uploaded 3 videos to CG.

Centerville

- Uploaded 1 video to CG.
- Created 4 new CG slides

Circle Pines

- Uploaded 1 video to CG.

Ham Lake

- Uploaded 2 videos to CG.

Lexington

- Uploaded 1 video to CG.

Lino Lakes

- Uploaded 3 videos to CG.

Spring Lake Park

- Uploaded 1 vides to CG.
- Created 10 new CG slides.

Closed Captioning



Closed captioning is an additional service provided by North Metro TV. Every city meeting is closed captioned live via our Tightrope system. That process is assigned a per-minute price by Tightrope. Once the meeting is recorded on our servers for repeat airings, that version of the meeting must be captioned separately. This is accomplished through a system owned by North Metro TV and does not incur an additional cost. The following table tallies the number of minutes of captioning provided to each city for the month of January.

City	Minutes of Live Closed Captioning	Minutes of Post Closed Captioning
Blaine	309	309
Centerville	392	392
Circle Pines	54	54
Ham Lake	21	21
Lexington	43	43
Lino Lakes	118	118
Spring Lake Park	161	161
Totals:	1,098 Minutes	1,098 Minutes

Meetings on Demand



NMTV has created a Video on Demand service, with agenda item bookmarking, for our Cities' meetings. In order to accomplish this, each meeting goes through several steps. The meeting must first be transferred and transcoded from the playback server to the video on demand server. Once that is done, a staff member must go through the meeting, entering a bookmark at the start of each agenda item and entering the corresponding chapter titles. Next, the meeting is linked to the NMTV website's city meeting page for Video on Demand. Finally, PDF copies of the meeting agenda are attached to the video. The following meetings were bookmarked and/or placed on VOD for the Cities in January:

- **Blaine**
 - 4 meetings bookmarked and placed on VOD.
- **Centerville**
 - 5 meetings bookmarked and placed on VOD.
- **Circle Pines**
 - 3 meetings bookmarked and placed on VOD.
- **Ham Lake**
 - 2 meetings bookmarked and placed on VOD.
- **Lexington**
 - 2 meeting placed on VOD.
- **Lino Lakes**
 - 3 meetings bookmarked and placed on VOD.
- **Spring Lake Park**
 - 3 meetings bookmarked and placed on VOD

Meeting Podcasts



NMTV provides a city meeting podcast service. Depending on each city's wishes, any or all meetings can be converted. All podcasts are available across six platforms: Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Podbean, Amazon Music/Audible, iHeart Radio, and Pocket Casts. Links to each platform are available on each individual channel's website and at northmetrotv.com/podcasts.

Blaine

- Uploaded 4 city meeting podcasts.
- 34 total downloads

Centerville

- Uploaded 5 city meeting podcasts.
- 25 total downloads

Circle Pines

- Uploaded 2 city meeting podcast.
- 20 total downloads

Ham Lake

- Uploaded 2 city meeting podcasts.
- 5 total downloads

Lexington

- Uploaded 2 city meeting podcasts.
- 11 total downloads

Lino Lakes

- Has decided not to convert city meetings to podcasts.

Spring Lake Park

- Uploaded 3 city meeting podcasts.
- 14 total downloads

Meeting Transcripts



NMTV also provides a city meeting transcription service. Depending on each city's wishes, any or all meetings can be transcribed. The transcripts are generated using an online platform called Otter.ai, which creates an interactive transcript that is broken down by speaker. Anyone using the transcript can click on any word to hear the meeting audio. Once created, links to each transcript are sent to relevant city staff, who often use the transcripts to help with creating meeting minutes.

Blaine

- Not participating.

Centerville

- Created 5 meeting transcript.

Circle Pines

- Created 3 meeting transcripts.

Ham Lake

- Created 2 meeting transcripts.

- **Lexington**
 - Not participating.
- **Lino Lakes**
 - Created 3 meeting transcripts.
- **Spring Lake Park**
 - Created 3 meeting transcripts.



Administrative

2025 Budget

- Began budgeting station operating costs for 2025.
- Worked with staff to determine necessary equipment upgrades and purchases.
- Worked on 5 year projections of income versus expenses, factoring in franchise and PEG fee attrition.

Broadband Franchising Bill

- Attended a Minnesota State House hearing on HF-4182, the Broadband Franchising bill shepherded by Commission lawyer Mike Bradley.

Building Maintenance

- Had new building master keys cut.
- Had building back door repaired.
- Continued to obtain quotes for long term building maintenance issues:
 - Dry system repair
 - HVAC contracting
 - Updated alarm system

Cost Studies

- Worked with staff to create an accurate estimate of the cost for any shoot involving the production truck.

Fridley

- Received draft agreement from the City of Fridley.
- Sent copy of agreement to counsel for review.
- Reviewed and revised agreement before returning to Fridley for further notes.

Rules of Decorum

- Working from Lino Lakes city documents, drafted a Code of Conduct and Rules of Decorum for the Cable Commission.

Cable Customer Requests

- Requests forwarded to Comcast:
 - Alan Irwin reached out to the City of Lino Lakes, who referred the issue to us. Alan was concerned that he seemed to be receiving fewer channels after upgrading his cable box. Comcast was able to confirm that Alan had been getting channels he was not supposed to be getting in the first place and that the new box actually corrected that issue.
 - Thao Tran wanted to cancel her internet service for her business, a Vietnamese restaurant. Thoa's native language is Vietnamese and was having trouble navigating the Comcast phone tree. We reached out to Comcast on her behalf and they were able to respond to her with a translator and resolve the issue.
- We also receive a steady stream of phone calls from Comcast customers who call us in error after finding our number on their bill. We typically provide them with the proper number for Comcast and recommend calling them directly to resolve the issue. If they cannot resolve the issue in this way, we invite them to call back. We received 17 such calls in March.
 - 6 were general billing questions
 - 1 was a general service request (upgrade/downgrade/cancel/replace equipment)
 - 1 could not find the Comcast phone number
 - 4 were general technology issues (slow internet, bad signal, etc)
 - 1 person was moving
 - 2 were calling on behalf of deceased relatives
 - 2 were for unspecified issues

Miscellaneous

- Received and documented monthly Comcast subscriber reports
- Reached out to Comcast about missing reports
- Reviewed March Legal Report
- Read industry articles