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## Roseville City Council Member Tom Kough prepares to say goodbye

### Kough offers plans for picking successor

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Tom Kough has spent decades in local politics and now, during the last months of his life, he has to make one of his toughest decisions yet: how to say goodbye.

Kough expects he will resign from the Roseville City Council at some point, and his last gesture — having a say in how his replacement is picked — is part of his wish to do what he feels is best for the city.

The 76-year-old Kough had a brain tumor removed in April, and doctors gave him months to live. The tumor returned recently. This time, he has chosen to forgo any treatment and instead will let "nature take its course," said his wife, Carol Kough.

"I'm very sad to have to leave because we have so many good things going for us now," he said of his possible resignation.

If Kough's health deteriorates to the point that he has to give up his seat, he will, Carol Kough said. But first, he wants to know how the city will select his successor. It had previously filled a vacancy through an application process.

Kough has ideas of his own.

Earlier this month, he proposed amending the city code to provide for a special election if more than six months remain before the general election.

He also suggested amending the code to appoint the candidate with the largest number of votes but was not elected during the most recent election.

"I would prefer that my successor will have demonstrated broad public support," he wrote in a letter to the council on Feb. 11. The letter will officially be received at tonight's Roseville City Council meeting.

According to the League of Minnesota Cities, council members don't often pitch ways for filling the vacancies they leave.

"It's not really common," said research manager Jeannette Bach. "Sometimes I think council members who are leaving do have a desire to help the city to get a replacement person. But I think most often, people just use the statutory provisions."

Based on Minnesota statute, if a vacancy occurs before the first day to file affidavits of candidacy for the next regular city election and more than two years remain in the unexpired term, a special election can be held. An appointed person would serve until then.

If the vacancy occurs on or after the first day to file affidavits or if less than two years remain in the term, the appointed person can serve the remainder of the term.

It wouldn't be the first time the Roseville City Council has had a vacancy in the middle of a term.

In late 2000, a council member moved and resigned. The city organized an application process. Craig Klausung, who is now mayor, applied and was

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appointed to fill the vacancy in 2001.

"I would suspect that we would probably use a similar process," he said.

Though the council has not formally responded to Kough's letter, it has directed the city attorney to review it, he said.

Kough, first elected to the council in 2001, has always loved politics, his wife said. Before moving to Roseville, he was mayor in Austin, Minn., during the 1980s. At that time, he was also an employee at the Hormel plant when workers there went on strike.

Kough has battled health problems before and persevered. He suffered a stroke two years ago, but he bounced back to continue bowling, playing horseshoes and playing banjo in a band.

A high-diving champion, he won five gold medals at the 2002 World Masters Games in Australia, Carol Kough said.

"We're hoping it's just all speculation," Klausning said. "His term is up at the end of the year, and I'd like to see him complete that."

### On The Web

A Web site has been set up so Tom Kough can keep in touch with friends and constituents. Go online to [www.tomkough.com](http://www.tomkough.com)

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