
Our Mission: Providing quality services through responsible leadership, innovation and the cooperation of dedicated people

Date: June 21, 2016
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the June 21, 2016, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County honors child care providers of the year

The Washington County Board of Commissioners honored Peggy Babcock, Forest Lake, and Peggy Elsasser, Woodbury, as Family Child Care Providers of the Year for 2016 June 21.

Historically, Washington County has recognized two family child care providers for excellent care in providing at-home child care. Individuals in the community nominate providers and the applications are reviewed by an ad hoc committee from the Washington County Child Care Council, which submits the chosen individuals to the Washington County Community Services Child Care Licensing Program.

The event publically acknowledges the achievement and success of two providers in Washington County, who especially stand out in their careers as early childhood educators and caregivers over the last year.

The first honoree, Peggy Babcock, cares for 10 children in Forest Lake. She has been licensed for nine years. When she started her career, she chose in-home child care because she wanted to be present in her children's lives and she wasn't finding the quality of care she wanted for her own children. Most of the learning Babcock provides is done through play and everyday learning. She is an active participant, getting down to the level of the children.

Babcock is a member of the Washington County Child Care Association and a Sponsor of a Park in her area.

A great place to live, work and play...today and tomorrow

When thinking about her personal philosophy regarding child care, Babcock said she believes, “What you put in is what you will get in return.” She also adheres to treating others the way she would like to be treated. Babcock said she considers the children and their parents an extension of her own family. When children leave her care, parents tell her how much their child misses going to Peggy’s home. She attributes success to having great communication with her children and their parents. Babcock teaches important life skills, including conflict management, to her young children. A parent said of Babcock, “Peggy has tremendously changed my daughter’s life in the few short years she has been alive.”

The second honoree, Peggy Elsasser, works with Little Helpers Child Care. She lives in Woodbury and cares for eight children. Elsasser has been licensed for 12 years. This is her second career, having worked as an occupational therapist for 10 years before she decided to stay at home with her three children.

What started as having one extra child as a playmate for her son eventually turned into Elsasser becoming a full-time licensed child care provider. She is currently enrolled in the self-study program to be accredited through the National Association for Family Child Care, and is a member of the National Association for Family Child Care, the Minnesota Licensed Family Child Care Association, and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy.

Elsasser promotes gardening, healthy eating, and natural science with the children in her care through a community organic garden where the children plan, plant, tend, and harvest fresh produce.

Elsasser’s goal is to partner with parents to meet the needs of the whole child. She said she believes in continually learning, and is working toward her Three Star rating with Parent Aware.

A parent wrote of Elsasser, “Peggy is a member of our family! She is not just someone who cares for our children during the day; she is helping us raise our children into wonderful little people.”

Contact: Rebecca Barnhart, Social Services Supervisor, 651-430-6476

Photo attached: Washington County commissioners Karla Bigham, District 4, Fran Miron, District 1, with Peggy Babcock, and commissioners Lisa Weik, District 5, and Gary Kriesel, District 3.

Photo attached: Washington County commissioners Karla Bigham, District 4, Fran Miron, District 1, Lisa Weik, District 5, Peggy Elsasser, and commissioner Gary Kriesel, District 3.

County Board thanks legislators Sieben, McNamara for their service

The Washington County Board of Commissioners thanked state Sen. Katie Sieben and state Rep. Denny McNamara for their service June 21.

Both legislators from south Washington County announced this spring that they would not be running for another term to their respective seats. The board provided each with a resolution of thanks for their support and representation of Washington County residents during their tenure at the Capitol. The resolution thanking Sieben noted that she has represented the county in either the House of Representatives or the Senate since 2002. It noted her advocacy for county residents, and her assistance to the county leadership in seeking legislation that would better the lives of county residents.

It noted especially her efforts on moving positive legislation in the areas of elections, especially in absentee voting; the environment; transportation, especially in the areas of supporting the progress of the Red Rock and Gateway corridors; education, especially in the area of early education; and health care, especially in support of the Hastings Veterans Home; and her work on the Grey Cloud Island Crossing, the Newport Transit Station, the new Hastings Bridge, the Wakota Bridge, the Point Douglas Trail connections, and improvements to Point Douglas Park.

The commissioners also thanked McNamara for his 14 years of representing residents in the southern portion of the county at the Capitol. They especially noted his work in the protection of natural habitat through the creation of the Vermillion Highlands and Empire Wildlife Management Area, supporting state funding to match county land and water legacy investments, and crafting responsible budgets for the Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and the Minnesota Board of Soil and Water Resources as chair of the House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee.

The board also noted McNamara's advocacy for the creation of the Red Rock transitway through financial support from the state, comprehensive nursing home funding reform, responsible road and

bridge funding, a number of education initiatives, and support for veterans through relief from state income tax on their pensions.

Contact: Yvonne Klinnert, Public Information Manager, 651-430-6026

Photo attached: Washington County commissioners Fran Miron, District 1, Karla Bigham, District 4, Sen. Katie Sieben, commissioners Lisa Weik, District 5, and Gary Kriesel, District 3.

Photo attached: Washington County commissioners Gary Kriesel, District 3, Lisa Weik, District 5. Rep. Denny McNamara, commissioners Karla Bigham, District 4, and Fran Miron, District 1.

County Board reappoints residents to advisory boards, commissions

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made several reappointments and appointments to county advisory boards and commissions June 21, as some appointments expired June 30.

Those who were appointed or reappointed and the body on which they serve are:

- to the Child Protection Review Panel:
 - Deborah Eckberg, Woodbury, reappointment;
 - Michael Laughton, Newport, reappointment
 - Julie Welter, Afton, reappointment;
 - Nancy Zupfer, Cottage Grove, reappointment;
 - Ralph Pennie, Afton, new appointment;
 - John Kiedrowski, Woodbury, new appointment;
 - Jennifer Dailey, Cottage Grove, new appointment;
 - Janice Hayne, Stillwater, new appointment;
- to the Workforce Development Board:
 - Steve Moeller, Lake Elmo, small business, reappointment;
 - Tom Colosimo, Oakdale, small business, reappointment;
 - Lori Tapani, Stacy, small business, reappointment;
 - Wayne Sarappo, St. Paul, labor, reappointment;

- Jennifer Hassebroek, Oakdale, economic development housing, reappointment;
- Sharon Blomgren, St. Paul College, appointment.
- to the Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Citizen Advisory Committee:
 - Elizabeth Semotink, District 2, Oakdale, reappointment;
 - Kristin Miller, Forest Lake, formerly homeless, new appointment;
 - Cheryl Peterson, Mahtomedi, emergency shelter, new appointment;
 - Courtney Knoll, Minneapolis, homeless advocate and a member of the Metro-wide Engagement on Shelter and Housing (MESH), new appointment.

Advisory boards are governed by state law or County Board authorization.

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County Board makes reappointments to the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District board

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made three reappointments to the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District board June 21.

Thomas Polasik, Stillwater Township; Kristen Tuenge, Scandia; and David Devault, May Township, were reappointed to the watershed district for terms expiring June 21, 2019.

The Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed encompasses 81 square miles, stretching along the St. Croix River from Stillwater Township to north of Scandia. The watershed is home to 31 lakes, three designated trout streams, hundreds of acres of wetlands, and more than 17 miles of St. Croix River shoreline.

Watershed district governance, required by state statute, helps to control or alleviate damage by flood waters; improves stream channels for drainage or navigation; reclaims or fills wet or overflow lands; oversees water supply for irrigation; regulates the flow of streams; diverts or changes water courses; provides and conserves water supply; and provides for the protection of groundwater and regulation of groundwater use.

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County will receive reimbursement for work with state prison inmates

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a joint powers agreement between the state Department of Corrections June 21 for expenses resulting from activities of inmates in the state correctional institutions in Washington County.

Washington County has two correctional facilities within the county and requested reimbursement from the state for some of the costs associated with the prosecution of inmates who are involved in criminal activities at the correctional facilities.

The agreement is for July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2017.

Contact: Pete Orput, County Attorney, 651-430-6124

2 firms have contracts approved for snow removal at county facilities

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved contracts with two firms June 21 to do snow removal at county facilities.

The county divides county facilities into three zones for snow removal. The contracts are with Interstate Removal, which will remove snow in Zone 2, the Headwaters Service Center and Transit Center; and with Twin City Outdoor, which will remove snow in Zone 3, the Oakdale Library, Woodbury Service Center, Environmental Center, Cottage Grove Service Center, Park Grove Library, and the Newport Transit Station.

The contract for the third zone will not be renewed until November.

Contact: Erik Jalowitz, Building Services Operations/Maintenance Manager, 651-430-6227

County will continue to house state inmates, approves agreement with state

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a joint powers agreement June 21 between the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the state Commissioner of Corrections for housing offenders in the Washington County Jail.

The term of the agreement is July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2018.

The state will pay Washington County \$55 per day per offender, not to exceed \$803,000 over the two-year period. The amount received for housing over the two years will be determined by the need for offender housing. The Washington County Sheriff's Office provides lodging, meals, and supervision to the state offenders in accordance with established jail policies and procedures.

Contact: Sheriff Bill Hutton, 651-430-7601

County Board members named to canvassing board

Two Washington County Board members will be part of the primary election canvassing board, named to the board June 21.

County Board members Fran Miron, District 1, and Karla Bigham, District 4, will serve on the canvassing board.

The canvassing board will meet at 1:30 p.m. Friday, Aug. 12, three days after the Aug. 9 primary, in the Government Center in Stillwater.

State law calls for the board to meet on either the second or third day following the state primary, and the membership is set by state law, which states, "The county canvassing board shall consist of the county auditor, the court administrator of the district court, the mayor or chair of the town board of the county's most populous municipality, and two members of the county board selected by the board from its members who are not candidates at the election. Any member of the canvassing board may appoint a designee to appear at the meeting of the board, except that no designee may be a candidate for public office."

Three members will constitute a quorum for the canvassing board.

Contact: Jennifer Wagenius, Property Records and Taxpayer Services Director, 651-430-6182

Several agreements in place to rebuild CSAH 26 in Oak Park Heights

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a number of agreements June 21 to set the stage for the rebuilding of the intersection of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 26 at its intersection with Highway 36 in Oak Park Heights.

The project involves the realignment of CSAH 26, the Highway 36 south frontage road, at the intersection of CSAH 24 (Osgood Avenue) in Oak Park Heights. It moves the intersection of CSAH 26 and CSAH 24 approximately 400 feet south of its current location to tie into 59th Street. The increased separation between CSAH 26 and Highway 36 will improve safety and the overall operations of all intersections in the area.

For work on the project, the board:

- approved a contract with Arnt Construction Company, Inc., in the amount of \$1.1 million for construction of project;
- approved an amendment to a contract with Alliant Engineering for \$74,140 for additional project design engineering;
- approved a cooperative cost share agreement with Holiday Stationstores, Inc., which is on the southeast corner of the county roads' intersection;
- approved a cooperative cost share agreement and a maintenance agreement with the City of Oak Park Heights for the project;
- approved a utilities cost share agreement with the City of Oak Park Heights for the CSAH 26 project; and
- adopted a resolution for a limited use permit with the Minnesota Department of Transportation for the pedestrian trail in the project.

The additional engineering work will include \$74,140 for a tree identification survey and condition, traffic counts, retaining wall and sidewalk options, watermain redesign, trail alignments, and easement coordination.

Holiday will be redeveloping its gas station at the same time that this project is being completed.

Holiday will pay for \$242,751.36 toward the project, including 100 percent of the cost to relocate the watermain, half of the cost of the retaining wall, and 72 percent of the cost of the pond.

The county will pay \$229,085.83 for right-of-way acquisition, 28 percent of the cost to demolish the Valvoline building that was next to the Holiday station, 50 percent of the cost to demolish the office building that was behind the Holiday station, 28 percent of cost of the chain link fence, and the cost of the trail.

The City of Oak Park Heights will pay \$61,526.42, which is 50 percent of the watermain relocation costs, 100 percent of the cost for city utilities, and a small portion of traffic control and design engineering and construction engineering.

The \$1.49 million cost of the project will be paid for with state aid funds, and the money received through the agreements with Holiday and Oak Park Heights.

Contact: Frank Ticknor, Design Engineer, 651-430-4319

County Board receives annual performance measurement report

The annual Washington County performance measurement report was presented to the County Board June 21.

Since the mid-1990s, Washington County has tracked, reported, and monitored performance measures to support decision-making, and to drive continued improvement in its core functions and the services it provides. The report's format is based on the county's goals, and is designed to reflect the county's values, one of which is stewardship. Several of the measurements reflect that value, describing the way in which the county makes wise use of taxpayer dollars.

The report offers an overview of the county's performance measurement and improvement efforts. Examples of measures noted in the report are participation numbers at storytime at the county's branch libraries, outstanding debt per capita, and the county's building energy efficiency. Each department in the county, as well as the Sheriff's Office and Attorney's Office, takes part in the performance measurement and improvement program.

A copy of the report is available on the county's website at www.co.washington.mn.us/performanceasures.

Contact: Amanda Hollis, Senior Planner, 651-430-6021