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Date: Sept. 6, 2016
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Sept. 6, 2016, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

Leiser will continue to serve on Brown's Creek Watershed District Board of Managers

Craig Leiser, Grant, was reappointed to the Brown's Creek Watershed District Board of Managers Sept. 6, to a three-year term expiring Oct. 21, 2019.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made the appointment.

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.

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

Eng will serve on Workforce Development Board

Chris Eng, the economic development director for the Washington County Community Development Agency (WCCDA), will fill the economic development representative position on the Workforce Development Board in a first term expiring June 30, 2019.

The County Board made the appointment Sept. 6.

In June, the County Board of Commissioners approved the conversion of the county's Housing and

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Redevelopment Authority to the WCCDA. The WCCDA hired Eng to the position of economic development director.

It is the responsibility of the Workforce Development Board to determine the most effective designation of administrative entities, grant recipients, and program operators for the Workforce Service Area. It also jointly plans for collaboration, and provides for on-site review and oversight of program performance. It also selects local priorities for service and target populations for supplemental programming within the Workforce Development Board.

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

County Board will conduct public hearing on modifying enabling resolution for WCCDA

The Washington County Board of Commissioners will conduct a public hearing Sept. 27 regarding the modification of the enabling resolution of the Washington County Community Development Agency.

In 1980, Washington County created the Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) following the procedures established in Minnesota statutes. Washington County passed enabling resolutions for the Washington County HRA with housing and redevelopment powers.

In 2016, the Washington County HRA's enabling law was amended by state law. The new law added economic development authority powers and renamed the HRA to the Washington County Community Development Agency (CDA). The boards of commissioners of both the then HRA and Washington County passed resolutions approving the law.

Washington County must also pass a resolution enabling the Washington County CDA with economic development powers. This resolution may include restrictions to those powers as determined by the County Board.

Prior to passing this enabling resolution, the board must conduct a public hearing, which will be Sept. 27.

Contact: Kevin Corbid, Deputy Administrator, 651-430-6003

County Board honors Houle Feed Mill on 100 years as family business

The Washington County Board of Commissioners recognized Houle Feed Mill of Forest Lake Sept. 6 for 100 years as a family business serving residents of Washington County.

In 1916, E.J. and Harry Houle made the first sale of feed from the newly formed Houle Feed Mill. The Houle Feed Mill celebrated the anniversary with the community Aug. 20.

The board noted the contributions that the family business has made to the community, and its century of providing employment and service to the community.

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

County continues to lease Afton site that hosts radio tower

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a new lease Sept. 6 for tenants who lease a home in Afton on property on which a county radio tower is located.

The existing property was originally leased back to the previous property owners, who later vacated the property.

New tenants signed a two-year lease on the property, for \$1,150 a month. The money is used to pay for maintenance of the property.

Contact: Sharon Price, Property Manager, 651-430-4391

County Board accepts fundraising proceeds from Explorers fair booth

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted \$1,862 Sept. 6 that the Sheriff's Office Explorers Program participants raised at their fastpitch booth at the Washington County Fair.

The money will be used for training programs for the Explorers.

Contact: Sheriff Bill Hutton, 651-430-7601

Sheriff's Office will use grant to provide writing program

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will use a \$10,000 grant from Metropolitan Regional Arts Council for a writing program for female offenders in the county.

The County Board accepted the grant Sept. 6.

The funding will pay to bring two professional writers into the jail to teach women offenders writing skills. Over the term of the grant, three writing sessions will be offered, each for four weeks, meeting two evenings per week.

The term of the grant is July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2017.

Contact: Sheriff Bill Hutton, 651-430-7601

Sheriff's Office will accept gift of 30 AED pads, batteries

Mark Altmann, Scandia, requested that the Sheriff's Office accept his gift of 30 Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) pads and five AED batteries.

The County Board accepted the gift Sept. 6.

The AED pads are valued at \$51 each and the AED batteries are valued at \$398 each, making the total value of the donation \$3,520.

Contact: Sheriff Bill Hutton, 651-430-7601

County will work with Lake Elmo to build railroad pedestrian crossing

Washington County will work with Lake Elmo to create a sidewalk crossing at the railroad tracks on County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 17 as part of the improvement and replacement of the infrastructure in the city's downtown.

The County Board approved an agreement Sept. 6 with the Union Pacific Railroad Company to allow the work.

Washington County is working with the City of Lake Elmo to improve and replace aged infrastructure in Lake Elmo's downtown. As part of the project, a sidewalk crossing the railroad tracks on CSAH 17 will be constructed to connect pedestrians walking from the commercial district downtown to the residential area south of the railroad tracks.

An existing agreement with the Union Pacific Railroad allows CSAH 17 to cross railroad property. The new agreement grants additional width to include sidewalks to be owned and maintained by the county. The agreement with the railroad allows:

- permanent use of Union Pacific Railroad property for the pedestrian crossing, at a cost of \$13,000;

- temporary use of the Union Pacific property to construct the pedestrian crossing, at a cost of \$2,000; and
- the extension of the concrete railroad crossing panels allowing pedestrians to cross the tracks without stepping over the rails, at a cost of \$72,930.

The cost for improving the railroad crossing, estimated at \$87,930, is funded by state aid and Lake Elmo.

It is expected that the work will be done yet this construction season.

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

Dresel Contracting, Inc., will crush, recover roadway materials

Dresel Contracting, Inc., will crush and recycle roadway materials for Washington County roadwork, after the County Board approved a \$72,000 contract with the company Sept. 6.

The county stockpiles old pavement and reclaimed gravel base from pavement improvement projects, and stores them at the county pit in May Township. About every five years, this material is crushed and blended with sand and gravel to create shouldering material used by the county to maintain county roadways. The material is also used for culvert replacements, to create roads and parking lots in county parks, and for other miscellaneous projects.

The practice of recycling road millings conserves natural resources and reduces the energy used to produce road maintenance material. It is also cost effective. To purchase new material would cost \$9 per ton, whereas the recycled material will cost less than \$3 per ton.

Dresel Contracting will crush 25,000 tons of material for the county, which should supply the county's needs for about five years.

Contact: Andrew Giesen, Engineer, 651-430-4336

Hardwood Creek Trail will get new, consistent signs

The Hardwood Creek Trail in northern Washington County will get new, consistent signs after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract with Global Specialty Contractors, Inc., Sept. 6 for signs and amenities along the trail.

The contract is for \$244,792 and will be paid for with the county's parks operating funds.

The Hardwood Creek Regional Trail is a 9.5-mile multiple-use trail in northwestern Washington County, running adjacent to Highway 61, from County Road 8 (Frenchman Road) in Hugo to the Washington/Chisago County Line in Forest Lake.

The project will involve the replacement of all trail signage and the installation of amenities, such as kiosks and benches, along the trail as the final phase of the trail's rehabilitation that began in 2014. The trail is the most used trail in Washington County, and is used all year round by pedestrians, bicyclists, horseback riders, and snowmobilers. The multiple users require consistency in signs to remain safe.

The trail was recently extended, from 140th Street to 145th Street, and the whole trail was resurfaced. The new signs and other amenities will complete the trail's revamping. It is expected that the work will be completed this fall.

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

County Board continues review of 2017 budget

The Washington County Board of Commissioners continued reviewing the county's 2017 budget during a workshop Sept. 6. The recommended budget was first set out to the board Aug. 9.

The recommended budget allows the county to "stay the course" on initiatives it began in 2016, and would ask taxpayers for a county property tax increase of about \$7 for the median-valued home in the county. That is a 1 percent county property tax increase for 2017.

The requested levy increase is 3.49 percent, which was the same increase requested for county taxes paid in 2015 and 2016. However, the county's tax base has grown 3 percent over the past year, and the new construction valued at \$363 million will add to the county's tax base to assist in paying the levy increase. The county's median-valued home is \$243,200, up 1.1 percent in value from 2016.

During the Sept. 6 workshop, the board reviewed recommended budgets for the department of Property Records and Taxpayer Services (PRTS) and the Public Works capital improvement plans. PRTS is planning upgrades to facilities at its Stillwater and Woodbury license centers, as well as the implementation of a new "point-of-sale" system in the license centers to increase their efficiency. The staff will also be implementing changes in the state licensing and registration computer system to implement the Real ID system.

The Public Works Department will place an emphasis on upgrading facilities in the county's parks, replacing equipment in the county's fleet that is used for road and parks upkeep, and a number of road and bridge and pavement preservation projects.

The board also reviewed the Washington County Regional Rail Authority budget, which includes funds to continue the planning and management of transit along four corridors in the county, Gateway, Rush Line, Red Rock, and Highway 36.

The County Board has reviewed the 2017 budget during workshops in August and September. It will set a preliminary levy Sept. 13. The budget may continue to be adjusted until December, when it is adopted. However, the levy can only be decreased, not increased, after it is set.

The public is invited to any budget discussions throughout the fall, and especially to the 6 p.m. public hearing on the budget Dec. 6.

Contact: Kevin Corbid, Deputy Administrator, 651-430-6003