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

Date: Sept. 20, 2016
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Sept. 20, 2016, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board approves work agreement with Sheriff's Office deputies, sergeants

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a collective bargaining agreement Sept. 20 with the Deputy Sheriff unit represented by the Law Enforcement Labor Services, Inc. (LELS), Local No. 214.

It is a three-year agreement, in effect through Dec. 31, 2018.

The tentative agreement includes:

- the group moving off of a step system and onto the county's open range minimum/maximum compensation system, effective the first full pay period in January 2016;
- a 2 percent general adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2016, a 2 percent general adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2017, and a 2 percent general adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2018;
- for 2016, 2017, and 2018, employees below the maximum of the compensation range shall be eligible for a 4 percent range adjustment not to exceed that year's range maximum;
- clothing allowance increases from \$730 to \$755 in 2016, to \$780 in 2017, and to \$805 in 2018;
- grievance language strengthened to require timelines and authorizations for grievance appeals and arbitration; and

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- a Memorandum of Understanding that continues the existing method of distributing overtime between deputies and sergeants.

There is also a description of how much the county will contribute to health insurance coverage and health savings accounts.

Contact: Jan Webster, Human Resources Director, 651-430-6075

County Board renews agreement to set aside funds from tax-forfeited lands for parks

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement Sept. 20 that sets aside 20 percent of the proceeds from the sale of tax-forfeited property for the acquisition and maintenance of parks and recreational areas.

The County Board approved the process in previous years.

State law allows the County Board to set aside up to 20 percent of the net proceeds from the sale of tax forfeited property for the acquisition and maintenance of county parks or recreational areas, and requires the County Board to approve the set aside of these funds on an annual basis.

The ownership of property that forfeits because of the non-payment of property taxes rests with the state, and counties are given the task of management and disposition of the property. When a tax-forfeited property is sold to a governmental agency or the public, the proceeds are deposited into the county's tax forfeited sale fund. Prior to any distribution of funds from this account, the department recovers the costs for management of the land.

From the net proceeds remaining, the distribution as established in state law is:

- 20 percent of fund proceeds goes to the county for acquisition and maintenance of county parks and recreational areas;
- of the remaining funds, 40 percent is distributed to the county general fund, 40 percent to the school district, and 20 percent to the city or township.

Contact: Jennifer Wagenius, Property Records and Taxpayer Services Director, 651-430-8182

County Board receives multiple GFOA awards

The Washington County Board of Commissioners received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for 2014 Sept. 20.

The county also was giving the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the county's 2015 and 2016 budgets.

This is the 30th consecutive year in which the county has received the Excellence in Financial Reporting certificate. The award is for the county's 2014 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Of the 87 counties in the state, 16, or 18 percent, received the award. Of the 3,031 counties in the country, 503, or 18 percent, received the award.

The award is intended to recognize and encourage excellence in financial reporting by state and local governments. The county's consistent participation in the program demonstrates its commitment to quality financial management practices and open and clear communication with its residents.

The award has a direct impact when rating agencies assess the county's financial practices during the bond issuance process.

The County Board was also presented with the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for 2015 and 2016. This is the 18th and 19th years the county has received that award from the Government Finance Officers Association. That award is given to 242 counties around the country, and six in Minnesota.

The board also received a review of the 2015 financial information that will be provided in the annual newspaper insert, which is the publication of financial summary information required by state law.

The 12,000 inserts will be published in the Lillie Suburban newspaper, as well as the Stillwater Gazette in late September or early October, according to state law.

The inserts will include information on the county's revenue and expenses, an explanation of financial statements, fund balance statements, government-wide financial statements, and disbursements of county funds of more than \$5,000.

Contact: Carl Jacobson, Accounting Principal, 651-430-6044

Cutline for Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA):

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Sept. 30, along with county staff who contributed to the report. Staff members Larry Phillips, Dee Bernard, Tabatha Hansen, Accounting and Finance director, along with commissioners Gary Kriesel, District 3, Lisa Weik, District 5, Fran Miron, District 1, and Karla Bigham, District 4, with staff member Carl Jacobson, accounting principal.

Cutline for Distinguished Budget Presentation Award:

Washington County commissioners accepted the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 19th year Sept. 20. Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5, is with Melinda Kirk, budget/financial analyst, Commissioner Gary Kriesel, District 3, Stephanie Kammerud, office specialist, with commissioners Fran Miron, District 1, and Karla Bigham, District 4.

County Board supports proclamation of Workforce Development Month

The Washington County Board of Commissioners offered its support Sept. 20 to Gov. Mark Dayton's proclamation of September as Workforce Development Month in Minnesota.

In the proclamation, Dayton highlights the scope of the workforce in Minnesota, the state's commitment to building the economy and a skilled workforce, and the investment of resources in workforce development.

It also highlights the role of Workforce Centers across the state and the knowledgeable professionals who help people develop career plans and find jobs.

The primary Minnesota Workforce Center in Washington County is at the Woodbury Service Center, with additional satellite offices at the Cottage Grove and the Forest Lake Headwaters service centers. The Minnesota Workforce Center in Washington County is staffed by 28 fulltime employees and, in 2015, served 29,164 people through its resource room, workshops, and employment programs. It is one of 48 in the state that serves job seekers and employers.

Contact: Tina Simonson, Economic Support Supervisor, 651-275-8661

1 commissioner, county administrator will serve on canvassing board

The only Washington County commissioner eligible to serve on the county canvassing board, Karla Bigham from District 4, was appointed to the board Sept. 20 by the County Board.

Molly O'Rourke, county administrator, was also named as a county board designee to the board.

According to state law, the county canvassing board must meet to canvass the State General Election results between the third and 10th day following the general election. According to the law, "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. ... Three members constitute a quorum."

With the death of Commissioner Ted Bearth in March, and with three other commissioners on November's ballot, only Bigham is eligible to serve on the board. Absent a second eligible commissioner, it was recommended that O'Rourke be appointed to the county canvass board as a county board designee.

The canvassing board will meet Nov. 17.

Contact: Jennifer Wagenius, Property Records and Taxpayer Services Director, 651-430-8182

Firm will construct traffic signal, sidewalk improvements along CSAH 5 in Stillwater

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract with Forest Lake Contracting, Inc., for construction of traffic signals and sidewalk improvements at three signalized intersections in Stillwater on and near County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 5, also known as Stillwater Boulevard, north of Highway 36.

The contract is for \$440,771.

The board also approved a project cost share agreement with the City of Stillwater in which the city would contribute \$222,500 toward the project, since one of the intersections is city-owned and not on the county highway.

The project involves the revision of existing traffic signal systems to add flashing yellow arrows, emergency vehicle preemption systems, pedestrian countdown timers, and LED signal indications at

the intersections of CSAH 5 and Curve Crest Boulevard, CSAH 5 at Orleans Street/Wild Pines Lane, and at the city-owned intersection of Curve Crest Boulevard at Market Drive. Work will include painting the signal systems and constructing new pedestrian ramps and pushbuttons in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

The project schedule calls for pedestrian ramp work to be completed before the end of October and traffic signal system upgrades before the end of the year. Signal painting will be completed before summer 2017.

Contact: Joe Gustafson, Traffic Engineer, 651-430-4351

Kimley-Horn will design CSAH 13 pedestrian bridge over I-94

Kimley-Horn will design a pedestrian bridge alongside County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 13 over Interstate 94, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract with the company Sept. 20.

Pedestrian and cyclists currently cross over I-94 in a developing area of Woodbury and Oakdale via a narrow section of the existing CSAH 13 bridge. This pedestrian link does not meet current design standards for two-way trail traffic, and is not up to current Americans with Disability Act standards. A new pedestrian bridge will accommodate all trail users, and will provide the ability to re-purpose the existing trail space as a third southbound travel lane. Traffic studies indicate that a third lane will be needed in the near future.

The design contract is funded by state aid. Project construction is scheduled to begin in 2019. Environmental documentation will be done now through next August, and will include public involvement, and a preliminary design. The final design and right-of-way plans will be made from July 2017 through August 2018. Bid opening will be in fall 2018, with construction in winter and spring 2019.

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

Braun Intertec will do material testing for road projects

Braun Intertec Corporation will do material testing for county road projects, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract with the company Sept. 20.

The contract is for \$315,609.50, which will be paid for with pavement preservation funds, state aid money, Metropolitan Council grants, city cooperative agreements, and bonds.

Professional material testing is needed on road projects for quality control, reporting, and compliance with applicable state and federal requirements. The county will work with Braun Intertec because more projects are being built in 2016 than in an average construction year creating an increased need for material testing, including a roster of 16 road and parks projects across the county. Also, the county's material testing and reporting methods have changed to match the Minnesota Department of Transportation recommendations. Using a consultant for this work frees up county inspectors to focus on managing contractor work and schedules.

The professional material testing includes delivery of a report summarizing testing data for each project, quick response to material failures, and specific expertise with construction material issues.

The contract will be funded by a combination of pavement preservation, state aid, Metropolitan Council grants, city cooperative agreements, and bonds.

Contact: Wayne Sandberg, County Engineer and Deputy Public Works Director, 651-430-4339