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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Oct. 4, 2016, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County accepts Metropolitan Council grant for Point Douglas Trail

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted a \$1.6 million grant from the Metropolitan Council Oct. 4 to help with costs for the construction of the Point Douglas Regional Trail and Hastings Bridge Trail connection.

The project, in Denmark Township, involves the construction of a paved trail to connect Point Douglas Park with the new Hastings Bridge Trail System. The trail is a key pedestrian link between two states and three counties.

This is partial funding for the trail. Construction is expected to start at the end of 2017 or the beginning of 2018.

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County Board receives overview of watershed management agencies' budgets

The Washington County Board of Commissioners received an overview Oct. 4 of the 2017 budgets for the watershed agencies that operate in Washington County.

The County Board does not have the authority to approve or deny watershed levies.

The overview included information on the work that the organizations plan for 2017.

The watershed district managers are appointed by the county board, and watershed management organizations (WMO) managers are appointed by participating local governments. The agencies are

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mandated by state law to create watershed plans, and then implement those plans over a 10-year cycle.

In Washington County, there are seven watershed districts, and one joint powers watershed management organization. The watershed 2017 expenditure budgets are:

- Brown's Creek, \$1,510,350;
- Carnelian Marine St. Croix, \$714,000;
- Comfort Lake-Forest Lake, \$1,898,394;
- Ramsey-Washington Metro, \$11,137,610;
- Rice Creek, \$9,289,099;
- South Washington, \$3,998,740;
- Valley Branch, \$1,120,500; and
- Middle St Croix Watershed Management Organization, \$389,070.

The watershed agencies manage both water quantity and water quality. The primary pollutants of concern in local water are phosphorus and sediment.

The review included a highlighted project from each watershed organization. These included a rock bed to lower the temperature of the Brown's Creek trout stream, sand filters to reduce phosphorus loading to a lake, wetland rehabilitation, rain garden planting, a stormwater reuse project to reduce demand for potable water, stream bed and ravine stabilization, and working with cities to update their ordinances for stormwater management.

The County Board also reviewed the budget for the Washington Conservation District, which works with local watershed districts to implement their plans, and provides services to the county and state. Its projected 2017 budget is \$2 million.

Its programs include watershed administration for some of the watershed districts, water and conservation practices monitoring, education and outreach on issues surrounding water, natural resource planning and prioritization, urban and rural conservation technical assistance, buffer program implementation, aquatic invasive species prevention, and conservation practices maintenance.

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