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Date: Dec. 13, 2016
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Dec. 13, 2016, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board sets 2017 budget, levy

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set the county's 2017 budget and levy Dec 13.

The board certified:

- a tax levy of \$96.1 million for county operations and \$1.05 million for the Land and Water Legacy Program; and
- the board also approved the property tax levy set by the Washington County Community Development Agency at \$4.718 million; and
- the Washington County Regional Rail Authority levy of \$776,800.

The board has been reviewing the 2017 recommended budget, which will be supported by the levies, since mid-summer. The approved budget would increase the county net tax levy (excluding Land and Water Legacy funding) by 3.49 percent, to \$96.1 million. The county's median-valued home is \$243,200, up 1.1 percent in value from 2016. It is expected that the owner of the median-valued home would pay a county property tax increase of about \$6, or about .8 percent, for 2017. The county's non-levy revenue is expected to be \$102.5 million, an increase of 8.94 percent over 2016.

The requested levy increase of 3.49 percent is 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, including new construction valued at \$363 million, to assist in paying the levy increase.

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Operating expenditures are expected to be \$165.3 million for 2017, an increase of 5.26 percent over 2016, and capital expenditures are expected to be \$28.3 million, an increase of 6.26 percent.

Archives of the webstreamed meetings at which the board members discussed the budget are archived on the website at www.co.washington.mn.us. Budget presentations may also be viewed on the website by searching the word “budget.”

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

County Board adopts county fee schedule for 2017 after public hearing

The Washington County Board of Commissioners adopted a schedule of fees Dec. 13 that the county will charge for services and programs in the coming year.

The board conducted a public hearing on the proposed fees before adopting the fee schedule. No residents spoke at the hearing.

Information on fees charged for a variety of services and programs can be found on the county’s website, www.co.washington.mn.us.

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

County Board adopts 5-year capital improvement plan after public hearing

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a hearing on the county’s five-year capital improvement plan (CIP) Dec. 13.

No residents spoke at the hearing. Comments were received from a number of municipalities in the county, which are part of the comment record, and revisions were made to the plan based on those comments.

State law requires the hearing, which covered the county’s 2017-2021 CIP. The plan includes major roadway and facility projects in the county, planned for the coming five years. The plan includes the budget for capital projects in the 2017 county budget.

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

Tenants will remain in county’s Historic Courthouse, rent set for 2017

The Washington County Board of Commissioners extended the lease agreements Dec. 13 with tenants who lease office space in the county's Historic Courthouse in Stillwater.

The Youth Service Bureau has been leasing office space at the Historic Courthouse since 2000.

The Youth Service Bureau will continue to lease 1,928 square feet. Its lease term will be for one year ending Dec. 31, 2017, with a monthly rent of \$2,008.33.

Valley Tours, Inc., has leased 306 square feet of office space on the first floor of the Historic Courthouse since 1995. The proposed amendment extends the term of the lease for one year through Dec. 31, 2017, with a monthly rent of \$318.75.

The rent is used for Historic Courthouse operations.

Contact: Peter Mott, Parks Manager, 651-430-4328

Canvas Health will continue to provide adult, children's mental health services

Canvas Health will continue to provide Washington County residents with adult and children's mental health services, after the County Board approved a contract with the organization Dec. 13.

The county is mandated by state law to provide mental health services to residents.

Canvas Health provides services to children, adolescents, adults, the elderly, and families who struggle with aging, crises, chemical and mental health, and domestic and sexual abuse.

The changes to the \$2,020,231 contract for 2017 are minimal. Certain areas that are covered through insurance were decreased (psychiatry, outpatient treatment and support services) and additional areas were given an increase (adult day treatment, Abuse Response services, Family Treatment Program and Adult Mental Health case management). There is an overall decrease of approximately 1 percent.

The county has worked with Canvas Health for many years to provide state-mandated mental health services and other services to county residents, with the majority of services covered by this contract.

Services include information, referral, and client outreach; diagnosis and psychiatric testing; outpatient treatment, day treatment, medication management, and Independent Living Skills training; case management for Seriously Emotionally Disturbed children; family-based services; parenting assessments; and after-hours emergency social services.

With the advent of Minnesota Managed Care Organizations and the Affordable Care Act, there has been a large shift in funding for services that were historically funded through Canvas Health

contracts. In recent years, data has been collected to understand these changes and to adjust funding accordingly.

After a review of the data, a number of services in the Canvas Health contract were identified as services now funded by health plans for a large number of Washington County residents.

Subsequently, adjustments have been made to the contract with Canvas Health. All changes have been made with the focus of ensuring that residents are receiving needed services in an appropriate and timely manner, while also ensuring the responsible use of taxpayer funds.

The contract is paid for through a combination of property tax levy and grant funds.

Contact: Kathy Mickelson, Community Services Division Manager, 651-430-6532

County will continue to receive federal funds for mother, child services

Washington County will continue to receive federal funds to support services to mothers and children after the County Board agreed Dec. 13 to continue to participate in the program that provides Maternal and Child Block Grant funds through the Minnesota Department of Health.

The block grant funding has provided consistent resources for services to mothers and children in Washington County, which uses the money to support developmental screening of children and home visiting services to at-risk and significantly stressed families.

The new grant agreement, which runs through Sept. 30, 2019, will provide \$434,137 for the program.

Contact: Jill Timm, Senior Public Health Program Manager, 651-275-7286

County farmland will continue to have tenant farmer

David See Farms will rent Washington County parkland for agricultural purposes, after the County Board approved a lease for the land Dec. 13.

When Washington County acquires farmland within a regional park, some of the land continues to be farmed until being restored to prairie and oak savanna. Currently, Washington County has 291 acres of land that is leased for farming, 180.1 in Lake Elmo Park Reserve and 110.9 acres in St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park.

Three bids were received for use of the farmland, and David See Farms was high bidder for both parks, \$213.33 an acre for Lake Elmo Park Reserve and \$221.38 per acre for St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park. As part of the county's pollinator efforts, Neonicotinoid use will not be allowed. Revenue from farmland rental is used for rental property expenses, restoration of natural resources, and development of park and trail master plans.

Contact: Dan MacSwain, Natural Resources Coordinator, 651-430-4328

County will continue to provide victim services with funds from state

Washington County will continue to provide victim notifications, using \$140,000 in grant money from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety after the County Board accepted the grant Dec. 13. State law requires victim notification in the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

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

County receives grant to add staff to continue pursuing major crimes

Washington County accepted a state grant of \$184,700 to add three staff members in the County Attorney's Office to continue its push to pursue major crimes, especially to investigate and prosecute sex trafficking and its related crime.

The new positions are for a law clerk, a legal assistant, and a project manager.

In January 2016, the Washington County Attorney's Office created a new section within its criminal division to manage the investigation and prosecution of sex trafficking and other related major crimes in response to a growing problem of internet-based criminal activity. In 2009, the FBI identified the Twin Cities as one of the nation's largest concentration of child prostitution. The new positions will provide support to the office's efforts aimed at helping those children and adults who are or have a high risk of being victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

The major crimes unit coordinates directly with multi-jurisdictional partners and other organizations in the training, database management, and investigation of sex trafficking cases. The unit also conducts training for criminal justice partner agencies, hotels, and other nonprofit organizations that work with at-risk juveniles, including runaways and truant children.

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

County Board approves contract with workers represented by AFSCME

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract Dec. 13 with county employees who are represented by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Council No. 5.

The contract is effective from Jan. 1, 2017, to Dec. 31, 2018. The terms of the contract include:

- 2.5 percent general salary adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2017, and a 2.5 percent general adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2018;
- for 2017 and for 2018, on their classification anniversary dates, employees below the maximum of the compensation range shall be eligible for a 4 percent salary range movement not to exceed that year's salary range maximum;
- part-time employees will be moved onto the county's standard, annual method of awarding compensation increases;
- union participation on a committee to review and recommend options to create a hybrid range movement system that is based on years of service as well as performance;
- life insurance is increased to \$35,000;
- grievance arbitration language is strengthened with a deadline for requesting a panel of arbitrators;
- the 2017 Christmas Eve holiday, which falls on a Sunday, is replaced with eight hours of PTO (or vacation) made available in January; and

The contract also outlines the contributions that the county and employees will make to health insurance plans.

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

County Board approves contract with workers represented by Local 49ers

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract Dec. 13 with county employees who are represented by the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local No. 49 AFL-CIO.

The contract is effective from Jan. 1, 2017, to Dec. 31, 2018. The terms of the contract include:

- 2.5 percent general adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2017, and a 2.5 percent general adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2018;
 - For 2017 and for 2018, on their classification anniversary dates, employees below the maximum of the compensation range shall be eligible for a 3 percent range movement not to exceed that year's salary range maximum;
 - Union participation on an upcoming committee to review and recommend options to create a hybrid range movement system that is based on years of service as well as performance;
 - Grievance arbitration language is strengthened with deadlines and authorizations for grievances and arbitrations;
 - The 2017 Christmas Eve holiday (which falls on a Sunday) is replaced with a Floating Holiday made available in January. The standard holidays resume for 2018; and
- The contract also outlines the contributions that the county and employees will make to health insurance plans.

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

County Board approves compensation and benefits terms for non-represented groups

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved compensation and benefits terms on Dec. 13 for county employees in four non-represented “meet and confer” groups: Confidentials, Confidential Supervisors, Deputy Directors, and Department Heads.

The terms are effective from Jan. 1, 2017, to Dec. 31, 2018 and include:

- 2.5 percent general adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2017, and a 2.5 percent general adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2018;
- For 2017 and for 2018, on their classification anniversary dates, Confidential and Confidential Supervisor employees below the maximum of the compensation range shall be eligible for a 4 percent range movement not to exceed that year's salary range maximum;
- For 2017 and 2018, on their classification anniversary dates, Deputy Director and Department Head employees are eligible for merit pay of between 0 percent and 5 percent each year;

- Part time employees will be moved onto the county's standard, annual method of awarding compensation increases;
- Participation from the groups on an upcoming committee to review and recommend options to create a hybrid range movement system that is based on years of service as well as performance; and
- The 2017 Christmas Eve holiday which falls on a Sunday is replaced with a Floating Holiday made available in January. The hours are pro-rated for part time employees. The standard holidays resume for 2018.

The compensation and benefits terms also outline the contributions that the county and employees will make to health insurance plans.

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

County Board approves contract with workers represented by Assistant County Attorney's Association

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract Dec. 13 with the Assistant County Attorneys unit represented by the Assistant Washington County Attorney's Association.

The contract is effective from Jan. 1, 2017, to Dec. 31, 2018. The terms of the contract include:

- Two-year agreement, January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2018;
- 2.5 percent general adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2017, and a 2.5 percent general adjustment effective the first full pay period in January 2018;
- For 2017 and for 2018, on their classification anniversary dates, employees below the maximum of the compensation range shall be eligible for a 4 percent range movement not to exceed that year's salary range maximum;
- The rate of compensation changes to \$625 per two-week for one employee assigned to respond to all calls of a public safety nature during the evening and on weekends;
- Association participation on an upcoming committee to review and recommend options to create a hybrid range movement system that is based on years of service as well as performance;
- Grievance arbitration language is strengthened with deadlines and authorizations for grievances and arbitrations; and

- The 2017 Christmas Eve holiday (which falls on a Sunday) is replaced with a Floating Holiday made available in January. The standard holidays resume for 2018.

The contract also outlines the contributions that the county and employees will make to health insurance plans.

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

Liberty Homes of Woodbury will provide group residential housing

Liberty Homes of Woodbury will continue on the list of facilities that provide group residential housing in Washington County, after the County Board approved an agreement with the agency Dec. 13.

Group residential housing (GRH) is a state-funded income supplement program that pays for room and board costs for low-income adults with a disabling condition who have been placed in a licensed or registered setting that holds a formal agreement with the county. The current rate for GRH is \$891 per person per month. GRH providers may offer an array of services, but at a minimum they must include housing, utilities, household furnishing, toiletries, and food.

Liberty Homes of Woodbury will provide a community residential setting (CRS), previously known as corporate foster care, designed for persons in need of regular supervision and assistance with daily activities. Each client receives individualized services based on the level of need, funded through Medical Assistance.

Contact: Sarah Tripple, Community Services Planning and Program Manager, 651-430-6480

Sheriff's Office will receive grant fight violent crime

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive a \$100,000 2017 Violent Crime Enforcement Team grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Justice Programs, after the County Board accepted the grant Dec. 13.

The money will be used for funding the Washington County Drug Task Force to reimburse the Sheriff's Office for personnel expenses of the drug task force officers during 2017.

Contact: Commander Cheri Dexter, 651-430-7855

County will continue to provide property assessment services to Forest Lake

Washington County will continue to provide property assessing services to the City of Forest Lake after the County Board approved an agreement with the city Dec. 13.

Washington County provides local assessment services for approximately 80 percent of the parcels in the county. The existing agreement with Forest Lake expires Dec. 31. Fees for assessment services are set by the County Board annually and reviewed during the annual budget process.

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