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

Date: July 25, 2017
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the July 25, 2017, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County works with partners to be ‘one-stop operator’ for workforce development

Washington County will work with local partners to provide “one-stop operator” services for local workforce development, after the County Board approved a cooperative agreement with other workforce consortium entities July 25.

The county’s WorkForce Center, the county’s one-stop career center, will work with the South Washington Schools Adult Basic Education, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development – Job Service. The agreement goes through June 30, 2018.

The primary role of the one-stop operator is to ensure that services provided through the Washington County WorkForce Centers meet the needs of its customers, both businesses and job seekers.

State law requires that the consortium providing one-stop services include at least three or more agencies that represent the different programs and these agencies must be members of the Workforce Development Board. The three members of the cooperative agreement meet that criteria.

Contact: Robert Crawford, Workforce Center Division Manager, 651-275-8660

Law Library will receive print research materials from Thomson Reuters

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Equal Employment Opportunity / Affirmative Action

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement July 25 with Thomson Reuters calling for the company to provide print research materials to the county.

The county will pay the company \$170,700 over three years for the subscription. The Law Library uses the company's information to provide primary and secondary legal research resources used by county departments, attorneys, courts, and the public.

The contract reflects an approximate increase of \$6,000 over the current three-year agreement with Thomson Reuters.

Contact: Pauline Afuso, Law Library Librarian, 651-430-6330

County Board reviews application for Legion pull-tabs at county fair

The Washington County Board of Commissioners reviewed an application from the American Legion Post 491 July 25 to allow the Legion to sell pull-tabs at the Washington County Fair Aug. 2-6.

The Legion Post is in Bayport. State law allows a licensed organization to conduct lawful gambling on a premise other than the organization's permitted premises if it meets all legal requirements, including the review by the County Board.

Contact: Steve Gransee, Taxpayer Services Election Division Manager, 651-430-8272

County will receive grant for radiological emergency preparedness

Washington County will receive a \$228,500 grant for radiological emergency preparedness from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Homeland Security and Emergency Management, after the County Board approved a grant agreement July 25.

The Radiological Emergency Preparedness grant funds will be used to provide and maintain local emergency response services, assure responders complete annual radiological training, provide equipment and training for the Cottage Grove Radiological Reception Center, and to conduct a Federal Emergency Management Agency evaluated exercise once every eight years in compliance with federal and state regulations.

The grant term is through June 30, 2019, and there is no local match required for this grant.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

County wins Outstanding Achievement Award for safety

Washington County received an Outstanding Achievement Award for safety during the Governor's Safety Award program at the Minnesota Safety Conference in the spring.

The County Board received the award July 25.

Since 1934, the annual Governor's Safety Awards program has honored Minnesota employers with exceptional safety performance. Applicants are judged on several years of injury data as it compares with their industry's national statistics, and on their progress in implementing a comprehensive safety program.

Winners are recognized at three levels, Meritorious, Outstanding Achievement, and the Award of Honor, based on incidence rates compared to the industry average, and a score on the safety program evaluation scale.

Contact: Julie Sorrem, County Risk Manager, 651-430-6083



Photo information: Washington County received an Outstanding Achievement Award for safety during the Minnesota Safety Conference. It was presented to the County Board July 25. Those on the Safety Committee with the board are, back row, left to right, Commissioner Stan Karwoski, District 2, Commissioner Fran Miron, District 1, Bonnie Depuydt, Jane Fellerer, Jessica Arneson, Lee Dhein, John Orawiec; front row, left to right, Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5, Kimberly Lehr, Julie Sorrem, Commissioner Gary Kriesel, District 3, Commissioner Karla Bigham, District 4, and Stephanie Kammerud.

County Board receives report from insurance group

The Washington County Board of Commissioners received its annual report July 25 from the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT), which provides insurance coverage and risk management services.

MCIT is a joint powers entity made up of counties and associated public entities that pool resources to provide property, casualty, and workers' compensation coverage to members, along with risk management and loss control services.

The organization is transitioning from using an insurance group to provide services to doing its own underwriting and property and casualty claims administration. That transition should be complete by 2018.

In reviewing historical claims to MCIT from the past five years, the most frequent claim is for automobile related claims. In reviewing the severity of claims, the frequency is spread out more evenly between auto claims, property claims, and public employee liability claims, which each make up about a quarter of the claims. The rest of the claims are spread out over insured areas of claims, namely law enforcement, liability, general liability, and land use defense.

MCIT also tracks workers compensation claims.

Insurance rates have decreased in 2017 from previous years. The annual report notes: "Two major factors influenced the decision to reduce property/casualty aggregate rates for 2017. Over the past five years, auto physical damage, general liability and law enforcement liability have remained fairly stable or trended down. ... Several efforts resulted in reducing costs for workers' compensation claims in the past few years, leading to the reduction in aggregate rates for 2017. Some of the

significant factors are improved return to work efforts, closure of many files, and recovery efforts using subrogation and restitution.”

Because of the favorable performance of the trust, Washington County has received a dividend from MCIT for the past five years; the county is estimated to receive roughly \$385,000 in 2017.

MCIT also provides services to reduce risk to the county, such as safety programs, peace officer online training, and employee assistance programs that provide professional counselors to employees who seek advice about personal issues or work-related concerns that may affect their ability to do their jobs.

Contact: Julie Sorrem, County Risk Manager, 651-430-6083

County Board accepts gifts to county in second quarter of 2017

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted gifts to the county valued at \$3,807.07 for the second quarter of 2017 July 25.

The bulk of the gifts, \$1,724.92, were in-kind donations from merchants who provided gift cards for the county’s annual Foster Care Recognition Evening, which was in June. Foster care providers receive gift certificates for dining, lodging, and entertainment tickets, among other gifts, from local merchants as door prizes at the annual event.

The Library received almost \$300 from a book discussion group and from donation boxes in the library branches. The Historic Courthouse received more than \$1,000 from a number of tour groups, and from its exhibit donation boxes. The Sheriff’s Office received \$750 from a memorial, gifts to support the Explorers in attending a national conference, and a gift from the City of Landfall to support the Cops & Kids Fishing program.

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