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**Date:** Dec. 19, 2017  
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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Dec. 19, 2017, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

#### **Regional Rail Authority approves permit for Forest Lake school bus parking**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners, sitting as the Washington County Regional Rail Authority (WCRRA) Dec. 19, approved a permit to allow the Forest Lake School District to use rail authority right-of-way for parking school buses.

The Forest Lake School District has parked up to 43 buses on the subject property since its purchase by the WCRRA in 1994, encroaching on approximately 21,440 square feet. The WCRRA has not issued a permit, nor charged the district for this use. The land is along 9.5 miles of Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad property that the WCRRA purchased in 1994. Washington County maintains the property on behalf of the WCRRA. The school district notified Washington County of the construction of a maintenance facility in 2017 that removes school property available for bus parking, and requested a permit to authorize parking of the buses on WCRRA property.

The WCRRA established a rate for use of the right-of-way of \$1.50 a square foot, and will offer the Forest Lake School District a permit at an initial discount of 80 percent in 2018. This initial fee will increase over the next five years to reach the full permit fee. This is similar to a schedule that was used for a Subway Sandwich Shop that also uses the right-of-way.

After that time, the district will have the opportunity for a one-time renewal of a five-year permit at the full fee. This timeline will allow the WCRRA property to be vacated within 10 years in anticipation of possible Rush Line extension planning.

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The Hardwood Creek Trail is in the WCRRRA right-of-way, an interim use of the property.

**Contact: Emily Jorgensen, Planner, 651-430-4338**

### **Wicker will serve on county Parks and Open Space Commission**

Corcoran Wicker, Woodbury, was appointed to serve on the Washington County Parks and Open Space Commission by the County Board Dec. 19.

Wicker will serve in a commissioner District 5 position for a partial term expiring Dec. 31, 2019.

The purpose of the commission is to bring citizen perspective to the operation of Washington County Parks. It reviews current operation policies, capital improvement programs, parkland preservation, park development projects, and long-range planning efforts for parkland and facilities for county parks. The commission also provides citizens' perspectives on the administration of the Land and Water Legacy Program.

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

### **Washington County to continue implementation of aquatic invasive species prevention aid**

Washington County will continue to provide aid to local groups that are working to fight aquatic invasive species (AIS) in county water bodies, after the County Board passed a resolution required by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Dec. 19.

Based on the 24 watercraft trailer launches and 353 watercraft trailer parking spaces in the county, Washington County will receive \$136,065 in local AIS prevention aid in 2018.

A county plan or resolution must be submitted to the DNR annually by the last day of each calendar year to continue implementation of the aid program.

**Contact: Colin Kelly, Senior Planner, 651-430-6011**

### **County Board approves agreement with Washington Conservation District**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement Dec. 19 with the Washington Conservation District for 2018, to fund general operations and services to county departments and county residents.

The Washington Conservation District provides technical assistance and educational services to promote and apply soil and water conservation practices throughout the county.

The contract is for \$260,000. It provides partial funding for the organization's administrative activities and services in the areas of local water management, land and water treatment, and public education. Funding for the East Metro Water Resources Education Program is included in the agreement.

The contract reflects a \$10,000 increase over the 2017 contract to support the Washington Conservation Districts administrative operations, including performance management and reporting requirements.

**Contact: Jessica Collin-Pilarski, Senior Planner, 651-430-6703**

### **County will receive reimbursement for collecting paint**

Washington County will continue to receive reimbursement from PaintCare for collecting and recycling paint as part of an agreement the County Board approved with the state Dec. 19 for the Household Hazardous Waste Program. In 2016, the county received \$247,000 from PaintCare to cover its expenses for paint management.

In 2014, the Minnesota Legislature approved the Minnesota Architectural Paint Recovery Program, which requires paint manufacturers to establish a system to collect and pay for the recycling of unused architectural paint throughout Minnesota. Paint manufacturers formed a nonprofit entity called PaintCare to perform this function and comply with the law.

In 2016 the county collected 60,000 gallons of paint products from residents at the county Environmental Center. 35,000 gallons of paint was sent offsite for recycling and 25,000 gallons of usable paint was provided free to residents through the Free Product Room at the Environmental Center.

**Contact: Jeff Travis, Senior Environmental Program Manager, 651-430-4033**

### **County Board approves 6-lot plat in West Lakeland Township**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a six-lot plat in West Lakeland Township Dec. 19, called Burr Oaks.

The plat is west of Norcrest Avenue North and south of 30th Street North.

By state law, the County Board must approve plats that are in townships.

**Contact: Nancie Schwintek, Property Records and Taxpayer Services Division Manager, 651-430-6758**

### **County will continue to work with Rise, Inc., to provide supported employment services**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners extended a \$161,000 contract with Rise, Inc., Dec. 19 to provide supported employment services to county residents who have a mental illness and are receiving case management services.

To comply with the objectives and goals of the Minnesota Olmstead Plan, Washington County is working toward creating more employment opportunities for persons with mental illness. The Minnesota Olmstead Plan "is a groundbreaking, comprehensive plan to provide people with disabilities opportunities to live, learn, work, and enjoy life in integrated settings."

The employment section has two main objectives: ensuring that people with disabilities have choices for competitive, meaningful, and sustained employment in the most integrated setting; and changing the prevailing attitudes, expectations, and beliefs about the integration of people with disabilities into the competitive workplace.

Rise, Inc., supportive employment services provide employment opportunities for people with a mental illness who may not be best served through a traditional job placement. The program provides employment placement and support services with a focus on individual choice, community integration, and independence.

Referrals for services come through Washington County's adult mental health case management services or behavioral health case management. The Rise, Inc., employment consultant will continue to maintain a caseload of up to 20 individuals at a time.

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

### **Sheriff's Office will continue to work with St. Croix County preparing squad cars**

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will continue to work with the St. Croix County, Wisconsin, Sheriff's Office to do squad vehicle commissioning and decommissioning after the County Board approved an agreement with St. Croix County Dec. 19.

The Washington County squad installer will work on law enforcement vehicles, boats, snowmobiles, ATVs, and investigator vehicles for the St. Croix County Sheriff's Office. The work on the vehicles will be done at the Washington County Sheriff's Office except when another location is mutually agreed upon. St. Croix County will pay Washington County \$16,000 for the commission and decommission of up to 15 St. Croix County emergency vehicles. The cost for any additional marked vehicles are \$1,800 and \$315 for unmarked vehicles.

The contract will run through 2018.

**Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601**

### **County Board conducts public hearing on bonds to finance The Glen**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing Dec. 19 on the sale of \$8 million in tax-exempt bonds by the Dakota County Community Development Agency to finance The Glen at Valley Creek, a 42-unit multi-family senior rental development for low- and moderate-income residents.

No residents spoke at the hearing.

The Glen at Valley Creek apartments are designed for independent living with occupancy restricted to households aged 62 years or older with incomes at or below 50 percent of the area median income, approximately \$35,000. Six units will have rents targeted to households with incomes at or below 30 percent of the area median, approximately \$21,000. The cost to acquire the property, demolish existing structures, remediate soil contamination, and build the apartments is \$13.4 million.

The bonds shall be limited obligation bonds issued by the Dakota County Community Development Agency, and the principal and interest shall be paid from the revenue from the project, paid by the developer. The bonds will be secured by cash from the project's first mortgage and bridge loan.

The Glen at Valley Creek is planned for 7987 Afton Road in Woodbury.

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

## **Board approves no increase in Commissioner salaries; acts on salaries for County Sheriff, County Attorney, and County Administrator**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set salaries for 2018 for several elected and appointed officials Dec. 19, including salaries for the board members.

Commissioners set their salary at \$52,713 for 2018, which is what the commissioners' salaries have been since 2009.

The board also set salaries for:

- Attorney Pete Orput, at \$171,580;
- Sheriff Dan Starry, at \$153,876; and
- Administrator Molly O'Rourke, at \$176,344.

**Contact: Molly O'Rourke, Administrator, 651-430-6002**