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**Date:** Aug. 21, 2018  
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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The following actions were taken at the Aug. 21, 2018, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

### **County Board makes appointments to advisory boards**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners appointed several members to county advisory groups Aug. 21.

Appointments and reappointments included:

- the appointment of Paul Richert, Scandia, and the reappoint of Andrew Weaver, May Township, and Wade Johnson, May Township, to the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District to terms ending June 21, 2021;
- the reappointment of Dawn Hyland to the Child Protection Citizen Review Panel, District 5 Representative, to a third term ending June 30, 2020;
- the reappointment of LaJuan McIntyr to the Child Protection Citizen Review Panel, District 2 Representative, to a third term ending June 30, 2020;
- the reappointment of Jennifer Dailey to the Child Protection Citizen Review Panel, District 4 Representative, to a second term ending June 30, 2021;
- the reappointment of Janice Hayne, Child Protection Citizen Review Panel, District 3 Representative, to a second term ending June 30, 2021;
- the reappointment of Michael Laughton, Child Protection Citizen Review Panel, District 4 Representative, to a third term ending June 30, 2021; and

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Equal Employment Opportunity / Affirmative Action

- the reappointment of Sara Murray to the Workforce Development Board - Job Services Representative to a first full term ending June 30, 2021.

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

### **County Board will request funds for turn lanes along Manning in May Township**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed Aug. 21 to request state funds to build turn lanes on Manning Avenue in May Township.

The money would come from the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and would be used to construct left turn lanes along County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 15 (Manning Avenue) at 124th Street, CSAH 7 (Square Lake Trail), and Lynch Road in May Township.

HSIP is a federal-aid funding program designed to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. The program identifies, evaluates, and implements cost-effective construction safety projects. The federal government has set aside approximately \$33 million in 2018 for HSIP safety projects, 60 percent of which are set aside for local safety projects.

The turn lane projects would eliminate future safety risks as daily traffic increases on the roadway. If selected, this project will be part of the 2019-2023 Washington County Capital Improvement Plan for 2023.

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

### **County Board approves ‘Show Your Library Card’ campaign**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a “Show Your Library Card” campaign for the county Aug. 21.

The “Show Your Library Card” campaign will partner with local businesses to offer Washington County Library cardholders a discount at their business. The businesses must be in Washington County and must fit in one of the categories of restaurants/food and dining, entertainment/recreation, beauty/health and well-being, retail, arts and culture, hospitality, and education.

More than 30 local businesses have expressed interest in the program, and it is expected that the program will launch in October.

**Contact: Bethany Venable, Communications Specialist, 651-275-8504**

### **Washington County Library receives \$2,000 gift**

The Washington County Library will receive a \$2,000 donation from a Woodbury resident from the donor-directed fund of the Renaissance Charitable Foundation, which the County Board accepted Aug. 21.

**Contact: Bethany Venable, Communications Specialist, 651-275-8504**

### **RSP i\_Space will perform next phase of county's strategic facilities plan**

RSP i\_Space will perform the next phase of the Washington County Strategic Facility Plan, after the County Board approved a \$197,743 contract with the company Aug. 21.

The Strategic Facility Plan, Phase II builds upon Workspace Guidelines created in 2018, and plans for future facility operation and service improvements. The project will help the county ensure buildings and services address growing service needs.

The plan will set a direction to accomplish long-term facility goals. This plan will help the county determine if it has enough space, of the right type, in the right condition, and in the right places, to serve the county for years to come.

**Contact: Jan Lucke, Public Works Planning Director, 651-430-4316**

### **County Board continues review of 2019 budget**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners continued review of the 2019 budget Aug. 21, reviewing budgets of the public safety departments in the county.

The board began work on the 2019 budget Aug. 14. Commissioners will review the recommended budget of separate departments throughout August and September, and set a preliminary property tax levy Sept. 18. Once the preliminary levy is set, it may be lowered, but cannot be raised in the final budget vote.

The recommended net property tax levy would increase 5.47 percent over the 2018 levy, and would result in a drop of the county's tax rate by .7 percent. If approved, it would be the fifth year in the last six that the county's tax rate decreased. Should the recommended levy be approved, the impact on the owner of the median valued home in the county, which is \$273,200, would be an increase of \$42 a

year in county taxes, offset by a \$1 reduction in the county's Regional Rail Authority levy. That is based on the average home's value increasing 5.7 percent during the past year.

The increase in the levy is spurred in part by service demands from a population that grew 1.5 percent during the last year, and inflationary costs of goods and services that is currently close to 3 percent annually.

The board reviewed specific budgets for the County Attorney's Office, the Department of Community Corrections, and the Sheriff's Office Aug. 21.

The County Attorney's Office has 51 staff members, in the Civil, Criminal, and Juvenile divisions. The proposed annual budget is for \$6.8 million, primarily for personnel. The number of criminal complaints issued by the office continues to grow, with 1,334 issued in 2017. The office has victim-witness coordinators, to act as liaisons, and provide victims and witnesses with information about court proceedings, and the recommended budget requests that a coordinator be added to the staff in mid-2019.

The office will continue its emphasis on stopping sex trafficking, which includes prosecutions and educating members of the community on the topic. The office saw an increase in the number and complexity of child protection cases handled in 2017, which is continuing in 2018. The office's budget emphasizes using resources to provide police training and community outreach.

The Community Corrections budget is recommended to be \$11.7 million in 2019. A portion of that comes from state funds, and fees. The majority of the money is used for wages and benefits, and \$2 million is used for client- and citizen-related support.

The department budget request includes additional office support position, to manage the increase in paperwork that results from the increase in the number of clients; additional funds to cover the costs of electronic monitoring services; and an additional probation officer to provide risk-reduction programming.

The Community Corrections Program Sentence to Service, whereby non-violent offenders perform community service to fulfill their sentences, will contribute more than 76,000 hours to the community and save more than \$1 million in the cost of jail beds in 2019.

The Sheriff's Office budget is recommended to be \$36.3 million in the jail, patrol, investigations, and special services divisions. New requests for 2019 include two additional deputies, one of whom will

be added in mid-year; money to fund half of an update to the office's portable radios; additional money for the jail medical unit; and funds for maintenance of its record system.

Crime trends require new resources and technology to do computer and cell phone forensics, resources to do special investigations in human trafficking, and drug diversion and interdiction, and crimes against the elderly. Initiatives include growing community involvement, a computer forensics lab, an improved records management system, and a human trafficking unit in partnership with the Attorney's Office.

Community Corrections, the Sheriff's Office and the Attorney's Office will work together to institute Stepping Up in the county, a National Association of Counties-sponsored initiative to address people with mental illness ending up in jail where they have longer stays than do other inmates, and where they cycle through more frequently.

A public hearing on the budget will be conducted Dec. 4, and the final budget will be adopted Dec. 11.

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