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

Date: Oct. 23, 2018
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Oct. 23, 2018, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board approves comments on draft comprehensive plan for City of Oakdale

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved comments Oct. 23 prepared by county staff following review of the draft comprehensive plan for the City of Oakdale.

All local governments within the seven-county metropolitan region must prepare a comprehensive plan and update that plan every 10 years. The Metropolitan Council is charged with reviewing local comprehensive plans. Before formally submitting local comprehensive plan updates to the Met Council, local governments must provide adjacent and affected jurisdictions the opportunity to review and comment on the draft plan during a mandatory six-month review period. Comprehensive plans must be submitted to the Met Council by Dec. 31.

The county's comments stated that it commends the city's strong commitment to affordable housing, and its focus on promoting housing choice affordable to all residents at different life stages. The stated connection between land use densities and affordable housing, and the benefits that affordable housing provides to employers, are especially valuable elements in the plan. The county commended the city on including the Washington County Community Development Agency as a partner in an effort to preserve affordable housing. The county also commended the city on its support and promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy, and the city's goals in promoting physical activity and active transportation.

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

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County Board makes reappointments to advisory committees

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made a number of reappointments to citizen advisory committees Oct. 23.

Gracie George was reappointed to the Child Protection Citizen Review Panel as an at-large representative to a partial term ending June 30, 2020. The Child Protection Citizen Review Panel provides opportunities for members of the community to have an integral role in ensuring that Child Protection Service Systems are protecting children from abuse and neglect and are meeting the permanency needs of children.

Sheri Vrieze was reappointed to the Mental Health Advisory Committee as a chemical health professional to a partial term ending Dec. 31, and Anne Vail was reappointed to the Mental Health Advisory Committee as a family member representative to a partial term ending Dec. 31. The advisory committee is established by state law. It reviews, evaluates, and makes recommendations regarding the local mental health system; annually arranges for input from the regional treatment center review board regarding coordination of care between the regional treatment center and community-based services; annually arranges for input from the local system of care providers regarding coordination of care between services; and identifies for the County Board the individuals, providers, agencies, and associations to receive information on predictors and symptoms of emotional disturbances, where mental health services are available in the county, and how to access the services.

Laura Pietan was reappointed to the Community Corrections Advisory Board as a District 3 representative to a partial term ending Dec. 31, 2019. The purpose of the advisory committee is to bring the community perspective and participate in forming the comprehensive plan for the development, implementation, and operation of community-based correctional programs, including preventative or diversionary correctional programs, probation, community corrections centers, and facilities for the detention or confinement, care, and treatment of persons convicted of crimes or adjudicated delinquent.

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

County will add probation officer to fill in for officer on special assignment

Washington County will hire a full-time probation officer to fill in for an officer who will be on special assignment for the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

The County Board approved the position Oct. 23.

This newly-hired probation officer will cover a current position while that employee is on a two-year assignment at the Federal Bureau of Prisons. The loan of a Washington County employee occurs through an agreement that allows the Federal Bureau of Prisons to fully reimburse Washington County for the employee's wages and benefits, which will be used to fund the special project position that is requested for up to two years.

Contact: Terry Thomas, Jr., Community Corrections Deputy Director, 651-430-6951

County will purchase land to add to proposed Grey Cloud Island regional park

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to purchase land on Grey Cloud Trail South in Grey Cloud Island Oct. 23 to add to the proposed Grey Cloud Island Regional Park.

The land is a little more than 20 acres at 11701 Grey Cloud Trail S., and is known as the Hale Property. The purchase price is \$505,000, 75 percent of which will be funded by the Metropolitan Council, with the balance being paid with funds from the county's voter-approved Land and Water Legacy Program.

The Grey Cloud Island Regional Park Master Plan was originally adopted in 1994. The acquisition of the property was initiated by the property owners who advised the county of their interest in selling the property. An appraisal was completed and reviewed by the County Board and the board determined that it is a parcel for inclusion into Grey Cloud Island Regional Park. An offer was made to the property owners based on the appraisal, and the property owners and county negotiated an agreement for the county's purchase.

Contact: Sharon Price, Right-of-Way Specialist/Property Manager, 651-430-4391

County Board approves company to administer 2019 residential survey

The Washington County Board of Commissioners will hire National Research Center, Inc., to administer a residential survey in 2019 after approving a contract with the company Oct. 23.

The survey will be partially paid for with \$25,000 that the county receives from the state for participation in the state standard measurement program.

Washington County will partner with Dakota, Olmsted, and St. Louis counties on the survey. The survey will be mailed to a randomly-selected group of people in each commissioner district. The county conducted its last residential survey in 2016.

Contact: Amanda Hollis, Senior Planner, 651-430-6021

County will participate in a conservation easement purchase in Hugo

Washington County will work with the Minnesota Land Trust to create a conservation easement on a parcel of land in Hugo, and contribute to the cost of the easement.

The County Board approved agreements Oct. 23, which include the expansion of a Memorandum of Understanding that the county has with the Minnesota Land Trust.

A landowner with land in the Land and Water Legacy's Keystone Woods high priority area provided an opportunity to place a permanent conservation easement on 19 acres of property at 16169 Jeffrey Ave. N.

The Minnesota Land Trust requested that Washington County be a partner in the project and contribute \$57,200 through its voter-approved Land and Water Legacy program to the purchase of the conservation easement, which will cost \$148,000. The Minnesota Land Trust and Washington County will serve as co-holders of the conservation easement.

This is the first of 21 parcels in the county's 387-acre Keystone Woods high priority conservation area to be placed under permanent protection. Keystone Woods is in the Rice Creek and Carnelian Marine St. Croix Watershed districts, and encompasses the western portion of Barker Lake. It is an area of high natural resource value, an area of ecological significance, and host to threatened species and rare plant communities.

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

County Board reviews watershed management organizations' budgets

The Washington County Board of Commissioners reviewed an overview of the budgets of the watershed management organizations (WMO) in the county Oct. 23.

The review was for the board's information only; the County Board does not approve budgets or tax levies for watershed management organizations. However, the County Board does appoint members to the organizations' boards.

The county has several watershed management organizations. Managers are appointed by the County Board to three-year terms. Their purpose is to:

- control or alleviate floodwaters;
- improve stream channels;
- control or alleviate soil erosion;
- regulate improvements by riparian property owners;
- protect and enhance water quality; and
- provide for the protection of groundwater.

In Washington County, the watershed districts and their proposed 2019 budgets are:

- Brown's Creek, \$1.48 million;
- Carnelian-Marine-St.-Croix, \$848,483;
- Comfort Lake-Forest Lake, \$2.59 million;
- Ramsey-Washington Metro, \$13.41 million;
- Rice Creek, \$7.34 million;
- South Washington, \$3.79 million; and
- Valley Branch, \$2.15 million.

The county also has one joint powers watershed management organization, the Middle St. Croix, which has a proposed 2019 budget of \$293,070.

These organizations create watershed management plans, which are implemented over a 10-year cycle. Each WMO looks at projected activities required to meet its goals, strategies, and implementation plan, and plans a budget in accordance. Budget levels fluctuate depending on grants and the status of projects identified in a watershed plan.

Highlights of the work at the watershed management organizations include:

- Brown's Creek riparian restoration in western Stillwater done by the Brown's Creek Watershed District, which will reduce thermal loading to Brown's Creek;

- 197th Street Ravine construction in Scandia done by the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District to reduce phosphorus;
- alum treatments in Moody Lake and Shields Lake near Forest Lake done by the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District that will clean the lakes enough to move them off the state's impaired list;
- an iron-enhanced sand filter at Stillwater Middle School, installed by the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization to reduce phosphorus;
- repair study for Anoka-Washington Judicial Ditch 3 by Rice Creek Watershed District;
- retrofit projects at New Horizon Academy and House of Prayer Lutheran Church by Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District to reduce phosphorus and sediment;
- the Ravine Lake outlet and conveyance channel in Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park, done by the South Washington Watershed District to stabilize the channel and provide a new outlet for Ravine Lake and flood control; and
- collaboration with willing partners to address flooding at Sunnybrook Lake by Valley Branch Watershed District.

Contact: Stephanie Souter, Senior Planner, 651-430-6701