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Date: Dec. 4, 2018
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Dec. 4, 2018, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board approves comments on Cottage Grove TIF district

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved comments on the creation of a tax increment financing district (TIF) in Cottage Grove Dec. 4.

The City of Cottage Grove will be conducting a public hearing Dec. 5 to consider the creation of a TIF district as an economic development district with a maximum life of nine years to assist a 421,000-square-foot expansion of a plastic trash bag manufacturing facility.

In a TIF district, the increase in property taxes generated by new development is captured to offset the costs of the development. Funds generated by the TIF district would be used to offset costs of site improvements, utilities, and other qualifying improvements related to the expansion of the Up North Plastics building.

Comments from the county express its support for the project, and state the support is consistent with the County Board's goals through the Community Development Agency (CDA) to support the efforts of cities to increase the tax base in the county and add jobs.

By law, the city must provide a 30-day notice to the county and the county has the ability to provide comments to the city to be included in the public record of the public hearing.

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

Workforce Development Board will change makeup of board

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Equal Employment Opportunity / Affirmative Action

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved changes to the membership of the county's Workforce Development Board Dec. 4.

The board will be reconfigured to meet the requirements of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, which are:

- the majority must represent business, i.e., private sector businesses and employers;
- no fewer than 20 percent of the members must represent the workforce, such as representation from unions/apprenticeships/organizations that serve special populations;
- at least one representative must be from adult education and higher education;
- one representative must be from economic and community development, employment services and rehabilitation services; and
- the board may include other individuals or organization, but are not required.

Contact: Rick Roy, Workforce Center Division Manager, 651-275-8660

Sheriff's Office receives 2 Kevlar bulletproof vests from Keeping K9s in Kevlar

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive two bulletproof vests for K9 Maia and K9 Viking, who both work with the Washington County SWAT team, from Keeping K9s in Kevlar.

The County Board accepted the vests, valued at \$2,560 each, Dec. 4.

Keeping K9s in Kevlar is a nonprofit organization whose goal is to help protect America's working K9s. It is a volunteer organization and 100 percent of the donations go to the purchase of the vests. Michele Beck, who owns PAWS Pet Hospital, also contributed to raising the funds. The two vests are embroidered with the names of fallen Minnesota Correctional Officer Joseph Gomm and St. Paul Police Officer Joshua Lynaugh.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601



Patrol Officer/Deputy Sheriff Clayton Evens with K9 Maia in her new Kevlar vest during the Dec. 4 Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting.

Washington County will submit 2040 Comprehensive Plan to Metropolitan Council

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed Dec. 4 to submit the county's 2040 Comprehensive Plan to the Metropolitan Council, after conducting a public hearing on the plan. The plan is due to the Metropolitan Council Dec. 31.

No members of the public spoke at the hearing.

Washington County and Community Development Agency (CDA) staff worked with a consultant to update the county's comprehensive plan. County and CDA staff were primarily responsible for updating or developing content in seven "plan elements" or chapters of the comprehensive plan, including Land Use; Transportation; Water Resources; Parks, Trails, and Open Space; Housing; Economic Competitiveness; and Resilience and Sustainability.

In addition to ensuring compliance with Metropolitan Council requirements and producing a final plan on the county's behalf, the consultant was responsible for gathering public input throughout the planning process. A required six-month review period by "adjacent and affected jurisdictions" (e.g., cities, towns, watershed districts, school districts, etc.) was open from March 26 to Sept. 26. The public also had opportunities to review and comment on the plan during that time.

County and CDA staff edited the comprehensive plan to reflect the comments received during the six-month review period.

Information on the plan may be found on the Washington County website at www.co.washington.mn.us by searching "comprehensive plan."

Contact: Hally Turner, Senior Planner, 651-430-4307

County Board honors Rosenquists for stewardship of natural resources

The Washington County Board of Commissioners honored Bob and Marilyn Rosenquist Dec. 4 for being good stewards of county natural resources.

Bob and Marilyn Rosenquist have owned and farmed land in Washington County since 1972 and have been the owners of a portion of the Keystone Woods, one of the highest quality habitats in Washington County. Bob Rosenquist is a board member of the Washington Conservation District, an organization that raises awareness of the need to protect land and water resources in the county.

The couple made the decision to put 19 acres of their wetland and forest lands into a conservation easement to protect the land in its natural state and create an environment for the protection of groundwater in the area. The Rosenquists are dedicated to preserving wild habitat for the health and sustainability of future generations in Washington County.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners extended its appreciation to the Rosenquists for their dedication and commitment to a healthy ecological future in Washington County.

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

County Board reviews 2019 budget before Dec. 11 adoption

The Washington County Board of Commissioners reviewed the county's 2019 budget Dec. 4, and invited public comment before the budget's final adoption set for Tuesday, Dec. 11.

No members of the public spoke at the meeting.

The board has been reviewing the proposed budget since it was first introduced by county staff Aug. 14. The board reviewed detailed budget recommendations from each of the county's departments. The board set the county's proposed property tax levy for 2019 Sept. 18, and approved proposed budgets for the county, the Regional Railroad Authority, and the Community Development Agency. The county's proposed property tax net levy for 2019 is \$108.1 million, an increase of 5.47 percent over 2018. The county's voter-approved Land and Water Program levy will be \$1.1 million, with no change from 2018.

The county's non-levy revenue is expected to be \$139.7 million, an increase of 27.17 percent over 2018. Operating expenditures are expected to be \$187.9 million, an increase of 6.59 percent, and capital expenditures are expected to be \$79.5 million, including \$31 million from bond proceeds.

The proposed property tax levy for the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority is \$660,000 for 2019, which is a reduction of 15 percent from 2018, and the proposed property tax levy for the Washington County Community Development Agency is \$5.23 million.

The net property tax levy increase of 5.47 percent over the 2018 levy is estimated to result in a drop of the county's tax rate by 1.5 percent. This would be the fifth year in the last six that the county's tax rate decreased. The impact of the proposed levy on the owner of the median valued home in the county, which is \$273,200, would be an increase of \$36 a year in county taxes, offset by a \$1

reduction in the county's Regional Rail Authority tax. 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 budget was prepared to provide for increased investment in public safety and safety net services, funding for previously recommended and approved projects, and continued funding for mandated services. Some of those mandated services include electronic home monitoring, civil commitments, court-appointed attorneys, jail medical services, and services from the medical examiner.

The County Board is expected to approve the 2019 budget and the county's capital improvement program at its Dec. 11 meeting.

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