



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

Date: Dec. 14, 2021
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Dec. 14, 2021, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board adopts committees, commission, joint powers boards assignments

The Washington County Board of Commissioners adopted assignments Dec. 14 for 2022 for the committees, commissions, and joint powers boards on which commissioners will serve for the coming year.

As part of their duties as commissioners, the commissioners serve on groups that oversee governance and functions throughout the metropolitan area, and throughout the state. The 2022 assignments are: Commissioner Fran Miron, District 1:

- Washington County:
 - Community Development Agency
 - Groundwater Advisory Committee
 - Personnel Committee
 - Planning Advisory Commission (Alternate)
 - Plat Commission (Alternate)
 - Regional Railroad Authority
 - University of Minnesota Extension Advisory Committee
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Committee
 - Extension Committee

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- Local Government Water Roundtable Advisory Committee
- Agricultural and Rural Development Advisory Committee
- East Central Regional Juvenile Center (Alternate)
- Lower St. Croix Watershed Policy Committee
- Metropolitan Emergency Services Board
 - Metropolitan Emergency Services Board Executive Committee
- Metropolitan Mosquito Control District
- Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) (Alternate)
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board
 - Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board Partnership on Waste and Energy
- Rush Line Corridor Task Force

Commissioner Stan Karwoski, District 2:

- Washington County
 - Community Development Agency (Alternate)
 - Regional Railroad Authority
 - Workforce Development Board
 - Oversight Action Committee
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Board of Directors as District X Representative
 - Board of Directors, Bylaws Committee
 - Board of Directors, Finance Committee
 - Economic Development, Workforce, and Housing Policy Subcommittee
 - Transportation Policy Committee
- East Metro Strong Board
- Gold Line Corridor Management Committee
- Gold Line Executive Change Control Board
- Gold Line Joint Powers Board
- Metropolitan Emergency Services Board

- Metropolitan Transportation Advisory Board (TAB)
 - TAB Executive Committee
 - TAB Regional Solicitation Policy Workgroup
- Minnesota Inter-County Association
 - Minnesota Inter-County Association Executive Committee
- National Association of Counties (NACo)
 - Environment, Energy and Land Use Steering Committee
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board

Commissioner Gary Kriesel, District 3:

- Washington County
 - Audit Advisory Committee
 - Historic Courthouse Advisory Committee
 - Law Library Board
 - Personnel Committee
 - Planning Advisory Commission
 - Plat Commission
 - Regional Railroad Authority
 - University of Minnesota Extension Committee
- Andersen Community Advisory Committee
- Lake Elmo Airport Advisory Commission
- Lower St. Croix Watershed Policy Committee (Alternate)
- Metropolitan Mosquito Control
 - Executive Committee
- National Association of Counties (NACo)
 - Veterans and Military Service
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board (Alternate)
 - Regional Haulers Licensing Board
- Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake liaison

Commissioner Wayne Johnson, District 4:

- Washington County
 - Community Corrections Advisory Board
 - Finance Committee
 - Groundwater Advisory Committee (Alternate)
 - Library Board
 - Parks and Open Space Commission
 - Regional Railroad Authority
 - Workforce Development Board (Alternate)
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Public Safety Policy Committee
- Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA)
- Metro Alliance for Healthy Families (Alternate)
- Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (Alternate)
- Metropolitan Transportation Advisory Board (Alternate)
- Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA)
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board
 - Budget and Facility Committee
 - Partnership on Waste and Energy (Alternate)
- Red Rock Corridor Commission

Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5:

- Washington County
 - Finance Committee
 - Library Park Association, Chair
 - Mental Health Advisory Council
 - Regional Rail Authority
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Futures Committee

- General Government Policy Committee
- Gold Line Executive Change Control Board
- Gold Line Corridor Management Committee
- Gold Line Joint Powers Board
- Greater MSP
- Metropolitan Alliance for Healthy Families
- Metropolitan Mosquito Control District (Alternate)
- National Association of Counties (NACo)
 - International Economic Development Task Force
 - Rural Action Caucus Steering Committee
 - Transportation Policy Steering Committee (Vice Chair)
 - Ports Subcommittee
 - Women of NACo Leadership Network
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board
 - Regional Hauler Licensing Board (Alternate)

Contact: Alyssa Soderlund, Administrative Assistant, 651-430-6015

Waller reappointed to Rice Creek Watershed District Board of Managers

John Waller, Hugo, was reappointed to the Rice Creek Watershed District Board of Managers by the Washington County Board of Commissioners Dec. 14.

Waller will serve a sixth term expiring Jan. 18, 2025.

Contact: Alyssa Soderlund, Administrative Assistant, 651-430-6015

Youth Services Bureau will continue to provide services to Washington County

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$233,273 contract Dec. 14 to continue using Youth Services Bureau (YSB) as a diversion service for youth in 2022.

YSB offers diversion services for juveniles that would otherwise be brought to juvenile court in Washington County. These services may be accessed by referral from a variety of sources, including the County Attorney's Office, Community Services Department, law enforcement agencies, and

schools. While on diversion, a juvenile may participate in community work service, an educational program, and/or early intervention services through the YSB. Juveniles are required to make restitution to the victim and complete the diversion conditions to avoid a formal court record.

The 2021 outcomes from the contract with the YSB, based on clients served during 2020, include:

- 315 youth served;
- \$823 cost per youth;
- 92% of juveniles have no further involvement in the Washington County Justice System for 12 months;
- \$1,605 collected for restitution; and
- 82 youth completing 1,103 hours of community service.

Also, while the state rate of juvenile probation clients is 319 per 100,000 population, Washington County's rate of juvenile probation clients is 183 per 100,000 population.

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

County will continue to work with Tubman to provide service for victims of domestic violence

Washington County will continue to work with Tubman to provide services for victims and families who have experienced domestic violence, after the County Board approved a \$204,241 contract with the agency Dec. 14 for services in 2022.

Tubman provides services to county residents, including shelter, crisis intervention, counseling, advocacy, Orders for Protection assistance, and community presentations. In addition, Tubman is the community point of contact for the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) program, a risk assessment tool used by law enforcement officers in Washington County.

The 2022 contract will enable Tubman's Washington County Legal Services program to maintain critical service delivery for victims and families of domestic violence. The increase of \$7,855, or 4%, will help offset an increase in service expenses from the previous adjustment in 2021.

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

County Board approves contract with HealthPartners for employee health insurance

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a three-year contract with HealthPartners Dec. 14 to continue to provide health insurance for county employees for the next three years.

The county issued a request for proposals for employee and retiree health insurance coverage in 2019 and signed a three-year agreement with HealthPartners for 2020, 2021, and 2022. The original rate cap for 2022 was 12%. However, last year, the county negotiated a new rate cap for 2022 of 9%.

After further negotiations, HealthPartners agreed to a new multi-year agreement with an overall increase in premium of 7% for 2022 and rate caps of 9% for 2023 and 2024.

Over the summer, the county reviewed claim use information and plan options and recommended benefit plan changes that further reduced the overall increase in premium to 3.3% for 2022. This new contract brings the county to the five-year maximum allowed under state law for health insurance coverage. Therefore, the county will need to re-bid in 2024 for coverage beginning in 2025.

Contact: Angie Nelezny, Human Resources Director, 651-430-6075

County will receive grants for protecting water resources

Washington County will receive \$184,000 of natural resource grants from the Board of Water and Soil Resources, after the County Board accepted the grants Dec. 14.

The county will receive the money between the beginning of 2022 and the end of 2024.

The funds will be used for shoreland preservation, septic treatment systems, local water management, and wetland conservation.

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

County will continue to work with Washington Conservation District

Washington County will continue to work with the Washington Conservation District, after the County Board approved a \$260,000 contract with the agency for 2022 Dec. 14.

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

Funding is for the organization's administrative activities, and services in the areas of local water management, land and water treatment, and public education. The 2022 contract for \$260,000 reflects

the support of the Washington Conservation District's administrative operations, including performance management and reporting requirements.

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

Washington County will receive additional funds for COVID-19 response

Washington County will receive additional funds to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, after the County Board accepted grants from the Minnesota Department of Health Dec. 14.

A \$1.198 million grant from the Minnesota Department of Health will be used for COVID-19 response and vaccine implementation to be used through Dec. 31, 2023.

Funding will be used for activities such as COVID-19 vaccine distribution, initiatives to address the mental wellbeing of staff and volunteers, addressing community recovery efforts associated with maintaining childhood vaccination rates, promoting well-child and addressing preventative medical care, chronic disease conditions, and adverse mental health impacts.

The county will also receive \$200,000 from the Minnesota Department of Health for the COVID-19 Public Health Workforce, to be used through June 30, 2024. Funding will be used for infectious disease control and response staffing associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Contact: David Brummel, Public Health & Environment Director, 651-430-6662

County Board approves plat in May Township

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a two-lot abstract plat in May Township Dec. 14.

The Manning Ridges plat is east of Manning Trail North and north of Square Lake Trail North.

Contact: Nancie Schwintek, Property Records Division Manager, 651-430-6758

County will acquire land for potential Manning Avenue extension

Washington County will acquire vacant land at the intersection of Memorial Avenue North and 58th Street North in the City of Oak Park Heights, as part of a potential future road extension of County State Aid Highway 15 south segment.

The County Board approved the acquisition Dec. 14.

The Washington County Capital Improvement Program includes a project for a 58th Street Extension/County Highway 15 south segment project. The project anticipates providing a connection from County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 5 to the new Highway 36 and CSAH 15/Manning Avenue interchange.

The property at the intersection of Memorial Avenue North and 58th Street North is within the project area. The owner of the parcel expressed an interest in selling the parcel, and the owner and the county have agreed on a price of \$545,570.

The purchase will be paid for with Local Option Sales Tax and State Aid.

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

Washington County, City of Woodbury start work on Central Park remodel

Washington County and the City of Woodbury will begin work to upgrade Central Park in Woodbury, after the County Board agreed to share the cost of remodeling professional services Dec. 14.

Washington County has partnered with the City of Woodbury on a study to determine the scope of needs in the Central Park building that contains the Washington County R.H. Stafford Library. To move into the design phase, the cooperative funding agreement established the appropriate cost split to design the project. The county and city will share costs of remodeling the existing common area spaces within the building, while the City of Woodbury also plans to construct an addition to its portion to include a multi-purpose community gathering space to accommodate up to 350 people. The resulting cost split has the county paying 34% and city paying 66%. The cost split and overall project scope will be re-evaluated after each phase of design.

The first phase is a schematic design and the county's share of this phase is expected to be \$150,000. The needs for the common areas include expanded and improved parking, enhanced safety and accessibility for the building, a safe and welcoming entry, and a number of significant maintenance needs. The city will act as the fiscal agent for the project and will execute the contracts with the chosen architect and construction management firm.

Each entity is responsible for any work done within its own unit, such as the county being responsible for the library.

The City of Woodbury is requesting \$15 million in state funds for its addition and the County Board approved a letter of support for that request to the state. It is anticipated that construction on the common areas would begin at the end of 2023.

Contact: Erik Jalowitz, Building Services Capital Projects Manager, 651-430-6227

County Board approves 2022-2026 capital improvement plan

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a capital improvement plan (CIP) for the county for 2022-2026 Dec. 14, after conducting a public hearing on the plan Nov. 30.

No one spoke at the hearing. Comment letters were received from a number of county cities, including Cottage Grove, Hugo, Lake Elmo, Oak Park Heights, and Woodbury, and the Rice Creek Watershed District. The plan includes major roadways, parks, and facility projects in the county planned for the next five years, and those projects that are funded by bonds. Along with those projects, specific projects for 2022 are included.

Roads and bridges make up 75% of the proposed projects in the five-year plan, with public facilities making up 17% and parks and land making up 8%.

Funding comes from a number of sources, including county program aid from the state, intergovernmental revenue, the local option sales tax, and bonds.

More than 79 projects or programs are included in the capital plan, with \$352 million in planned investments in infrastructure over the next five years.

Projects in the 2022 portion of the plan include an expansion of the Environmental Center in Woodbury, as well as the construction of an environmental center in Forest Lake, and yard waste facilities in the county. Roadway projects throughout the county are also in the proposed plan.

After receiving comments from a number of cities in the county, changes were made to the final plan, which was adopted Dec. 14. No projects were removed from the plan, and the changes did not affect the 2022 budget.

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

County Board adopts county fee schedule for 2022

The Washington County Board of Commissioners adopted the county's fee schedule for 2022 Dec. 14.

The board conducted a public hearing on the proposed fee schedule Nov. 30.

The county's fee schedule is governed by county policy, as well as state laws and rules. The policy states that when a single user is the beneficiary of a service, the costs of the service should be borne by that individual. Service delivery costs can be supported by revenue other than user fees when there is a public benefit provided by the service.

The county policy is to set fees that have a reasonable relation between the fee and the cost of providing the service, as well as a number of other considerations.

Programs throughout the county may require fees, and each is reviewed and considered for changes each year. Changes in fees are made to reflect changes in services offered, as well as any state legislative changes that affect county services and related fees.

Information on fees charged for services and programs may be found on the county's website www.co.washington.mn.us.

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

County Board adopts county redistricting principles

The Washington County Board of Commissioners adopted principles Dec. 14 that it will use when redistricting county commissioner districts next year.

State law establishes the procedure and process for redistricting of county commissioner districts based on population figures from the federal Census. Although not required, the County Board members wish to establish principles to guide the redistricting process. The proposed principles were posted on the county website Oct. 19 for public review and comment. They may be viewed on the county website at www.co.washington.mn.us by searching "redistricting."

The principles to guide the redistricting process include the number of districts, the population deviation required, the shape and form of the district, the relationship to other boundaries, the state and constitutional standards, the division of political subdivisions, the public notice and participation, how to preserve communities of interest, the protection of minority representation, the impact on incumbents, and the creation of staggered terms.

The county will be the last governmental entity to establish its district boundaries before the 2022 election. The schedule will be:

- Feb. 15, 2022 – new congressional and legislative districts set
- March 29, 2022 – reestablishment or redistricting of municipal precincts
- April 26, 2022 – new local government election districts set (county, soil and water conservation, school district, etc.)
- May 17, 2022 – candidate filings open
- Aug. 9, 2022, and Nov. 8, 2022 – State Primary and State General Election based on newly-drawn districts.

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

County Board approves levies, budget for county for 2022

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the county's 2022 budget Dec. 14, and the property tax levy that will support it.

With the ongoing response to and recovery from the pandemic, the recommended 2022 budget includes a levy increase that funds increased costs to the county expected in 2022, and those that occurred in 2021.

The County Board conducted workshops on the recommended 2022 budget throughout August and September. After reviewing the recommended budgets from departments, the County Board set a proposed levy and adopted a proposed budget for 2022 Sept. 14. The board conducted a public hearing on the proposed levy and budget Nov. 30.

The levy adopted is a 5.28% increase in the county's 2021 levy, for a levy of \$120.6 million. It is expected that the levy will result in an increase for the county's portion of the annual property tax of \$25 for the average valued home in the county, which is \$318,700. That same average valued home in 2021 experienced a \$25 reduction in county tax when the board approved a 0% levy increase for 2021. The county's revenue budget will include revenue other than levy of \$133.1 million. Operating expenditures are budgeted to be \$204.8 million; capital projects are budgeted to be \$64.1 million in 2022.

The Regional Rail Authority levy was set at \$660,000 for 2022, the same as in 2021, with planned expenditures set at just less than \$700,000 for the year. The county's Community Development Agency will have a levy of \$5.68 million, to which the board consented.

The county continues to respond to the pandemic with services that meet clients' needs. At the same time, much like other service providers, the county has found ways to deliver some county services in a more efficient, less costly way, which will continue in the future. This has included upgrades to county facilities that made them safer places to receive services and work.

New funding in the budget will pay for salaries and benefit increases for existing employees; base salaries of all county employees were held flat in 2021. The recommended budget includes only a small number of new employees and few changes in the services or programs delivered.

The recommended budget includes investments in the county's technology infrastructure and information technology staff to maintain and enhance data and network security. The budget funds a fairly substantial increase in election costs for 2022 as more people vote absentee, which adds to the cost of managing an election. The budget also funds replacements in the public works fleet to ensure the ability to maintain and provide snow removal on county roads.

The recommended budget is impacted by reduced revenue in a variety of areas, including reduced county program aid, a state aid provided to reduce the reliance on property taxes to fund mandated services, and reduced fees for services that have been impacted by the pandemic.

Contact: Jennifer Wagenius, Deputy County Administrator, 651-430-6007, and Jan Lucke, Deputy Administrator, 651-430-6003

Downs Government Affairs will continue to be federal lobbyist for county

Downs Government Affairs LLC will continue to represent Washington County in Washington, D.C., after the County Board approved a contract extension with the agency Dec. 14.

The contract will run through Dec. 31, 2024.

The contract will be extended an additional two years, with the cost not to exceed \$63,000 in 2022, or a 5% increase over 2020-2021, and \$66,150 in 2023, a 5% increase over 2022.

Contact: Jan Lucke, Deputy Administrator, 651-430-6003