



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

**Date:** April 19, 2022  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the April 19, 2022, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

### **Regional Rail Authority elects leadership for 2022**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners, sitting as the Regional Rail Authority April 19, elected a chair and vice chair to the Regional Rail Authority for 2022.

Commissioner Stan Karwoski, District 2, was elected chair, and Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5, was elected vice chair.

### **Regional Rail Authority will use grant funding for Gold Line construction**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners, sitting as the Regional Rail Authority April 19, agreed to begin work on the Gold Line bus-rapid transit project.

Both the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority and the County Board, as two of the Gold Line Joint Powers Board Parties, needed to take action to allow funds to be used for civil construction before the Full Funding Grant Agreement is received from the Federal Transit Administration.

Allowing funds for this use will not increase the overall county share. Ramsey County is scheduled to take a similar action in the coming weeks.

Washington County will fund \$120.5 million of the Gold Line project cost. None of that will come from property taxes, but rather from the transportation sales tax. It is anticipated that the project will begin construction in September.

Later in the regular County Board meeting on the same day, the board approved the Gold Line funding commitment.

A great place to live, work and play...today and tomorrow

The Gold Line is a bus-rapid transit project that will connect downtown St. Paul with Woodbury, with transit stops along the way.

**Contact: Lyssa Leitner, Public Works Planning Director, 651-430-4316**

### **County Board makes appointment to citizen advisory boards**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made appointments to citizen advisory boards April 19.

The appointments are:

- Samuel Rosemark, who was appointed to a partial term expiring June 30, 2022, as the District 2 representative on the Family Homelessness Prevention Assistance Program Committee; and
- Timothy Brewington II, who was appointed to a first term expiring Dec. 31, 2023, as the minority representative on the Community Corrections Advisory Board.

**Contact: Holly Hess, Administrative Assistant, 651-430-6015**

### **County Board amends American Rescue Plan Act project plan**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to amend the county's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) April 19, to allow for programs for employment training and transitional housing. Washington County is a direct recipient of \$50.9 million under ARPA, of which \$25.4 million was received last May to address the expenditures and impacts of COVID-19 and to replace revenue shortages related to the pandemic.

Guidance for those use of funds changed last May, and now the county will use funds to change the scope of the Career Pathways System Project to include adults. The Career Pathways is universal to individuals of all ages facing disparities and being impacted by the pandemic. Adding adults to this project would enable a larger outreach and impact by providing support to those needing training or assistance who aren't eligible for regular program funding.

The county will also use the money for the County Emergency/Transitional Housing Program to provide funding for general operations and administrative support and supplies. This may include communication/marketing, education about need for emergency housing, cleaning and incidentals for

hotel rooms, consultation fees for people with lived experience, and support services for people accessing services in the shelter when no other funds are available.

**Contact: Tabatha Hansen, Accounting & Finance Director, 651-430-6027**

### **County Board recognizes week of April 24-30 as Victims' Rights Week**

The Washington County Board of Commissioner declared the week of April 24-30 as Victims' Rights Week at its meeting April 19

The Washington County Attorney's Office asked that the County Board remind residents that every April the Office of Victims of Crime (OVC) helps lead communities throughout the country in their annual observances of National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) by promoting victims' rights and honoring crime victims and those who advocate on their behalf. This year's theme is rights, access, and equity for all victims, and underscores the importance of helping crime survivors find justice by enforcing victim's rights, expanding access to services, and ensuring equity and inclusion for all.

**Contact: Brent Wartner, First Attorney, 651-430-6123**

### **County Board approves tentative labor agreements**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved three tentative labor agreements April 19 with county bargaining units.

The three agreements are:

- the 2022 - 2023 Collective Bargaining Agreements with the Minnesota Public Employees Association (MNPEA) Correctional Officer/Public Safety Telecommunicator Unit (Essential Unit);
- the 2022 - 2023 Collective Bargaining Agreements with the Minnesota Public Employees Association (MNPEA) Correctional Officer Sergeant/Public Safety Telecommunicator Supervisor Unit (Essential Unit); and
- the LELS Local 214 Deputy Sheriff Unit agreement.

The agreements have salary adjustments at the beginning of each year, along with market adjustments and retention adjustments. They also set out how much the county will pay for health insurance for each group.

**Contact: Angie Nalezny, Human Resources Director, 651-430-6075**

### **County Board approves off-sale liquor license application for Holiday Station Stores**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an off-sale liquor license application for the Holiday Station Stores in Denmark Township April 19.

The store is at 12370 Point Douglas Road, Hastings.

Washington County processes all liquor licenses for the townships within the county. The county reviews the application, and the Sheriff's Office and the County Attorney's Office complete compliance/verification checks.

These requirements have all been completed, and the appropriate fee has been paid by the applicant. The license fees pay for the administrative cost of the county for administration, compliance, and verification checks.

**Contact: Christine Piskura, Taxpayer Services & Election Division Manager, 651-430-8272**

### **County Board conducts public hearing on commissioner district redistricting**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing April 19 to gather comments on proposed redistricting of county board commissioner districts.

Following each decennial census, the county must redistrict its county commissioner and soil and water conservation districts. Districts must be established that meet the statutory guidelines, including equal population, bounded by precinct lines, and composed of contiguous territory.

County staff provided a number of options for new districts for the County Board to consider. The county published a notice in its official newspaper for three weeks beginning March 16, 2022, that announced this meeting to review options. The public notice also allowed for a member of the public to submit a plan for redistricting to be considered by the board. The deadline for submittal of a plan by a member of the public was April 18.

One resident spoke at the public hearing. County residents also left 25 comments on the county's website to be considered.

The County Board will meet April 26 to adopt a final redistricting plan and establish staggered board terms as required by law. The districts will be used to elect commissioners in the 2022 election.

**Contact: Jennifer Wagenius, Deputy County Administrator, 651-430-6007**

### **Meyer Contracting will build Central Greenway Regional Trail in Lake Elmo park**

Meyer Contracting Inc. will build a portion of the Central Greenway Regional Trail in Lake Elmo Park Reserve, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$1.23 million contract with the company April 19.

The project includes the implementation of the Central Greenway Regional Trail within the park by improving existing paved trails to meet regional trail standards and constructing new trail segments where needed. It will also:

- reconfigure the main park entrance road and trail to minimize trail and road user conflicts and provide a safer experience for all.
- expand the parking lot at the contact station to accommodate staff and visitors.
- add a new parking lot and canoe/kayak launch near the existing boat launch.

This project is funded with a combination of a Metropolitan Council State Bonding Grant, and a Metropolitan Council Parks and Trails Legacy Grant, which includes proceeds from the state sales tax.

**Contact: Andrew Giesen, Engineer II, 651-430-4336**

### **KFI Engineers will design heating, cooling upgrade at Government Center campus**

KFI Engineers will design a heating and cooling system at the Washington County Government Center campus in Stillwater after the County Board approved a \$425,000 contract with the company April 19.

The project will use American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to replace the outdated and inefficient heating and cooling plants at the campus. Updating the HVAC equipment will allow the county to react to the pandemic conditions more efficiently and to provide for the movement of larger volumes

of outside air. Modernized modular boilers and more effective chillers will allow for improved energy efficiency in all three buildings – the Government Center, the Courts, and the Law Enforcement Center.

This portion of the project will carry the project from program creation and schematic design through final closeout and post-occupancy evaluation. It is expected that construction will be done during 2023 and 2024, with completion by summer 2024.

**Contact: Joe Welters, Building Services Project Manager, 651-430-6226**