



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

Date: April 26, 2022
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the April 26, 2022, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

Andresen appointed to Workforce Development Board

The Washington County Board of Commissioners appointed Diane Andresen as a business representative on the Workforce Development Board April 26.

Andresen will serve a partial term that will expire July 1, 2024.

Contact: Holly Hess, Administrative Assistant to the County Board, 651-430-6015

County Board proclaims Arbor Day, Arbor Month in county

The Washington County Board of Commissioners proclaimed April 29, 2022, as Arbor Day and May 2022 as Arbor Month April 26.

Designating the day and month help bring awareness to the value and benefits that trees provide to communities. It also brings attention to the impact emerald ash borer (EAB) will have and encourages communities and residents to prepare for the impact of the insect.

Throughout Washington County Parks, there has been a noticeable uptick in the number of trees with EAB. A survey of all trees within mowed areas of the county's parks was completed in the summer of 2021. The survey found that 20% of the trees are ash and will likely need to be removed over the next few years.

Ash tree deaths will increase dramatically throughout Washington County. Last year, to help increase public awareness, ash trees at Lake Elmo Park Reserve were wrapped with green tape that stated

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

“Emerald ash borer kills ash tree.” These trees were then removed over the winter to reduce the spread of EAB.

Community members may help replace trees lost within county parks due to the emerald ash borer by making a donation to the living forest program. A donation of \$50 allows for the purchase and planting of a variety of new trees.

Contact: Dan MacSwain, Natural Resources Coordinator, 651-430-4323

Scott Petersen Construction will do window rehab, repair at Historic Courthouse

Scott Petersen Construction will do window rehabilitation and repair at the Washington County Historic Courthouse after the County Board of Commissioners approved a \$117,711 contract with the company April 26.

Washington County Parks has been working in phases to rehabilitate and repair every window at the Historic Courthouse. This next phase includes adding storm windows to the first and second floors of the building. These storm windows will protect the windows replaced in 2020 and will match the existing aesthetic and historical significance of the building. The first phase in window restoration was in 2021 when 38 windows were restored on the first and second stories of the courthouse. This project will furnish and install 55 storm windows on the basement, first, and second stories of the Historic Courthouse.

Washington County has received \$20,000 from the Huelsmann Foundation and \$54,500 from the Minnesota Historical Society State Capital Grant in Aid grant program to pay for the work. In addition, the Historic Courthouse Restoration Fund will contribute \$51,400 to the work.

The project is going through a design review by the Minnesota Historical Society and the City of Stillwater. Installation is expected to take place between July and October of this year.

Contact: Alex McKinney, Parks Manager, 651-430-4364

County Board approves contracts for road construction inspection, surveying, staking

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved contracts for road construction inspection, surveying, and staking April 26.

SRF Consulting Group Inc. will do construction inspection services for this construction season for \$749,085.

The 2022 construction program will include 16 projects valued at more than \$25 million. Due to the projected construction workload for 2022, additional personnel and resources will be necessary to successfully administer, inspect, and survey several of the construction projects. The county's construction engineer will provide guidance and oversight throughout these projects. This contract will provide contract administration and inspection on seven county projects.

The contract will be paid for with Highway State Aid.

The board also approved a contract with WSB & Associates for \$293,680 for construction surveying and staking services.

The projects that will include are:

- County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 12 - County Line Road to Stillwater Road;
- CSAH 13 - Phase 2;
- CSAH 19 - turn lane at Indian Boulevard;
- Highway 36 frontage road realignment at CSAH 24;
- CSAH 15 - signal at 30th Street; and
- CSAH 14 and Interstate 694 - trail and signal.

The county's construction engineer and project engineer will provide guidance and oversight for the consultant work.

The contract will be funded through Highway State Aid.

Contact: Gerritt Bangma, Construction Engineer, 651-430-4317

County Board receives update on diversity, equity, inclusion work

The Washington County Board of Commissioner received an update April 26 on the work that is being done in the county to promote diversity, inclusion, and equity.

The work in the county is being overseen by a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Steering Team. The team has created a vision of:

- a diverse, talented workforce and leadership;

- equitable, accessible, and inclusive services;
- an inclusive, welcoming workplace;
- an interculturally competent organization; and
- an organizational commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The strategic goals are:

- recruiting, hiring, and building a diverse organization while retaining and promoting talent;
- listening, learning, and adapting service delivery to ensure inclusion and equitable access to all members of the community;
- creating a workplace that provides a culture and security and supports around acceptance, belonging, and inclusion for all identities;
- establishing a diversity, equity, and inclusion baseline and developing interculturally competent mindsets through training, development, and practice; and
- building a sustainable, socially-responsible resource structure that declares commitment to and prioritizes of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

One of the tools used in the program are Equity Change Teams. The teams oversee initiatives in project evaluations and training, maintain communication about their work, collect and analyze program data, and assist in recruitment and hiring. Employee Resource Groups are also working to ensure alignment with Washington County's mission, vision, and strategic directions.

Contact: Dawan Propps, Organizational Development and Training Partner, 651-430-6078

County Board accepts donations for first quarter of 2022

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted donations to the county received in the first quarter of 2022 April 26.

The Washington County Library received \$572.22 in donations, from a single donation and from donation boxes.

The county Parks received \$444.21 from Historic Courthouse exhibit donations, the parks and trails fund, and from the Milkweed for Monarchs fund.

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

County Board establishes county commissioner, soil, water conservation districts

The Washington County Board of Commissioners established the commissioner districts and the soil and water conservation districts April 26 that will be used for elections in the fall.

The commissioners also established staggered two- and four-year terms for county commissioner districts.

The adopted map is on the county website by seeing www.co.washington.mn.us and searching “redistricting.” The adopted map generally follows current commissioner districts, with the exception of Precinct 8 in Woodbury, which is moved from commissioner District 5 to commissioner District 2 to better equalize representation. Also, elections will be conducted in districts 2, 4, and 5 in 2022; elections will be conducted in districts 1 and 3 in 2024.

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 equalized 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. A public hearing on redistricting options was conducted April 19, 2022. Numerous comments were received.

The county published a notice in its official newspaper for three weeks beginning March 16, 2022, announcing this meeting and the April 19, 2022, public hearing to establish districts. The public notice also allowed for members 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, 2022. No plans were submitted by the public.

The new districts adopted by the board will be effective for the 2022 election and candidate filings.

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