

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

**Date:** Aug. 23, 2022  
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#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Aug. 23, 2022, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

#### **Sheriff's Office receives anonymous donation for Explorers Program**

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive an anonymous donation of \$3,000 for the office's Explorers Program, after the County Board accepted the donation Aug. 23.

The Explorers are the future for law enforcement, so the Sheriff's Office is always grateful for donations dedicated to this program.

**Contact: Laura Perkins, Public Information Officer, 651-430-7994**

#### **County Board accepts second quarter donations**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted donations to the county received during the second quarter of 2022 Aug. 23.

Donations totaled \$3,463.31.

The Library received \$658.51 through donation boxes at the Environmental Center and the Library branches. The Sheriff's Office received \$1,350. Susan Tuomi contributed money for the K9 Unit, the Stillwater Sunrise Rotary contributed for the Shop with a Cop Back to School event, and the City of Landfall Village contributed for the Fishing with a Cop event.

Public Works received \$779.50 through the Historic Courthouse exhibit donations, for the Parks and Trails Funds for trail enhancements, and through the Stewardship Fund for the Milkweed for Monarchs program.

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In-kind donations were also made. Community Corrections received gift cards from Chris Charlson for its programs, totaling \$100, and the Sheriff's Office received gift cards for deputies to distribute in the community from Melissa and Makayla Staarup, and water bottles for the Citizens Academy from Beth Springborn, totaling \$575.

**Contact: Yvonne Klinnert, Senior Communications Specialist, 651-430-6026**

### **County Board accepts bench donation from Johnson family**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted the donation of a park bench from the Wayne Johnson family Aug. 23.

Johnson is the District 4 commissioner and this year's chair of the County Board.

The Johnson Family wishes to place a steel bench at Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park, in recognition of the time the family has spent in the park and the memories they have made there. The bench will include a plaque with the following engraving: May you create as many great memories as we have visiting here. Wayne, Mary Beth, Nate & Lexi Johnson.

Washington County Parks has an array of donation opportunities for individuals and groups to provide support for the Parks. The generosity of park users over the years has allowed the Parks to enhance natural areas and improve trails.

The bench program allows an individual or a group to donate funds to install and maintain a bench to be used on a trail or near a park facility. The bench includes a commemorative plaque. There are two types of bench styles, a \$2,500 cedar bench and plaque to be placed along a turf trail within the park system and maintained for a minimum of five years or a \$3,500 steel bench and plaque to be placed along a paved trail or park facility and maintained for a minimum of 10 years.

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

### **County Board continues review of 2023 budgets**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners continued reviewing recommendations for the county's 2023 budget Aug. 23.

The board received the overall budget recommendations Aug. 2. The recommended budget would be supported by the county's net levy, as well as non-levy revenue sources. Under the budget

recommendations, the county net levy would increase 4.9% over 2022, to \$126.6 million, and non-levy revenue would be \$108.3 million, a decrease of 18.6% from 2022.

The board heard recommendations for budgets for the county's Community Corrections, Community Services, and Public Health and Environment departments Aug. 23.

As in nearly all counties, property owners in Washington County have experienced increased property values from the rise in sales prices, especially for residential properties in the county. The median value of a home in the county went up about 20% between 2021 and 2022. The recommended levy combined with the rising valuations results in the county's tax rate decreasing by 13.9%.

Should the recommended budget and levy be approved, the median valued home in the county, which is \$386,500, assuming that its value increased by 20% in the past year, would be taxed \$910 for 2023 by the county, a \$46 or 5.4% increase over 2022.

After reviewing the recommended budgets, the County Board will set a proposed levy and adopt a proposed budget for 2023 Sept. 27; after the proposed levy is set, it may be reduced but not raised in the final budget, which will be approved Dec. 13.

An evening public budget meeting will occur at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 6, in the Board Room of the Government Center in Stillwater. The public is invited to attend to comment on the 2023 budget.

The budget workshops may be viewed through webstreaming of the County Board meetings. See the county website at [www.co.washington.mn.us](http://www.co.washington.mn.us) and search "County Board." See budget materials on the same website by searching "budget."