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Date: Sept. 13, 2022
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Sept. 13, 2022, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board appoints LeRoux to Brown's Creek Watershed District board

The Washington County Board of Commissioners appointed Chuck LeRoux, Oak Park Heights, to a second term as manager on the Brown's Creek Watershed District board Sept. 13.

LeRoux's term will expire Oct. 21, 2025.

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

County Board sets public hearing Oct. 4 to consider revisions to county's food code ordinance

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set a public hearing for Oct. 4 to consider revisions to the county's food code ordinance.

The board set the hearing at its meeting Sept. 13. The hearing will be in the Board Room of the Government Center at 14949 N. 62nd St. in Stillwater at approximately 9 a.m. at the beginning of the regular County Board meeting. The public hearing will allow residents or food establishment operators to provide their input to the County Board regarding the proposed changes to the Food Code Ordinance.

An electronic copy of the proposed ordinance can be found at www.co.washington.mn.us/Food

A copy of the proposed ordinance is also available for public review during regular business hours at the Washington County Department of Public Health & Environment offices at:

- 14949 62nd St. N. in Stillwater,

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- 13000 Ravine Parkway S. in Cottage Grove, or
- 19955 Forest Road N. in Forest Lake.

Questions or written comments can be directed to Jeff Travis at 651-430-4033, jeff.travis@co.washington.mn.us, or at Department of Public Health & Environment 14949 62nd St. N., P.O. Box 6, Stillwater, MN 55082-0006.

The Washington County Food Code Ordinance specifies regulatory requirements for food establishments to provide for safe food consumption and prevent foodborne illness. The Department of Public Health & Environment is proposing revisions to the Food Code Ordinance to bring it into alignment with the Minnesota Food Code.

The purpose of the county food code is to:

- meet consumer expectations for the quality and safety of retail food;
- provide standards for design and construction;
- provide health and safety standards for operation and maintenance;
- establish a process for licensing and inspections;
- establish a process for setting license fees, including late fees;
- provide enforcement authority for resolving non-compliance; and
- establish process for considering variances from the ordinance.

Changes in the state food code include changes in terminology, food handling, health and hygiene, and equipment and facilities. The county's food ordinance was last revised in 2000.

More than 750 food establishments are licensed and inspected by the county's Department of Public Health & Environment. Many establishments have more than one license type. For example, a hotel with a pool and restaurant will have three licenses. County registered environmental health specialists perform professional food safety services.

After the public hearing, the County Board will consider the new ordinance at its Oct. 18 meeting.

Contact: Jeff Travis, Senior Community Health Program Manager, 651-430-4033

Advanced Practice Solutions to provide psychiatric services to inmates

Advanced Practice Solutions LLC (APS) will provide psychiatric services to inmates at the Washington County Jail after the County Board approved a contract with the agency Sept. 13.

The services provided by this contract are not new, but a continuation of services provided by a vendor, which are ending Sept. 30.

Services covered by the contract include inmate evaluation, and medication prescribing and management. In addition to these professional mental health services, the county has also embedded two full-time social workers in the jail, providing additional day-to-day support for inmate mental health needs. All providers collaborate as a part of the full medical team.

The cost of the contract is variable depending on the number of service hours required. Costs are projected at \$163,800 a year minimum, not exceeding \$262,080 a year. The contract term is through December 2023.

Mental health and psychiatric services are required by the Minnesota Department of Corrections, which mandates the medical and mental health requirements that jails in Minnesota must provide for inmates.

Contact: Rolando Vera Jr., Senior Program Manager of Nursing Services, 651-430-7962

County will receive reimbursement for purchase of land for Grey Cloud Island park

Washington County will receive \$385,590 from the Metropolitan Council to pay for 75% of the purchase price of land to be added to a future county park on Grey Cloud Island.

The County Board accepted the money Sept. 13. The money reimburses the county's Land and Water Legacy Program fund used to purchase the land.

The County Board also agreed to put restrictive covenants on the land.

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

County Board proclaims September as Library Card Sign-Up Month

The Washington County Board of Commissioners proclaimed September as Library Card Sign-Up Month Sept. 13, a national campaign to emphasize the importance of library cards to a child's education and to combat illiteracy.

The campaign first started in 1987 as a response to then Secretary of Education William Bennett, who encouraged a campaign because "Every child should obtain a library card and use it."

Washington County Library is celebrating September as Library Card Sign-Up Month by promoting the benefits of signing up for a library card, including access to materials and resources that serve students of all ages, as well as lifelong learners, job seekers, small business owners, and more.

To acknowledge the important role libraries play in communities and to encourage everyone to sign up for their own library card today, September 2022 is declared as Library Card Sign-Up Month in Washington County.

Contact: Aubrey Fonfara, Library Communications Specialist, 651-275-8504

County will adjust county-wide fee schedule for assessment services

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an exception to the countywide fee schedule Sept. 13 to adjust fees charged for assessing single-family residential properties to account for rapidly appreciating values.

Communities within Washington County have the option of contracting with the county for local assessment services. The existing assessment contract fee structure in the Countywide Fee Schedule provides a two-tiered fee for single-family residential property, with a value of \$500,000 estimated market value as the tier break. The value of \$500,000 was chosen as an indicator of the work required, reflecting the level of complexity for homes valued more than \$500,000.

Due to unprecedented residential property appreciation in assessment year 2022, many communities experienced a large number of homes moving from the less than \$500,000 tier to the more than \$500,000 tier, without a corresponding increase in the complexity of the assessment. This resulted in a greater than anticipated increase in assessment contract fees and created a significant, unplanned expenditure for the communities in 2022. This increase was not anticipated in the 2022 county budget.

The County Board approved an exception to the countywide fee schedule, authorizing an increase in the \$500,000 single-family residential property tier to \$612,000, which reflects the countywide change in the median single-family residential value. The difference between the originally billed fees and the fees adjusted with the revised tier break is \$148,700.

Contact: Amy Stenftenagel, Acting Property Records and Taxpayer Services Director, 651-430-6182

Alliance Architects will provide architectural, engineering services for new service center

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$1.5 million contract with Alliance Architects architectural and engineering services for a new West Central Service Center Sept. 13.

The county's 2019 strategic facility plan indicates the need to replace the existing Woodbury Service Center on 2150 Radio Drive with a new facility that will better meet the needs of the county. A number of locations for the new service center near the proposed METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit Line were evaluated. Last spring, the County Board agreed on a new service center to be built near the corner of Woodlane Drive and Guider Drive, which will be the West Central Service Center project.

The architectural firm will begin the design phase of the project.

Contact: Mandy Leonard, Senior Building Services Project Manager, 651-430-6236