

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

Date: Oct. 4, 2022
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Oct. 4, 2022, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

Brach named to Valley Branch Watershed District board

John Brach, West Lakeland Township, was named a manager on the Valley Branch Watershed District Board by the Washington County Board of Commissioners.

The appointment was made Oct. 4. It is to a second term that will expire Nov. 13, 2025.

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

County will receive funds to support adults with serious mental illness

Washington County will receive \$227,181 from the state Department of Human Services to provide housing support for adults with serious mental illness after the County Board accepted the grant Oct. 4. The money will be used during 2023 and 2024.

The program is designed to assure that all persons with a serious mental illness with significant barriers to housing can obtain and retain permanent housing in the community of their choice. The money will support the work of the county's Homeless Outreach Services Team (HOST) by supporting one full-time social worker, an already existing position. This additional funding allows for the creation of a streamlined program that begins with outreach and ends with long-term housing support offered to individuals with a diagnosed mental illness. The funding is flexible and provides support to individuals who may not be eligible for other programs.

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Washington County is an equal opportunity organization and employer

Many individuals encountered by county outreach workers have some diagnosed mental health conditions that can often pose a barrier to accessing and retaining independent housing. However, with assistance and support, these individuals can remain independently housed in their community. Planning for and providing these services is more cost-effective than having a reactive system addressing the expensive and complicated needs of someone in a housing crisis.

Contact: Kathy Mickelson, Community Services Division Manager, 651-430-6532

Library receives donation of brokerage account

The Washington County Library will receive the donation of a brokerage account of deceased patron Delores Sundbye with a value of \$4,322.87 as of Sept. 22, 2022.

The County Board accepted the donation Oct. 4.

The Library was named the beneficiary of the account. It is recommended that the funds from this account be used to support the demand for the electronic book and audio collections.

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

County Board approves plat in Baytown Township

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the Hills of Spring Creek First Addition, an abstract plat in Baytown Township on Ordell Trail North, west of Osgood Avenue North and north of 47th Street.

The County Board approved the 21-lot plat Oct. 4.

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

Clean Harbors will continue to manage Environmental Center

Clean Harbors Environmental Services Inc. will continue to manage the Washington County Environmental Center and provide household hazardous waste management services after the County Board extended a contract with the company Oct. 4.

The county has contracted with Clean Harbors for more than eight years for services at the Environmental Center. Clean Harbors provides the county with highly-trained staff who provide excellent customer service.

The current contract began Jan. 1, 2019, with a three-year term and two one-year renewal options. The county will exercise the final renewal option, extending it to Dec. 31, 2023. Clean Harbors has requested a labor rate increase of 4%, which is estimated at \$69,000 annually. The total labor cost in 2021 was \$841,735.

Washington County has operated a household hazardous waste (HHW) program since 1989. From 1994 to 2009, the county operated the program at a facility in Oakdale, and in September 2009, opened the Environmental Center in Woodbury. The county also conducts several one-day collection events each year to provide service for residents who do not live close to the Environmental Center.

Clean Harbors also provides logistics and operations support for the county's Public Health Emergency Preparedness program, which has been a valuable service during the pandemic response.

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

Sheriff's Office will receive grant for traffic safety officer

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive \$125,125 through the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety, for a 2023 DWI/Traffic Safety Officer after the County Board accepted the grant Oct. 4.

The grant funds the salary and training of one officer for one year with the purpose of identifying and arresting intoxicated drivers. This grant will continue the position for a fifth year from Oct. 1, 2022, through Sept. 30, 2023. No local match is required.

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

Sheriff's Office K9 unit receives grant to get new canines

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will accept \$15,000 from the United States Police Canine Association and the American Kennel Club after the County Board approved the grant Oct. 4.

The Washington County Sheriff's Office K9 unit applied for the American Kennel Club (AKC) Reunite Adopt a K9 Cop Matching Grant from the American Kennel Club and sponsored by the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA).

The grant will assist with the purchase of two new canines that will replace two who will be retiring. The Sheriff's Office is a long-standing member of the USPCA and has a partnership with the organization. The grant does require a \$6,000 county match, which is covered by budgeted levy dollars.

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

County Board conducts public hearing on proposed revisions to food code ordinance

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing on proposed revisions to Washington County Food Code Ordinance #145 Oct. 4.

No residents spoke at the hearing.

The county proposed changes to the food code ordinance to bring it into alignment with the state code and the county's agreement with the Minnesota Department of Health.

The proposed ordinance includes the following changes:

- deleting or revising definitions that are redundant, unclear, or outdated;
- clarifying language that is unclear or to improve readability;
- revising the variance section to include the state variance process;
- clarifying exemptions from the ordinance; and
- revising late fees for special food event applications.

The proposed code revisions were published in the official county paper, with a notice of intent to revise the ordinance and conduct a public hearing. Licensed food establishments in the county were notified of the proposed ordinance revisions.

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

County Board recognizes Property Records, Taxpayer Services staff

The Washington County Board of Commissioners recognized the staff in the Property Records and Taxpayer Services Department and declared Oct. 3-7 Customer Service Week in Washington County.

The board passed a resolution honoring the workers Oct. 4.

In 1992, the first full week in October was proclaimed National Customer Service week by the U.S. Congress to recognize the work of customer service professionals throughout the year and the importance of that work in a wide range of businesses, including government.

The employees in the Property Records and Taxpayer Services Department serve county residents on a daily face-to-face basis at a number of locations throughout the county, and their high-quality service is recognized and appreciated.

A resolution approved by the board noted that the people who make up the staff of the county's Property Records and Taxpayer Services Department have extensive technical knowledge and serve county residents daily around the county; and that prompt, friendly, and accurate customer service is a requirement of that staff doing its job well, providing matchless customer service to all residents of the county.

Contact: Amy Stenftenagel, Property Records and Taxpayers Interim Director, 651-430-6182

County will receive funds to maintain health promotion program

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted a \$1.5 million grant from the Minnesota Department of Health Oct. 4 that will continue to support the county's State Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP).

SHIP is focused on creating opportunities in partnership with communities that lead to equitable, healthy, and positive conditions that promote the health and well-being of all Minnesotans. Within Washington County, SHIP funds are focused on expanding opportunities for active living, healthy eating, commercial tobacco-free living, and overall wellbeing.

SHIP is awarded on a five-year funding cycle, with the first year of this application cycle approved by the Washington County Board in 2020. The amendment approval includes an increase of \$1,543,461, with funding amounts for years three through five of the grant, at \$514,487 per year, with a total amended grant amount for the five-year period of \$2,592,435.

Contact: Rebecca Leighton, Public Health Program Supervisor, 651-430-6786