

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

**Date:** Nov. 1, 2022  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The following actions were taken at the Nov. 1, 2022, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

**Washington County Library will continue to work with Bayport Library**

Washington County Library will continue to partner with the Bayport Library, an associate city library, after the County Board renewed the service agreement between the two libraries Nov. 1.

The agreement runs through Dec. 31, 2025.

The agreement maintains existing services to city and county library cardholders. It also shares and reduces costs of providing library services by coordinating the operations, programs, and activities of Bayport Public Library and the county library system.

Washington County and Bayport Library have had contractual arrangements since at least 1975 to share services.

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

**City of Marine on St. Croix will receive funds from Jordan bequest for library**

The City of Marine on St. Croix made its annual request to the Washington County Board of Commissioners for funds from the Jordan bequest, with this year's request of \$6,000.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the use of the bequest Nov. 1. The money will be used for materials and services at the Marine Community Library.

In 2001, Elizabeth Jordan made a bequest in her will to the Washington County Library to be used for the Marine Library branch. In 2012, an agreement was reached between the City of Marine and the

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county that, upon request of the city, the county would disburse funds from the bequest to support the Marine Community Library.

Through a joint powers agreement between the city and the county, city residents have maintained access to the county library system and continue to pay the county library tax. A separate non-profit organization, the Marine Library Association (MarLA), maintains a small community library, which includes privately purchased materials, as well as materials and services provided by the county library.

The request from the city follows directives related to disbursements made to the Jordan bequest as specified in a joint powers agreement.

**Contact: Aubrey Fonfara, Library Communications Specialist, 651-430-8504**

### **County, City of Woodbury will work together on Central Park improvements**

Washington County and the City of Woodbury will work together to make improvements at Central Park in Woodbury, which houses city, county, and other community services.

The County Board approved the agreement Nov. 1.

The county and the city cooperatively own portions of the 20-year-old Central Park building off of Radio Drive, a facility that contains the R.H. Stafford Library and South Washington County school district Community Education and is connected to the YMCA and the Stonecrest Senior Living complex.

The county and city are working together to make improvements, upgrades, and updates to the aging complex. The first phase of design for the projects is complete, with the following improvements identified as high priority:

- enhance a welcoming environment and increase general gathering opportunities for all users.
- improve accessibility throughout the facility.
- increase the multi-purpose space capacity to host larger events, meetings, and public programs, especially for children, teens, and seniors.
- update Lookout Ridge indoor playground to include programming for children ages 0-3 years.
- provide more space for public/community art displays.

- expand and enhance the space for Great Rivers Adult Education Consortium-English language and life skills.
- address deferred maintenance issues, reduce energy consumption. and create a healthier indoor environment for all guests.
- add single-user restrooms.
- expand parking lot capacity.

A cooperative agreement was signed by both the county and the city at the end of 2021, but it no longer reflects the current design and cost splits. Therefore, a new cooperative funding agreement is needed to allow the project to move into the design phase and through construction. This agreement reflects that the county cost share will be a lump-sum payment of \$4.5 million to the city. All other remaining costs will be the responsibility of the city. In addition to the lump sum payment, the terms of the agreement include:

- an agreement on the ownership of shared conference rooms to better facilitate county programming in the future.
- access for county staff and programs to the new city conference areas.
- separation of shared mechanical systems to accommodate higher efficiency city systems and allow future upgrades to the R.H. Stafford Library to be streamlined.

The county's share of project costs will be funded through a bond sale in 2023. The city will act as the fiscal agent for the project and will execute the contracts with its chosen architect, construction management firm, and construction contractor.

**Contact: Erik Jalowitz, Building Services Capital Project Manager, 651-430-6227**

### **County Board reviews proposed budgets for water management agencies**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners reviewed proposed budgets for 2023 for the county's water agencies Nov. 1.

The Washington Conservation District (WCD) provided an update to the County Board on its 2022 activities and 2023 budget and planning. The WCD is a local unit of government, with an elected Board of Supervisors, dedicated to soil and water conservation. Its mission is to enhance, protect, and preserve the natural resources in Washington County. Staff works with residents, watershed agencies,

and state and local partners to provide education, water and conservation practices monitoring, technical assistance, conservation practices maintenance, aquatic invasive species prevention, and other activities.

Annually, the WCD receives \$260,000 from Washington County for core services. Its additional sources of revenue are local watershed agreements, other county service agreements, and payments from state grants and programs, for an annual budget of just more than \$2.6 million.

In addition, the County Board heard an overview of watershed budgets and activities. The county is home to seven watershed districts, who have their board members appointed by their respective county boards, and one watershed management organization, which has board members from are participating local government representatives. Watershed districts and watershed management organizations are governed by different state laws, but have similar broad purposes.

Those broad purposes include:

- control or alleviate floodwaters;
- improve stream channels;
- control or alleviate soil erosion;
- regulate improvements by riparian property owners;
- protect and enhance water quality; and
- provide for the protection of groundwater.

Both watershed district and watershed management organizations are required to create and implement 10-year watershed plans. Generally, budgets are driven by the individual projects that are outlined in each agency's 10-year plan.

Washington County is also a partner in the Lower St. Croix One Watershed One Plan and continues to host monthly meetings of the Washington County Water Consortium.

**Contact: Tom Dietrich, Public Health & Environment Planner, 651-430-6716**

### **Klennert honored for lifetime achievement award**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners honored Yvonne Klennert, senior communications specialist for the county, Nov. 1 for receiving the Minnesota Association of Government Communicators Scott Pengelly Lifetime Achievement Award.

Klinnert received the award from the government communicators association earlier in the summer. She has worked for Washington County since 2009, and concentrates on external communications, working with the county's news releases, newsletter, website, and social media posts. Previous to working for Washington County, she served as a reporter and editor at a number of community newspapers.



**Yvonne Klinnert, senior communications specialist, was honored by the Washington County Board of Commissioners Nov. 1, after receiving the Minnesota Association of Government Communicators Scott Pengelly Lifetime Achievement Award. Klinnert is with commissioners Gary Kriesel, District 3, Lisa Weik, District 5, and Wayne Johnson, District 4, Klinnert,**

**Commissioner Fran Miron, District 1, Tina Elam, Communications Manager, and  
Commissioner Stan Karwoski, District 2.**