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Date: Jan. 10, 2023
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Jan. 10, 2023, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

Bigham elected Regional Railroad Authority chair for 2023

Commissioner Karla Bigham, District 4, was elected the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority chair for 2023 at the authority's organizational meeting Jan. 3.

Commissioner Michelle Clasen, District 5, was elected vice chair.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners sits as the regional railroad authority to conduct business for that governmental entity.

Contact: Jennifer Ochocki, Coordinator to the County Administrator, 651-430-6010

Armstrong will serve on Valley Branch watershed district board

William T. Armstrong, Lake Elmo, will serve a partial first term as manager on the Valley Branch Watershed District, with a term beginning Jan. 10 and expiring Nov. 14, 2024.

Armstrong was appointed by the Washington County Board of Commissioners Jan. 10.

Contact: Jennifer Ochocki, Coordinator to the County Administrator, 651-430-6010

County, City of Stillwater will partner on mental health calls response

Washington County and the City of Stillwater will work together to coordinate responses to calls for mental health assistance after the County Board approved an agreement with the city Jan. 3.

The contract between the two will be in the amount of \$122,058 for the next 18 months.

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In 2022, the City of Stillwater Public Safety partnered with the county to launch a new response to mental health related calls in the field: embedding a social worker in the police department. This approach allows for a tailored assessment and response for people calling due to mental health and substance-use issues.

Through the program, the embedded social worker receives referrals from the municipal police department and dispatch offices regarding individuals who appear to have mental health, substance use, or other issues during interactions with police and/or dispatch. The embedded social worker will offer support, assessment, and connections to community services that will best meet the person's needs. The goal of the program is to reduce criminal justice system involvement and create timely access to social services. The integration of social workers into emergency response reduces unnecessary law enforcement contacts and raises quality of life for individuals through ongoing stability in their community.

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

Thomas will be member of Commission on Judicial Selection

Terry Thomas, Jr., Community Corrections director at Washington County, has been appointed as a non-lawyer member of the Commission on Judicial Selection for the state's Tenth Judicial District. The commission's members are appointed by the Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court. Thomas will serve through January 2027, which is the end of Gov. Tim Walz' term.

The Commission on Judicial Selection solicits, considers, and recommends candidates to the governor for vacancies in the District Courts and the Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals. The commission is tasked with identifying candidates with "integrity, maturity, health if job related, judicial temperament, diligence, legal knowledge, ability and experience, and community service."

The commission is comprised of nine at-large members, including the chair, and four district members from each of the state's 10 Judicial Districts.

County Board adopts committees, commission, joint powers boards assignments

The Washington County Board of Commissioners adopted assignments Jan. 10 for 2023 for the committees, commissions, and joint powers boards on which commissioners serve.

As part of their duties as commissioners, the commissioners serve on groups that oversee governance and functions throughout the metropolitan area, and throughout the state. The 2023 assignments are:

Commissioner Fran Miron, District 1:

- Washington County:
 - Community Development Agency
 - Groundwater Advisory Committee
 - Personnel Committee
 - Planning Advisory Commission (Alternate)
 - Plat Commission (Alternate)
 - Regional Railroad Authority
 - University of Minnesota Extension Advisory Committee
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Committee
 - Agriculture & Rural and Development Advisory Committee
- East Central Regional Juvenile Center (Alternate)
- Lower St. Croix Watershed Policy Committee
- Metropolitan Emergency Services Board
- Metropolitan Mosquito Control District
 - Executive Committee
- Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) (Alternate)
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board
 - Partnership on Waste and Energy Board

Commissioner Stan Karwoski, District 2:

- Washington County
 - Regional Railroad Authority
 - Workforce Development Board
 - Oversight Action Committee
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Transportation Policy Committee

- East Metro Strong Board
- Gold Line Executive Change Control Board
- GOLD Joint Powers Board, Vice Chair
- Greater MSP
- Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (Alternate)
- Metropolitan Transportation Advisory Board
- Minnesota Inter-County Association
 - Executive Committee
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board
- Rush Line Corridor Task Force
- Yellow Ribbon Network of Washington County

Commissioner Gary Kriesel, District 3:

- Washington County
 - Audit Advisory Committee
 - Community Corrections Advisory Board
 - Finance Committee
 - Historic Courthouse Advisory Committee
 - Law Library Board
 - Planning Advisory Commission
 - Plat Commission
 - Regional Railroad Authority
- Andersen Community Advisory Committee
- Lake Elmo Airport Advisory Commission
- Lower St. Croix Watershed Policy Committee (Alternate)
- Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB)
- Metropolitan Mosquito Control
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board, Alternate
 - Regional Haulers Licensing Board
- Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake

Commissioner Karla Bigham, District 4:

- Washington County
 - Finance Committee
 - Groundwater Advisory Committee, Alternate
 - Library Board
 - Regional Railroad Authority
 - University of Minnesota Extension Advisory Committee
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Board of Directors as District X Representative
 - Public Safety Policy Committee
- East Central Regional Juvenile Center
- Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA)
- Metropolitan Transportation Advisory Board, Alternate
- Minnesota Inter-County Association, Alternate
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board
 - Finance and Facilities Committee
 - Partnership on Waste and Energy, Alternate
- Red Rock Corridor Commission
- Unsheltered Homeless Public Sector Leadership Meeting Committee

Commissioner Michelle Clasen, District 5:

- Washington County
 - Community Development Agency, Alternate
 - Library Park Association
 - Mental Health Advisory Council
 - Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee
 - Personnel Committee
 - Regional Rail Authority
 - Workforce Development Board, Alternate
- Association of Minnesota Counties

- Board of Directors as District X Representative, Alternate
- Economic Development, Workforce, and Housing Policy Subcommittee
- Community and Economic Development Steering Committee
- Local Government Water Roundtable Advisory Committee
- Gold Line Executive Change Control Board
- Gold Line Joint Powers Board
- Minnesota Inter-County Association
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board
 - Regional Hauler Licensing Board, Alternate
- State Community Health Services Advisory Committee