

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

**Date:** Jan. 17, 2023  
**Contact:** Yvonne Klinnert, Senior Communications Specialist  
**Phone:** 651-430-6026, after hours 952-807-3723  
**E-mail:** yvonne.klinnert@co.washington.mn.us

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The following actions were taken at the Jan. 17, 2023, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

#### **Carstenbrock will serve on Mental Health Advisory Committee**

Natalie Carstenbrock, Cottage Grove, will serve a first term as the District 4 representative on the Mental Health Advisory Committee.

Carstenbrock was appointed by the Washington County Board of Commissioners Jan. 17. She will serve until the end of 2025.

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

#### **County Board approves application for Pheasants Forever gambling permit**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an application by Pheasants Forever for an exempt lawful gambling permit Jan. 17.

The organization plans to conduct a raffle at the Washington County Fairgrounds in February.

After approval by the County Board, the application will be sent to the Minnesota State Gambling Board for its consideration.

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

#### **County will use HealthPartners donation to assure residents receive Medicaid assistance**

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Government Center | 14949 62nd Street North | P. O. Box 6 | Stillwater, MN 55082-0006  
P: 651-430-6001 | F: 651-430-6017 | TTY: 651-430-6246  
[www.co.washington.mn.us](http://www.co.washington.mn.us)

*Washington County is an equal opportunity organization and employer*

Washington County will use an \$85,000 donation from HealthPartners to assist residents in maintaining their enrollment in Medicaid.

The County Board accepted the grant Jan. 17.

With the wind-down of the public health emergency triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, many public assistance program changes will go into effect. Among the most critical are the thousands of healthcare renewals that have accumulated during the past two-plus years of the pandemic.

Washington County will hire case managers to enable the county to be proactive in preparing for the end of the Public Health Emergency. In 2022, between 900 and 1,700 cases required renewal each month. The numbers are expected to be the same or higher in 2023.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services has been urging counties to make sure that they have the correct, current addresses of all of its enrollees to ensure that people will receive their renewals when they become mandatory to complete. Staff hired with the donation funds will do this work.

**Contact: George Stone, Community Services Division Manager, 615-430-6472**

### **Bolton & Menk will do community engagement, design for CSAH 12 improvements**

Bolton & Menk will assist with community engagement and complete design on three projects that will improve County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 12 in Grant and Mahtomedi.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$549,722 contract with the company Jan. 17.

The work will combine three projects in road and trail improvements. They are:

- a roadway improvement project for CSAH 12 (75th Street North) from East Avenue/Hallam Avenue South to Kimbro Avenue North;
- a trail construction project from East Avenue/Hallam Avenue to County Highway 9 (Jamaca Avenue) that will construct a new trail connection along the south side of County Highway 12; and
- pavement preservation and rehabilitation to include pavement and multi-use trail resurfacing from County Highway 9 (Jamaca Avenue) to Kimbro Avenue.

The three projects will be bundled under one design contract.

The project will include the last phase of reconstructing 2.7 miles in Willernie and Mahtomedi, the rural two-lane undivided roadway just outside of the downtown area.

The main objectives of the bundled project are to:

- improve pavement;
- reduce short- and long-term maintenance costs;
- construct a new traffic signal at CSAH 12 and East/Hallam Avenue;
- review horizontal and vertical alignment of the roadway for safety improvements;
- add trail connections and improve pedestrian accessibility and safety; and
- design appropriate drainage improvements to manage surface water and improve its quality.

The contract will include project coordination of final design, public engagement, environmental investigations, and utility coordination necessary to deliver the project. The project is scheduled for construction in 2024. The contract will be funded through highway state aid and local contributions.

**Contact: Eden Rogers, Engineer, 651-430-4352**

### **County receives grants to do habitat restoration in county parks**

Washington County will receive two conservation legacy grants to do conservation restoration in county parks, after the County Board accepted the grants totaling \$72,500 Jan. 17.

The first grant for \$50,000 was received to restore 18 acres of oak savanna within Lake Elmo Park Reserve. Prairie and oak savanna are key habitats within the St. Paul Baldwin Plains and Moraines Ecological Subsection, and contain the rarest plant, pollinator, and wildlife communities. Project expenses for the restoration project will include contracted services for removal of box elder trees to restore the oak savanna canopy. Removal of the box elder trees will encourage desirable groundcover, shrubs, and trees that benefit wildlife that require an oak savanna habitat. A 10% in-kind match is required, which will be covered by staff time to plan and implement the project.

The second grant, totaling \$22,500, was received for Pine Point East Prairie and Savanna Restoration, and will go towards restoring an 11-acre agricultural field into a diverse prairie to support at-risk pollinators and other species of greatest conservation need. Project expenses for the restoration project include the purchase of seed and plants. The county 10% match will consist of staff time planting the prairie with a seed drill and coordination with volunteers.

The grants are part of the Outdoor Heritage Fund, one of four funds established by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment. Funding is appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature and recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC).

**Contact: Dan MacSwain, Natural Resources Coordinator, 651-430-4323**

### **County Board accepts donations to county in fourth quarter 2022**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted donations received by the county in the fourth quarter of 2022 at its Jan. 17 meeting.

The Library received cash donations of \$2,065.73 from individuals and from donation boxes. The Parks received cash donations of \$3,139.51 from exhibit donations at the Historic Courthouse, from the trail enhancement fund, and the Living Forest and Milkweed for Monarchs programs. The Sheriff's Office received \$470 for its Explorers Program and the Shop With A Cop program. In-kind donations included merchandise and gift cards totaling \$852 to support the Christmas at the Courthouse event.

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