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Date: Feb. 28, 2023
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Feb. 28, 2023, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota.

County will be part of Great River Rail Commission

The Washington County Board of Commissioners, sitting as the Regional Rail Authority Feb. 28, agreed to become a member of the Great River Rail Commission.

In addition, the board appointed Commissioner Karla Bigham, District 4, as the board's representative to the commission.

The Great River Rail Commission advocates to increase transportation alternatives by expanding passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Chicago to bolster economic development in the corridor between the Twin Cities and La Crescent. The cost of pro-rated dues for 2023 is \$2,980, and revenue is budgeted. Annual dues for 2024 onward are anticipated to be \$4,470.

The county has been a member in the past but withdrew membership in 2021.

Contact: Lyssa Leitner, Public Works Planning Director, 651-430-4316

County will do traffic signal work for Gold Line project

Washington County will replace traffic signals along the planned METRO Gold Line route after the County Board approved a \$1.7 million funding agreement with the Metropolitan Council Feb. 28 to do the work.

METRO Gold Line, a bus rapid transit route from downtown St. Paul to Woodbury, requires multiple traffic signal systems to be replaced along the corridor, 15 of which are within Washington County.

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Because Washington County has expertise in the required signal systems, it was decided that the county is in the best position to furnish, assemble, test, and inspect the traffic signal equipment. The money is a not-to-exceed amount for 15 signals. It is part of the overall project cost commitment that the county agreed to last spring.

The County Board also agreed to be a part of a transfer of \$3.5 million to pay for bridge improvements in Oakdale. The money was appropriated by the state Legislature to the Minnesota Department of Transportation for the Fourth Street Bridge replacement in Oakdale, which is also part of the Gold Line project.

Contact: Lyssa Leitner, Public Works Planning Director, 651-430-4316

County will transfer historical firearm to Camp Ripley museum

Washington County will transfer an Italian Breda Model 30 machine gun, which is a World War II historical weapon of the Italian Army, to Camp Ripley Military Museum.

The County Board approved the transfer Feb. 28.

The weapon was seized by the Sheriff's Office in 2015 as part of a criminal investigation. It is inoperable with the action and breech being welded closed prior to confiscation. The item is contraband and cannot be legally owned by a civilian as it was not registered with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

The criminal case that caused the seizure is now concluded and the gun was forfeited according to state law, as it cannot be legally owned by a civilian. The Sheriff's Office has since registered the item with the ATF under government ownership provisions.

The Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum traces its beginnings to 1976 when the Military Historical Society of Minnesota was organized for the express purpose of establishing a state military museum. The Minnesota Department of Military Affairs agreed to provide facilities for the museum at Camp Ripley in northwestern Minnesota.

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

County will receive reimbursement for land added to Big Marine Park Reserve

Washington County will receive up to \$649,594 from the Metropolitan Council to reimburse it for land the county purchased in 2018 in Scandia to add to the Big Marine Park Reserve.

The County Board approved the reimbursement of the county's Land and Water Legacy Program fund Feb. 28.

The purchase of the property at 14621 Margo Ave. was approved by the County Board in November 2018 for \$866,125, including recording fees and taxes. The Metropolitan Council payment will cover 75% of the purchase price. The county is required to put certain restrictive covenants on the land.

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

SRF will do preliminary design for Radio Drive project in Woodbury

SRF will do preliminary design for a roadway improvement project for County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 13 (Radio Drive) from CSAH 20 (Military Road) to Hargis Parkway in the City of Woodbury after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$365,394 contract with the company Feb. 28.

The main objectives of the project are to:

- Expand the highway from a two-lane undivided to a four-lane divided highway, to meet current and forecast traffic volumes.
- Add multi-modal trails.
- Improve drainage.
- Improve intersection control at the intersection of Dale Road.

The contract for preliminary design services will include project coordination, data collection, utility coordination, public engagement, traffic, intersection and drainage analysis, environmental documentation, and creation of a preferred alternative project layout. The project is scheduled for construction in 2027.

The City of Woodbury was included in the selection process. County state aid and a local contribution of \$50,000 will fund the contract.

Contact: Andrew Giesen, Engineer III, 651-430-4336