

Our Mission: We strive to provide exceptional services that enhance quality of life and promote a safe, healthy, and welcoming community for all.

**Date:** Jan. 21, 2025  
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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The following actions were taken at the Jan. 21, 2025, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota.

## **County Board makes advisory council and committee appointments**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made appointments to advisory councils and committees Jan. 21.

Commissioner Michelle Clasen, District 5, was appointed to the Metropolitan Library Services Association (MELSA) board as the Washington County member.

The board appointed Tim Hatten to a partial term on the Mental Health Advisory Council LAC as a District 3 Representative beginning Jan. 22, 2025, and expiring Dec. 31, 2026.

The board also appointed Nathaniel Smith to a first term on the Community Development Block Grant Advisory Committee as a Private Sector Representative beginning Jan. 22, 2025, and expiring Dec. 31, 2027.

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

## **County Board approves Coordinated Mental Health Response agreement with Oak Park Heights**

The City of Oak Park Heights Police Department will join the county's Coordinated Mental Health Response Program through 2027.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the agreement Jan. 21 with the City of Oak Park Heights Police Department for approximately \$137,400 for the term of Feb. 1, 2025, to Jan. 31, 2027. Following the County Board's direction, the cost share for the Coordinated Mental Health

Response Program is 75% county-funded and 25% city-funded in the first year, and 50% county-funded and 50% city-funded in the second year and thereafter.

Under the program, social workers are integrated into mental health-related emergency responses. The program reduces law enforcement patrol contacts for mental health calls and increases opportunities and the likelihood of connecting individuals to appropriate mental health and substance use disorder services.

In 2021, the Washington County Community Services Department partnered with the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the City of Woodbury to launch the Coordinated Mental Health Response Program to address mental health-related calls. One of the goals of the program is to reduce criminal justice system involvement and create timely access to social services.

In 2024, Washington County decided to expand the program to additional city partnerships, including the City of Oak Park Heights Police Department.

**Contact: Jennifer Castillo, Community Services Director, 651-430-6461**

## **Feb. 18 public hearing set for 2025-2035 Groundwater Plan**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set a public hearing for Feb. 18 on the Washington County 2025-2035 Groundwater Plan.

State law allows metropolitan counties to prepare, adopt, and implement Groundwater Plans. Plans are updated every 10 years and are comprehensive documents that lay out technical information, issues, goals, and strategies to address existing and future groundwater topics and concerns.

Washington County adopted its first Groundwater Plan in 2003. A second-generation plan was adopted in September 2014 and expires in August 2025. The county's 2025-2035 Groundwater Plan was released for a 60-day public comment period, and the public will have the chance to share their comments with the County Board at the public hearing Feb. 18.

The County Board will consider adopting the draft Groundwater Plan at a later meeting. If adopted, the draft plan will be to the Metropolitan Council, state agencies, and the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resource for final review.

**Contact: Jessica Collin-Pilarski, Public Health and Environment Senior Planner, 651-430-6703**

## **Household hazardous waste collection event licenses approved for 2025**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved three licenses for household hazardous waste collection events planned for weekends in 2025 in Washington County.

The collection events have been planned as follows:

- Saturday, April 26, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Mahtomedi Middle School Ball Fields Lot, 8100 75th St. N., Mahtomedi, MN 55115.
- Saturday, May 31, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Lily Lake Ice Arena 1208 S. Greeley St., Stillwater, MN 55082.
- October 11, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Lily Lake Ice Arena 1208 S. Greeley St., Stillwater, MN 55082.

Satellite collections bring the services offered at the Washington County Environmental Centers, located in both Forest Lake and Woodbury, closer to residents throughout the county. Events make it more convenient and practical for all residents to recycle electronics and dispose of household hazardous waste properly.

In addition to the satellite collection events, dates have been set for confidential paper shredding at Washington County Environmental Centers. All events are from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The events at the North Environmental Center will be Thursday, May 15, July 24, and Nov. 6. The events at the South Environmental Center will be Wednesday, April 16, June 25, and Sep. 10.

The Washington County Environmental Centers accept Household Hazardous Waste and electronics year-round. Find more information about the county's household hazardous waste collection and recycling options at [WashCoRecycles.com/EnviroCenter](http://WashCoRecycles.com/EnviroCenter).

**Contact: Adam Frederick, Environmental Program Supervisor, 651-391-0633**

## **January proclaimed Human Trafficking Awareness Month in Washington County**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners proclaimed January 2025 as Human Trafficking Awareness Month in the county at its Jan. 21 meeting.

Since 2010, January has been recognized as National Human Trafficking Prevention Month by presidential proclamation. Community awareness is a major component of countering the negative impact that human trafficking has on the community. This year's theme is "Connecting the Dots. Strengthening Communities. Preventing Trafficking."

Washington County is committed to stamping out human trafficking in our community. The Washington County Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office, and other staff have been working collaboratively for many years to fight this damaging crime in the county.

The county participates in the East Metro Human Trafficking Task Force, which pursued 121 cases and tips and charged 12 persons with human trafficking-related offenses in 2024. The Task Force also investigated 25 cases involving juveniles and juvenile runaways in 2024.

To learn more about human trafficking and how you can help fight it in the community, visit [WashingtonCountyMN.gov/HumanTrafficking](http://WashingtonCountyMN.gov/HumanTrafficking).

**Contact: Jennifer Baltaian, County Attorney Administrative Services Manager, 651-430-6125**

## **County Board approves MnDOT agreement for 58th St. extension project**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution giving the County Board Chair and the County Administrator authorization to approve a cooperative agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to allow construction work along Trunk Highway (TH) 36 for the 58<sup>th</sup> St. extension project Jan. 21.

The agreement allows Washington County and its construction contractor to complete tree clearing and grading within the existing MnDOT easement on the south side of TH 36 in Stillwater. This is a no-cost agreement.

Washington County has been planning for a frontage road to bridge the gap along County Road 15, on the south side of TH 36. This connection was identified through the planning of the Manning Interchange that was constructed in 2022, and the 58th St. Extension/County Highway 15 South Segment project is slated for construction in 2025.

Grading at this stage in the project will allow for the material to settle and stabilize prior to the roadway construction, as well as provide the City of Stillwater the space to extend utilities to serve future development.

**Contact: Ryan Hoefs, Public Works Engineer II, 651-430-4336**

## **County Board accepts donations, gifts for fourth quarter of 2025**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted \$6,430.56 in donations and gifts for the fourth quarter of 2025 at its Jan. 21 meeting.

Cash donations were received by the following departments:

- \$400.00 to the Community Services Department.
- \$2,320.25 to the Library Department.
- \$1,437.31 to the Public Works Parks Division in support of the Parks and Trails Fund, Historic Courthouse Restoration Fund, Living Forest Fund, Milkweed for Monarchs Fund, and Bench Program.

Several departments received in-kind donations. Community Corrections received \$300 in gas gift cards, Community Services received \$1,765 in gas, grocery, and home goods gift cards, and Public Works Parks Division received \$208 in material goods for its Spooky Stories program.

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