



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

Date: Feb. 4, 2025
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Feb. 4, 2025, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota.

D&D Contracting LLC to complete Lake Elmo Park Reserve playground site work

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract with D&D Contracting LLC Feb. 4 to complete site work on the Lake Elmo Park Reserve's Swim Pond play area.

The contract totaling \$433,447 includes removing old infrastructure, improving the parking area, landscaping, drainage grading, installing a new sidewalk, new retaining walls, and adding benches, picnic tables, bike racks, and drinking fountain.

The former Lake Elmo Swim Pond Play Area play structure was removed last fall. That play structure was built in 1988 and had outdated equipment, sand surfacing, and treated timber retaining walls. Over the years, Parks staff removed certain pieces of equipment as safety standards changed and old features no longer met current day standards.

The goals of the Play Area replacement include improving accessibility, providing varied play experiences for multiple age groups, leaning into the natural topography, serving both caretakers and kids, as well as incorporating the feedback received from the public engagement efforts.

Bids for the project's site work opened Jan. 7, 2025, and D&D Contracting LLC was the lowest of nine bids. The contract will be paid for with Metropolitan Council Park Modernization Funds and construction is expected to begin in spring of 2025.

Contact: Erin Clarkowski, Engineer II, 651-430-4384

Parkos Construction Company selected for St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park building construction

Parkos Construction Company will construct a new restroom building and make improvements to the Hilltop shelter at St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park in Denmark Township.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the \$550,600 contract for the St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park Hilltop Improvement Project Building Bid Package Feb. 4.

The project includes restroom building replacement, park shelter improvements, tennis court rehabilitation, and playground replacement. This project is separated into four components:

- Purchase of new playground equipment.
- Installation of new playground equipment.
- Site Work Bid Package.
- Building Bid Package.

The playground equipment purchase and installation contracts were approved by the County Board in August of 2024. The Site Work Bid Package included demolishing the existing restroom building, installing a new septic system, resurfacing and restriping the tennis court to accommodate tennis and pickleball, and the site work required for the new playground container. The site work bid package was awarded by the County Board in October of 2024.

Bids for the Building Bid Package opened Dec. 17, 2024, with Parkos Construction Company submitting the lowest of four bids. The contract will be paid for with Metropolitan Council Park Modernization Funds and Metropolitan Council Legacy Funds. Construction is expected to begin this spring.

Contact: Erin Clarkowski, Engineer II, 651-430-4384

County Board proclaims February as Black History Month in Washington County

The Washington County Board of Commissioners proclaimed February as Black History Month in Washington County Feb. 4.

Black History Month is a month-long commemoration of the history and achievements of Black Americans in the United States celebrated annually in February. The County Board's adopted resolution seeks to raise awareness of and celebrate the rich history and contributions of Black people in Washington County and across the United States.

Black History Month began as Negro History Week in 1926, after Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and conceived of the week. It was first celebrated during the week encompassing the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass in February 1926. In 1976, President Gerald R. Ford expanded the celebration to a month.

Today, Black American communities celebrate with events and educational programs that focus on the past, present, and future.

Contact: Angie Nalezny, Human Resources Director, 651-430-6075

Lifeguard hiring and referral incentives are back for 2025 summer season

Washington County Parks seeks to hire and retain 40 lifeguards this summer to staff county beaches. To help in the search, the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a recruitment and referral program for lifeguards Feb. 4.

The program includes a \$300 hiring incentive for new lifeguards and a \$100 referral incentive for current employees who refer lifeguard candidates (who are hired and work for the full season) for the 2025 season. The hiring incentive would be paid half upon hiring and half at the end of summer. If the county is able to hire an adequate number of lifeguards, it anticipates staffing county beaches from early June through Labor Day.

This program was in place for 2024 and helped recruit additional lifeguards which allowed for better staffing levels at county parks.

Contact: Angie Nalezny, Human Resources Director, 651-430-6075

New full-time Deputy Sheriff coming to Newport in April

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement with the City of Newport to add the services of an additional full-time Washington County Deputy Sheriff Feb. 4.

The Washington County Sheriff's Office is contracted by the City of Newport to provide law enforcement services. The city was awarded a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, for the addition of one full-time equivalent Deputy Sheriff position. The grant will provide \$125,000 in funding for the new position staggered over three years and requires a minimum 25% match from the city.

The city will be responsible to pay any and all direct costs and expenses related to the position that are not reimbursed by the grant, including vehicle, equipment, and overtime costs. The city is required to retain the grant-funded position for a minimum of one year following depletion of the grant funding, in accordance with the program requirements.

The anticipated start date of the position is April 1, 2025, at the request of the city. The total cost in 2025 is estimated at \$123,400, with approximately \$66,100 funded by the grant, \$48,400 funded by the city, and \$8,900 in police state aid credit.

Contact: Chief Deputy Doug Anschutz, Sheriff's Office, 651-430-7846