

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

**Date:** May 13, 2025  
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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The following actions were taken at the May 13, 2025, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota.

## **County Board makes advisory committee, board appointments**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made appointments to the Mental Health Advisory Council and the Brown's Creek Watershed District Board May 13.

The County Board appointed Griffin Brod of Stillwater to a partial term beginning May 14, 2025, and expiring Oct. 21, 2027, as a manager on the Brown's Creek Watershed District Board.

The board also appointed Nicholas Stephens to a partial term beginning May 14, 2025, and expiring Dec. 31, 2026, as a supportive housing representative on the Mental Health Advisory Council.

**Contact: Megan Carlson, Administrative Assistant, 651-430-6001**

## **County receives \$250,000 grant for wood waste utilization program**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$250,000 grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) May 13.

The MPCA funding will support the establishment of the county's wood waste utilization program. The program will recover logs for lumber production and process woody material into beneficial products through partnerships with various service providers. The grant will fund the purchase of equipment that converts otherwise unrecoverable woody material into biochar.

The initial grant period begins April 30, 2025, and expires June 30, 2027.

**Contact: Caleb Johnson, Senior Community/Environmental Health Program Manager, 651-502-1295**

## **County accepts bench donation for Lake Elmo Park Reserve**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted a \$2,500 donation from Mary Jaros May 13 for a cedar bench to be placed on Eagle Point Lake within Lake Elmo Park Reserve.

The cedar bench at Lake Elmo Park Reserve will commemorate Jaros' late husband, John Jaros. Captain John Jaros served in the United States Navy, and the family feels that a bench near the water would be a meaningful tribute to his life and service.

**Contact: JJ Williams, Parks Manager, 651-430-8245**

## **County Board supports Gold Line extension to Minneapolis**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution May 13 supporting the Metropolitan Council's plan to extend the METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit to Minneapolis.

METRO Gold Line officially launched its service on March 22, 2025, marking a significant step in regional transit expansion. Metro Transit, a division of the Metropolitan Council, plans to build upon this investment by extending Gold Line service to downtown Minneapolis by 2027.

To include the extension in the region's Transportation Policy Plan, resolutions of support are required from affected jurisdictions. While the Gold Line Extension does not fall within Washington County's boundaries, this extension would provide benefits to Washington County residents and visitors. Recognizing the benefits of increased ridership and enhanced connectivity for Washington County communities, the Board expressed its support for the Gold Line Extension.

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

## **County receives reimbursement for Big Marine Park Reserve land purchase**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a grant agreement with the Metropolitan Council, reimbursing the county 75% of the purchase cost for an 80-acre addition to Big Marine Park Reserve.

The land purchase was approved in December 2024 for \$1,734,243 as a part of the Land and Water Legacy Program. The Metropolitan Council grant reimbursement totals \$1,300,682.

The 80-acre property is located north of the park's entrance road, in the southeast corner of Manning Avenue North and 180th Street North, and is adjacent to the Veterans' Campground on Big Marine Lake. The property owner approached the county with an interest in selling the land. The County Board determined that the purchase fits the conditions outlined in the Big Marine Park Reserve Master Plan, originally adopted in January 1989 and updated in 2010.

The grant requires the county to enter into restrictive covenant agreements on the property. These two covenants are standard and have been included in past acquisition grants:

1. The property cannot be sold, encumbered, or conveyed in any way without the written approval of the Metropolitan Council.
2. A permanent easement is established for future regional wastewater conveyance corridors on the property. As a consideration of the Wastewater Facilities Easement, the Metropolitan Council agrees to waive the service availability charge for the property.

**Contact: Sharon Price, Public Works Senior Right of Way Specialist, 651-430-4391**

## **County Board approves Parks and Open Space Commission ordinance**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved Parks and Open Space Commission Ordinance #220 May 13.

The new ordinance, which establishes the Parks and Open Space Commission in Washington County, replaces Parks and Open Space Commission ordinance #17 and #75. The updated ordinance language brings it into alignment with County Policy #6006 on Advisory Boards, Commissions, and Committees, increases the membership structure to 13 members, and updates the duties and functions of the board.

As required by state law, the board published a public hearing notice for three weeks and held the public hearing May 6. No members of the public made comments at the public hearing.

**Contact: Alex McKinney, Parks Director, 651-430-4364**

## **County approves paving contract for Century Avenue improvement project**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$1,459,741.24 contract May 13 with OMG Midwest Inc. dba Minnesota Paving & Materials, for the County State Aid Highway 25 (Century Avenue) pavement improvement project.

This project will repave 1.9 miles of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 25 from South Century Avenue to Brookview Drive, within the cities of Maplewood and Woodbury. The project will also replace aging highway signs and pavement striping.

Bids for the project opened in April with OMG Midwest Inc., dba Minnesota Paving & Materials, submitting the lowest of five bids. A pre-construction open house will be held May 29 at Woodbury Middle School from 4-6 p.m. Construction will begin in June.

The board also approved a cooperative cost agreement with Ramsey County, under which Ramsey County agrees to contribute \$926,127, which is 50% of the current total project costs.

**Contact: Mike Kline, Public Works Engineer I, 651-430-4304**

## **County Board recognizes National Law Enforcement Week, Law Enforcement Memorial Day**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners recognized National Law Enforcement Week and Law Enforcement Memorial Day at its meeting May 13.

National Law Enforcement Week will be recognized from May 11-17, 2025. The county extends its appreciation to the dedicated law enforcement community for the vital contribution it makes to public safety for the well-being of county residents.

In honor of National Law Enforcement Memorial Day, the Washington County Sheriff's Office would like to invite the public to the Historic Courthouse on Thursday, May 15, 2025, at noon, for their annual ceremony honoring those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy signed a proclamation designating May 15, and the week in which it falls, as a week for all law enforcement. The week is about honor, gratitude, remembrance, and support.

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

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## **County Board approves Climate Action Plan consultant contract**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$174,969 contract May 13 with SRF Consulting Group (SRF) for the creation of the county's Climate Action Plan.

In August 2024, the County Board adopted the 2024-2029 Countywide Strategic Plan, which included a performance measure to develop and adopt a comprehensive climate action plan by 2026. A climate action plan assesses current and future local climate conditions and identifies actionable strategies to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Washington County's climate action plan will include climate strategies at both the county operations and community scales.

In January 2025, Washington County released a request for proposals for consultant services for a climate action plan and received 12 proposals from qualified candidates. SRF was selected as the preferred consultant.

The amount of the contract that will be spent during the 2025 calendar year is included in the 2025 adopted county budget. The remainder of the costs that will be incurred in 2026 will be included in the recommended 2026 county budget that will be presented in early August to the board.

**Contact: Emily Jorgensen, Office of Administration Planning Manager, 651-430-6011**