

Washington County, Minnesota

Board of Commissioners - Actions

Actions at the Tuesday, December 13, 2011 Board Meeting

This page is a brief view of the actions taken by the Washington County Board of Commissioners. For further information, please telephone 651-430-6001.

Washington County's mission is to provide quality public services in a cost-effective manner through innovation, leadership, and the cooperation of dedicated people.

County budget adopted, levy certified by County Board

A 2012 budget was adopted and the property tax levy for 2012 was certified by the Washington County Board of Commissioners at its meeting Dec. 13.

Over the past few months, administrative reviews and board workshops have been conducted with county departments to develop the 2012 budget. Sept. 13, the County Board approved a preliminary net property tax levy that was a .3 percent decrease from the 2011 levy. Dec. 8, the County Board conducted a public budget meeting allowing residents to voice their opinions regarding the proposed tax levy.

The gross levy for 2012 is \$92,030. The State of Minnesota has notified the county to expect county program aid of \$5,506,600. The net certified levy, after all appropriate adjustments, is \$86,523,700.

The Regional Rail Authority levy will be \$574,800, and the Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority levy will be \$3,332,236.

The county budget for 2012 will be \$164,914,000. Revenue from sources other than the levy is expected to be \$74,352,800.

County, City of Newport approve agreement for changed library service

The Washington County Board of Commissioners signed an agreement with the City of Newport Dec. 13, which outlines the level of library service which will be provided to that city in the new year.

Washington County, in partnership with the City of Newport, will provide library service at the Newport City Hall using a "library express" system, including automated lockers for pick up of requested materials, book return and a circulating collection.

In addition to installing a locker system in the city hall, the county will provide a browsing collection of popular youth and adult library books in the current library location.

Public hearing conducted on county's Capital Improvement Plan

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a hearing Dec. 13 on the county's Capital Improvement Plan for 2012-2016.

The county received several letters of comment from cities and townships in the county regarding the plan. Capital improvement funds will be received from both levy and non-levy sources. One resident spoke at the hearing. The 2012 portion of the plan is part of the overall county 2012 budget. The remainder of the plan outlines future capital improvement spending.

Salaries set for 2012

Salaries for the County Board, county administrator, County Attorney and Sheriff were set for 2012 at the Dec. 13 meeting of the Washington County Board of Commissioners.

The commissioners set their own salaries for 2012 at \$52,713, which is the same as 2011. The administrator salary was set at \$150,065, which also is not an increase from 2011.

The salary for the County Attorney was set at \$131,840; his first assistant will be paid \$118,656, and his executive assistant will be paid \$51,469, all of which are 3 percent increases for 2012 from 2011. The Sheriff will be paid \$132,600, and his chief deputy will be paid \$119,340 in 2012, which are 2 percent increases from 2011.

County will transfer DeMontreville Trail to City of Lake Elmo

Washington County will transfer DeMontreville Trail, or County Road 13B, to the City of Lake Elmo, after the Washington County Board of Commissioner agreed to the transfer Dec. 13.

The Washington County 2030 Comprehensive Plan includes proposed jurisdictional transfers of certain roadways which include County Road 13B/DeMontreville Trail. The Washington County Public Works Department worked with the City of Lake Elmo staff to reach an agreement as to the conditions of the road transfer and entered into such an agreement with the city April 19.

Tapani will join WorkForce Investment Board

Lori Tapani of Hugo was appointed to the Washington County WorkForce Investment Board by the County Board Dec. 13. Tapani will represent small business on the board, with a term that will expire June 30, 2014.

The WorkForce Investment Board is mandated by state law. The board is made up of area residents representing business, organized labor, and public agencies, with the majority of the members coming from businesses. Its purpose is to oversee employment and training programs in Washington County, and designate administrative entities, grant recipients and program operators for the Workforce Service Area.

County will contract with Frazier Recovery Home to provide residential care

Washington County will contract with Frazier Recovery Home in Cottage Grove for group residential housing, after the County Board agreed Dec. 13 to a contract with the organization that goes through 2013.

Group Residential Housing (GRH) is a state-funded program that pays for room and board costs for low-income adults with a disabling condition who have been placed in a licensed or registered setting that holds a formal agreement with a county. The current rate for GRH is \$846 per person per month. The providers may offer an array of services, but at minimum they must include housing, utilities, household furnishings, toiletries, and food.

Frazier Recovery Home will provide those items and on-site supervision for most of the day. The owner of Frazier Recovery Home is a licensed social worker and alcohol and drug abuse counselor. It will house six adult men who are working so they may live in the community following chemical health and/or mental health treatment.

While living at Frazier Recovery Home, many residents will be in out-patient treatment and seeking employment and permanent housing in the community. The estimated average length of stay is six to 18 months. This facility will allow the county to provide safe, stable, and sober housing for individuals who may otherwise be placed in more costly treatment facilities. The program is funded by the state.

County will work with Salvation Army to provide help to homeless

Washington County will enter an agreement with the Salvation Army, which will use \$65,333 to provide direct financial assistance and support services to families, youth or single people who need help in overcoming homelessness. The County Board approved the agreement at its meeting Dec. 13.

Salvation Army will use the Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) funds to serve 84 families, youth or single adults. It is expected that the result of the program will include finding or maintaining permanent housing and result in the households not entering shelter or becoming homeless within six months of program exit.

Washington County will work with other metro counties to provide transportation to medical appointments

Washington County will continue to work with other counties in the metropolitan area to provide non-emergency medical transportation services for recipients of Medical Assistance or Minnesota Care.

The agreement, which the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved Dec. 13, is with Anoka, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey and Sherburne counties.

In 2009, the Minnesota Legislature amended statutes regarding the delivery of Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT), which is included in the benefit set for Medical Assistance and some Minnesota Care recipients. This ended the state-funded service for 11 metro-area counties. However, several of the metro counties elected to work together to provide this service in a similar manner.

The counties selected the “most qualified provider” Medical Transportation Management (MTM) to provide the service. The eight participating counties entered into a Cooperative Agreement from July 1, 2010, to Dec. 31, 2011. Hennepin County manages this contract, and provides quality assurance monitoring and reports, and serves as the fiscal agent. The contract with MTM and the Cooperative Agreement ends Dec. 31. The participating counties have agreed to amend all contracts for a one-year extension, as the Minnesota Legislature is considering additional changes to the structure of the NEMT system.

For the first 10 months of 2011, Washington County recipients of this service made an average of 2,779 trips per month (2011 year-to-date total is 27,787) by an average of 304 unique users. Overall, this service is being used more frequently in 2011 than it was in 2010. The primary factor for this is likely increased enrollment into Medical Assistance and Minnesota Care.

The transportation cost of the trip is paid entirely by state and federal funds. MTM, who brokers the trip, is paid \$5.54 per trip, which is paid by county (51 percent) and state/federal funds (49 percent). Based on the proposed rate, it is estimated Washington County’s expense will be \$90,200 for 2012.

AFSCME contract approved for county workers

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a labor agreement with the county's AFSCME exempt and non-exempt workers at its meeting Dec. 13.

The agreement calls for 0 percent general adjustment in 2012 and 2013, and medical insurance contributions and flex credits will remain the same as in 2011 for 2012. In 2012 and 2013, employees below the maximum of the salary range shall be eligible based on the employee's full-time equivalent (FTE) for an increase of up to 1.5 percent not to exceed the salary range maximum on their anniversary date. In 2012, employees at the salary range maximum shall be eligible for a non-base lump sum payment based on the employee's FTE of 1.5 percent on their anniversary date. In 2013, employees at the salary range maximum shall be eligible for a non-base lump sum payment based on the employee's FTE of 2 percent on their anniversary date.

J.F. Rooney family foundation donates to library account

The J.F. Rooney Family Charitable Foundation has made a contribution of \$1,000 to the Washington County Library to be used for the "Many Hands Together" Campaign sponsored by the Washington County Library to raise funds for purchase of library books and materials. The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted the donation at its meeting Dec. 13.

Funds donated to the campaign, which has been in existence for several years, will be used to replace lost funding for collection purchases, including children's books and large print books. Due to revenue reductions in 2012, the library's collections budget will be reduced by \$100,000. Donations to the campaign will help fill this gap.

Contract with delivery service widened for additional services

A contract with Street Fleet for delivery of library materials around Washington County was amended by the Washington County Board of Commissioners Dec. 13 to reflect changes in library services in 2012.

Street Fleet delivers the bins of library materials between the library branches and associate libraries in the county. The delivery company places materials into the lockers in the Library Express lockers at the City of Hugo, removes materials not picked up and empties the book return.

The contract amendment modifies the delivery schedule to include the lockers and book returns being installed in the cities of Marine on St. Croix and Newport and makes other adjustments to work with the recently-adjusted 2012 library hours and locations.

County will continue to provide health insurance outreach

Washington County will work with the state Department of Human Services (DHS) to continue outreach to families who are eligible for public health insurance programs, after the County Board gave its approval to an agreement with the DHS Dec. 13.

The county is required by the state to provide outreach to families who are eligible for public health insurance programs. The outreach is done to ensure children receive regular and timely preventive health care, to find and treat problems early, and to reduce long-term medical expenses.

Under the Child and Teen Checkup Program (C&TC), the Department of Public Health and Environment provides outreach to the Medical Assistance eligible population, ages birth to 21 years. Outreach focuses on ensuring that those eligible receive comprehensive and routine well-child care through primary medical providers.

The program is paid for with state and federal funds that are managed by the DHS.

County will receive Natural Resource Block Grant funding in 2012

Washington County will receive \$71,200 in Natural Resource Block Grant (NRBG) funding from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) in 2012. The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to accept the funds at its Dec. 13 meeting.

The NRBG is a composite of base grants available to counties to help implement programs that protect and improve water resources. Individual programs under this grant include the Comprehensive Local Water Management; the Wetland Conservation Act; the Department of Natural Resources Shoreland Management Program; and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems Program.

To be eligible for the NRBG, a county must have a locally-adopted and BWSR-approved comprehensive local water management plan and submit an annual report. The county is responsible for providing the required match to the grant money, as specified by BWSR. The required local match of \$70,938 is determined by the equalized net tax capacity for the county.

Washington Conservation District will provide services to county in 2012

The Washington Conservation District will provide wetland conservation services to Washington County in 2012, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to work with the district at its meeting Dec. 13.

The county contracts with the Washington Conservation District for local administration of the Wetlands Conservation Act. The act's purpose is to retain the benefits of wetlands and reach the Minnesota Legislature's goal of no net loss of wetlands in the state. The act, passed in 1991, requires anyone proposing to drain, fill, or excavate a wetland first to try to avoid disturbing the wetland; second, to try to minimize any impact on the wetland; and, finally, to replace any lost wetland acres, functions, and values.

The county is responsible for providing the required cash or in-kind match for any projects, as specified by the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources.

The county will receive Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG) funds for projects completed by the Washington Conservation District; proceeds from the County Environmental Charge will be used as matching funds. The County Board also approved an agreement with the conservation district to provide technical assistance and educational services to promote and apply soil and water conservation practices throughout the county. This contract for \$220,000 provides partial funding for the organization's administrative activities, and services in the areas of local water management, land and water treatment, and public education. Included in the agreement is \$11,078 for the East Metro Water Resource Education Program.

County will pay for part of landscaping on Century Avenue, Valley Creek Road project

Washington County will share costs for landscaping along Century Avenue and Valley Creek Road with Woodbury, now that the road construction in the area is complete.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the agreement with the city at its meeting Dec. 13. The construction project on Century Avenue (County State Aid Highway 25) between Brookview Drive/Woodbine Avenue and Lake Road/Century Avenue and on Valley Creek Road between .2 miles west of Century Avenue and Weir Drive was substantially completed in July. The roadways were reconstructed with four lanes, center medians and turn lanes, traffic signals, access control/consolidation, bicycle trails, sidewalks, retaining walls, and storm water ponds. The City of Woodbury will be responsible for landscaping along the roadway, and the county will pay the city for the landscape construction costs, estimated to be \$95,497, and 25 percent of the design and construction engineering costs, estimated to be \$23,874.

When completed, the landscaping will require regular maintenance, which will be the responsibility of the city.

Welling reappointed as county's surveyor

Michael J. Welling was reappointed to another four-year term as the Washington County Surveyor by the Washington County Board of Commissioners Dec. 13.

His current term as County Surveyor expires at the end of the year. Welling is the 19th person to hold the position, since Aquilla Greeley was elected in 1851. The position was made full-time in 1968; Welling is the fourth person to hold the position since it was made full-time.

Work that the surveyor's office completed recently includes the completion of the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Plain Mapping project, assistance with delivering major Capital Improvement Program projects, and current survey work for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Browns Creek Trail, which will follow the former Zephyr rail line from downtown Stillwater toward Grant.

Youth Services Bureau, Valley Tours will continue to lease space in Historic Courthouse

The Washington County Board of Commissioners extended leases Dec. 13 for office space in the Washington County Historic Courthouse in Stillwater with the Youth Service Bureau and Valley Tours, Inc., to Dec. 31, 2012.

The Youth Service Bureau has been leasing office space at the Historic Courthouse since 2000. There are three separate lease agreements with the Youth Service Bureau, one for 1,058 square feet of the lower level of the Sheriff's Residence for \$1,102.08 per month; one for 870 square feet of the upper level of the Sheriff's Residence for \$906.25 per month; and one for 450 square feet of the Treasurer's Office (Southeast Office) for \$468.75 per month.

Valley Tours, Inc., has leased 306 square feet on the first floor, west side, middle room, of the Historic Courthouse since 1998. The current lease rate is \$318.75 per month

The \$33,549.96 received from the office space rental is used for Historic Courthouse operations, in addition to revenue from event rentals.

County will receive for funds for emergency management

Washington County will receive funds for emergency management programs after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement Dec. 13 with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, to receive funding through the Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG).

The Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) provides financial assistance of \$104,667 for 2011 for the administration of local emergency management programs, which meet state and federal requirements. The money is used to offset costs in personnel, training, and other program administrative categories.

County, cities, township work together to provide CodeRED service

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved joint powers agreements with 29 cities and townships in the county Dec. 13, as part of the Sheriff's Office creating a CodeRED Emergency Notification system for the county. Washington County has entered into a contract with Emergency Communications Network for the use of the CodeRED Emergency Notification System. This system gives public officials the ability to send mass emergency and non-emergency messages to residents of Washington County, by assisting participating agencies within Washington County to provide necessary emergency and non-emergency mass notifications.

The joint powers agreements are with Afton, Bayport, Birchwood, Baytown Township, Cottage Grove, Dellwood, Denmark Township, Forest Lake, Grant, Grey Cloud Island Township, Hugo, Lake Elmo, Lakeland, Lakeland Shores,

Lake St. Croix Beach, Marine on St. Croix, Mahtomedi, Newport, Oakdale, Oak Park Heights, Pine Springs, Scandia, Stillwater, Stillwater Township, St. Mary's Point, St. Paul Park, West Lakeland Township, Willernie and Woodbury.

Washington County renews agreements with Stillwater, Bayport libraries

Service contracts between the Stillwater and Bayport libraries and the Washington County Library were renewed by the Washington County Board of Commissioners Dec. 13.

Washington County Library and the Stillwater and Bayport libraries have had contractual arrangements since at least 1975 to share services. Washington County provides support services, such as cataloging, to the Stillwater Library and Bayport Library and shares access to its collection to residents of Stillwater and Bayport at no charge. The County Library also offers the libraries the option to participate in the purchase of certain services, such as electronic databases. Both libraries reciprocate by providing Washington County residents access to their collections.

This contract also makes Stillwater and Bayport associate members of the Metropolitan Library Service Agency, an alliance of more than 100 public libraries in the seven-county Twin Cities metro, working together to provide library services and programs to residents. It is a regional library system that promotes cooperation among its eight member library systems.
