

Washington County, Minnesota

Board of Commissioners - Actions

Actions at the Tuesday, January 3, 2012 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.

Beginning of year requires getting organized

The Washington County Board of Commissioners began 2012 by taking action Jan. 3 to do County Board business for the remainder of the year.

Commissioner Dennis Hegberg, District 1, was elected to serve as the board chair for the coming year. Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5, will serve as vice chair for the coming year.

The board set the meeting schedule and location for the coming year. The board will meet the first four Tuesdays of each month at 9 a.m. in the boardroom at the Government Center in Stillwater. The board also has the option of meeting at other times and locations during the year, if it is in the interest of the county, or if an evening meeting would allow access by residents or interested parties.

Also, meeting as the Washington County Regional Rail Authority Jan. 3, the authority named Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5, as the Rail Authority chair and Commissioner Dennis Hegberg, District 1, as the vice chair.

The commissioner also discussed their own appointments to internal and metropolitan-wide committees, commissions, and Joint Powers Boards for 2012.

Viking named to Planning Advisory Commission

Robert Viking, Woodbury, will join the Washington County Planning Advisory Commission after a vote by the County Board Dec. 20.

Viking will represent County Commissioner District 5, which encompasses most of Woodbury. The Planning Advisory Commission's purpose is to promote the proper planning and development of Washington County, and is established under state statute.

The commission makes recommendations on amendments to the Development Code and the Comprehensive Plan prior to adoption of the amendment by the County Board, and conducts hearings on any alleged violations of codes and conditional use permits.

Hargis, Landis named to Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board

William Hargis, Woodbury, and Mark Landis, Oakdale, will join the Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (WCHRA) Board after the Washington County Board of Commissioners made the appointments at its meeting Dec. 20.

Hargis is from County Commissioner District 5, which encompasses most of Woodbury, and Landis is from County Commissioner District 2, which encompasses Oakdale, Lake Elmo and a portion of Woodbury.

The board is authorized by state statute, and oversees the activities of the WCHRA, which has as its purpose to undertake certain types of housing and redevelopment activities in Washington County.

County Board designates newspapers, website for public notices

The Washington County Board of Commissioners designated official newspapers for 2012 publications Jan. 3, as well as designating the county's website as the official publication for transportation projects. State law requires that certain notices of county business be published in local newspapers.

Summary of Proceedings, Delinquent Real Estate notices, and the First Publication of the Financial Statement will be published in the Country Messenger; Legal Notices will be published in Lillie Newspapers; and the Second Publication of the Financial Statement will be published in the St. Croix Valley Press. It is estimated that placing the notices in the newspapers will cost the county \$30,000 in 2012.

County Board makes appointments, reappointments for 2012

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made advisory committee appointments and reappointments for 2012 at its meeting Jan. 3.

In District 1, which is the northern portion of the county, those appointed are:

- John Miller, Forest Lake, Community Corrections Advisory
- Darlene Anderson, Dellwood, Historic Courthouse Advisory
- Tom Triplett, Marine on St. Croix, Housing and Redevelopment Authority
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In District 2, which is the west central portion of the county, those appointed are:

- Todd Bruehl, Woodbury, Community Corrections Advisory
- Carol Banister, Lake Elmo, Community Development Block Grant Citizens Advisory
- Amy Rostron-Ledoux, Oakdale, Mental Health Advisory
- Kathy Sedro, Lake Elmo, Planning Advisory Commission
- Joseph Rheinberger, Oakdale, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
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In District 3, which is the east central portion of the county, those appointed are:

- John Rheinberger, Stillwater, Historic Courthouse Advisory
- John Sievert, Lakeland, Library Board
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In District 4, which is the southern portion of the county, those appointed are:

- Sheila Colbert, Cottage Grove, Historic Courthouse Advisory
- Herbert Japs, Cottage Grove, Library Board
- Shane Bauer, Hastings, Planning Advisory Commission
- Jennifer Osborne, Cottage Grove, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
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In District 5, which is the majority of Woodbury, those appointed are:

- Nancy Utoft, Woodbury, Community Development Block Grant Citizens Advisory
- Robert Bankers, Woodbury, Historic Courthouse Advisory
- Linda Stanton, Woodbury, Mental Health Advisory
- Andy Joyce, Woodbury, Parks and Open Space
- Mary Beth Johnson, Woodbury, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
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Those appointed to at-large positions:

- Francis Rheinberger, Stillwater, Audit Advisory Committee

- Harry Melander, Mahtomedi, Board of Adjustment and Appeals
- Mark Doneux, Stillwater, Board of Adjustment and Appeals
- Jen Peterson, Cottage Grove, Community Development Block Grant Citizens Advisory
- Jason Husveth, Marine on St. Croix, Groundwater Advisory Committee
- Pat Snyder, Afton, Groundwater Advisory Committee
- Brian Zeller, Lakeland, Groundwater Advisory Committee
- Rick Vanzwol, Grant, Groundwater Advisory Committee
- Melva Radtke, Lakeland, Mental Health Advisory Committee
- Dan Dolan, Woodbury, Minnesota Extension
- Daniel Malmgren, Marine on St. Croix, Personnel Board of Appeals
- Charles Newman, Stillwater, Planning Advisory Commission
- James Huffman, St. Paul Park, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
- Donna Honeyman, Cottage Grove, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
- Sheriff Bill Hutton, Stillwater, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
- Mary Ann Newman, Newport, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
- Joseph Moore, III, Denmark Township, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
- Mark Swenson, Oak Park Heights, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
- Mark Wackerfuss, Woodbury, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
- Jacy Clarke, Woodbury, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory
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In addition, the County Board affirmed the following committee appointments:

- Charles Ochocki, Stillwater Area Schools, Community Corrections Advisory
- Chief Bill Sullivan, Oakdale, Community Corrections Advisory
- Mary Waldkirch, Stillwater, Community Corrections Advisory
- Jeremy Jenkins, Woodbury, Mental Health Advisory
- Joseph Bauer, Stillwater, Mental Health Advisory
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Minnesota statute requires a Board of Adjustment and Appeals, a Community Corrections Advisory Board, a Groundwater Advisory Committee, a Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board, a Library Board, a Mental Health Advisory Board, a Minnesota Extension Committee and a Personnel Committee to help perform county business. The Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee fulfills the local public health grant duty, which states, “Throughout the term of the project agreement, the Community Health Board must maintain or participate in a local public health emergency advisory committee.”

Washington County continues as part of emergency services group

Washington County will continue to be part of a regional emergency services group, after the County Board approved a new joint powers agreement Jan. 3.

The county now participates in a joint powers agreement with Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, and Scott counties as well as the City of Minneapolis, as the Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (MESB).

The current agreement was amended to include Isanti County, and extend the term of the agreement to Dec. 31, 2016.

The MESB was formed to obtain economic and operational advantages by enabling its members to jointly plan, coordinate, and administer a regional 911 system, emergency medical services, and a regional radio system in the metropolitan area.

The annual membership fee assessed for the joint powers for participation is based on a formula; the 2012 fee for Washington County is \$86,945.

Public hearing set for Feb. 7 for WCHRA bond refinancing, issuance

The Washington County Board of Commissioners will conduct a public hearing Feb. 7 to receive public comment on the issuance of general obligation bonds for the Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (WCHRA).

The County Board set the hearing at its meeting Jan. 3. The bond sale will be a refinancing of a portion of the WCHRA's current debt, as well as the issuance of new energy conservation bonds.

After reviewing the WCHRA's bond portfolio, it was determined that it can achieve an estimated annual savings of \$134,000 over the next 19 years by refinancing \$13,250,000 of current bonds, which are and will continue to be backed by Washington County's general obligation pledge.

The WCHRA also plans to issue new Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds (QECCBs) for \$2,375,000 concurrent with the bond refinancing, with the request that the Washington County Board back the new QECCBs with its general obligation pledge.

The total general obligation pledge will back \$15,625,000 in WCHRA bonds. It is also hoped that the county's AAA rating by Standard & Poor's will enhance the bond offering in the market and reduce interest costs.

The public hearing will be conducted in the boardroom of the Washington County Government Center in Stillwater during the regular board meeting Feb. 7.

County continues with financial advisors, bond counsel

Springsted, Inc., will continue as the Washington County financial advisors and Kennedy & Graven, Chartered, will continue as bond counsel after the County Board approved five-year contracts with both at its Jan. 3 meeting.

The county retains expert financial advisor and bond counsel services to protect its financial interests and expedite debt issuance transactions. These firms have significant resources to represent the county's best interest in bond market transactions and to ensure that the county's actions comply with various federal and state regulations. Both of these firms currently serve the county in their respective capacities, and both will receive new contracts.

Since the county's current bonding strategy for the Capital Improvement Plan include major bond issues at four-year intervals, it is most efficient to enter into five-year contracts.

Company will continue to provide services to Community Corrections

RS Eden will continue to provide services to Washington County Department of Community Corrections clients after the County Board approved an agreement Jan. 3 that outlines those services.

RS Eden will provide drug testing, Electronic Home Monitoring, global positioning systems, and all transdermal alcohol testing devices for juvenile and adult divisions in 2012; \$80,000 is budgeted for 2012 for the services.

Agency will continue to provide services to clients of Community Corrections

Canvas Health, formerly known as Human Services, Inc., (HSI), will continue to provide Domestic Abuse treatment, the PLACE Program, the Community Options Program, and adult psychosexual evaluations to clients of the Washington County Department of Community Corrections after the County Board approved an agreement Jan. 3. The contract is for \$84,409.

Canvas Health will provide domestic abuse treatment services for indigent offenders referred by Community Corrections. In 2009, Community Corrections shifted from more broadly funding assessment and treatment services to funding for indigent offenders only. Funding for 2012 is budgeted at \$7,500.

The PLACE Program is a partnership with Canvas Health and local school districts. The county's share of \$56,609 offsets a portion of the operating expenses; school districts using the program pay a per diem for the remainder.

Community Options Program (COP) offers an alternative cognitive/behavioral intervention to traditional inpatient and outpatient chemical abuse treatment for high-risk adolescents. Twenty-three juveniles participated in COP in 2010. The \$15,300 budgeted offsets a portion of the operating costs.

Canvas Health also provides psychosexual assessment for adult offenders referred by Community Corrections; each assessment costs \$900, part of which is reimbursed by the state.

Additional services will be provided by family support organization

The Washington County Board of Commissioners amended a contract Jan. 3 with Genesis II for Families, Inc., to include an additional service provided to county families.

The amendment adds Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) and allocates additional funding for the service, increasing the money paid to Genesis II for Families from not to exceed \$20,000 in 2011 to not to exceed \$40,000 in each of 2012 and 2013.

The mission of Genesis II for Families, Inc., is to promote social change by strengthening families and the community through programs that encourage self-determination, self-sufficiency, and healthy family lifestyles.

While not mandated by the state or federal government, the program is considered a "best practice" when working with children, families and older youth in the child welfare system. In addition, Washington County, in conjunction with Ramsey County, has received a grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services which requires the service be provided and funded via the grant.

Attorney's Office will receive grant money for victim/witness program

The Washington County Attorney's Office will receive \$68,106 in a grant from the Minnesota Office of Justice Programs after the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to accept the grant Jan. 3.

The money is used to offset salary and fringe benefits for the victim/witness function in the Criminal and Juvenile Divisions. The grant has been renewed annually since being accepted by the County Board in 1990.

Wages, insurance set for department directors, confidential group, supervisors

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved wages and insurance contributions for the county's department directors, employees in the Confidential Group, and employees in the Confidential Supervisors Group Jan. 3. The agreement calls for 0 percent general adjustment in 2012 and 2013, and medical insurance contributions and flex credits will remain the same in 2012 as in 2011. The directors may receive merit pay for 2012 up to 1.5 percent of their salary on their anniversary dates for appointed department heads that are within their salary range, not to exceed the range maximum. The same opportunity for merit pay will be available in 2013.

Employees in the county's Confidential Group and Confidential Supervisors group will also receive no general adjustment for 2012 and 2013. In 2012 and 2013, employees below the maximum of the salary range shall be eligible based on the employee's FTE for an up to 1.5 percent wage increase 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 increase 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 the anniversary date.

Medical insurance employer contributions and flex credits will remain the same in 2012 as in 2011.

Forest Lake will continue to contract with county for assessing

The City of Forest Lake will continue to contract with Washington County for property assessment services, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to a contract with the city at its meeting Jan. 3. The city approved the contract renewal at its December meeting.

Washington County provides assessing services through a contract for services to 25 of the 33 communities in the county. The current contract with the city expired Dec. 31, 2011.

County will contract with Lakeview Health for jail medical care

Inmates in the Washington County Jail in Stillwater will continue to receive care from personnel at Lakeview Hospital and the Stillwater Medical Group, after the County Board entered into an agreement with the health care providers Jan. 3. State law requires that the county provide medical care to jail inmates.

The county has contracted with Lakeview Hospital and Stillwater Medical Group for many years to provide emergency room, physician, physician assistant and laboratory services. The County Board renewed the contract, which is now with the Lakeview Health System, which oversees the clinic and the hospital. A total of \$150,000 was budgeted for the contract for 2012.

County will get Met Council grants for park improvements

Washington County will receive a \$571,000 grant from the Metropolitan Council for park improvements that will be built in 2012. The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted the grant at its meeting Jan. 3.

The projects will be:

- St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park Shower Building and Campground Improvements
- This is construction of a shower building that meets the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines, a dump station, well, septic, electric services, water distribution, trails, parking, and landscaping. Grant money for \$100,000 is for this project. Previous grants for this project have been received from the Metropolitan Council.
- Lake Elmo Park Reserve Group Camp Well and Water Distribution Project
- This project is the development of a well and water distribution system, vault toilets, drinking fountains, shelters, and landscaping. Grant money of \$250,000 is the only funding for this project.
- Lake Elmo Park Reserve Trailhead Parking Lot and Trail Connection Improvement Project
- A parking lot and trail connections near the cross country ski trailhead will be paid for with \$221,000 of the grant. This is the next phase of the lighted ski trail and trailhead projects.
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The grant money is coming from the state bonding bill.

Sheriff's Office will receive grant to help prevent auto theft

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a grant agreement Jan. 3 with the Minnesota Commissioner of Commerce, which will provide the Sheriff's Office with \$58,946 for auto theft prevention programs in 2012. The money will be used to purchase two Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) units, set up patrol units to accept the information that they collect, and train personnel on the system.

With the ALPR units, Sheriff's Office personnel hope to reduce the incidence of auto theft, increase the recovery rate of stolen vehicles and the number of auto theft cases prosecuted or convicted, and closed, and increase public awareness of auto theft.

County allocates authority for energy bonds to WCHRA

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to allocate Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds (QECB) to the Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (WCHRA) at the board's meeting Jan. 3.

Under the federal American Recovery and Restoration Act (ARRA), the state of Minnesota allocated authority to Washington County to issue up to \$2,377,557 in QECBs in 2010. These bonds are intended primarily for government projects that can realize at least a 20 percent energy savings. Washington County did not pursue issuing these bonds at the time. In December 2010, the St. Paul Port Authority approached several metro counties to form a joint power agreement to use the QECBs to fund anaerobic digestion facility, but there was no follow-up on the facility.

The WCHRA has requested that the county reallocate its QECB authority to the WCHRA to finance eligible projects. The reallocation is necessary to meet the state's application and filing deadlines to issue the QECBs concurrent with other WCHRA bonding activity in the next several months.
