

Washington County, Minnesota

Board of Commissioners - Actions

Actions at the Tuesday, November 15, 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 Board will hear comments on capital improvement program Dec. 13

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set Dec. 13 as the date for a public hearing on the 2012-2016 Washington County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

The board set the date for the hearing at its Nov. 15 meeting; it will be during the regular board meeting. During the public hearing, the County Board will take public comments, consider any changes to the proposed CIP, and take action to adopt the final 2012-2016 plan. The board reviewed the plan at a meeting earlier in the fall.

County will work with DNR on plans for Brown's Creek Trail

Washington County will assist the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) with plans for the Brown's Creek State Trail corridor, which is on the former Zephyr rail bed from downtown Stillwater to the Gateway Trail. The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to the cooperative agreement at its meeting Nov. 15. The State of Minnesota needs to complete a boundary survey of the Brown's Creek State Trail Corridor prior to trail development. To expedite this work, the DNR has asked for the county's assistance. The county is providing a portion of the funds necessary for the state to acquire the trail corridor and is working with the DNR to design and construct safe trail crossings of county roads. It is also working with the DNR to plan for trail uses and facilities that complement the county's trail system.

The county will be paid \$50,000 for completing the work under the agreement.

County Board forms 2012 legislative positions

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed at its Nov. 15 meeting to a set of positions that it will take on issues in the coming legislative session.

The positions are:

- local property tax protection, requesting that the state reduce the mandates that is places on the county to provide services and programs;
- sale of tax forfeited land, in which the county identifies a number of properties that it wishes to sell, which require legislative approval because they have more than 150 feet on water;
- construction of a new St. Croix River Crossing;
- a request for \$1 million in state bond money for preliminary engineering work on the Gateway Corridor transitway;
- a trail link between the Hastings Bridge and Point Douglas Trail; and a state-funded grade separation at Manning Avenue and the Brown's Creek State Trail;

- funding for a grade separation between the planned Brown's Creek Trail and Manning Avenue (County State Aid Highway 15.)

The board members will use the position statements to communicate with local legislators.

County Attorney's Office will receive car theft prevention grant

Washington County Attorney's Office will receive a grant of \$84,490 over two years as part of an Auto Theft Prevention Grant.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted the grant at its meeting Nov. 15. The grant period is July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2013.

East Metro Women's Council, HSI will provide services to homeless

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed at its Nov. 15 meeting to allocate funds to social service agencies in the county to provide services to homelessness.

The county will allocate \$130,667 in Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) funds to the East Metro Women's Council, and \$49,000 to Human Services, Inc.

East Metro Women's Council will use FHPAP funds to serve 32 households with support services and rent payment assistance through the Home Again program. Expectations for the programs are to ensure households will be permanently housed when leaving the program and not re-enter shelter or become homeless within six months of program exit. Human Services, Inc., will use its funds to provide 150 youth with support services to increase independent living skills and access stable housing through its Youth Transition Program. It is expected that the programs will help stabilize youth in permanent housing and ensuring youth will not become homeless or enter shelter within six months of leaving the program.

The County Board approved an agreement with Minnesota Housing to accept \$270,000 in FHPAP grant funds in October.

County will lease farm land in parks to farmers

Washington County will lease agricultural land inside county parks to farmers who will farm the land.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to the leases at its Nov. 15 meeting.

David See Farms offered the highest responsible bid for the lease of Lake Elmo Park Reserve agricultural land at \$178.30 per acre, for a total of \$36,801.12. Matthew Wohlman offered the highest responsible bid for the lease of St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park agricultural land at \$261.50 per acre, for a total of \$29,000.35. The total bid is \$65,801.47.

Seventy percent of the revenue, or \$46,061, received from the rental of agricultural land goes into the Parks Division Stewardship Fund, used for rental property expenses, restoration of natural resources, and development of park and trail master plans. The remaining 30 percent, or \$19,740, of the rental revenue is used for "in-lieu of tax" payments. The bid amount for agricultural land rental is approximately \$8,600 greater than what was budgeted in 2012.

Prescription Landscape will provide snow removal from county facilities

Prescription Landscape's bid for snow removal at Washington County facilities was accepted by the Washington County

Board of Commissioners at its meeting Nov. 15.

The company was the lowest bidder at \$63,500 for all three bids, which break the county facilities into three "zones," grouping facilities geographically in the county. The job includes snow removal at the Government Center and Law Enforcement Center in Stillwater, the Environmental Center in Woodbury, the Headwaters Transit Center and county libraries and service centers throughout the county. The bids were based on 12 "snow events" during the winter.

County Board approves 2 forfeiture repurchases

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the repurchase of two properties that were in tax forfeiture at its meeting Nov. 15.

One parcel is a home in Oak Park Heights, which was purchased by an heir to the previous owner of the property. Another was a property in Pine Springs, which will also be purchased by an heir to the previous owner.

County Board will seek new county administrator from within county staff

The Washington County Board of Commissioners expressed its intent to hire a new county administrator from within the county during a discussion at its meeting Nov. 15. Current Administrator Jim Schug has announced that he will retire from that post Jan. 26, 2012.

Kay McAloney, human resources director for the county, asked the board for direction on seeking Schug's replacement. The first question was whether the board wished to conduct an external search, or an internal search. The board members said that they were comfortable with conducting an internal search only, saying that it was their opinion that there were current county employees who would be eligible to fill the position.

The second question McAloney asked was whether the board wished to employ a consultant to manage the hiring process. She said it would eliminate any conflict of interest that may occur if the county's own human resources department conducted the hiring process. The board said that it would wish to employ an outside consultant for the hiring process.

McAloney will provide information and recommendations for a potential consultant to the board at its meeting Nov. 22.
