

Washington County, Minnesota

Board of Commissioners - Actions

Actions at the Tuesday, May 17, 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.

Residents appointed to county committees

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made several appointments to county committees and boards at its meeting May 17.

John Miller, Forest Lake, will fill an unexpired term on the Community Corrections Advisory Board, until Dec. 31, 2011. Commissioner Dennis Hegberg, District 1, recommended the appointment. The committee helps form the comprehensive plan for the development, implementation and operation of community-based correctional programs with recommendations to the county board.

Pamela Johnson of Human Services, Inc., was appointed to the Mental Health Advisory Council as a family support services representative. She will serve a first term expiring Dec. 31, 2013. State statute requires that the county have a local adult mental health advisory council. The purpose of the advisory committee is to bring the community perspective and make recommendations to the County Board on the local mental health system. The committee arranges for input from the regional treatment center review board regarding coordination of care between the regional treatment center and community-based services, and input from local system of care providers regarding coordination of care between services.

Mary Ann Newman, Newport, was appointed to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee for a first term that will expire Dec. 31, 2011. Commissioner Autumn Lehrke, District 4, recommended the appointment. The purpose of the advisory committee is to bring the community perspective and provide advice or make recommendations to the County Board on matters relating to the application, administration, and implementation of local public health duties outlined by the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grant Agreement between Washington County and the Minnesota Department of Health. It is required by state law.

Richard Adams, Grey Cloud Island Township, was named to the Board of Adjustment and Appeals to a fourth term expiring Dec. 31, 2013. The board has authority to hear and decide appeals from decisions made by the Zoning Administrator with respect to the administration of the Washington County Development Code, and has the exclusive power to order the issuance of variances from the terms of any official control.

Joseph Moore, Denmark Township, was appointed to the Parks and Open Space Commission to a first term expiring Dec. 31, 2013. The appointment was recommended by Commissioner Autumn Lehrke, District 4, and Commissioner Gary Kriesel, District 3. The commission brings citizen perspective to the operation of Washington County Parks and the Land and Water Legacy Program. The commission reviews current operation policies, capital improvement programs, parkland preservation, park development projects, and long-range planning efforts for parkland and facilities for county parks.

WorkForce Center will continue to help those laid off by Delta/Northwest merger

The Washington County WorkForce Center extended its agreement with the Dakota County WorkForce Center to assist displaced workers who lost their jobs when Delta and Northwest airlines merged.

In December 2009, Delta Airlines announced layoffs at the Delta headquarters in Minnesota. Because its headquarters are in Dakota County, its Workforce Center was awarded the dislocated worker project to serve these laid-off airline employees. To assist that center with the large number of cases, Dakota County subcontracted with several service providers, including Washington County's WorkForce Center to serve those living in Washington County and western Wisconsin.

That agreement was extended by the Washington County Board of Commissioners May 17, to run through June 30, 2012. The agreement adds \$130,000 in training and support funds to serve clients, and it adds up to \$12,000 in performance incentives for the WorkForce Center. It will also add up to \$7,068 to provide additional workshops for the workers. The WorkForce Center is projected to serve 100 clients under this agreement. As of May 2011, it has enrolled 73 people into the project. Of those, 21 of them found employment at an average wage of \$23 per hour. Services provided by the WorkForce Center include case management, job search workshops, retraining and certification attainment.

County to get emergency telephone notification system

Washington County will have a telephone emergency notification system, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to a contract May 17 with Emergency Communication Network, Inc., to provide the CodeRed service.

The CodeRed Emergency Notification System allows users to place prerecorded telephone calls at high speed to call recipients. The county will use geographic areas, such as city boundaries, or various risk areas, listed databases, or a customized mapped area at the time of an emergency. The service is designed to be active 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

County staff were approached by city administrators to consider a joint purchase of services for a countywide emergency telephone notification system. A small working group was formed and it reached an agreement with a vendor. The same working group will develop procedures for using the system, including ways to cover the system's annual expenses. The term of the agreement is through Dec. 31, 2012, with a total cost of \$52,500.

The county and city and townships partners will conduct a public awareness campaign, with assistance from the company, prior to the official start date of the system. This will include telling residents how to opt in or out of the system, and opportunities to add mobile devices in addition to home telephone numbers.

Road sealing contract approved for ASTECH Corporation

Asphalt Surface Technologies Corporation, also known as ASTECH Corporation, will do crack sealant on various county roads this summer, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract with the company May 17. The contract is for \$148,832.

Xcel transmission lines will be moved for Broadway Avenue project

An electrical transmission line owned and operated by Xcel Energy will be moved to make way for construction on the Broadway Avenue project in Forest Lake, and the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to a reimbursement plan for moving the lines May 17.

The estimated cost of moving the lines is \$95,025. Washington County will pay 80 percent of the cost. Relocation plans have been agreed upon and the work to relocate the facilities will be coordinated with the county and the county's contractor, Redstone Construction.

County will expand licensing center to conform to new federal rules

Washington County will expand its licensing center at the Valley Ridge Mall in Stillwater to provide for service changes directed by the U.S. Department of State relating to passports.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to an expanded lease for the location at its meeting May 17. Recently, the state department made new rules to separate services related to passport acceptance, drivers license processing and vital records. It required that the tasks related to each be separated from each other, to reduce the potential for documents being procured fraudulently. Additional leased space at the license center will provide the necessary room to separate the tasks, as required by the new federal rules.

Century Avenue will be focus of traffic study

Trunk Highway 120 (Century Avenue) will become a county highway in the future under an existing memorandum of understanding signed in 1996, and Washington County is starting to plan for that change.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed May 17 to pay \$10,000 toward a study on the future of the roadway.

The highway experiences significant traffic congestion during peak periods when the traffic from Century College overlaps commuter traffic. In the morning, it is common for traffic queues to back up onto Interstate 694. This study intends to evaluate the key factors involved in the traffic congestion, and develop a range of solutions that could reduce the magnitude and length of the congestion. The plan will be completed in conjunction with Century College and the City of Mahtomedi.

County Board recognizes Law Enforcement Memorial Week in county

The Washington County Board of Commissioners recognized Law Enforcement Memorial Week in Washington County with a resolution of support passed May 17. The Sheriff's Office conducted a memorial service to mark the week at the Historic Courthouse in Stillwater Monday, May 16.

The resolution passed by the board noted the selfless and devoted work done by law enforcement officers, and the internal freedom from fear of violence and civil disorder that their work provides to citizens of the country.

The resolution extended thanks and appreciation to the law enforcement community for its vital contribution to public safety and the well-being of citizens.

Board sees overview of Chemical Health Action Collaborative

The Washington County Board of Commissioners viewed an overview of the county's Chemical Health Collaborative (CHAC) at its meeting May 17.

The task force was formed in 2004 as a collaborative between the departments of Public Health and Environment, Community Services and Community Corrections, as well as school district superintendents as a countywide program to address alcohol, drug and tobacco use among youth. Since then, the county's Sheriff's Office and Attorney's Office has joined the collaborative. The group works with a variety of community groups, as well as parents and youth themselves to counter substance abuse among youth.

In 2008, CHAC was awarded a Drug Free Communities Grant through the Federal Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, and will receive \$125,000 a year for five years. Human Services, Inc., is serving as the fiscal agent for the grant. Communities with efforts like CHAC have better outcomes than national averages among youth, with 23 percent lower rates of alcohol use and 10 percent lower rates of marijuana use and tobacco use.

Tools used in the community include social host ordinance development; reduced youth access to alcohol and tobacco; training, education and information to youth, parents and community members through channels such as the website www.connect2chac.org; and the use of evidence-based curricula in schools.
