

Washington County, Minnesota

Board of Commissioners - Actions

Actions at the Tuesday, June 21, 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.

Grant will pay for indigent who need alcohol abstinence monitoring

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a grant agreement with the Minnesota Department of Corrections June 21, which will provide money to pay for electronic monitoring for indigent offenders who are ordered by the court to be monitored for abstinence from alcohol. Washington County has participated in this grant since state fiscal year 2004.

Community Corrections uses SCRAM (Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitoring) equipment to monitor repeat DWI offenders, as well as other offenders ordered to use Electronic Alcohol Monitoring (EAM) devices. The SCRAM bracelet is placed on the ankle of the offender and takes a transdermal alcohol reading several times per hour. The information is stored in the bracelet and downloaded each night, through a modem in the offender's residence. Non-indigent offenders pay for this service themselves. The grant program assists with the cost of coverage for indigent offenders who have committed alcohol-related offenses, with the total grant amount not to exceed \$24,000 during the next two years.

County will receive grant for training to respond to domestic violence

Washington County Community Corrections will receive a grant that will pay for training on how to address domestic violence, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners voted to accept it June 21.

The grant program, known as S.T.O.P. (Services.Training.Officers.Prosecutors), provides funds applied for and granted to Tubman, a local domestic violence program. The money will be used for interagency planning, training, and coordination to address domestic violence.

Tubman, formerly known as Tubman Family Alliance, sought federal funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Tubman was granted funds to support planning and coordination efforts addressing domestic violence in Washington and Ramsey counties. Community Corrections' share of the funding is \$11,000. These funds will be used for the training of local justice partners over a two-year period.

Sentence to Service grant renewed with state

Washington County Community Corrections will continue to conduct the Sentence to Service program, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the acceptance of funding for 2011 and 2012, for up to \$74,000 each year. The agreement covers July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2013.

The state provides up to 25 percent of the total costs to operate four Sentence to Service crews in Washington County. Legislative changes adopted in 2010 reduced the state's contribution from 50 percent of funding to 25 percent of funding. Washington County provides the balance of the funds, which is included in the Community Corrections 2011 budget.

Sentence to Service is a jail alternative program designed to repay the community harm incurred by an offense. The program reduces the cost of incarcerating offenders, provides work projects that are of benefit to the residents of Washington County, and improves the competencies of offenders through meaningful work experiences. The Sentence to Service Program in Washington County contributes more than 103,000 hours of service in the community annually and provides an alternative to longer incarceration times for non-violent offenders.

The program affords lower-risk offenders the opportunity to work on supervised work crews on projects throughout the county, for public, private non-profit, and government agencies. Work projects include cutting grass and shoveling snow for elderly/disabled individuals, trail and prairie restoration for state and county agencies, recycling for county buildings, natural disaster relief, painting, clean-up, and general maintenance.

Public hearing set to collect comments on changes in hazardous waste ordinance

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set a public hearing for Tuesday, July 26, to hear comment on changes in the county's hazardous waste ordinance.

The hearing will be in the Board Room of the Government Center during the regular county board meeting at 9 a.m. Proposed changes include adopting the state's Universal Waste Rules; establishing regulation of special hazardous waste, which includes electronics; prohibiting the dumping or abandonment of appliances; and clarifying requirements for hazardous waste transfer facilities.

Fees will increase for home detention, work release programs

Those participating in home detention or work release programs will pay more for the service, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a change in the fee structure June 21.

The Home Detention and Work Release Program operated by the Sheriff's Office provides alternative sentencing options for the judiciary while allowing inmates to maintain employment. The cost associated with operating these programs has continued to increase over the last nine years. The last participant fee increase occurred in February 2002. Washington County has one of the lowest inmate fee rates in the metro area. The board approved an increase in fees for the work release program to be \$20 per day, up from \$16 per day for residents in Washington County. The fee for the work release program for those who are out of the county will be raised to \$60 a day, from \$40 a day. The fee charged for home detention will rise to \$18 a day, from the current \$16 a day.

County, Cottage Grove agree to add property to Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed June 21 to purchase land that will replace property that has been removed from the Cottage Grove Regional Park for public buildings.

The county removed acreage from the park to build the South Service Center, and now the city of Cottage Grove has removed land to build a new city hall. Both are required to replace the land so that the park has no net loss of property to the public buildings.

A property owner contacted Washington County and expressed interest in selling a portion of his property, known as the Austin property, to the county. The property consists of approximately 9.34 acres and is adjacent to Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park, between the park and Kimbro Avenue. In April, the County Board approved an amendment to the Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park Master Plan that added the Austin property to the planned park boundary. The County Board also authorized amending the land exchange agreement between Washington County and the Metropolitan Council to change the park boundary, and that plan was approved by the Metropolitan Council.

The county has already replaced some of the land taken by the Service Center, and the purchase of this property will

replace the remaining 1.9 acres needed. The remaining 7.44 acres will partially fulfill the replacement obligations of the City of Cottage Grove.

The purchase price for the 9.34 acres is \$200,000. Washington County will pay \$40,685 for its 1.9 acres, and the City of Cottage Grove will pay \$159,315 for the remaining 7.44 acres.
