

Washington County, Minnesota

Board of Commissioners - Actions

Actions at the Tuesday, Feb. 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.

Lutchen, Erickson will serve on county advisory boards

David Lutchen, Cottage Grove, was appointed to the Washington County Community Corrections Advisory Board, and David Erickson, Newport, will serve on the Historic Courthouse Advisory Council.

The appointments were made by the Washington County Board of Commissioners at its meeting Feb. 15. The appointments were recommended by Commissioner Autumn Lehrke, District 4.

The Community Corrections Advisory Board helps formulate the comprehensive plan for the development, implementation and operation of community-based correctional programs including preventive or diversionary correctional programs, probation, community corrections centers, and facilities for the detention or confinement, care, and treatment of persons convicted of crimes or adjudicated delinquent. The board is required by Minnesota statute. Lutchen will serve a term that expires Dec. 31, 2012.

The Historic Courthouse Advisory Committee reviews current operation and long-range plans of the Historic Courthouse building use and restoration within the context of the mission statement adopted by the Washington County Board of Commissioners for the Historic Courthouse, which is in Stillwater.

Erickson will serve a term that will expire Dec. 31, 2012.

Agreement to provide services to employees laid off from Andersen modified

Changes were made to an agreement that directs the Washington County WorkForce Center to assist workers laid off from Andersen Windows in 2009. The changes, which reflect the changing needs of the laid-off employees, were approved by the Washington County Board of Commissioners Feb. 15.

Andersen Windows laid off 95 workers in July 2009. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) awarded the Workforce Center \$292,500 to provide dislocated worker services to 65 former Andersen employees. These services include individual career counseling, retraining, and support services. The WorkForce Center has requested an extension of this grant to Dec. 31, 2011, to continue to serve participants who are still active in the project. The original grant was written to provide dislocated worker services to 65 participants; however, only 49 individuals have enrolled into the project. That resulted in the reduction of \$57,500 in funding for a total project allocation of \$235,000. Of the 49 project participants, 21 remain enrolled and are receiving services; 28 have had their cases closed by the WorkForce Center, as they have obtained and maintained employment. The services of the WorkForce Center are required by state statute; the funds used for the services are provided by DEED.

Community Thread will continue to manage medical reserve volunteers

Community Thread, a nonprofit organization in Stillwater, will continue to manage the medical and non-medical volunteers registered in the Washington County Medical Reserve Corps, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the 2011 agreement with the organization Feb. 15.

The Medical Reserve Corps is a part of the national Citizens Corps project to mobilize and coordinate volunteers to respond to disasters of all kinds. This volunteer program is developed and used by public health agencies statewide. Medical volunteers are a vital resource and an important part of public health emergency preparedness efforts of the county's Department of Public Health and Environment. The contract with Community Thread will cost \$54,806 in 2011. The funds are received from the Center for Disease Control and the Minnesota Department of Health Cities Readiness Initiative and Public Health Emergency Preparedness programs.

During the past two years, more than 140 Medical Reserve Corps volunteers have been mobilized to assist the department in responding to public health incidents, community outreach activities, trainings and exercises. The Medical Reserve Corps volunteers, in large part due to Community Thread efforts, have donated more than 650 hours to the county.

County will do septic system inspections for Afton, Cottage Grove, Newport

The Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment will provide subsurface sewage treatment system inspection for the cities of Afton, Cottage Grove and Newport, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved agreements with those cities Feb. 15.

The inspections are required by state statute; the cities have the option of either performing the inspections at the city level, or contracting with the county to do the inspections.

Under this agreement, the county provides the necessary inspection application review and sewage system plan approval as required by law, provides all job-site inspections of projects under permit, and conducts special inspections as deemed necessary to ensure compliance with the county and city ordinances.

The county will receive funding for these services from permit fees paid by applicants. Additional cities in the county also contract with the county to provide similar services.

Telephone company will lease space on county's radio tower

The Somerset Telephone Company will lease space on the Somerset (Wis.) Radio Tower, owned by Washington County, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to the lease Feb. 15.

The county purchased the tower as part of its 800 megahertz radio system, which provides uniform radio communications throughout the county. The lease agreement is for \$10,000 a year, with the county receiving \$8,300 in 2011, which will help support the operation of the radio system.

The telephone company will install equipment used to provide Wi-Fi services to the surrounding area.

County Board receives report from Child Protection Citizen Review Panel

The Washington County Child Protection Review Panel (CRP) presented its annual report to the Washington County Board of Commissioners Feb. 15.

Melissa Ronces, co-chair of the Washington County CRP, and Sue Lewis, CRP member, presented the panel's annual report to the Board of Commissioners.

The Citizen Review Panel was authorized by the Washington County Board of Commissioners in 1999. Citizen Review Panels are implemented jointly with the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the five counties in Minnesota which have elected to participate. The Department of Human Services provides some staff support to the panels along with \$3,000 per panel per year to help cover costs.

Members of the panel took part in county in-service training; provided recommendations for the county's Washington County Children and Family Service review; sponsored a child abuse prevention community awareness event called "Remembering the Children," a memorial and healing ceremony honoring the lives of children who died in Minnesota as a result of child abuse in 2009; took part in a volunteer recognition and training event; pursued projects that stressed the involvement of fathers in their children's lives; and participated at the annual Walk to Prevent Child Abuse sponsored by Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota.

The panel's 2011 agenda calls for action on the topic of young people transitioning out of foster care, and continuing to build awareness of the devastating effects of child abuse in the community.

Board adopts resolution supporting addition of land to William O'Brien State Park

The Washington County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution of support for the addition of 13 acres to William O'Brien State Park, which is near Marine on St. Croix. The resolution was passed at the board's Feb. 15 meeting.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is proposing to add to the statutory boundary of the park. The landowner, Brian Jemelka, has expressed a desire to have his property included in the boundary of the park. Including the property in the statutory boundary of the park allows the DNR to negotiate the purchase of the land from willing landowners. The owner is not obligated to sell to the DNR in the future; the DNR simply becomes another potential buyer.

The Marine on St. Croix City Council passed a resolution of support Jan. 13.
