

# Washington County, Minnesota

## Board of Commissioners - Actions

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### Actions at the Tuesday, May 24, 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.

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*Washington County's mission is to provide quality public services in a cost-effective manner through innovation, leadership, and the cooperation of dedicated people.*

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### Residents appointed to watershed district, parks commission

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made an appointment to a watershed district and an appointment to the county's parks commission May 24. Victoria Dupre, May Township, was appointed to the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District board of managers for a third term that will expire June 21, 2014.

Commissioner Gary Kriesel, District 3, and Dennis Hegberg, District 1, recommended this appointment. The watershed district oversees areas in Grant, Hugo, Marine on St. Croix, Scandia and May and Stillwater townships. The watershed districts are required by state law, and carry out conservation of the natural resources of the state through land utilization, flood control and other needs based upon sound scientific principles for the protection of natural resources.

Robert Livingston, Lakeland, was appointed as the District 3 representative to the Parks and Open Space Commission to fill an unexpired term until Dec. 31, 2012. Commissioner Kriesel recommended this appointment.

The commission brings citizen perspective to the operation of Washington County Parks. It reviews current operation policies, capital improvement programs, parkland preservation, park development projects, and long-range planning efforts for parkland and facilities, for county parks. The commission also provides citizens' perspectives on the administration of the Land and Water Legacy Program.

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### County will ask DNR for assistance to maintain ski trails

Washington County Parks will apply for funding to help maintain the county's cross country ski trails, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the application May 24.

Washington County has participated in the Minnesota Cross-Country Ski Trail Assistance Program in past years and will apply to continue participation. The financial assistance would be used to maintain ski trails at Pine Point Park, Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park, St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park, Big Marine Park Reserve, and Lake Elmo Park Reserve. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) informed the county that new revenue is available for the Minnesota Cross-Country Ski Trail Assistance Program from increased ski pass sales the last couple of years, and the DNR is soliciting existing grant recipients for requests for additional funding if past funding levels have not met cross-country ski trail maintenance and operations needs.

The county is applying for \$38,618.20 for ski trail assistance in 2012, but as funding for the program fluctuates, the county will budget \$5,000 from the fund for 2012, and add any additional funds to the county's budget, should it be received.

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## **County Board hears report on insurance trust**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners received its annual report May 24 from the Minnesota Counties Intergovernmental Trust (MCIT), which is a public entity joint risk retention pool that serves 81 of Minnesota's 87 counties.

MCIT was formed in 1979 to provide property, casualty and workers' compensation coverage, risk management and loss control service, and long-term rate stability for counties and associated members.

Through the trust, members saw a 4.5 percent rate decrease in property/casualty and 7.8 percent decrease in workers' compensation rates in 2011. The trust also paid out a \$20 million dividend to its members in 2010. In 2010, Washington County received a \$606,000 dividend, after making a \$1.44 million contribution to the insurance trust.

The most frequent claim that Washington County makes relates to auto claims, at 70 percent of frequency of claims. In terms of severity of claims, auto and property claims were the primary claims by Washington County.

MCIT does a variety of training of county personnel to increase safety, and provides a number of tools to aid in risk management, safety and wellness programs.

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## **Spring flood emergency officially over**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution May 24 officially ending the state of emergency in the county for the spring 2011 flood season. The board declared a state of emergency March 15, related to river flooding conditions.

Washington County will likely be added to the presidential declaration for the state. Emergency management staff will continue to work with cities and townships in the county to secure available state and federal assistance. Local governments in the county that declared states of emergency are expected to pass similar resolutions, ending their states of emergency.

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## **Washington County will join Coalition for St. Croix River Crossing**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners voted May 24 to provide \$10,000 to the Coalition for the St. Croix River Crossing, a non-profit organization incorporated to educate residents about the benefits of building a new St. Croix River Crossing, organize community support for the project in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and communicate that support to federal and state representatives.

The coalition is comprised of business, labor, government and community leaders from Minnesota and Wisconsin who support building a four-lane bridge that will benefit the entire region. The need for a new bridge has been documented in Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) reports and environmental documents. In addition projects in the county Capital Improvement Program are affected by completion of the bridge. This includes pedestrian and intersection improvements on County State Aid Highway 24 (Osgood Avenue).

Washington County has for many years supported MnDOT in its efforts to replace the current Stillwater Lift Bridge. In addition, the county's current work plan with its federal transportation lobbyist Lockridge, Grindal, Nauen includes coordination to communicate county support for moving this project forward. This participation is similar to coalition efforts Washington County participated in for the successful completion of the Wakota Bridge.

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## **Part of national health survey will be conducted in Washington County**

Washington County has been selected as one of 15 counties nationally as a participant in the 2011 national survey for health and nutrition, a program of the Centers for Disease Control and the National Center for Health Statistics.

The county's Department of Public Health and Environment was notified earlier this year about the project, and has been communicating with federal authorities about the project for several weeks. This is the 50th year of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey in the United States. The purpose of the project is to assess the health and nutritional status of adults and children in the United States.

The goal of the program is to gather information from 350 people in the county, between June 16 and Aug. 21. A local office will open June 9, and interviewing will start June 16. A mobile exam center, which will be placed in the Sheraton parking lot in Woodbury, will be part of the process. An open house in the exam center will be July 18; exams will begin July 21, and conclude Aug. 21. Potential participants will receive an advance letter; if they agree to be part of the program, they will take part in a screening, an interview and an exam. Participants are paid \$125, along with any transportation costs to be part of the program.

Results from past studies have revealed blood lead levels in children, been used to create growth charts for children, and revealed trends in obesity rates and cardiovascular disease. Information collected by the researchers is protected by federal law.

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