

# Washington County, Minnesota

## Board of Commissioners - Actions

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### Actions at the Tuesday, February 7, 2012 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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### Board conducts public hearing, authorizes WCHRA bond sale

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing Feb. 7 to receive public comment on the issuance of general obligation bonds for the Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (WCHRA). No one from the public commented during the hearing. After the hearing, the board authorized the pledge of general obligation of the county to the bond sale. The bond sale will be a refinancing of a portion of the WCHRA's current debt, as well as the issuance of new energy conservation bonds.

After reviewing the WCHRA's bond portfolio, it was determined that it can achieve an estimated annual savings of \$134,000 over the next 19 years by refinancing \$13,500,000 of current bonds, which are and will continue to be backed by Washington County's general obligation pledge.

The hearing was also to receive comment on plans by the WCHRA to issue new Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds (QECBs) for \$2,375,000, with Washington County backing the new QECBs with its general obligation pledge, which is done to secure a lower interest on the bond.

The total general obligation pledge will back \$15,625,000 in WCHRA bonds. It is also hoped that the county's AAA rating by Standard & Poor's will enhance the bond offering in the market and reduce interest costs. The first series of bonds will be used to refinance housing for 289 senior households and 60 non-senior households at the housing authority's seven properties. The occupancy rate of these properties is 97 percent as of year-end 2011. Annual debt service savings are expected to total \$134,000.

The QECB is a bond issued to finance one or more qualified "conservation" purposes. The WCHRA is proposing to qualify for the QECB under the 20 percent energy use reduction in publicly owned buildings as the "eligible use" permitted by law. The WCHRA will accomplish the energy use reduction by installing improvements, such as water heater, boiler and window replacements at its 11 properties.

The annual debt service, estimated at \$140,000, will be paid by a portion of the WCHRA capital improvement budget and the operational cost savings created by the energy related improvements.

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### Clarke will serve on county's extension committee

Jacy Clarke of Woodbury will serve on the Minnesota Extension Committee for Washington County, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners made the appointment Feb. 7.

The Washington County Extension Committee is authorized by Minnesota statute, and its purpose is to work to fulfill goals of the county and the Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service, which provides educational programs and services through Extension agents in agriculture, economic and human development, community leadership, and environment and natural resources.

The Washington County Extension Committee works with the Washington County Board of Commissioners through the county's Department of Public Health and Environment.

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### **County will continue to contract with Regions Hospital for psychiatric hold costs**

The Washington County Board of Commissions approved an extension of a contract Feb. 7 with Regions Hospital to pay for psychiatric hold costs of uninsured individuals. State law requires that counties shall maintain or provide by contract a facility for the confinement of people held temporarily for observation, evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses.

Individuals who are considered a danger to themselves or others may be placed on a 72-hour hold by a medical examiner in an inpatient psychiatric setting. Counties are considered to be the last resort in paying for non-insured individuals during the 72-hour hold process, during civil commitment proceedings, and during involuntary psychiatric hospital admission while under civil commitment court jurisdiction.

Regions has contracted with Washington County for many years to provide observation, evaluation, diagnosis, care, treatment and involuntary confinement for uninsured individuals who are considered a danger to self or others. This amendment to the contract extends the agreement through 2013. The county will pay 2 percent more for services in 2012 and 0 percent more in 2013. The annual cost of the contract is expected to be \$237,600.

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### **ESR will work with residents in program for finding employment**

East Suburban Resources (ESR) will continue to provide service to Washington County customers in the Minnesota Family Investment Program seeking employment, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to a contract with the organization Feb. 7.

To meet federal and state requirements for the Diversionary Work Program (DWP) and Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), the county contracts with ESR to provide job skills training, job development, and placement services. ESR placed 21 subsidized and 123 unsubsidized individuals into employment July 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011. This continued to exceed the contract requirement, which was 50 job placements with 12 of the placements in subsidized employment.

Washington County is a leader in job placements in the seven-county metropolitan area, with the assistance of ESR, and continues to perform at the highest rate on a monthly and annual basis. One example of success is the Work Participation Rate, which is the percentage of MFIP customers employed or engaged in employment-related activities. For the year April 2010 through March 2011, Washington County was at 49 percent, well above the federal adjusted goal of 39.7 percent. This was also a significant increase from 36.3 percent from the same time period a year ago.

State and federal funds pay for the program. The county's 2012 allocation was recently announced and the contract for 2012 is for \$170,809.

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### **Community development block funding will be used to rehab John Jergens Estates**

The John Jergens Estate senior housing apartments in Forest Lake will be rehabilitated with \$85,328 from the Washington County 2011 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to the use of the money at its meeting Feb. 7. Spending the funds is directed by the county's 2011 Annual Action Plan for the block grant.

Annual grant funds for federal CDBG and HOME programs are used to fund high- and medium-priority activities identified in the Consolidated Plan approved by the board and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority owns the 30 apartments to be rehabilitated. The majority of the residents have very low or low incomes below 80 percent of the area median income. The project includes the replacement of 20-year-old water heaters, furnaces and air conditioning units and renovation of the original kitchens and bathrooms.

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### **Grant money will be used to enhance public safety**

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will be part of enhancing regional preparedness and collaboration in the metropolitan area, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to an Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant agreement between the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the county Feb. 7.

Jurisdictions receiving funds from the Twin Cities UASI Grant Program include the counties of Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, and Washington, and the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The 2011 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) UASI grant will provide \$244,677 to Washington County, expiring Dec. 31, 2013.

The funds will be used to increase Washington Counties capabilities in Interoperable Communications, including Mobile Data Computers (MDCs) for law enforcement and fire/rescue, and 800MHz radios for the county and designated cities; strengthen planning, which will include prioritizing needs and updating preparedness strategies; and improve the Emergency Operations Center/Common Operating Picture, which will provide for sustaining and expanding the web-based Knowledge Center to unify web network communications for emergency managers, elected officials, and public safety partners during emergency and non-emergency events.

It is expected that \$104,000 will be spent in 2012 and \$140,677 will be spent in 2013. Funded projects were determined and prioritized by a Washington County Urban Area Work Group (UAWG), and approved by voting members of the Twin Cities UASI Administration Council, the State Senior Advisory Committee (SAC), and the Department of Homeland Security.

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### **County will help out Bayport, Oak Park Heights with gasoline purchase**

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will help out the cities of Bayport and Oak Park Heights by providing gasoline to the cities at the cost the county pays through 2013.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to the joint powers agreements with the cities Feb. 7. The Washington County Sheriff's Office entered into a Minnesota State Fuel contract for Feb. 1, 2012, through Jan. 31, 2013, with Yocum Oil. The cities are in need of procuring 87 octane gasoline to operate their squad cars and SUVs for law enforcement services. The Washington County Sheriff's Office will provide gasoline for \$2.704 per gallon, which includes fuel cost plus taxes and fees.

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### **Sheriff's Office will provide CodeRED services to May Township, Landfall**

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will provide mass emergency notification to residents in May Township and Landfall through its CodeRED program, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved joint powers agreement with the communities Feb. 7.

Washington County entered into a contract with Emergency Communications Network for the use of the CodeRED Emergency Notification System, which gives public officials the ability to send mass emergency and non-emergency messages to residents of Washington County. With this system, the county is able to assist participating agencies within Washington County to provide necessary emergency and non-emergency mass notifications.

In December, the County Board approved 29 CodeRED agreements for other communities in the county.

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