

Washington County, Minnesota

Board of Commissioners - Actions

Actions at the Tuesday, June 7, 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.

County recognizes Family Child Care Providers of the Year

The Washington County Board of Commissioners recognized two family care providers at its meeting June 7, in conjunction with the Minnesota Licensed Family Care Association's annual conference and banquet, conducted for family providers throughout Minnesota. Joey Olson, Hugo, and Jody Urbano, Cottage Grove, were recognized as Family Child Care Providers of the Year for 2011.

Individuals in the community nominate providers and these applications are reviewed by an ad hoc committee from the Washington County Child Care Council with representation from the Minnesota Licensed Family Child Care Association. The ad hoc committee recommends individuals for recognition. Their recognition at the board meeting publicly acknowledges their achievement and success in their career as early childhood educators and caregivers, and to increase awareness of quality child care.

County performance measures presented to board

The Washington County Board of Commissioners received information on the county's performance measurement and improvement efforts at its June 7 meeting.

Since the mid-1990s, Washington County has tracked, reported, and monitored performance measures to support decision-making and to drive continued improvement in its core functions and the services it provides. The performance measurement and improvement program is designed to increase efficiency and maintain the commitment to high-quality services provided to residents and businesses by Washington County. The focus of the program is continuous quality improvement, as well as periodic updates to the County Board about performance measurement. A copy of the report is on the county's website at www.co.washington.mn.us, under "Performance Report" on the right green column.

Peichel appointed to Workforce Investment Board

Susan Peichel, Hastings, was appointed to the Washington County Workforce Investment Board by the Washington County Board of Commissioners June 7. Peichel will represent the Adult Basic Education sector on the board.

The purpose of the board, established by state statute, is to determine the most effective designation of administrative entities, grant recipients and program operators for the Workforce Service Area, and provide on-site review and oversight of performance of the Workforce Investment Board programs.

Peichel will serve a first term that will expire June 30, 2014.

Grant will be used to supplement juvenile probation program

Washington County will accept more than \$12,400 in federal funds to help pay for a probation officer who works with juveniles in the county's PLACE program, after the Board of Commissioners approved an agreement with the state June 7.

The funding will be used to offset part of the salary for a probation officer at the PLACE North site, a program that serves as an alternative for juveniles who are assessed as high risk to re-offend and are being considered for placement in residential treatment facilities. It is recognized as an effective intervention for high-risk juveniles involved in the court system.

Since 2000, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety has made Federal Department of Justice grant dollars available to counties. For state fiscal year 2012, the county Department of Community Corrections will receive this Juvenile Accountability Block Grant from the Office of Justice Programs for \$12,447.

WorkForce Center updates its annual plan

A work plan for the Washington County WorkForce Center was approved by the Washington County Board of Commissioners at its meeting June 7.

Washington County residents who are looking for a better job or who are unemployed may use services available through the WorkForce Center to help obtain the support and training necessary to find and keep a job. The WorkForce Center plans how to make the best use of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding for job seekers and businesses. Planning takes place on both the state and local levels each year, as Workforce Investment Boards in Minnesota develop plans that support the goals of the WIA and the state's work plan.

The local plan includes strategies and guidelines to ensure the state and federal dislocated worker programs and the WIA program provides services to job seekers in compliance with state and federal policies. The plan approved is for July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012. Funding for programs comes from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, and the U.S. Department of Labor.

AccessAbility Options, Inc., will do remodeling for home accessibility

AccessAbility Options, Inc., will provide home and community environmental accessibility modifications for individuals who receive medical assistance, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract with the firm June 7.

State law requires that counties that administer medical assistance be responsible for contracting with companies that can do home modifications. AccessAbility Options, Inc., specializes in home modifications that allow individuals with disabilities to remain in their home, such as bathroom remodels, permanent or modular ramps, transfer aides or lift systems, and stair or platform lifts.

The philosophy of Home and Community Based Services for persons on medical assistance is to seek to maintain vulnerable and disabled individuals in the community and/or in their homes, while avoiding more costly institutional placements. By making environmental accessibility modifications to people's homes, residents are often able to age safely in place, as modifications allow the person's home to better accommodate their physical limitations. Prior to any modifications being made, the individual's county case manager will obtain multiple bids from contractors. The contract with AccessAbility Options, Inc., is through Dec. 31, 2012. All medical assistance services are funded by state and federal dollars.

Public hearing set July 12 to review updated zoning map for Denmark Township

A public hearing to consider the updated Washington County zoning map for Denmark Township was set for July 12 by the Washington County Board of Commissioners at its meeting June 7. The hearing will be conducted during the regular board meeting that day, in the Board Room of the Washington County Government Center in Stillwater.

It is necessary to revise and update the zoning map for Denmark Township so it will be consistent with the Land Use Plan in the 2030 Washington County Comprehensive Plan. The Washington County Planning Advisory Commission conducted a public hearing April 26 to consider the updated Denmark Township zoning map, and recommended its approval. It is expected that the County Board will take action on the zoning map at the July 12 meeting.

Public hearing set July 12 to consider amendment to county development code

A public hearing to consider an amendment to the Washington County Development Code, which pertaining to the permitted height of a wind energy conversion system, was set for July 12 by the Washington County Board of Commissioners at its meeting June 7. The hearing will be conducted during the regular board meeting that day, in the Board Room of the Washington County Government Center in Stillwater.

A text amendment to the code will be considered during the hearing. David and Cynthia Krueger have submitted a request to amend a section of the Washington County Development Code pertaining to wind energy conversion systems (WECS). The Washington County Planning Advisory Commission conducted a public hearing April 26 and recommended denial of the request.

'Summer Tuesdays' event will be conducted at Historic Courthouse

The "Summer Tuesdays" event sponsored by the Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce will be at the Washington County Historic Courthouse for the first time this year, Tuesday evenings July 12 through Aug. 16.

The event has been at Lowell Park in downtown Stillwater since 2005. Due to construction occurring at the park this summer, the Chamber is seeking a new location for the event, which will be 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. each of the Tuesdays. The Washington County Board of Commissioners gave its approval to the venue change at its meeting June 7.

As with other events at the Historic Courthouse, the Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce will enter into a license agreement for the rental of the facility and pay \$250 per Tuesday evening for a total of \$1,500 to cover county staff time during the event and for clean-up of the building and grounds afterwards. Parking and security will be handled similarly to the Kickoff to Lumberjack Days event, which also occurs at the Historic Courthouse. The Historic Courthouse is at the intersection of Pine and Third Street South in Stillwater.

DeMontreville Trail will be transferred to City of Lake Elmo

DeMontreville Trail North, also known as County Road 13B, will be transferred to the City of Lake Elmo, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to the transfer June 7. The final transfer of jurisdiction over the road will occur Dec. 31.

The 2030 Washington County Comprehensive Plan includes proposed jurisdictional transfers of roadways, to seek closer alignment between the level of government owning the road and the manner in which the road functions to meet local, regional or state-wide needs. The 2.02-mile transfer of the roadway from County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 35 (50th Street North) to Highway 36 in Lake Elmo was identified as a potential transfer in the comprehensive plan.

The transfer includes an agreement between the city and county, which calls for a pavement rehabilitation project to address the existing deteriorated pavement conditions along with localized drainage improvements, at an estimated cost of \$765,000 and will take approximately eight weeks; and payment to the city of \$36,740.09 for two years of snow and ice removal and other maintenance expenses the city may incur, to provide time for the city to transition to providing these services.

Contract pilot policy will be used to add speed, efficiency to Broadway project

Washington County will introduce a pilot program to change the way it administers contracts to assure speed and efficiency in its road projects, especially the Broadway Avenue "mega project" now underway in the Forest Lake area. The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the changes at its meeting June 7.

Previously, county contract administration required board approval for construction contract amendments "if the sum of the amendments for a prime contractor exceed \$100,000 or 5 percent of the original contract or if any single amendment exceeds \$50,000."

Because of the size of the Broadway Avenue project, the \$100,000 threshold will be exceeded in a relatively short time. Because time is critical during the short Minnesota construction season, and to avoid contractor delay claims, the work often needs to be initiated prior to county board approval of the resulting amendment. Thus, to keep work progressing on the project, a pilot policy was established that states the county board will approve contract amendments when the sum of amendments exceed 7 percent of the original contract or a single amendment exceeds \$100,000.

In addition, on the Broadway Avenue project, the contractor is eligible to earn project incentives for delivering project phases ahead of schedule. Total possible incentives could be approximately 3 percent, or \$506,250, of the contract award amount.

Under this pilot, each contract amendment will be reviewed by the project engineer, project consultant, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and county engineer for a recommendation to the public works director. Funding for contract amendments will come from the project funding sources of federal grants, state aid, 2011 bond issue, and the City of Forest Lake.

The public works director will report to the county board when the project contract amendment budget is 25 percent, 50 percent, 75 percent and 100 percent utilized. The report will include information on contract amendments, project budget, and construction status.

County, Cottage Grove will cooperate on land for public safety/city hall building

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a cooperative agreement June 7 with the City of Cottage Grove for the use of and replacement of land in the Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park for the construction of a new public safety building, city hall and associated roads.

In May 2005, Washington County and the City of Cottage Grove agreed to plan the construction of the Washington County South Service Center and the City of Cottage Grove's city hall/public safety/community center on land within the Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park.

In February 2006, Washington County agreed to allocate costs and responsibilities related to the construction of roads and utilities to serve the new South Service Center, which opened in 2007. The agreement noted the city's plans to construct a city hall/public safety building on a site at Keats Avenue and 85th Street. Cottage Grove and Washington County agreed at that time to address responsibilities and costs of the extension of the Ravine Parkway and the city hall/public safety facility.

The city has planned for the extension of the Ravine Parkway, including a highway bridge over the ravine, and for a city hall and public safety building. There are also plans for future community development on the site, and agreements must address responsibilities and costs associated with these projects.

The board agreed to two separate actions. The first allows land in the Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park to be used for the city hall/public safety building and associated infrastructure, including the Ravine Parkway Extension. All parkland must be replaced, acre for acre, with new parkland elsewhere by Dec. 31, 2015.

The second action determines costs, construction and maintenance responsibilities between the city and county for these improvements. The county cost share will come from the county's Gravel Tax Fund.

'Protecting the Wetlands' display donated to county

A Stillwater Area High School civics class presented a "Protecting the Wetlands" display to the Washington County Board of Commissioners June 7.

Kathleen Ferguson's civics class at Stillwater Area High School developed a project on "Protecting the Wetlands" and presented it during "Project Citizen" at the State Capitol. The judges were very impressed with their work and strongly recommended the students donate their project for display.

Ferguson contacted the county to inquire about displaying the project at the county. Public Health and Environment staff is currently working with the Parks Department to find suitable places in county parks and libraries for the display. Members of the team creating the display who presented to the County Board are Sam Casey, Drew Lynch, Alex Huth, Blake Eason and Christine Myers, all seniors at Stillwater Area High School.
