

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
MARCH 17, 2020**

WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS CONVENES

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 4:00 p.m. in the Washington County Government Center, County Board Room.

Present: Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5
 Commissioner Gary Kriesel, District 3
 Commissioner Fran Miron, District 1
 Commissioner Wayne Johnson, District 4
 Commissioner Stan Karwoski, District 2

Also Present: Kevin Corbid, County Administrator
 Susan Tice, County Attorney Civil Division Chief
 Stephanie Kammerud, Board Clerk

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Board Chair Miron asked for comments from the public; none were heard.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Commissioner Weik moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to adopt the Consent Calendar as follows:

- A. Approval of county comment letter of the draft City of Afton Comprehensive Plan.
- B. Approval of Master Grant Agreement No. 13329 between Washington County Community Services and the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) for the period of April 1, 2020, through March 31, 2025.
- C. Approve revisions to Personnel Rules and Regulations, Section #1, Purpose, Adoption and Administration.
- D. Approve revisions to Human Resources Policy 5015A, Federal Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act and Related Regulations Implementation Policy.

E. Approval of **Resolution No. 2020-022** as follows:

**RESOLUTION APPROVING AN APPLICATION TO CONDUCT
OFF-SITE GAMBLING FOR THE GREEDER HINDS
COMFORT POST 323 AUXILIARY**

WHEREAS, an application has been received from Greeder Hinds Comfort Post 323 Auxiliary to conduct off-site gambling at the Washington County Fairgrounds located in Baytown Township, and

WHEREAS, M.S.349.165 requires the permit to be approved by the County Board of Commissioners by resolution and remitted to the Minnesota Gambling Control Board for their consideration.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington County Board of Commissioners approves the Application to Conduct Off-Site Gambling , Pull-Tabs, from the Greeder Hinds Comfort Post 323 Auxiliary at the Washington County Fairgrounds located in Baytown Township and for it to be remitted to the Minnesota Gambling Control Board for their consideration.

F. Approval of Amendment No. 2 to Contract No. 11249 with Kraus-Anderson Construction in the amount of \$278,191 for budgeted services to complete the Wildwood Library project (BSD-WWL-001).

G. Approve permanent use of fund balance in an amount not to exceed \$70,000 from the Capital Repair Fund 411 to complete the Sheriff's Department Gun Range Renovation project (BSD-PWN-2001) located at the Public Works North Shop.

The motion was adopted 5-0 with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Weik, Kriesel, Johnson, Karwoski, and Miron. Nays, none.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

COVID-19 Update

The Department of Public Health and Environment (PHE) Director Lowell Johnson reported on the community response for the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the key messages for the public is community mitigation, which includes adequate spacing of public places, practicing 6 feet of separation, and limiting contact with others in the community. Washington County currently has two reported cases of COVID-19 and anticipates more cases. Governor Walz announced yesterday that dine-in restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues are being closed to prevent congregate gathering. Mr. Johnson said he has been very heartened by the response of the community. It has been less crowded, people are staying home, and working from home. The community has been doing the right thing and taking this pandemic seriously. Mr. Johnson stated there is much information on the county website, the county's PHE site, and the public should seek reputable

and credible sources of information from the county, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), and the Minnesota Department of Health. PHE has been working diligently on public information and dissemination of that information. As public cases occur in the community, Mr. Johnson assured that the PHE department is working hand-in-hand with the state health department on any contact tracing, following up on the treatment and care for those individuals, to help limit the further spread of the illness.

Commissioner Kriesel inquired on the quarantine process for COVID-19. Mr. Johnson said in terms of testing, screening, and treatment, it is a fluid situation. In general, if a person is suspect or found to have the virus, they would be asked to quarantine for 14 days.

Commissioner Karwoski inquired on the locations of the diagnosed cases. Mr. Johnson said a person's health is private medical information and there are medical data practices laws that the county needs to adhere to. As a health authority, the department cannot disclose that information, they can only release the county of residence.

County Administrator Kevin Corbid reported on county response to COVID-19. The county has a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) in place. In the event in which there is not enough staff to continue to provide all county services, COOP includes prioritization of services. The county has a Pandemic Plan which includes information on the county facilities response, human resources questions, and the response of the organization.

Mr. Corbid reported the Department of Public Health and Environment activated its incident command structure for the community response. The county created an executive operations response team and created an internal page for sharing of information to staff. Information Technology staff has been preparing for the potential of more people working from home. Building Services staff has increased cleaning practices at all county facilities. Departments have been directed to allow increased telework, where feasible. All out-of-state non-essential travel has been banned and there has been implementation of social distancing recommendations. Mr. Corbid provided the County Board with a compilation of various departments activities/responses to COVID-19.

Mr. Corbid presented two actions that were developed with Human Resources. There is concern that some employees may not have enough paid time off to keep them in a paid status. The first action is to allow for an 80-hour emergency paid leave program. This would be used after all other paid leave is exhausted for the COVID-19 pandemic to care for children, family members, or for an employee who is sick or quarantined. The 80 hours must be paid back with future accruals. The second action is to temporarily waive maximums of vacation for staff in mission critical functions who are not able to use vacation.

Commissioner Kriesel asked if these actions are specific only to COVID-19. Human Resources Director Angie Nalezny stated this would only be used by employees for COVID-19, if they are sick/quarantined, or if they have family members that are sick/quarantined.

Commissioner Johnson asked about the period of time for payback to the program. Ms. Nalezny reported the program would require a promissory note to payback the hours.

Commissioner Weik moved to approve that the board direct the Human Resources Director to create an emergency paid leave program of up to 80 hours for employees who have used all other paid leave and are in need of an emergency loan of paid time due to the COVID-19 pandemic to care for the employee's children, family members that are sick, or if they themselves are sick or quarantined related to COVID-19 and that requires the repayment of the loaned time at a future date. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion and it was adopted unanimously.

Commissioner Karwoski moved that the board direct the Human Resources Director to work with the labor unions to temporarily waive vacation accrual limits for employees in mission critical functions and for whom their Department director has determined the employee may not use vacation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Commissioner Weik seconded the motion and it was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Corbid reported on modifications to county board operations, including social distancing in meeting spaces and opportunities for electronic or telephone meetings. It has been discussed with the board chair that Administration will minimize board agenda items to only the core county operational needs for a period of time.

Resolution Declaring Local State of Emergency

Mr. Corbid presented a resolution to the board about declaring a local state of emergency.

Commissioner Weik moved to approve **Resolution No. 2020-023** as follows:

RESOLUTION DECLARING LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the Novel Coronavirus known as COVID-19 poses an immediate threat to Washington County; and,

WHEREAS, the impacts and effects of the COVID-19 are continuing to be studied; and

WHEREAS, Washington County has multiple confirmed cases of COVID-19 by the Minnesota Department of Health; and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States has declared a National Emergency; and,

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Minnesota has declared a Peacetime State of Emergency to authorize any and all necessary resources to be used in support of the COVID-19 response; and,

WHEREAS, public health officials and others have determined that proactive measures must be taken to reduce the impact of COVID-19, and activity will be beyond the usual resources of Washington County; and,

WHEREAS, response and support to affected individuals, communities, medical systems, business and government has caused significant impact to the county as a whole; and,

WHEREAS, the necessary resources to respond to and recover from this pandemic will exceed those resources available within the County, and additional resources may be requested from other counties, the State, and/or federal sources; and,

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 12.29 authorizes the Chair of the Washington County Board of Commissioners to sign a Declaration of Local Emergency in Washington County valid for up to 72 hours after which a meeting of the Board of County Commissioners is needed to continue a declaration; and,

WHEREAS, the Washington County Administrator recommends the Washington County Board of Commissioners declare that a Local State of Emergency exists in Washington County.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners declare Washington County to be in a Local State of Emergency effective March 17th, 2020, due to ongoing and expected response to and recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic and direct the County Administrator and the Director of Emergency Management to coordinate such actions and request such local, state and/or federal assistance as needed to protect lives and public and private property in Washington County and the recovery of the County from the impacts of this situation to the extent practicable and allowed by law, ordinance and resolution.

Commissioner Karwoski seconded the motion and it was adopted 5-0 with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Weik, Kriesel, Johnson, Karwoski, and Miron. Nays, none.

Commissioner Johnson asked what the procedure is when we no longer need the declaration. Emergency Services Manager Doug Berglund responded there is no action needed to terminate a declaration. After 30 days, or until the resources needed are no longer required, a declaration will sunset.

Commissioner Weik asked if there was any state or federal funding assistance available that the county could take immediate action on. Mr. Berglund responded not at this time.

Mr. Corbid reported that some county facilities are experiencing a slowdown of activity and customers. The county has reduced many non-essential programs and events, and is implementing social distancing recommendations where practical/feasible. Many county services must continue such as law enforcement, jail, courts, safety net services, and public health.

Mr. Corbid requested County Board direction on operations at parks, license centers, libraries, and all county public buildings. Mr. Corbid presented a potential press release if the board considers closing county facilities. The timeframe on the draft coincides with the school closing date of March 29. Mr. Corbid reported Hennepin and Ramsey Counties have closed all facilities to in-person services, and there is potential that other counties will do the same. Counties are not closing county business, but restricting in-person activity at their facilities and looking for ways to provide services in an alternative manner. For example, libraries are looking at curbside service or delivery service for book pickup, and reservations for use of computers in the libraries.

Commissioner Weik asked if there are online services available for the license center. Deputy County Administrator Jennifer Wagenius reported an update from DVS was received and there has been no action to delay the expiration of a driver's license or motor vehicle tabs at this time. Things are changing very rapidly under these circumstances. The state run facilities would stay operational for now and they would be able to respond to some of those services. As a license center provider, the county has an opportunity to assist with tab renewals. For example, license tab renewal payments could be dropped off at the Property Records & Taxpayer Services drop box, and the department would mail the tabs back to the customer. The department is continuing to look into alternative options.

Commissioner Kriesel asked about citizens getting their Real ID and passports. Ms. Wagenius reported there are discussions with staff about a possible appointment type service for urgent driver's license renewals. An example of an urgent need would be if a person's driver's license is expiring during the time when license centers are closed. Ms. Wagenius reported there is a group that is petitioning the federal government for an extension of the Real ID deadline of October 1st. Commissioner Kriesel suggested a hotline number with information for the public.

Commissioner Karwoski reported he has received several phone calls from constituents asking for closure of public-facing facilities. Commissioner Karwoski would be in favor of this and supports county staff being innovative on how to continue services to the public.

Commissioner Miron asked for clarification that staff is not recommending closure of the county, only of public-facing facilities.

Mr. Corbid read a potential statement about closing public-facing services at its eight libraries, service centers, and license centers, potentially as early as tomorrow, March 18. There is an opportunity for the government to provide services in a different way and at different locations and the county would be communicating to the public how to access those services.

Commissioner Johnson asked if closing the libraries would be a hardship for students that need library services or online learning with school closures.

Library Director Amy Stenftenagel reported the library staff has been working on a closure plan with distance learning. Staff is discussing the possibilities such as computers by appointment and curbside delivery of materials. This would allow the computer equipment to be properly cleaned between appointments.

Commissioner Kriesel reported receiving communication from constituents questioning closure of the libraries. Commissioner Kriesel expressed concern about not having a plan in place at this time. He would support closing libraries until there is a plan in place.

Ms. Stenftenagel said if the libraries are closed beginning tomorrow, staff has communications ready for the public. There are library services available to offer, even if closed, such as email, phone, and online services, and curbside pickup.

Commissioner Weik asked if the CDC had recommended closing public libraries. Ms. Stenftenagel reported to the best of her knowledge, it had not. Commissioner Weik indicated that Governor Walz specifically asked for public libraries to remain open in the State of Minnesota. Ms. Stenftenagel said this is possibly because of the services the library offers. Commissioner Weik expressed concern about closing the libraries because some families may not have Wi-Fi, access to laptops, or other educational materials needed.

Commissioner Johnson echoed concerns about the students that need library services, and suggested while the schools are closed, use the opportunity to close the libraries and get them set up to serve the people that need them.

Other counties are implementing closure with a specific period of time and each timeframe is different. Mr. Corbid expressed concern that if Washington County libraries remain open, while other county libraries are closed, Washington County is risking being overcrowded with more people. If Washington County libraries close, this will provide the opportunity for library staff to pursue alternative services with the hope to implement those changes as soon as they can. Mr. Corbid reported that county libraries still remaining open are having a harder time controlling the crowds in the library and people are not obeying social distancing practices. Mr. Corbid reiterated this is not an ideal situation but considers this is the best solution at this time.

Commissioner Kriesel said these are extraordinary times, and health, welfare, and safety of the public is of utmost concern, and advocates to close the libraries and come up with a process that will work.

Commissioner Karwoski would like library staff to monitor and record how we meet expectations as needs arise.

Commissioner Karwoski inquired about leaving the end date open on the closures. Chair Miron reported the County Board will meet again next week on March 24, 2020. Chair Miron suggested the board take action today, and continue or revise the action at the March 24 meeting.

Commissioner Miron moved to approve that Washington County close all public-facing services in response to COVID-19 that would include eight libraries, service centers, and license centers and also county park buildings, beginning Wednesday, March 18, through Tuesday, March 24. County parks will remain available for use of their trails and open spaces. County government services will continue to function but in a different way and different locations. Public safety agencies will continue to provide service to the community, as will the county's Department of Public Health & Environment, as we continue to monitor the virus. Included in the motion, staff

will continue to work with school leadership, developing service plans, and then the County Board will reevaluate at the March 24 meeting.

Commissioner Weik asked to add that there will be no charge to enter county parks through March 24. Mr. Corbid asked to include the Government Center in the list of facilities.

Commissioner Weik seconded the motion.

After a brief discussion about the details of the closures, Mr. Corbid asked to amend the motion to include the Public Works North Shop under the closed facilities. Commissioner Miron moved to amend the motion to include the North Shop. Commissioner Weik seconded the motion, and the amendment was adopted unanimously.

Commissioner Miron asked for all in favor of the original motion with amendment to close all public-facing facilities as indicated, say Aye. It was adopted unanimously.

PUBLIC WORKS

Approve Contract with Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc. for Phase 3 of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 5 / Trunk Highway (TH) 96 Project

Commissioner Kriesel moved to approve Contract No. 13273 with Kimley-Horn and Associates Inc. in the amount of \$555,128 to perform preliminary design and final design services for Phase 3 of CSAH 5 (Stonebridge Trail) – Sycamore Street to TH 96 project (RB-2639). Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion and it was adopted unanimously.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioners reported on meetings and other events that they attended. Please see archived web streaming of the board meeting for full commissioner reports at www.co.washington.mn.us, under “County Board.”

BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

Board correspondence was received and placed on file.

PUBLIC HEARING – PUBLIC WORKS

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING ON CONSIDERATION OF UPDATING WASHINGTON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION SALES, USE AND EXCISE TAX

Mr. Corbid reported the original schedule on the board agenda included an Open House to occur prior to the public hearing. Mr. Corbid reported that communication had been posted on the county’s website that the public hearing would still occur, but due to the pandemic issue, the board would likely not take action at the public hearing. Public Works staff reported that no one from the public has come for the open house or public hearing tonight.

The Public Hearing opened at 6:28 p.m.

County Board Chair Miron presented a brief overview of today's public hearing for the purpose of updating Washington County's Transportation Sales, Use and Excise Tax to include funding the development and construction of county Road & Bridge projects and increase the tax to 0.5%.

This public hearing commenced on February 11, 2020. After receiving initial testimony, the board acted to hold the record open and continue the hearing to today's date.

At the conclusion of any further testimony today, Chair Miron will ask for a motion to again hold the record open and continue the public hearing at a certain date in 2020, or to terminate the public hearing process and take no further action of this matter at this time.

Chair Miron asked for any comments from the public regarding the sales tax.

There were no public comments.

Commissioner Johnson moved to terminate this public hearing process which will result in the County Board taking no further action on this matter at this time. Commissioner Kriesel seconded the motion and it was adopted unanimously.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:35 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Johnson moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Karwoski, and it was adopted unanimously. The County Board meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

BOARD WORKSHOP – PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

The Board met in workshop session for a presentation and discussion on the Lower St. Croix One Watershed One Plan. Present for the workshop were Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Kriesel, Johnson, and Weik. Also present were Kevin Corbid, Jennifer Wagenius, and county staff.

BOARD WORKSHOP – ADMINISTRATION

The Board met in workshop session to discuss 2021 budget development, guidelines, and principles. Present for the workshop were Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Kriesel, Johnson, and Weik. Also present were Kevin Corbid, Jennifer Wagenius, and county staff.

Attest:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin J. Corbid".

Kevin Corbid
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fran Miron".

Fran Miron
County Board Chair