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**Date:** Aug. 7, 2018  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Aug. 7, 2018, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

### County Board adopts energy plan

The Washington County Board of Commissioners adopted an Energy Plan Aug. 7, designed to identify, promote, and expand the use of energy-efficient practices and renewable energy resources. The county's 2040 Comprehensive Plan contains the goal to use energy more efficiently. The county contracted with the Great Plains Institute to develop an implementation plan, policies, and strategies that together make up the "Washington County 2018 Energy Plan." The implementation of this plan will support county efforts to achieve its goals.

The 2018 County Energy Plan guides the county toward collaboration with its cities in planning its energy future. The county is home to more than a quarter million people and is anticipated to continue to grow over the next few decades. Planning now can help curb the growth of energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

The plan contains two policies – the first states that the county will collaborate with public entities, community organizations, businesses within the county, and with other counties to achieve mutual energy goals; and the second states that the county will lead in its operations to conserve energy, use renewable energy sources, and take steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The 2018 County Energy Plan also contains an assessment of county internal energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. It highlights extensive investments by Xcel Energy and maintenance upgrades by the county resulting in overall reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 19 percent

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between 2008 and 2016. This occurred due to building energy use going down by 24 percent and transportation energy use going down by 26 percent. The changes resulted in \$2.4 million in energy savings, along with the accompanying positive health impacts and savings that result from reduced air, water, and soil pollution.

**Contact: Kevin Corbid, Deputy Administrator, 651-430-6003**

### **County Board approves comments on draft comprehensive plan for City of Scandia**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved staff comments Aug. 7 prepared following review of the draft comprehensive plan for the City of Scandia.

All local government units within the seven-county metropolitan region must prepare a comprehensive plan and update that plan every 10 years. The Metropolitan Council is charged with reviewing local comprehensive plans.

Before formally submitting local comprehensive plan updates to the Met Council, local governments must provide adjacent and affected jurisdictions the opportunity to review and comment on the draft plan during a mandatory six-month review period. Comprehensive plans must be submitted to the Met Council by Dec. 31.

The county's comments stated encouragement for the city's resiliency goals and objectives that promote solar access and the promotion of other alternative fuels, and commended the city taking steps to become a GreenStep City. The county also asked the city to encourage "away-from-home" recycling in public recreation areas, and commended the city for encouraging a range of housing options in the city, and for the city's water resources goals.

**Contact: Colin Kelly, Senior Planner, 651-430-6011**

### **County Board approves hiring staff for county Crisis Response Unit**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners gave its approval to hire additional staff for a newly-created county Crisis Response Unit Aug. 7.

The equivalent of almost 12 full-time staff members will be hired to form a new Crisis Response Unit in the county, starting in the beginning of 2019.

The county will create the unit to provide mobile crisis mental health services in response to the recommendations of the governor's task forces on mental health and protection of children. Mobile crisis services provide a rapid response to assess the individual, resolve crisis situations, and link people to needed services.

Starting in 2019, county emergency mobile mental health services will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Mobile crisis interventions are face-to-face, short-term, intensive mental health services provided during a mental health crisis or emergency.

Mobile crisis teams divert people in crisis from psychiatric hospitalization. They link suicidal individuals discharged from the emergency department to services, and link people in crisis to outpatient services.

The cost for the Crisis Response Unit is estimated at \$1.1 million a year. In 2019, the county has budgeted \$351,400 in levy funds and \$460,400 in allocated grant funds, in addition to recapturing \$105,100 in joint funding with Ramsey County to pay for the unit. It also anticipates that the county will receive \$163,600 in third-party billing and federal reimbursement.

**Contact: Kathy Mickelson, Community Services Division Manager, 651-430-6532**

### **County Board approves gambling application for Arcade Phalen American Legion**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a permit application for the Arcade Phalen American Legion Aug. 7 to conduct gambling at the Disabled Veterans Rest Camp in May Township.

Monthly bingo and meat raffles will be conducted in accordance with state requirements.

There is no county fee for a Premises Permit Application; however, the applicant will be required to pay a \$150 annual state fee. Before the Gambling Control Board may issue a premises permit, the county must give prior approval of the application. The permit application and county resolution will be sent to the Minnesota Gambling Control Board for its consideration.

**Contact: Steve Gransee, Property Records and Taxpayers Services Elections Division Manager, 651-430-8272**

### **County Board approves plat for St. Croix Knoll Stables Addition**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a plat for St. Croix Knoll Stables Addition Aug. 7.

St. Croix Knoll Stables Addition is an abstract plat in Denmark Township east of St. Croix Trail South, north of 110th Street South, and south of St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park. It is a one-lot plat combining three lots into one.

The plat has already been approved by the Denmark Township board.

**Contact: Nancie Schwintek, Property Records and Taxpayers Services Division Manager, 651-430-6758**

### **County Board approves agreement for assessing services with City of Hugo**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement with the City of Hugo Aug. 7 to provide assessing services for the city.

Washington County provides local assessment services for more than 85 percent of the parcels in the county. The City of Hugo will pay the county a fee determined by the county fee schedule for assessing services. The Hugo City Council has approved the agreement.

The board also approved hiring a full-time residential property appraiser to assess the approximately 6,500 residential properties in the city.

**Contact: Jennifer Wagenius, Property Records and Taxpayer Services Director, 651-430-6182**

### **County Board conducts public hearing to name a Cottage Grove's lake, continues hearing to Aug. 28**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing Aug. 7 on the naming of an unnamed lake in Cottage Grove.

After hearing testimony from six residents, the board continued the hearing to Aug. 28 before making a decision.

The county received a petition requesting that the board name an unnamed body of water in Cottage Grove Lake Robert. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) lake identifier is 82-83W. The lake is south of Military Road, west of Jamaica Avenue, and north of 70th Street. The petition met state requirements.

After the public hearing was ordered, a letter was sent to the City of Cottage Grove, the South Washington Heritage Society, and the DNR notifying them of the petition and planned public hearing, and asking them to provide any comments on the proposed name to the county prior to the public hearing.

**Contact: Jennifer Wagenius, Property Records and Taxpayer Services Director, 651-430-6182**

### **August recognized as Minnesota Breastfeeding Month**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners recognized August as Minnesota Breastfeeding Month Aug. 7.

They also recognized Aug. 1-7 as World Breastfeeding Month.

From birth, breastfeeding protects infant health. Evidence of the impact on future health for both mother and infant is growing. Increasing breastfeeding initiation, duration, and exclusivity are state and national goals. Achieving these goals will reduce health care costs and save money for families, employers, and society.

Breastfeeding promotion and support is integral to the work of the Washington County Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program to improve maternal and infant health and to reduce health disparities. The current breastfeeding rate for WIC participants is nearly 85 percent at birth and 35 percent at six months. This year for the observance during August, the local WIC staff will provide displays at each clinic, hand out a small gift to breastfeeding families, and continue to support and encourage these important family decisions.

During the 2018 Washington County Fair, a breastfeeding tent was provided for a private place to breastfeed while attending the fair.

**Contact: Shannon Eisentrager, Communications Specialist, 651-430-6672**

### **County purchases property in Woodbury for future public services campus**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the purchase of land at the southeast corner of Bailey Road and Cottage Grove Drive in Woodbury Aug. 7 for a future public services campus.

The 60 acres of land will cost \$3.65 million.

The Novak parcel became available when the owner contacted Washington County and advised that he was considering selling the property. The parcel will provide the necessary space for the future campus expansion. An appraisal was completed and reviewed by the County Board, which authorized county staff to make an offer based on the appraisal, and the owner accepted the offer.

**Contact: Don Theisen, Public Works Director, 651-430-4304**

**Hardrives, Inc., will put in turn lanes at CSAH 15, 30<sup>th</sup> Street**

Hardrives, Inc., will install turn lanes at County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 15 and 30<sup>th</sup> Street where Baytown and West Lakeland townships and the City of Lake Elmo touch, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$432,681 contract with the company Aug. 7.

The project will add turn lanes and drainage improvements to the roadway that carries 22,500 vehicles each day. The work is considered interim improvements until the third phase of improvements on the Manning Avenue Corridor are done.

**Contact: Frank Ticknor, Design Engineer, 651-430-4319**