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Our Mission: Providing quality services through responsible leadership, innovation and the cooperation of dedicated people

**Date:** May 21, 2019  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the May 21, 2019, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

### **County Board will conduct public hearing June 11 on selling bonds**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set a public hearing for June 11 to receive comment on the sale of general obligation bonds to support the county's 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan.

The board set the hearing at its May 21 meeting.

The County Board has adopted a county Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2019-2023. The plan includes financing of \$31 million through bonding to pay for the projects.

The financing will be structured to remain within the board's budget guidelines and debt policy.

At the public hearing, county staff and consultants will provide project information, financial strategies, and legal requirements associated with the planned sale of bonds.

**Contact: Tabatha Hansen, Accounting and Finance Director, 651-430-6027**

### **County Board approves liquor license, gambling permit applications**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an application for a temporary on-sale liquor license and two application for off-site gambling May 21.

The board approved the application for a one-to-four-day temporary on-sale liquor license from Stillwater VFW Post 323 for a special event at the Washington County Fairgrounds July 31 through Aug. 4.

*A great place to live, work and play...today and tomorrow*

The board also approved off-site gambling applications from the Afton Bayport Lakeland Lions Club and from the Greeder Hinds Comfort Post 323 Auxiliary to conduct off-site gambling at the Washington County Fairgrounds July 31 through Aug. 4.

State law requires the county to approve permits for organizations to conduct off-site gambling within townships. Washington County processes all liquor licenses for the townships within the county. The county is required by the state to review the establishments' insurance certification, and the Sheriff's Office and Attorney's Office complete compliance and verification checks. The applicants pay for the cost to the county for administration, compliance, and verification checks.

**Contact: Steve Gransee, Taxpayer Services & Election Division Manager, 651-430-8272**

### **County Board reviews 2018 performance measurement report**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners received the 2018 Performance Measures and Indicators Report May 21, along with an update on countywide performance measurements and quality improvement efforts.

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.

Performance measurements from the current report highlighted for the board are the rate of early voting in the county, early literacy projects, and an enhanced review of how changes are made in the county's child support program when there is a review by the courts.

Highlights from the early literacy program discussed the variety of research-based early literacy programs and training sessions the library uses, focusing on vital early literacy skills. The library offers programs in which librarians foster an excitement for reading in children and share best practices with families and caregivers. In 2018, the library hosted 835 early literacy programs and reached 32,931 children, families, caregivers, and educators in a variety of settings, including the very popular storytimes, offered at seven locations across the county. The report notes the enrichment programs that the library offers, such as visits by music groups from the MacPhail Center for Music. The report points out how the library is one piece of a community-wide effort to prepare children to

read by third grade. Through these programs and training opportunities, the county helps to ensure that every child is ready to learn to read.

The complete report can be found at [www.co.washington.mn.us/performanceasures](http://www.co.washington.mn.us/performanceasures).

**Contact: Amanda Hollis, Senior Planner, 651-430-6021**

### **County Board proclaims May as Mental Health Month**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners proclaimed May as Mental Health Month in Washington County May 21.

This recognition helps to inform the public about the importance of mental health in the community, and it highlights several of the programs and services offered by Washington County to address mental health concerns.

During the past year, the county, led by the Sheriff's Office, has begun work on the Stepping Up Initiative. Stepping Up is a national initiative to reduce mental illness in jail inmates. Key to these efforts is having an effective process in place to accurately identify and collect data on individuals with mental illnesses who enter county jails.

**Contact: Lowell Johnson, Public Health & Environment Director, 651-430-6725**

### **Washington County will submit application for funds from 3M settlement for projects**

Washington County will apply for funds from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources available under the 3M Expedited Projects, after the County Board approved the application May 21.

The applications are due May 25.

The application is for funds to supplement the county's existing well-sealing cost-share program. Unsealed wells present a threat to groundwater quality. In areas of contamination, such as where per- and poly-fluoro alkyl substances (PFAS) have been found, this is particularly important.

Well sealing is an identified strategy in the county's approved Groundwater Plan. Many private and public wells are impacted by the PFAS in groundwater, especially in the southern portion of the county.

Requested funds would be used to cover the cost of sealing wells in communities impacted by PFAS pollution. This could include residents who are being hooked up to city water through smaller projects, or residents who have already been hooked up to water in the past, but still have an unsealed well on their property.

**Contact: Stephanie Souter, Public Health and Environment Program Supervisor, 651-430-6701**

### **County will use land in Hugo for yard waste collection site**

Washington County will use land in Hugo as a site for yard waste collection, after the County Board approved the lease May 21.

The county has been seeking an appropriate place for yard waste operations in the north part of the county, in an area that will meet the needs of most residents. The site is near the intersection of Fenway Avenue and 170<sup>th</sup> Street North in Hugo.

Until a permanent site is found, an interim solution in the north part of the county is to take over the operation of the current City of Hugo's site. Agreements for this site are being completed with the City of Hugo. The current city site, however, is not large enough to accommodate the county operations serving more than the City of Hugo. To expand operations, an adjacent land owner has agreed to lease a portion of his property, which will allow the county adequate acreage to provide yard waste service for the northern portion of the county. The lease will run until Dec. 31, 2022, at a cost of \$3,500 a year for the first two years, and then \$5,836 for the third year.

The county will develop the site for interim use, at an estimated cost of \$137,960.

A contractor will staff the site and manage the collected materials, such as leaves, grass, garden material, brush, trees and other household organics. Proceeds from the County Environmental Charge will be used for the lease payment and operations of the site.

**Contact: Sharon Price, Right of Way Specialist/Property Manager, 651-430-4391**