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**Date:** June 4, 2019  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the June 4, 2019, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

### **County will receive funds to help prevent homelessness**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted \$337,329 from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency June 4 that will be used to prevent or mitigate homelessness in the county.

The county will allocated \$141,399 to Solid Ground and \$164,698 to the YMCA. Solid Ground will use the money for rapid re-housing for families, which includes rent payment assistance and support services. The YMCA will use the money for rapid re-housing for youth, which includes rent payment assistance and support services. The county will also use just more than \$30,000 for administration of the programs.

**Contact: Dana Dumbacher, Community Services Policy Analyst, 651-430-8363**

### **County Board approves plat for Carnelian Overlook in Stillwater Township**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a plat for Carnelian Overlook in Stillwater Township, north of Stonebridge Trail and east of Partridge Road North June 4.

The plat has four lots.

By state law, the County Board approves plats in townships.

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

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### **County Board approves comments for community comprehensive plans**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved comments for draft comprehensive plans for Lake St. Croix Beach, St. Mary's Point, Birchwood Village, and the City of Lakeland June 4.

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 council, local government units must provide adjacent and affected jurisdictions the opportunity to review and comment on the draft plan. Comprehensive plans are to be submitted to the council by Dec. 31, 2019, unless an extension is granted.

The comments received by neighboring jurisdictions must be included with the plan. Washington County and the Community Development Agency staff reviewed the draft comprehensive plan updates.

**Contact: Emily Jorgensen, Planner II, 651-430-4338**

### **County Board approves gambling license application**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the application for an exempt permit of Minnesota Lawful Gambling from the Children's Health Care Foundation June 4 to conduct a raffle at the StoneRidge Golf Club in West Lakeland Township June 10.

After approval by the County Board, the application will be sent to the Minnesota State Gambling Board for its consideration.

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

### **County Board honors childcare provider**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners recognized Margaret Zimmer of Woodbury as the county's Family Childcare Provider of the Year June 4.

Historically, Washington County has recognized family childcare providers for excellence in providing at-home childcare. Individuals in the community nominate providers and the applications are reviewed by an ad hoc committee comprised of the Washington County Child Care Council

members, and submitted to the Washington County Community Services Child Care Licensing Program. Criteria for the program require that the caregiver:

- has been in the field for at least three years;
- promotes quality childcare as a profession and in the community;
- meets annual state training requirements and has future goals to further enhance competency as a childcare provider;
- has a positive impact on the lives of the young children; and
- demonstrates professional skills in childcare.

Zimmer oversees Margi's Mini Academy in Woodbury. She has been providing childcare for 28 years, and will soon have nine children enrolled in her program full-time. Zimmer has a bachelor of arts in psychology and elementary education from Hamline University. She is a member of the Minnesota Licensed Family Child Care Association, Minnesota/National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the National Association of Family Child Care.

The care of children is a family business for Zimmer. Her mother was a licensed childcare provider from 1969 to 1979. Zimmer's sister provided care for approximately 10 years in the 1990s.

Zimmer started her career as a licensed elementary school teacher. She started a career of in-home childcare to be able to care for her three children and still use her training as an educator. Childcare was meant to be a temporary profession until her fourth child entered school full time. When that time came, Zimmer loved the children in her care and worried that the parents would not be able to find alternate childcare with comparable teaching philosophies, and Zimmer decided to stay in the profession.

Zimmer believes that a home-like childcare setting is a wonderful environment for children to learn and grow. Her program has routine, but is flexible. She said that she feels that play is the "work" of children and their day should include a lot of play time, as well as learning. Zimmer teaches the children phonics and pre-reading skills and pre-math skills. The children get exercise by walking to the park, library, or through nature.

Zimmer upholds the requirements on her professional childcare license. She has taken many classes through the years on brain development, sign language, Spanish for Kids, childhood development, math, science, reading and literacy, First Aid and CPR, and abusive heat trauma. She also reads books

and articles on child development and the connection between learning and movement and brain development.

Zimmer has worked with children of different needs and abilities over the years. The person who nominated Zimmer for this honor stated, “[Zimmer] is willing to go the extra mile to accommodate the needs of all children and celebrate their differences.”

The event publicly acknowledges the achievement and success of at-home childcare providers in Washington County and recognizes a provider who stands out in their career as an early childhood educator and caregiver during the past year.

**Contact: Rebecca Motzko, Social Services Supervisor, 651-430-6476**



**Margaret Zimmer receives her award among her charges, their families, and members of the Washington County Board of Commissioners.**

### **Asphalt Surface Technologies Corporation will repave CSAH 29**

Asphalt Surface Technologies (Astech) Corporation will repave County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 29, or Hilton Trail, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$178,372 contract with the company June 4.

The pavement preservation project is between 62nd Street and County Highway 12 (Stillwater Road) in Pine Springs and Mahtomedi, and will provide two thin layers of new pavement, which will extend the life of the pavement.

A larger project for CSAH 29 is included in the county's capital improvement plan to evaluate the need for turn lane and intersection improvements, pedestrian accommodations, roadway drainage, and surface water management, as well as reconstructing the roadway pavement.

This minor resurfacing project will extend the life of the pavement until the roadway is reconstructed in the future.

The repaving should be a three-week project completed this summer. The roadway will remain open to two-way traffic. The project will be paid for with proceeds from the county's wheelage tax.

**Contact: Andrew Giesen, Engineer I, 651-430-4336**

### **County Board will send request for capital improvements to state**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to submit requests to the 2020 Minnesota Capital Budget program June 4, including major road and park projects.

Minnesota's capital budget is primarily funded by issuing state general obligation bonds. The Minnesota Department of Management and Budget asked for capital budget requests in April preceding its submission to next year's Legislature. Preliminary submissions of state agency capital budget requests are due in June, with final submissions due in September. The governor submits a proposed capital budget to the Legislature in January of even-numbered years. Local governments requesting funding must make the request and include a ranking of projects by priority, if submitting more than one project.

The focus of the projects is on critical and strategic investments with emphasis on addressing life and safety issues; preserving existing infrastructure and repairing existing facilities before starting new

projects; and minimizing construction and operating costs. Priority is given to projects with clear regional or statewide significance.

Ramsey County will be submitting a request for the Ramsey/Washington Resource and Energy Center Building improvements project on behalf of the Ramsey/Washington County Recycling & Energy Board. The County Board supports that request. The \$21 million requested would be used to enhance the Recycling and Energy Center to recover source-separated organic waste and add equipment for the removal of recyclables.

Washington County's requests will include:

- Highway 36 and Manning Avenue Interchange Project in Stillwater, Grant, Oak Park Heights, and Stillwater Township, a request for \$15 million. This is the county's top priority.
- Fourth Street Bridge in conjunction with the METRO Gold Line in Oakdale, a request of \$4 million. The new bridge would allow a separate lane for Gold Line and accommodate non-motorized transportation.
- Cottage Grove Ravine Park Lower Landing Development, a request of \$2 million. The current infrastructure is past service life, and would build on recent investments the county has made in the park.
- St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park Boat Launch, a request for \$1 million. The launch would be along a nationally-recognized wild and scenic river, and provide the only public access to the St. Croix River south of Stillwater.

Requests will be reviewed, and final capital budget requests and the governor's recommendations will be submitted to the Legislature Jan. 15, 2020.

**Contact: Emily Jorgensen, Planner II, 651-430-4338**

### **Fixmer honored for 30 years of videotaping County Board meetings**

Don Fixmer, a Stillwater resident, was honored June 4 for 30 years of videotaping Washington County Board of Commissioners meetings.

Fixmer videotapes the County Board and other governmental bodies throughout the St. Croix Valley for Valley Access Channels.

Fixmer started taping the City of Stillwater meetings in 1987, and began taping the county meetings in 1989. Fixmer's work with the county and other governments allows for residents to view meetings on cable access channels and provide their input to the elected officials on issues of importance to them.

**Contact: Molly O'Rourke, Administrator, 651-430-6002**



**Don Fixmer, third from left, is congratulated for 30 years of videotaping County Board meetings June 4. County commissioners congratulating him are Lisa Weik, District 5, Fran Miron, District 1, Gary Kriesel, District 3, Wayne Johnson, District 4, and Stan Karwoski, District 2.**