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Date: Nov. 5, 2019
Contact: Yvonne Klinnert, Public Information Manager
Phone: 651-430-6026, after hours 952-807-3723
E-mail: yvonne.klinnert@co.washington.mn.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Nov. 5, 2019, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board makes appointments to advisory groups

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made two appointments to citizen advisory groups Nov. 5.

Tad Jude was appointed to the Historic Courthouse Advisory Board as an at-large representative to a first term expiring Dec. 31, 2020.

The purpose of the Historic Courthouse Advisory Council is to review current operation and long-range plans of the Historic Courthouse building use and restoration within the context of the mission statement adopted by the County Board for the Historic Courthouse.

James Dibble, Forest Lake, was appointed to the Comfort Lake - Forest Lake Watershed District to a first term expiring Sept. 23, 2022.

Watershed district governance, required by state law, helps to control or alleviate damage by flood waters; improves stream channels for drainage or navigation; reclaims or fills wet or overflow lands; oversees water supply for irrigation; regulates the flow of streams; diverts or changes water courses; provides and conserves water supply; and provides for the protection of groundwater and regulation of groundwater use.

Contact: Alyssa Soderlund, Administrative Assistant, 651-430-6015

County Board will conduct public hearings Dec. 17 on CIP, fee schedule

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Equal Employment Opportunity / Affirmative Action

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set two public hearings for Dec. 17 at its meeting Nov. 5.

One will be to consider the adoption of the final 2020-24 Washington County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). During the public hearing, the County Board will hear public comments, consider any recommended changes to the draft CIP, and adopt the 2020-2024 CIP, pending any final changes. The second public hearing is to consider revisions to the county's fee schedule for 2020. Washington County's Fee Schedule is updated annually. All fee changes are brought to the County Board for approval. By law, the fee schedule can only be adopted after conducting a public hearing.

The public hearings will be conducted at 9 a.m. in the fifth floor Board Room in the county Government Center, 14949 62nd St. N. in Stillwater.

Contacts: Wayne Sandberg, Deputy Public Works Director/County Engineer, 651-430-4339, and Yvonne Klinnert, Public Information Manager, 651-430-6026

Washington County will receive funds to combat auto theft

Washington County will receive \$71,200 to combat auto theft, after the County Board accepted a grant from the Minnesota Department of Commerce Nov. 5.

The grant is for two years running through fiscal year 2021. Washington and Anoka counties have been receiving this grant since 2005. The amount fluctuates each grant cycle. Washington County will distribute \$33,100 to Anoka County, which is its share of the grant.

Contact: Attorney Pete Orput, 651-430-6115

County will receive state grant to enhance community health

Washington County will receive \$543,338 through a local public health act grant from the Minnesota Department of Health to be used from Jan. 2, 2020, through Dec. 31, 2024, after the County Board accepted the grant Nov. 5.

Funds will be used by the county to address areas of public health responsibility and essential public health services.

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

Mills will serve as county medical examiner

Dr. Kelly Mills will serve as the Washington County medical examiner in a four-year term starting Jan. 1, after the County Board made the appointment Nov. 5.

In 2011, Washington County entered into an agreement with Ramsey County for medical examiner services. In that agreement, Dr. Michael B. McGee was named the Washington County medical examiner. McGee was reappointed as medical examiner in 2015 and 2019.

As of Dec. 31, McGee is planning to step down from his position as the medical examiner. Mills has served as McGee's principal assistant for the past 15 years and understands the requirements of Washington County.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

Sheriff's Office will work with state on Narcotics Task Force

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a joint powers agreement Nov. 5 between the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) and the Washington County Narcotics Task Force.

The Sheriff's Office is working with the BCA to participate in a Minnesota Anti-Heroin Task Force Program. Detectives assigned to the Washington County Narcotics Task Force continuously investigate illicit activities related to the distribution of heroin or unlawful distribution of prescription opioids. By participating in the program, overtime incurred by task force members related to opioid overdose death will be reimbursed. The agreement is for five years.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

Alliance will design improvements to Lake Elmo Park Reserve swim pond

Alliance will design improvements to the Lake Elmo Park Reserve swim pond recreation area, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$586,569 contract with the company Nov. 5.

The project will focus on improvements to the beach building and play area, as well as revamping the filtration system for the swim pond.

The swim pond was built in 1985. The pond itself and beach and picnic areas around the pond were improved three years ago. The next project will focus on the beach building, which houses restrooms, the lifeguard station, and the concession stand, as well as the play area that is southeast of the swim pond.

The beach building has insufficient space for what it is being used for, and has poor accessibility. The play area is past its life design, and also lacks accessibility. Its age has required increased maintenance. The filtration and pump system also has aging infrastructure, causing increased maintenance costs.

The improvements are needed to improve the experience that people have at the park, improve accessibility by adhering to the Americans with Disabilities Act, and reduce maintenance costs at the park. Public participation will be part of the design process.

The revenue to cover the cost of the design process is expected to come from Metropolitan Council grants.

It is expected Alliance will use the winter and next spring doing public outreach and preliminary design, with final design planned for fall 2020. Construction planned for fall 2022.

Contact: Andrew Giesen, Engineer II, 651-430-4336