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

Date: Nov. 12, 2019
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Nov. 12, 2019, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

Regional Rail Commission makes appointments to Great River Rail Commission

The Washington County Board of Commissioners, sitting as the Regional Rail Authority Nov. 12, made two appointments to the Great River Rail Commission.

Commissioner Wayne Johnson, District 4, was appointed the Washington County representative on the Great River Rail Commission for the remainder of 2019 and through 2020. Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5, was appointed as the alternate Washington County representative to the Great River Rail Commission for the same timeframe.

The Great River Rail Commission advocates for the development of the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train Project, a daily round-trip passenger train between the Twin Cities and Chicago.

Contact: Sara Allen, Planner II, 651-430-4363

Regional Rail Commission makes changes to Gateway Corridor Commission

The Washington County Board of Commissioners, sitting as the Regional Rail Authority Nov. 12, terminated the joint powers agreement that established the Gateway Corridor Commission.

The vote also transferred the remaining balance of the commission's funds, after payment of all outstanding obligations, to the newly formed Gold Line Joint Powers Board.

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Formed in 2009, the Gateway Corridor Commission was funded by Ramsey and Washington counties in equal share, and was comprised of local elected officials and business and community leaders.

The Gateway Corridor Commission:

- lead planning studies, including alternatives analysis, draft environmental impact statement, and station area planning;
- engaged with the public to inform and build support for the project;
- advocated for the project at the state and federal level;
- provided educational opportunities and peer region site visits for its members; and
- moved the project to the Metropolitan Council for seamless entry into the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Grant Program.

The new Gold Line Joint Powers Board was created in July 2019, by agreement among Ramsey County, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority, Washington County, and Washington County Regional Railroad Authority. The purpose of the new board is to fund and oversee the next phase of work of the Gold Line Project, and see the Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit Project through engineering and construction.

The Gold Line is a planned bus rapid transit line that will go from downtown St. Paul to Woodbury, roughly along Hudson Boulevard. It is expected that service will begin in 2024.

Contact: Jan Lucke, Public Works Planning Director, 651-430-4316

County Board approves comments on City of Dellwood comprehensive plan

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a comment letter for the City of Dellwood comprehensive plan Nov. 12.

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. The comments must be included with the formal plan update submittal. County staff reviewed the draft City of Dellwood Comprehensive Plan Update.

The county's comments stated that the county is encouraged by the city's proactive approach to water management, and commended the city on its Trail Planning section to protect walkers and bikers in the city, and the city's support for solar access protection through the city's zoning ordinance.

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

County Board agrees to purchase land for Grey Cloud Island Regional Park

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed Nov. 12 to purchase land at 11523 Grey Cloud Trail S. in Cottage Grove for inclusion into Grey Cloud Island Regional Park.

The purchase of the property aligns with the Grey Cloud Island Regional Park Master Plan, originally adopted in 1994.

The acquisition of the property was initiated by the property owners who advised the county of their interest in selling the property. The property owners and county negotiated the \$319,000 purchase price.

The total purchase price of the property will be funded 75 percent by the Metropolitan Council, and 25 percent by Washington County's Land and Water Legacy Program.

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

Sheriff's Office will receive communications trailer from ATF

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive a communications trailer from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), after the County Board accepted the donation Nov. 12.

The trailer is a 10-foot enclosed box and includes a generator with external fuel tank, air conditioner, and a radio tower. This trailer can be used to set up radio or data networks in areas with compromised communications or to offload low priority radio traffic from the county's public safety radio system.

This trailer may also be used by ham radio communications volunteers.

This trailer is valued at \$3,000 and will be stored at the county's North Shop cold storage building.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

County Board approves 5-year agreement with amateur radio club

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a five-year agreement Nov. 12 between the South East Metro Amateur Radio Club (SEMARC) and the Washington County Sheriff's Office. The agreement runs from the beginning of December to Dec. 1, 2024.

The SEMARC provides volunteer communications support for planned and unplanned public safety events in Washington County, especially the Cottage Grove radiological event reception center.

SEMARC wishes to place a ham radio repeater at the Forest Lake tower site to support events in the northern portion of the county. The county will supply the tower antenna, feedline, and electricity.

SEMARC will supply and install the repeater equipment in the county's shelter.

The lease has no cost and no installation cost for the county, as the county has an unused antenna at the site that will function with the proposed radio repeater.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

County will rent storage space from City of Woodbury

Washington County will rent space for staff and equipment, including plow trucks, from the City of Woodbury, after the County Board approved a lease with the city Nov. 12.

The base rent for the facilities will be \$35,000 per year, and the five-year payment of \$175,000 shall be made before the start of the lease.

The City of Woodbury recently remodeled and reconstructed its maintenance facility off Tower Drive and has adequate room to lease space to the county for staff and storage of equipment.

The proposed lease would be for five years, and would provide 6,000 square feet of equipment storage and office equipment. The county anticipates storing three snow plow trucks and other equipment at the facility.

Contact: Cory Slagle, Assistant County Engineer, 651-430-4337