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

Date: Nov. 19, 2019
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Nov. 19, 2019, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County's library receives gift from Renaissance Charitable Foundation

The Washington County Library will receive a gift of \$1,000 from the Renaissance Charitable Foundation.

The County Board accepted the gift on behalf of the library Nov. 19.

Contact: Amy Stenftenagel, Interim Library Director, 651-275-8521

County will have electronic poll books ready for elections in August

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the purchase of electronic poll books Nov. 19 to use during elections.

The county will purchase the electronic poll books from KNOWiNK for \$379,145 under a state contract. Specialized charging carts and other supplies are also part of the purchase, with a full cost of \$388,500. Annual maintenance for election equipment is paid for by local municipalities.

Electronic poll books provide an efficient method for voters to register or check-in on election day. They are not used for voting, or to tabulate ballots.

More than 50 Minnesota counties have purchased the KNOWiNK electronic poll books, and they are used across the country. Washington County will use them for the first time during the August 2020 election.

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

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

County will receive funds to protect water resources

Washington County will receive \$160,509 to be used to protect water resources, after the County Board approved an agreement with the Board of Water and Soil Resources Nov. 19.

The money will be used for projects from Jan. 1, 2020, through Dec. 31, 2022.

The Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG) is a composite of grants available to counties to assist programs that protect and improve water resources. Individual programs under this grant include Comprehensive Local Water Management, the Wetland Conservation Act, the Department of Natural Resources Shoreland Management Program, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) Program.

To be eligible for the NRBG, a county must have a locally-adopted and Board of Water and Soil Resources approved comprehensive local water management plan, which is the county's groundwater plan, and submit an annual report.

The funding for each program area is:

- Comprehensive Local Water Management, \$16,188;
- Wetland Conservation Act, \$83,102, which will be passed through to the Washington Conservation District for 2020 and 2021;
- Shoreland Management Program, \$5,230;
- Septic Treatment Systems, \$18,600, for 2020;
- Septic Treatment Systems Upgrade, \$37,389, for 2020.

Contact: Jessica Collin-Pilarski, Senior Planner, 651-430-6703

Washington, Ramsey counties will use loan from reserve funds to update Recycling & Energy Center

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to work with Ramsey County to loan the joint Recycling & Energy Board \$5 million to make improvements to the Recycling & Energy Center (R&E Center) in Newport.

The counties' Recycling & Energy Board, a joint board between the two counties, has worked since 2013 to achieve environmental, economic, and social benefits through the Recycling & Energy

Center. To continue that task, the R&E Center will require an expansion and system improvements; the joint board has approved that work.

To finance the renovation of the administration building and construction on an enclosure for the residue/refuse-derived fuel load-out area, the counties will change the requirements of their R&E reserve funds, and loan the reserve funds to the joint board for the renovations.

The \$5 million loan will be split 73% from Ramsey County (\$3,650,000) and 27% from Washington County (\$1,350,000). These loans will be paid back to the counties in the same proportions in four annual payments of \$500,000 from 2024 through 2027, and two annual payments of \$1.5 million in 2028 and 2029, for a term of six years at no interest.

The R&E Board chair has already approved the loan agreements with the counties.

Contact: Nicole Stewart, Senior Environmental Resource Manager, 651-430-6713

County Board receives update on Marine on St. Croix Community Library

The Washington County Board of Commissioners received an update Nov. 19 from the Marine Library Association (MarLA) on the activities and services provided by MarLA at the Marine on St. Croix Community Library.

Jim Maher, board chair of the volunteer library, reported to the County Board, and was accompanied by Mary Burke, a board member, and Marine on St. Croix Councilmember Bill Miller.

The library is celebrating its eighth birthday in January. Maher reported on the activities during the past year. The library has added 400 new books over the course of the year, and Maher said that the community is appreciative of also being able to access new titles through the Washington County Library. New this year is a rotating art display in the library, which draws foot traffic to the building, while the library continues to offer children's and adult programming, such as author talks and poetry readings. A major draw at the library was a recent presentation by former Minnesota Supreme Court Associate Justice Alan Page. The library also collaborates with the Marine Film Society, and is in its sixth year of hosting a documentary series.

Maher said that the success of the library is a testament to how a community can come together to create a community asset.

Maher also thanked the staff at the county's Hardwood Creek Library and the County Board for their support of the library.

The Washington County Library works with the Marine Community Library to maintain and support the community library and to ensure that Marine residents continue to have access to comprehensive library services provided by the county.

Contact: Kim Ukura, Social Media Specialist, 651-275-8511