

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

**Date:** Dec. 17, 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 Dec. 17, 2019, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

### **Salvation Army will provide services to those in county who could become homeless**

The Salvation Army will provide services to those in Washington County who could become homeless, after the County Board agreed Dec. 17 to provide the organization \$113,504 to support the services.

The money is to be used through Sept. 30, 2021.

In 1993, the Minnesota Legislature established the Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) to assist families with children, youth/unaccompanied youth, and single adults who are experiencing barriers to housing stability. This program is conducted through the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency with funds awarded on a biennial basis.

The funds will be used to serve approximately 64 households with rent and damage deposit payment assistance to prevent homelessness.

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

### **County Board approves comments on Met Council draft transit, transportation plan**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners offered comments Dec. 17 on the Metropolitan Council's Draft Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan.

The county offered comments on the draft plan, including:

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- the plan does not recognize or respond to employment-related transportation barriers with several proposed strategies that may increase the effectiveness of services for those seeking work and those seeking talent;
- the plan does not address the impact of limited transportation on access to food, with proposed activities and strategies that may increase options for older adults, persons with disabilities, and/or low-income residents;
- the plan should outline more activities that will strengthen and sustain Metro Mobility;
- the plan needs additional information on demographic projections that illustrate the transportation challenges of the future; and
- the plan should use available “real-time” data that specifically speaks to the transportation barriers that the region’s residents encounter.

**Contact: Sheila Holbrook-White, Community Services Policy Analyst, 651-430-6609**

### **Marine Library will use money from Jordan bequest for book drop**

The Marine Community Library will receive a new book drop, using \$3,367 from the Jordan bequest to pay for the purchase.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to the purchase Dec. 17.

In 2001, Elizabeth Jordan made a bequest in her will to the Washington County Library to be used for the Marine Library branch. In 2012, an agreement was reached between the City of Marine and the county that, upon request of the city, the county would disburse funds from the bequest to support the Marine Community Library. Through a joint powers agreement between the city and the county, the city residents have maintained access to the county library system. A separate non-profit organization, the Marine Library Association (MarLA), maintains a small community library, which includes privately-purchased materials, as well as materials and services provided by the county library.

**Contact: Aubrey Fonfara, Communications Specialist, 651-275-8504**

### **County Board agrees to provide election services to cities, school districts**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed Dec. 17 to provide election services to several cities and school districts in the county in 2020.

The county administers elections for other governmental bodies through contracts that reimburse the county for its staff costs and other expenses.

The County Board approved an agreement with the City of Lakeland, which will pay \$11,258 for election services.

The board also approved updated city election services joint powers agreements with the cities of Forest Lake, Oakdale, Grant, Pine Springs, and Landfall. The fees that the cities will pay are now part of the county's fee schedule.

The County Board also approved updated election services joint powers agreements with the school districts of North St Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale 622; Forest Lake 831; Mahtomedi 832; South Washington County 833; and Stillwater 834. The annual fees charged to the school districts will also be part of the county fee schedule.

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

### **County will continue to manage funds to fight aquatic invasive species**

Washington County will receive \$135,414 from the state to fight aquatic invasive species in 2020, and the County Board agreed Dec. 17 to continue to administer the program.

In the 2014 legislative session, a county aid program was created to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) in lakes and rivers. Based on the county's 24 watercraft trailer launches and 353 watercraft trailer parking spaces, Washington County received \$135,414 in local AIS prevention aid in 2019.

The county must submit a request to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources by the last day of the year before funds are distributed the following year.

**Contact: Maureen Hoffman, Planner II, 651-430-6684**

### **County will work with Washington Conservation District on conservation practices**

Washington County will continue to work with the Washington Conservation District that provides technical assistance and educational services to promote and apply soil and water conservation practices throughout the county.

The County Board approved a 2020 contract for \$260,000 with the agency Dec. 17.

The contract is for the same amount as in 2019, and will provide partial funding for the organization's administrative activities and services in the areas of local water management, land and water treatment, and public education. Included in the agreement is funding for the East Metro Water Resources Education Program.

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

### **County Board approves contract for tenant in Historic Courthouse**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a lease agreement in the county's Historic Courthouse Dec. 17.

Valley Tours, Inc., will continue to lease office space in the courthouse. The company has leased 306 square feet of office space on the first floor of the Historic Courthouse since 1995. The proposed amendment extends the term of the lease for 12 months ending Dec. 31, 2020, with no change in the current monthly rent payments, which go into the courthouse's restoration fund.

**Contact: Alex McKinney, Parks Manager, 651-430-4364**

### **County Board approves contract for mechanical maintenance in county buildings**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an annual \$385,723 contract with Metropolitan Mechanical Contractors, Inc., for the maintenance of the building mechanical systems in the Stillwater Government Center campus and the Historic Courthouse Dec. 17.

The service contract provides for the routine and preventative maintenance of major building mechanical systems in the buildings. The contract includes analyzing major equipment, consulting on energy optimization, and one-hour emergency response around the clock.

The contractor shall provide a number of specialized workers on an as-needed basis, with the ability to dispatch several more of each discipline in an emergency.

**Contact: Tim Stich, Building Services Operations/Maintenance Manager, 651-430-6233**

### **County will seek money to install tornado sirens**

Washington County will seek \$27,578 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's hazardous mitigation grant program to install tornado sirens in the northern part of the county to serve Big Marine Park Reserve and the Disabled Veterans Rest Camp.

The County Board approved the application Dec. 17.

Big Marine Park Reserve has a risk of thunderstorms and lightning during the summer when the park experiences the most visits. The park reserve is in a rural area of Washington County with no near access to a tornado siren to alert visitors to the threat of severe weather, and has more than 227,000 visits annually. Surrounded by the park is the Disabled Veterans Rest Camp, which has an additional 30,000 visitors each year. A tornado siren will increase the evacuation time for visitors and staff to take shelter in appropriate locations. The extra time afforded by an early and localized warning reduces the chances of a casualty.

**Contact: Alex McKinney, Parks Manager, 651-430-4364**

### **Sir Lines-A-Lot will do county's ground-in pavement marking striping**

Sir Lines-A-Lot will provide Washington County's ground-in pavement markings in 2020.

The County Board approved a \$157,568 contract with the company Dec. 17.

Lane striping is required on roadways meeting certain width and volume thresholds under standards adopted by state and federal rules. Many Washington County highways meet these thresholds.

Washington County contracts out for its highway striping. Ground-in striping puts the pavement marking material below the pavement surface, and significantly increases the life expectancy of the markings. Bids for ground-in striping are requested on an annual basis.

**Contact: Mitch Bartelt, Engineer II, 651-430-4349**

### **Sheriff's Office will receive funds for narcotics task force**

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive \$90,000 from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Justice Programs, for funding the Washington County Narcotics Task Force.

The County Board accepted the money Dec. 17. It will be used to reimburse the Sheriff's Office for personnel expenses of the sergeant overseeing the task force during 2020.

**Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601**

### **Sheriff's Office receives \$2,000 from Walmart**

The Washington County Sheriff's Office received \$2,000 from Walmart, which the County Board accepted Dec. 17.

The money will be used to support, Shop with a Cop, hosted by the Sheriff's Office, which occurred during the week.

**Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601**

### **County Board sets 2020 budget, levy**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set the county's 2020 budget and levy Dec 17.

The board certified:

- a tax levy of \$115.7 million for county operations, capital, and debt service;
- the Washington County Regional Rail Authority levy of \$660,000; and
- the board consented to the property tax levy set by the Washington County Community Development Agency at \$5.42 million.

The board has been reviewing the 2020 recommended budget, which will be partially supported by the levies, since late summer. This levy amount is estimated to produce a reduction in the county tax rate.

Expenditures for 2020 adopted by the County Board total \$281 million. Of that, \$227 million is operating expenditures, \$38 million is capital project funds, and \$15.9 million is for debt service.

The Board also adopted 2020 expenditures for the Regional Rail Authority in the amount of \$689,000.

Archives of the webstreamed meetings at which the board members discussed the budget are on the county website at [www.co.washington.mn.us](http://www.co.washington.mn.us). Budget presentations may also be viewed on the website by using the search word "budget."

**Contact: Kevin Corbid, Deputy Administrator, 651-430-6003**

## **County Board conducts public hearing, adopts capital improvement plan**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing on the county's 2020-2024 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Dec. 17, and then approved the plan.

No residents spoke at the hearing. Comment letters were received from a number of county cities, including Cottage Grove, Forest Lake, Hugo, Scandia, and Woodbury. Responses to those communities were included at the hearing.

State law requires the hearing, which covered the county's 2020-2024 CIP. The plan includes major roadway, parks, and facility projects in the county planned for the next five years. Along with projects planned for the next five years, specific projects for 2020 are included. Some of those major projects will be:

- County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 19 from Dale Road to CSAH 18;
- CSAH 5 from County Road 64 to Sycamore Street West;
- the intersection of CSAH 18 and CSAH 20 in Woodbury; and
- CSAH 18 from Woodlane Drive to CSAH 13 in Woodbury.

In addition, several county roadways will be designed in 2020, in preparation for construction in later years.

Major parks projects for 2020 include the Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park lower landing facility, a St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park boat launch, as well as a number of park maintenance projects throughout the county.

In addition to bond funds, the capital improvement plan is funded by state and federal transportation aid, state sales tax, state bonds, and local contributions from municipalities where the project is located.

**Contact: Wayne Sandberg, County Engineer/Public Works Deputy Director, 651-430-4339**

## **County Board conducts public hearing on 2020 fee schedule**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing on the county's 2020 fee schedule Dec. 17.

No residents spoke before the County Board adopted the new fee schedule.

The county's fee schedule is governed by county policy, as well as state laws and rules. The governing policy states that when a single user is the beneficiary of a service, the costs of the service should be borne by that individual. Service delivery costs can be supported by revenue other than user fees when there is a public benefit provided by the service.

The county policy is to set fees that have a reasonable relation between the fee and the cost of providing the service, as well as a number of other considerations.

Programs throughout the county may require fees, and each is reviewed and considered for changes each year. Changes in fees are made to reflect changes in services offered, as well as any state legislative changes that affect county services and related fees.

Information on fees charged for a variety of services and programs can be found on the county's website [www.co.washington.mn.us](http://www.co.washington.mn.us).

**Contact: Yvonne Klinnert, Public Information Manager, 651-430-6026**

### **County Board requests speed studies on county roads**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners authorized the County Engineer Dec. 17 to request that the Minnesota Department of Transportation perform speed studies on a number of county roadways.

According to state law, the authority to determine speed limits on a county highway resides with the commissioner of the Department of Transportation. It is normal procedure to request such a determination after a roadway has undergone major changes, such as reconstruction, expansion, or significant changes to the roadside character or access.

County State Aid Highway (CSAH) roadways that have recently been subject to roadway alteration projects are:

- CSAH 6 (Stillwater Boulevard North) from Highway 120 to Granada Avenue North;
- CSAH 13 from the Highway 36 westbound ramps at the new roundabout intersection to Olson Lake Trail North;
- CSAH 17 from CSAH 14 to CSAH 10;
- CSAH 17B from Interstate 94 to CSAH 10; and
- CSAH 18 from Pioneer Drive to CSAH 19.

**Contact: Mitch Bartelt, Engineer II, 651-430-4349**

### **SRF selected for final design of Manning, Highway 36 intersection**

SRF Consulting, Inc., will perform the final design and project coordination for the Manning Avenue (County State Aid Highway 15) and Highway 36 interchange, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to a \$1.1 million contract with the company Dec. 17.

Manning Avenue provides access to northern Washington County, and Highway 36 is a critical east-west highway that serves the northeast metro to the Wisconsin border. The current intersection has significant congestion during morning and evening peak hours that will worsen with increased traffic caused from the opening of the St. Croix Crossing. The intersection also has a significant number of crashes that are severe. A better roadway would improve access to areas that may be developed soon, while benefiting pedestrians and stormwater drainage.

An interchange study was conducted in 2017 and 2018 to identify the needs at the current intersection's location now and into the future. In 2019, the designs were further refined to determine a preferred alternative. A design layout has been submitted to Minnesota Department of Transportation for review, with anticipated approval in January 2020.

SRF will provide public and agency involvement, final design, and environmental documentation for a grade separated interchange to be constructed in 2021.

The contract is funded with state aid funds.

**Contact: Nathan Arnold, Engineer II, 651-430-4384**

### **Downs Government Affairs hired for federal legislative representation**

Downs Government Affairs will provide federal legislative representation to Washington County, after the County Board agreed to a contract with the firm Dec. 17.

The county issued a request for proposals for federal legislative representation in August, and 12 firms responded. County staff interviewed four firms,

The county lead will be Tom Downs, who has more than 30 years of experience working on Capitol Hill. In addition, Downs Government Affairs is partnering with Aurora Strategic Advisors, LLC, a locally-based firm lead by Dawn Erlandson and Mike Erlandson.

The contract with the firm is two years, beginning Jan. 1, 2020. The contract includes a clause allowing either party to terminate the agreement without cause through a 60-day written notice. Payment under the contract shall not exceed \$60,000 a year, paid in 12 equal monthly installments. No other compensation will be paid unless agreed to in writing by the county.

**Contact: Kevin Corbid, Deputy County Administrator, 651-430-6003**



**Staff members of the Washington County Department of Community Corrections with the Washington County Board of Commissioners and staff from the Association of Minnesota Counties with the award from the association for the county's Dosage Probation program.**

### **Washington County's Dosage Probation program wins statewide award**

Dosage Probation, a program piloted by Washington County's Department of Community Corrections, was recognized by the Association of Minnesota County's at its conference in early December.

The County Board recognized the award at its meeting Dec. 17.

Washington County Community Corrections is one of two sites in the nation creating a new way to deliver probation services to adult offenders with Dosage Probation. The model was first developed

through a collaboration with The Center of Effective Public Policy and a judicial district in Milwaukee, Wis.

Dosage probation relies on an offender's internal motivation to change behavior. The offender can shorten the time they are under probation supervision by actively participating and completing programming to reduce the likelihood of future criminal behavior. The model is more efficient and cost-effective than the traditional model of supervision in which probationers are sentenced to years of supervision with or without behavior change conditions.

Those offenders who have Dosage Probation have been released from probation earlier than would have been the case with earlier programs.

National Institute of Corrections (NIC) has adopted Dosage Probation as one of its major initiatives in 2019, and has sponsored Washington County to train correctional professionals from around the country to embrace this innovative intervention.

**Contact: Yvonne Klinnert, Public Information Manager, 651-430-6026**