



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

Date: Jan. 28, 2020
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Jan. 28, 2020, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

Members named to county's Library Board

The Washington County Board of Commissioners named members to the county's Library Board Jan. 28.

Sunday Olayinka, Woodbury, was named as an at-large representative; Mary Burke, Marine on St. Croix, was named as a District 1 representative; and Shawn Foster-Huot, Cottage Grove, was named as a District 4 Representative, all appointed to first terms expiring Dec. 31, 2022.

David Olufson, Mahtomedi, was also re-appointed to the Library Board as an at-large representative, and will serve a second term through 2022.

The Washington County Library Advisory Board is advisory to the Library Director, and the Washington County Board of Commissioners, which is the governing board of the Library.

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

County Board approves contract renewals with service providers

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the renewal of contracts with Opportunity Services, Midwest Special Services, Inc., and Phoenix Alternatives Jan. 28 to provide Day Training & Habilitation (DT&H) and related employment services.

The contracts run through Dec. 31, 2021. Washington County Community Services currently has a contract with a fourth provider, Rise that runs through Dec. 31, 2021.

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

DT&H services assist adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to achieve and maintain the highest level of independence, productivity, and integration in the community. The day programming provides services related to employment, self-care, communication skills, socialization, physical mobility, and cognitive development. The county is mandated to protect the health and safety of vulnerable adults, which includes providing supervision and care for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities during the day when their caregivers are not present.

Opportunity Services and Midwest Special Services also provide three types of employment services, which provide the support to assist individuals with developmental disabilities to work for compensation in community-integrated work environments in which persons without disabilities are employed. The program is designed to promote regular interaction with persons without disabilities who are not paid caregivers or service providers. Services include:

- Employment Exploration Services, which are community-based services that introduce and explore employment. The services assist people in making an informed choice about working in competitive, integrated employment;
- Employment Development-Individualized services that help people find competitive, integrated employment or attain self-employment; and
- Employment Support Services, which are individualized services and support that assist people with maintaining community employment in an individual or group arrangement.

The rate of the services vary for each individual based on needs. This rate formula is determined by a Rate Management System that is administered by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Contact: Kathy Mickelson, Community Services Division Director, 651-430-6532

County Board sets election judge compensation

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set the compensation rate Jan. 28 for election judges for the 2020 elections.

The proposed pay for an election judge is \$11 per hour, a co-head judge is \$13 per hour, a head election judge is \$15 per hour, and absentee ballot election judge is \$16 per hour.

Approximately 600 election judges will be recruited, trained, and assigned to polling locations for the cities of Forest Lake, Grant, Lakeland, Landfall, Oakdale, Pine Springs, and Woodbury. The county

also hires election judges to assist with absentee voting. The other cities and townships in Washington County will recruit and assign judges in their own communities.

The cities will reimburse the costs of precinct election judges, plus county staff costs according to the terms of election service agreements that they have with the county.

County staff reviewed election judge pay at other metropolitan area municipalities and recommended similar rates.

Contact: Steve Gransee, Election Division Manager, 651-430-8272

County Board increases support for U of M Extension for 4-H programs, staff

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement with the Minnesota Extension Service Jan. 28 that increases the support that the county provides to the program.

The agreement runs through Dec. 31, 2021.

The agreement outlines the relationship between the two parties for funding, staffing, and in-kind services, and supports 4-H program activities in the county. The agreement for 2019 included a full-time and two three-quarter time staff for 4-H program coordinators for community youth development and the Youth Teaching Youth school-based programs. The program coordinators are employees of the University of Minnesota, and have offices at the county Government Center.

The new agreement reflects the shared arrangement with increased county funding. In addition to the program coordinators previously funded by the county, the new agreement adds money for one-quarter time of the executive administrative support position, while the Washington County 4-H Federation will fund just more than a half-time position.

The cost for the services for 2020 is \$203,069, which is just more than a \$15,000 increase over 2019.

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

Farmers will continue to lease agricultural land in county parks

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to three leases for agricultural land in county parks Jan. 28.

When Washington County acquires farmland within one of its regional parks, some of the land is often kept agricultural until it's needed for park purposes

Currently, Washington County has 241.95 acres of land that is leased for farming; 112.1 acres in Lake Elmo Park Reserve and 105.1 acres in St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park. The land at Big Marine Park Reserve was recently acquired and is not included in that total acreage.

As a part of Washington County's commitment to pollinators, the county is continuing a provision of the 2018 farmland lease that prohibits the use of neonicotinoid pesticides, which are linked to declines in bee and butterfly populations.

Bids for the lease of agricultural land were requested and opened at a public opening Jan. 7.

Ronald Schiltgen will lease the agricultural land in Big Marine Park Reserve, and David See will lease the agricultural land in Lake Elmo Park Reserve and St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park.

Rental rates paid for individual tracts of farmland depend on the productivity of the land, expected crop prices, costs of production, United States Department of Agriculture programs, and the supply of and demand for rented farmland in the community. Seventy percent of the revenue received from the rental of agricultural land goes into a fund created for “non-recreational” revenue. The remaining 30% is used for in-lieu-of tax payments.

Contact: Dan MacSwain, Natural Resources Coordinator, 651-430-4323

County Board approves contract for electrical maintenance work

Collins Electrical Construction Company will service building electrical systems for Washington County, after the County Board approved a \$216,750 contract with the company Jan. 28.

The service contract provides for the routine and complex work on major and minor building electrical systems at 17 locations throughout Washington County. The contract includes projects not to exceed \$50,000, analysis of major equipment, consultation on energy optimization, and one-hour emergency response time 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

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

County receives grant for local emergency management programs

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a grant agreement between the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency

Management Division, and the Washington County Sheriff's Office for \$111,349 for local emergency management programs between Jan. 1, 2019, and Jan. 31, 2020.

This money will cover personnel costs, including salary, overtime and fringe benefits for the Washington County Emergency Operations Center staff. The grant requires a 100% match, which is covered by levy dollars.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

Sheriff's Office receives gifts to support K-9 unit

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive \$2,000 from the E. Theodore and Lois M. Thompson Family Fund of the Saint Paul and Minnesota Foundation to support the K-9 Unit of the Washington County Sheriff's Office.

The grant is made on behalf of John and Rosie Thompson. The donation will be used to purchase K-9 training aids, leather scratch pants, and arm gauntlets for each handler.

The Sheriff's Office also received a \$1,146 gift from the Oakdale Gun Club to support the K-9 unit.

The money will be used to rebuild the K-9 agility equipment.

The County Board accepted the gifts Jan. 28.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

Library receives \$30,000 from RAFT Foundation

Washington County Library received \$30,000 from the RAFT Foundation, which the County Board accepted Jan. 28.

Washington County Library has received donations from the RAFT Foundation for more than a decade. In the past, the library used the donation to purchase materials, provide training and library outreach, and develop communications materials. This year, the library is recommending the funds be used to improve the children's areas at all branches to enhance support for early literacy and learning.

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

\$390,000 will be used to restore 166 acres of oak savanna at Lake Elmo Park Reserve

Washington County will receive a \$390,000 grant from the Metro Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program to restore 166 acres of oak savanna and prairie within Lake Elmo Park Reserve. The grant is part of the Outdoor Heritage Fund, one of four funds established by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment. Funding is appropriated by the Minnesota Legislature and recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.

Prairie and oak savanna are key habitats within the St. Paul Baldwin Plains and Moraines Ecological Subsection, and contain rare plant, pollinator, and wildlife communities. Project expenses for the restoration project will include contracted services for removal and control of invasive shrubs, restoring prairie, and purchase of native seed.

A 10% in-kind match is required, which will be provided by staff time to plan and implement the project.

Contact: Dan MacSwain, Natural Resources Coordinator, 651-430-4323

SRF will design 3rd phase of Manning Avenue improvements

SRF Consulting, Inc., will do preliminary design and project coordination for the Manning Avenue (County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 15) third phase capacity improvement project, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$319,399 contract with the company Jan. 28.

Manning Avenue from CSAH 10 (10th Street) to the Union Pacific Rail Road is a 2.8-mile segment of the 6.5-mile corridor that connects Highway 36 to Interstate 94 that carries 11,750 vehicles a day. As part of a 2016 corridor study, several improvements were identified to expand Manning Avenue in this area to address its current needs and capitalize on opportunities, such as access management, safety improvements, and trail connectivity. This project will connect the two previously constructed segments and bring this corridor closer to the four-lane vision that was laid out in the corridor study. This contract will cover preliminary design, public engagement, and environmental investigations necessary for the initial development of the phase-three portion of the Manning Avenue corridor project. It is scheduled for construction in 2023.

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

Shafer Contracting Company will get \$300,000 for speedy completion of Hadley project

Shafer Contracting Company, Inc., will receive the \$300,000 offered as incentive pay for completing the Hadley Avenue and Highway 36 interchange project ahead of schedule last summer.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the payment as a change order to the project Jan. 28.

The original contract with the company for the project included provisions for the contractor to receive up to \$400,000 in incentives for completing portions of the project earlier than required. The incentives required the bridge to be open to traffic, the interchange ramps open, and work completed by Nov. 12, 2019. The incentives were \$10,000 per day for early completion, to a maximum of \$200,000. The bridge was opened to traffic Oct. 19, 2019, and the interchange was fully functional on approximately Nov. 5, 2019. The contractor earned an additional \$100,000 when all roadways were opened Nov. 22, 2019, and the final completion date changed from August 2020 to June 2020.

The board agreed that the contractor has earned \$300,000 in early completion incentives for the project and that the contract completion dates were moved up.

The original contract for the project was \$22.1 million, to be completed Aug. 31, 2020, with the \$400,000 early completion incentive. Work will continue this spring on 56th Street and connection roads on the north side of Highway 36, with the entire project scheduled to be complete by the end of June.

Contact: Gerrit Bangma, Construction Engineer, 651-430-4317

County Board accepts gifts for 2019 4th quarter

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted \$5,876 in donations to the county Jan. 28 from the fourth quarter of 2019.

The donations are both cash and in-kind donations.

The Library received \$822 in donations in gifts and memorial donations, and from donation boxes at the Library's branches and the Environmental Center.

Gifts received at the Historic Courthouse from exhibit and tour donations totaled \$188.

Gifts were received for the county's Offender Recovery Program, totaling \$100.

The Historic Courthouse received \$4,865 in in-kind donations that supported its Scary Stories program, and the Christmas at the Courthouse event. The gifts were used as door prizes, and included the catered food and beverages at the event, as well as the decorations used throughout the building for the event.

Contact: Stephanie Kammerud, Administrative Assistant, 651-430-6014

County Board adopts resolution recognizing, honoring O'Rourke for work

The Washington County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution Jan. 28 recognizing and honoring Molly O'Rourke, who retired from her position as county administrator.

O'Rourke was hired by Washington County March 13, 1995. She was promoted to the position of Director of Assessment and Taxation in 1998, promoted to Deputy Administrator in 2001, and promoted to County Administrator in 2012.

During her nearly 25 years of work at the county, O'Rourke focused on ensuring that the county provided excellent customer service, focused on prevention activities, protected and improved the county's financial health, and increased the engagement of county employees, as well as many other accomplishments and achievements. O'Rourke was twice recognized by her peers in 2019 with awards for her outstanding leadership.

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



Washington County commissioners presented outgoing Administrator Molly O'Rourke with a copy of a resolution that recognized and honored the work that she has done at Washington County for the past 25 years. They are Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5, Commissioner Gary Kriesel, District 3, Commissioner Fran Miron, District 1, O'Rourke, Commissioner Wayne A. Johnson, District 4, and Commissioner Stan Karwoski, District 2.