



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

Date: Feb. 25, 2020
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Feb. 25, 2020, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

Weik, Johnson will lead Washington County Regional Rail Authority in 2020

The Washington County Board of Commissioners, sitting as the Regional Rail Authority Feb. 25, elected Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5, as chair of the Regional Rail Authority for 2020.

Commissioner Wayne Johnson, District 4, was also elected vice chair of the authority.

The Regional Rail Authority extended an agreement between the rail authority and the Washington County Community Development Agency (CDA) regarding the sale of property next to the Newport Transit Station. The option to sell the remaining property next to the transit station was extended to Sept. 1, 2021. The land is part of the long-term plan for transit-oriented development around the Newport Transit Station. The CDA built one 41-unit apartment building on the land across the street from the transit station, and is continuing negotiations with interested developers for the remaining land.

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

Mapletree Group Home Inc. will provide residential care

Mapletree Group Home Inc. will provide residential care for Washington County young men with high needs and criminal justice involvement, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract with the agency Feb. 25.

The contract runs from March 1, 2020, through Dec. 31, 2021. The facility is in Maplewood.

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

Mapletree serves young men between the ages of 16 and 20 who have high support needs that cannot typically be met in family foster care, don't require a secure correctional placement or institutional residential treatment, and are otherwise appropriate for placement in the community.

Mapletree works with teenagers who have a wide range of behavioral challenges, emotional dysregulation, or diagnoses.

For many residents, Mapletree is either their last opportunity to avoid a more restrictive placement, or their first opportunity to re-enter the community following institutional placement. As such, there is a strong focus on transitional services and independent living for all residents.

Mapletree services include around-the-clock supervision, a therapeutic setting, and individual placement plans, therapy, job and independent living skills groups, preparation for discharge, and an alumni program to support former residents.

Contact: Sarah Amundson, Community Services Division Manager, 651-430-6597

County Board approves application for liquor licenses

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a number of applications for liquor licenses Feb. 25.

Washington County processes all liquor licenses for townships within the county. The county reviews the necessary information for the licenses, and the Sheriff's Office, Attorney's Office, and the Department of Public Health and Environment complete compliance/verification checks.

The County Board approved:

- an application for an off-sale liquor license for Holiday Station Stores LLC in Denmark Township. The company does business as Point Liquors at 12370 Point Douglas Road, Hastings;
- an application for renewal of an on-sale and Sunday liquor license for Stoneridge Golf Club Inc. at 13600 N. Hudson Blvd., West Lakeland Township;
- an application for renewal of an on-sale and Sunday liquor license for VR US Holdings Inc. Afton Alps Resort, 6600 Peller Ave. S., Denmark Township;
- an application for a one- to four-day temporary on-sale liquor license for St. Croix Preparatory Academy, 4260 Stagecoach Trail, Baytown Township.

All requirements for the applications have been completed, and the appropriate fees were paid by the applicant. The license fees pay for the cost of the county for administration, compliance, and verification checks.

Contact: Steve Gransee, Taxpayer Services & Election Divisions Manager, 651-430-8272

County transfers radios to MnDOT after removal of equipment from King stack

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the transfer of 16 radios to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Feb. 25, after moving radio equipment to Houlton, Wis. In 2019, all 800 mhz radio equipment was removed from the Xcel King Plant stack in Oak Park Heights, and transferred to the new Houlton tower. This tower was built by St. Croix County in partnership with Washington County, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and MnDOT. During the planning phase of the Houlton tower, MnDOT agreed to take over the maintenance responsibility for all 800 mhz equipment at the new site.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

Sheriff's Office receives grant to fight acts of terrorism

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive a \$200,000 2019 Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division.

The County Board accepted the grant Feb. 25.

The UASI grant program assists high-threat, high-density urban areas in efforts to build and sustain the capability to prevent, respond to, and recover from acts of terrorism. The grant will fund planning, equipment, training, and exercises. The grant term is Jan. 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021. It does not require a local match.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

Sheriff's Office receives donation from Afton Apple Orchard

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted a \$1,846.50 gift from Afton Apple Orchard Feb. 25, on behalf of the Sheriff's Office.

The proceeds will go towards the Sheriff's Office community engagement efforts.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

County Library will receive copy of photographer Craig Blacklock's book

The Washington County Library will receive a copy of photographer Craig Blacklock's book "St. Croix & Namekagon Rivers – An Enduring Gift" after the County Board accepted the gift Feb. 25. The photographer received a donation to give 10 libraries in or near the St. Croix Watershed a copy of the Museum Edition of his book. Washington County Library was chosen as one of the 10 libraries.

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

County will use UCare Foundation grant for behavior health services, medication assisted treatment

Washington County will use a \$100,000 UCare Foundation grant to implement Medication Assisted Treatment in the jail, after the County Board accepted the grant Feb. 25.

In November, Washington County was one of five counties invited to respond to a grant opportunity provided by the UCare Foundation, the fourth-largest health plan in Minnesota. The foundation provides grants for programs and initiatives that improve the health of underserved populations in the Twin Cities and throughout Greater Minnesota.

The grant priority areas include behavioral health services, and the county identified the Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) implementation as an appropriate use for the grant.

Collaborating groups within Washington County have been seeking ways to reduce the impact of the opioid crisis, and Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) has consistently been identified as a top priority in the effort.

The grant will be used to pay a coordinator of the opioid project. The coordinator will work with other staff already working with jail inmates to provide policies for the program, facilitate training with medical providers and jail and nursing staff, and work with those who assist inmates with chemical and mental health treatment while in jail and upon release.

Contact: Jill Timm, Public Health Program Manager, 651-275-7286

Meyer Contracting Inc. will do Woodbury Drive project

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$16.8 million contract Feb. 25 with Meyer Contracting Inc. to rebuild Woodbury Drive, or County State Aid Highway 19, in Woodbury. The County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 19 (Woodbury Drive) and Local Road Capacity and Safety Improvement Project will improve the capacity and safety of the Woodbury Drive corridor from Tamarack Road to Interstate 94. The county will also work with the City of Woodbury to address capacity, safety, and pavement issues on the adjacent local roadways.

Currently, 34,800 vehicles use the roadway every day, and it is expected that 42,000 will use it in 2040.

Woodbury Drive will be reconstructed from a four-lane to six-lane road, and the project will improve existing intersections to include dual left- and right-turn lanes where needed. The project will include a trail along the west side of Woodbury Drive to complement the existing regional trail on the east side, and improve stormwater drainage in the area. Working with the City of Woodbury, the county's project will reconstruct and rehabilitate several local roadways in the area and add additional trail connections to improve the walkability in this commercial area.

The project will be done over two years, with Woodbury Drive and intersections reconstructed in the first year, and Tamarack Road, Commerce Drive, Hudson Road, and Rivertown Drive reconstructed in the second year.

One-third of the project will be paid for with proceeds from the county's capital improvements bonds, with the remainder paid for with money from the City of Woodbury.

In addition to the construction contract, the County Board approved a cooperative construction cost share agreement and a maintenance agreement with the City of Woodbury, and a limited use permit with the Minnesota Department of Transportation for the construction and operation of trails in the area.

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

County will submit Pine Point Regional Park master plan to Met Council

Washington County will submit a Pine Point Regional Park Master Plan to the Metropolitan Council, after the County Board agreed to the submission Feb. 25.

Washington County developed the Pine Point Regional Park Master plan for the park in Stillwater Township throughout 2019. The 287-acre regional park is a trailhead for the Gateway State Trail and a local destination for skiing, hiking, biking, and equestrian riding.

A master plan for the park was adopted by the Washington County Board in 1989, but was not submitted to the Metropolitan Council. A new master plan, approved by the County Board and the Metropolitan Council, is needed to provide direction for future park development and make proposed improvements eligible for regional funding. The plan provides short- and long-term planning and implementation guidance for the park capital improvements, acquisitions, natural resource management, and overall development to create a regional park that meets the needs of Washington County park users.

The plans guiding principles are to:

- improve and expand the trail system strategically;
- strengthen equitable use of the park;
- explore opportunities to connect to the park's history and cultural value;
- provide access to diverse recreational opportunities;
- enhance the ecological functioning of the park;
- promote environmental awareness; and
- connect gateway state trail users with the greater park.

With the County Board's support, the plan will be submitted to the Metropolitan Council Feb. 28.

With an approved plan, the county will be able to capitalize on opportunities, and pursue grants and state and regional funding for park expansion and projects.

Contact: Connor Schaefer, Planner, 651-430-4303

County will receive additional state money to buy flood management equipment

Washington County will receive an additional \$204,300 to pay for the equipment used for road maintenance, after the County Board accepted the money Feb. 25.

During the 2020 budget planning process in May 2019, it was estimated that the county would receive a 2.2% increase in Highway State Aid Maintenance over 2019. The county actually received a 6.45% increase. The additional money will be used to buy equipment for safety and flood mitigation, including two mini-trailer systems with batteries and a solar kit and driver feedback signs to replace ones that are broken, a portable pump and hoses, and a pressure washer with a portable tank for cleaning out culverts, along with appropriate hoses.

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