



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

**Date:** May 26, 2020  
**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 May 26, 2020, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting via virtual systems, with staff in person at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

### **Insight Public Sector Inc. will provide technology updates to county**

Insight Public Sector Inc. will provide technology improvements to Washington County, after the County Board approved a \$200,000 contract amendment with the company May 26.

The county has a contract with the company, an approved State of Minnesota vendor, which has provided the architecture and engineering for the county's core technology network. The core network is at end of life and Insight Public Sector Inc.'s knowledge and expertise of the county's system will help ensure the network changes will not impact services from any Washington County locations or connections to the state.

The amendment increases the contract from \$99,000 to \$299,000, with the additional \$200,000 used to pay for major core switches, and other end-of-life projects, such as Wireless Local Area Network (LAN) Controller, Storage Area Network (SAN), and firewall replacement.

**Contact: Renee Heinbuch, Information Technology Director, 651-430-6421**

### **Keller Farm Country Estates plat approved**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a one-lot plat in the Keller Farm Country Estates Plat 3 in May Township May 26.

The plat is west of May Avenue North and south of Square Lake Trail North.

**Contact: Nancie Schwintek, Property Records Division Manager, 651-430-6758**

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

### **The Master's Touch will mail county's tax statements, valuation notices**

The Master's Touch will print, mail, and email Washington County tax statements, valuation notices, and truth in taxation notices, after the County Board approved a five-year, \$319,270 contract with the company May 26.

Each year, Washington County mails property tax statements by March 31. A notice of valuation and classification for taxes payable in the following year is mailed in the same envelope. Manufactured homes tax statements are mailed in mid-June.

The proposed property tax notice, sometimes called the "Truth In Taxation" notice, is mailed in mid-November and provides property taxpayers with an estimate of the property tax they will pay in the following year.

The contract will run from June 1 through Dec. 31, 2022, for a maximum amount of \$91,240 and is subject to auto renewal for up to three additional one-year terms under the same terms for a maximum amount of \$76,010 a year for a total of \$319,270.

**Contact: Jody Moran, Tax Division Manager, 651-430-6102**

### **County will receive funds to respond to public health emergencies**

Washington County will receive money from the state Department of Health to assist in the preparation for and response to public health emergencies after the County Board accepted an increase to the grant, which will be \$175,416 annually for the next four years.

The county has received grant funds for a number of years through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's federal program administered by the state's Department of Health to assist in preparation to respond to health emergencies. The money allows the county to plan, train, exercise, and respond to a public health emergency, such as COVID-19. These activities include community partners, such as local medical providers, school districts, police, fire and emergency medical services, and non-profit organizations.

The 2020 grant equals \$175,416, which is an increase from the 2019 grant total of \$171,682.

**Contact: David Brummel, Public Health & Environment Deputy Director, 651-430-6662**

## **County will help pay for study on managing high water on 10<sup>th</sup> Street North**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed to pay for half the costs of a study to learn how to mitigate high water on 10<sup>th</sup> Street North from Goose Lake in Lake Elmo.

The County Board approved a cost-share agreement with the Valley Branch Watershed District for the study May 26.

Goose Lake is a landlocked lake experiencing high water levels that threaten to overtop County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 10 (10th Street North) and CSAH 19 (Keats Avenue North). In 2019, the county pumped more than 100 million gallons out of the lake to prevent closure of 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Keats Avenue. A partnership with Valley Branch Watershed District was developed to complete a feasibility study to address the high water. The study will provide solutions to the high water to consider, including costs and impacts of any solution. It will consist of data collection and analysis of existing conditions, and developing short- and long-term solutions and cost estimates.

The study will cost \$224,610 and will be led by the watershed district, and the county will pay 50% or \$112,305, of the cost.

**Contact: Eden Rogers, Engineer I, 651-430-4352**

## **DEED continues to lease county space, adds square footage**

The state Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) will continue to lease space from Washington County in the Woodbury Service Center for the CareerForce Center, after the County Board approved an extension of the agency's lease May 26.

The state has been leasing office space from Washington County since 1986 for the DEED work space. Under the federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014, DEED is required to have a physical presence at Washington County's Comprehensive "One-Stop" location for the delivery of services required by the law, which is the Woodbury Service Center.

The law requires DEED to pay for the space. The current lease expired at the end of last year.

With the new lease, the state will add 35 square feet to the lease, for 836 square feet of dedicated and shared space. The amendment also extends the lease to the end of the year.

DEED will pay the county \$14,203.68, in monthly installments. Revenue from the lease helps pay for maintenance and operations expenses.

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

### **Minnesota Paving & Materials will repave 2 county roads**

Minnesota Paving & Materials will repave County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 15 and CSAH 13, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$734,338 contract with the company May 26.

The CSAH 15 project will resurface the pavement from 450 feet north of Interstate 94 to 1,000 feet south of CSAH 10 in Lake Elmo and West Lakeland Township. The new pavement surface will improve the ride quality in the area. The .7 miles of the roadway included in the project averages 18,000 vehicles a day. The project will also upgrade signs and striping, and replace a driveway culvert.

The CSAH 13 project is in the City of Woodbury, and will resurface portions of the northbound lanes from Afton Road to 500 feet north of Donegal Drive. The .8 miles of roadway carries an average of 26,000 vehicles a day. The project will extend the life of the existing pavement, and upgrade pedestrian ramps.

Revenue for the project will come from proceeds of the wheelage tax.

**Contact: Andrew Giesen, Engineer II, 651-430-4336**

### **County's CDA will receive funds to assist in pandemic relief**

Washington County, through its Community Development Agency (CDA), will receive \$427,331 to be used for emergency housing assistance.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) provides for additional funding to the county's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Washington County and the county's CDA were notified April 1 that the county would receive \$427,331 of CDBG COVID-19 funding. The money was allocated in recognition of a community need to respond and aid in hardships caused by the coronavirus. Funds may be spent on rental assistance, operating costs of shelters, and other necessities. A review of community needs found that there are increased requests for emergency assistance related to housing issues.

The county's intakes doubled from February to March, with residents voicing concern about paying for rent and utilities, and needing shelter in a hotel. The CDA had a 15% increase from March to April of questions on mortgage moratorium, and default on homeowner association dues or property taxes.

The funds will be added to Washington County's 2019 Annual Action Plan so that funds can be used immediately, which requires approval by the County Board.

These funds will be used for:

- \$400,000 to provide homeless prevention services and emergency assistance in Washington County; and
- \$15,000 to provide foreclosure prevention services and emergency assistance for homeowners in Washington County.

The CDA will use \$12,331 for program administration and delivery of services.

The proposed amendment was released for public comment and published in the Stillwater Gazette and on the CDA's website May 8, with instructions on how to comment. The public comment period ended May 19. No public comments were received.

**Contact: Melissa Taphorn, Community Development Agency Executive Director, 651-202-2821**