

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

Date: Sept. 1, 2020
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Sept. 1, 2020, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board names residents to advisory boards

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made several appointments to citizen advisory boards Sept. 1.

The appointments are:

- Gail Theisen, Forest Lake, appointed as an at-large representative to the Child Protection Citizen Review Panel to a term ending June 30, 2023.
- Shannon Stotenbur, Woodbury, appointed as an at-large representative to the Child Protection Citizen Review Panel to a term ending June 30, 2023.
- Julie Stromen, from Renewal by Andersen, appointed as a business representative to the Workforce Development Board to a term ending June 30, 2022.
- Gregory Renne, IUPAT District Council 82/Finishing Trades Institute Upper Midwest, appointed as a business representative to the Workforce Development Board to a term ending Dec. 31, 2021.

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

County will contract with Bluestone Physician Services to do COVID-19 testing

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

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$500,000 contract with Bluestone Physician Services Sept. 1 to provide COVID-19 testing for high-risk and high-need populations in the county.

The primary focus of the work will be targeting and offering testing at residential care facilities, such as long-term care and group homes, but it may be expanded to include other community-based settings, as determined by the county and the contractor.

The county will use federal CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act money to pay for the contract.

The county has been actively involved in COVID-19 response since March. Diagnostic testing for COVID-19 remains a barrier for residents and facilities in the county, due to supply shortages and access to labs.

While the county will continue outreach to high priority facilities, it will also explore options for offering testing to other high priority groups, and in community settings. The testing could include people with symptoms of COVID-19, as well as asymptomatic people, who require medical care or are linked to an ongoing public health investigation in a shared setting, such as a long-term care facility, workplace, schools, multi-unit housing, etc. Testing may also be done for those with known COVID-19 exposure, and for high-risk groups, such as individuals working or attending K-12 schools/child care; first responders; individuals living, working, or visiting congregate settings; those ages 65 and older; and large household living in close quarters.

The contract will run through Dec. 31.

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

County Board approves grant agreement with DNR to preserve land in Afton

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a grant agreement with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Sept. 1, which will assist in paying for a conservation easement in Afton.

The Belwin Conservancy, the DNR, the City of Afton, and the county have collaborated to protect a 31-acre parcel in the City of Afton. Valley Creek runs southeasterly through the property for 750 feet, and the parcel contains wetlands, a pond, and forested uplands.

State funding for the project is from a grant from the DNR. The county funding, through its Land and Water Legacy Program, provided an equal match to the state funding. The County Board approved the terms for the project, which allows the county to request reimbursement for the \$290,000 in a state grant awarded to the project.

The County Board adopted a resolution committing the county funds for the project June 23.

Contact: June Mathiowetz, Senior Planner, 651-430-6016

County Board approves Met Council grant to help pay for Grey Cloud Island park land

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement Sept. 1 with the Metropolitan Council to receive a 75% reimbursement for land purchased to be included in the future Grey Cloud Island Regional Park.

The purchase of the property at 11523 Grey Cloud Trail S. was approved by the County Board last November. The cost of the parcel was \$348,700, including recording fees and taxes. The Metropolitan Council grant reimburses the county's Land and Water Legacy Program funds used to purchase the property up to \$261,525.

The grant requires that the county enter into restrictive covenants on the acquired property, which are standard for such acquisitions.

Contact: Sharon Price, Right-of-Way Specialist-Property Manager, 651-430-4391

Pember Companies Inc. will install traffic signal on CSAH 13 at Fifth Street on Oakdale, Lake Elmo boundary

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$392,168 contract with Pember Companies Inc. Sept. 1 to install a traffic signal at the intersection of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 13, or Inwood Avenue, and Fifth Street North on the Lake Elmo and Oakdale border.

The volume of turning traffic at this intersection has grown in recent years with residential development along Fifth Street North, and is expected to warrant traffic signal control due to the planned opening of a retail store in the southeast corner of the intersection. The project will include construction of pedestrian crosswalks which will link the current sidewalks along Fifth Street to the

existing trail along the west side of CSAH 13. The crosswalks will be controlled by the new traffic signal.

Under county policy, the City of Lake Elmo will be asked to pay a third of the cost of the project, as the costs for the signal are split by approaches to the intersection.

The county's portion of the project, \$321,700, will be paid for with highway state aid.

The board also approved cost-share and maintenance agreements with the City of Lake Elmo.

Contact: Joe Gustafson, Traffic Engineer, 651-430-4351

Securus Technologies will provide county jail inmates telephone service

Securus Technologies will provide Washington County Jail inmates telephone services, after the County Board approved a five-year contract with the company Sept. 1.

Securus Technologies has more Minnesota jail clients than any other vendor and has strong regional management. The county jail has had a relationship with Securus Technologies for more than 12 years.

Securus Technologies will provide new implementations for an updated investigative software, video visitation, inmate computer tablets, and an automated information platform for the public to call with inmate questions. The company will provide all hardware and software.

Due to the pandemic, the company has been reducing the call cost for inmates, their families and friends, as well as allowing two free calls per week.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601