

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

Date: Oct. 20, 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 Oct. 20, 2020, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

GSI Inc. will provide support services for county's financial system

GSI Inc. will provide support services for the Washington County financial system, after the County Board approved a \$350,000 contract with the company Oct. 20.

The JD Edwards Financial System is used countywide and manages all capital assets, debt, investments, collections, fleet, finance and accounting, project costing, and budgeting.

GSI Inc. will provide support, management, enhancements, and upgrades to the system. The initial term of the contract will be three years with the option to renew for two additional one-year terms.

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

County will receive money to continue Statewide Health Improvement Partnership

Washington County will receive a \$514,487 grant from the Minnesota Department of Health to continue the county's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) after the County Board accepted the grant Oct. 20.

The SHIP grant is intended to support upstream prevention of chronic diseases which are the leading causes of morbidity and mortality throughout the state by promoting healthy eating, active living, smoking cessation, and mental well-being. The agreement the board approved covers five years of the program. The first year's funding for Washington County is \$514,487, which is the same amount as the previous year of SHIP funding.

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

However, for years 2 through 5 of the grant, the state will create an alternative funding structure and the funding amounts for each subsequent year are yet to be determined.

Contact: Caitlin Suginaka, Public Health Program Supervisor, 651-430-6786

Public health grant will support COVID-19 investigation, contact tracing

Washington County will receive \$277,500 from the Minnesota Department of Health to help pay for COVID-19 investigation and contact tracing, after the County Board accepted the grant Oct. 20.

The county has been actively involved in COVID-19 investigation and contact tracing since May 6. Currently, 18 staff are performing this work seven days a week.

This state grant agreement allows the Washington County work to join a regional approach, designed by the state to provide additional leadership, staff surge capacity, and support for the work.

The state will provide Washington County an hourly reimbursement for the investigation and contact tracing, and continue to provide guidance, direction, and updates for consistency across the state.

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

County will participate in DNR program to maintain snowmobile trails

Washington County Parks will participate in the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) snowmobile trails assistance program, after the request was approved by the County Board Oct. 20.

The county administers the program for the Star Trail Association. The Star Trail Association clubs throughout the county groom, sign, mark, and maintain 140 miles of snowmobile trails. The County Board entered into an agreement with the Star Trail Association in 1991, whereby the county agreed to sponsor the snowmobile club and act as a pass-through agency for funds from the DNR snowmobile trail maintenance and grooming grants-in-aid program. The snowmobile club cannot receive the grant funding directly.

The term of the grant will be from now to June 30, 2021. All grant revenue received by the county on behalf of the Star Trail Association will be forwarded to the club as a reimbursement for costs expended for trail maintenance during the 2020-2021 snow season. In 2019-2020, the grant was for \$44,447.15, with a one-time supplemental increase. In 2020-2021, the grant is expected to be around \$40,517, but may vary based on previous year snowmobile sales.

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

Sheriff's Office receives \$235,800 Toward Zero Deaths grant

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive \$235,800 in a Toward Zero Deaths Grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety, after the County Board accepted the grant Oct. 20.

It will be used from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30, 2021.

The Toward Zero Deaths grant dollars will be used to reimburse overtime costs associated with traffic enforcement for driving while intoxicated, distracted driving, speeding, and move over, seat belt, and pedestrian enforcement. The overtime money will cover work performed by the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the police departments of Bayport, Cottage Grove, Forest Lake, Oakdale, Oak Park Heights, Stillwater, St. Paul Park, and Woodbury.

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will act as the fiscal agent for the grant. The agreement does not require a match.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

Sheriff's Office will work with federal drug enforcement administration

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will work the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to staff a task force whose focus is large-scale illegal drug operations.

The County Board approved an agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, DEA, Oct. 20.

The DEA Task Force investigates high-level street narcotics distribution. The Sheriff's Office will provide an experienced deputy to the task force through Sept. 30, 2021. The DEA will reimburse the Sheriff's Office for overtime, up to \$19,180.25 per deputy.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

County will upgrade 9-1-1 system

Independent Emergency Services LLC will install a Next Generation 9-1-1 Compatible Call Handling System in Washington County, after the County Board approved a contract with the company Oct. 20.

The five-year agreement with the company is for a replacement of the 9-1-1 call system. This system will integrate and receive 9-1-1 calls and text-to-9-1-1 calls processed by the state's system. This is a county-owned, standalone system.

The cost is \$490,432.10, which will be paid for with a combination of state, federal, and 9-1-1 system funds.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

City of Marine on St. Croix will use money from the Jordan bequest to upgrade community library, website

The City of Marine on St. Croix will use \$21,000 from the Jordan bequest to redesign the interior of the Marine Community Library and upgrade the library's website.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the use of the bequest Oct. 20.

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 and continue to pay the county library tax. 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: Kim Ukura, Social Media Specialist, 651-275-8511

County will refund portion of 2020 environmental health regulation fees

Washington County will refund a portion of 2020 environmental health license fees previously paid to the county.

The County Board agreed to the refunds of about \$170,000 in license fees Oct. 20.

The county provides environmental health regulatory services for the community, including licensing of more than 1,300 food establishments, public pools, lodging facilities, youth camps, and recreational camping areas.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the business of the establishments and facilities that are licensed by the county. Refunding a portion of the 2020 license fees will recognize the hardship caused by the pandemic and provide financial relief to the licensed businesses.

Contact: Jeff Travis, Environmental Program Manager, 651-430-4033

Washington County will extend small-business financial relief, add nonprofits, hospitals, schools to relief programs

Washington County will extend its program to provide financial assistance for businesses in the county that have been negatively impacted through additional expenses or lost revenue due to closures during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and extend assistance to hospitals and schools, and provide assistance to chambers of commerce and food shelves within Washington County.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the expansion of the county's COVID-19 financial relief programs Oct. 20.

The county received \$31.7 million from the CARES Act/Coronavirus Relief Fund. More than half has been allocated to provide financial assistance to county residents and businesses. The county will use a portion of the funding to reimburse itself for expenditures made to manage the pandemic, and modifications made to county facilities to allow county business to continue safely.

Using CARES funds, the County Board created a Small Business Relief Fund to provide grants of up to \$15,000 to small businesses in need of support. There have been two rounds of applications; Tuesday's action extends that program through Nov. 4.

The county is also providing assistance to homeowners and renters who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The program for the Small Business Relief Fund is being administered by the Community Development Agency (CDA). Recipients:

- must be a locally owned and operated for-profit business in the county. Multiple individual businesses in the county that are owned by one owner are eligible to apply;
- to receive up to the maximum \$15,000 funding limit, businesses must have at least one full-time equivalent employee, in addition to the owner as of March 1, and not more than 75, and generate less than \$5 million in annual revenues;
- have been operating Jan. 1, 2020; and
- demonstrate a significant loss in revenue since March 15.

Home-based businesses and self-employed entrepreneurs are eligible for grants of up to \$7,500; however, priority will be given to employer businesses with separate non-residential property addresses.

Applications are managed by Open to Business at the Washington County Community Development Agency, 7645 Currell Blvd., Woodbury; telephone 612-789-8838, and email wccoviderelief@mccdmn.org. More information is at www.washingtoncountycda.org/

The homeowners program for mortgage assistance is also being administered by the CDA. Information on that program may also be found on the CDA website.

Renters' assistance, which is also available to pay utilities, is being administered by Washington County. See information on the county's website at www.co.washington.mn.us by searching "emergency assistance programs."

At the Oct. 20 meeting, the County Board also agreed to provide \$300,000 for chambers of commerce and food shelves, \$1.5 million to hospitals, and \$2 million to schools.

Economic assistance of \$1.5 million directed to hospitals is to be used to reimburse a portion of their COVID-19-related costs for supplies, disposable equipment, training and education costs, and economic assistance to public schools of \$2 million is to reimburse a portion of their COVID-19-related costs.

Contact: Kevin Corbid, County Administrator, 651-430-6002

County Board summarizes performance review for administrator

The Washington County Board of Commissioners provided a summary Oct. 20 of the performance review for County Administrator Kevin Corbid, which was conducted Oct. 6.

Also, at the Oct. 20 meeting, the board set the administrator's salary at \$188,700 for 2021, which is the same salary received in 2020.

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

County Board sets board salaries for 2021

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set salaries for the board for 2021 Oct. 20.

State law requires the board members to set a salary before the beginning of the year.

The board salary set for 2021 is \$70,725, which is the same salary as in 2020.

The board members also receive expense reimbursement and the same benefits as those that the elected department heads, namely the county sheriff and attorney, receive.

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