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Date: Dec. 15, 2020
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Dec. 15, 2020, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board adopts committees, commission, joint powers boards assignments

The Washington County Board of Commissioners adopted assignments Dec. 15 for 2021 for the committees, commissions, and joint powers boards on which commissioners will serve for the coming year.

As part of their duties as commissioners, the commissioners serve on groups that oversee governance and functions throughout the metropolitan area, and throughout the state. The 2021 assignments are: Commissioner Fran Miron, District 1:

- Washington County:
 - Community Development Agency
 - Groundwater Advisory Committee
 - Personnel Committee
 - Planning Advisory Commission (Alternate)
 - Plat Commission (Alternate)
 - Regional Railroad Authority
 - University of Minnesota Extension Advisory Committee
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Environment and Natural Resources Advisory Committee
 - Extension Committee

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- Local Government Water Roundtable Advisory Committee
- Agricultural & Rural Development Advisory Committee
- East Central Regional Juvenile Center (Alternate)
- Lower St. Croix Watershed Policy Committee
 - Metropolitan Emergency Services Board
- Metropolitan Emergency Services Board Executive Committee
- Metropolitan Mosquito Control District (Alternate)
- Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA) (Alternate)
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board
- Rush Line Corridor Task Force

Commissioner Stan Karwoski, District 2:

- Washington County
 - Community Development Agency (Alternate)
 - Regional Railroad Authority
 - Workforce Development Board
 - Oversight Action Committee
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Board of Directors as District X Representative
 - Board of Directors, Bylaws Committee
 - Board of Directors, Finance Committee
 - Economic Development, Workforce, and Housing Policy Subcommittee
 - Transportation Policy Committee
- East Metro Strong Board
- Gold Line Executive Change Control Board
- Gold Line Corridor Management Committee
- Gold Joint Powers Board
- Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (Alternate)
- Metropolitan Transportation Advisory Board

- Regional Solicitation Policy Workgroup
- Minnesota Inter-County Association
 - Minnesota Inter-County Association Executive Committee
- National Association of Counties (NACo)
 - Environment, Energy and Land Use Steering Committee
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board

Commissioner Gary Kriesel, District 3:

- Washington County
 - Audit Advisory Committee
 - Historic Courthouse Advisory Committee
 - Law Library Board
 - Personnel Committee
 - Planning Advisory Commission
 - Plat Commission
 - Regional Railroad Authority
 - University of Minnesota Extension Committee
- Andersen Community Advisory Committee
- Lower St. Croix Watershed Policy Committee (Alternate)
- Metropolitan Mosquito Control
 - Executive Committee
- National Association of Counties (NACo)
 - Veterans and Military Service
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board (Alternate)
 - Regional Haulers Licensing Board
- Veterans Campground on Big Marine Lake liaison

Commissioner Wayne Johnson, District 4:

- Washington County
 - Community Corrections Advisory Board

- Finance Committee
- Groundwater Advisory Committee (Alternate)
- Library Board
- Parks and Open Space Commission
- Regional Railroad Authority
- Workforce Development Board (Alternate)
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Public Safety Policy Committee
- Great River Rail Commission
- Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA)
- Metropolitan Emergency Services Board
- Metropolitan Transportation Advisory Board (Alternate)
- Minnesota Inter-County Association (MICA)
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board
 - Budget and Facility Committee
- Red Rock Corridor Commission
- Unsheltered Homelessness – Public Sector Leadership Meeting Committee

Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5:

- Washington County
 - Finance Committee
 - Library Park Association
 - Mental Health Advisory Council
 - Regional Rail Authority
- Association of Minnesota Counties
 - Futures Committee
 - General Government Policy Committee
- Gold Line Corridor Management Committee
- Gold Line Executive Change Control Board

- Gold Line Joint Powers Board
- Greater MSP
- Great River Rail Commission (Alternate)
- Metropolitan Alliance for Healthy Families
- Metropolitan Mosquito Control District
- National Association of Counties (NACo)
 - International Economic Development Task Force
 - Rural Action Caucus Steering Committee
 - Transportation Policy Steering Committee
 - Women of NACo Leadership Network
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Board
 - Regional Hauler Licensing Board (Alternate)

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

County Board reappoints members of advisory committees for coming year

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made appointments to county advisory committees Dec. 15 of members who will serve during 2021.

Those appointed, and their committees, are:

- Francis Rheinberger - Audit Committee
- Mark Doneux - Board of Adjustment & Appeals
- Harry Melander - Board of Adjustment & Appeals
- Shane Bauer - Board of Adjustment & Appeals
- Steve Ryan - Community Development Block Grant Advisory Board
- Tom Triplett - Community Development Block Grant Advisory Board
- John Belisle - Community Development Block Grant Advisory Board
- Theresa Bottum - Child Protection Citizen Review Panel
- Janice Hayne - Child Protection Citizen Review Panel
- Andrew Jackola - Community Corrections Advisory Board

- Tami Schmitz - Community Corrections Advisory Board
- Kevin Horst - Community Corrections Advisory Board
- Katie Pape - Community Corrections Advisory Board
- Eric Peterson - Community Corrections Advisory Board
- Roger Green - Community Development Agency
- John Belisle - Community Development Agency
- Ji-Young Choi - Family Homelessness Prevention Assistance Program Committee
- Kristin Huntley - Family Homelessness Prevention Assistance Program Committee
- Kristine Mason - Family Homelessness Prevention Assistance Program Committee
- Kristin Miller - Family Homelessness Prevention Assistance Program Committee
- Courtney Knoll - Family Homelessness Prevention Assistance Program Committee
- Kent Grandlienard - Groundwater Advisory Committee
- Mark Frazer - Groundwater Advisory Committee
- Brian Bachmeier - Groundwater Advisory Committee
- Brian Krafthefer - Groundwater Advisory Committee
- Daniel Belka - Groundwater Advisory Committee
- Dale Setterholm - Groundwater Advisory Committee
- Mary Ann Newman - Historic Courthouse Committee
- Michael Reeves – Library Board
- Faith Myers - Mental Health Advisory Committee
- Louisa Lienke - Mental Health Advisory Committee
- Daniel Parnell - Mental Health Advisory Committee
- Robert Singleton - Mental Health Advisory Committee
- Stacey Kislenger - Mental Health Advisory Committee
- Megan Bernard - Parks and Open Space Commission
- Vincent Anderson - Personnel Board of Appeals
- Robert Viking - Planning Advisory Committee
- Charles Newman - Planning Advisory Committee

- Francis Rheinberger - Planning Advisory Committee
- Mark Doneux - Planning Advisory Committee
- Anna Zanko - Planning Advisory Committee
- Vicki Hoffman - University of Minnesota Extension Committee
- Dan Dolan - University of Minnesota Extension Committee
- Tammy Lewis - University of Minnesota Extension Committee
- Susan Evans - Workforce Development Board
- Jeffrey Klemmer - Workforce Development Board
- Lori Tapani - Workforce Development Board

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

County Board approves Land, Water Legacy Program Berggren conservation easement

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a conservation easement on approximately 18 acres on Valley Creek Trail South in Afton Dec. 15.

The easement is the final step of a Land and Water Legacy program project approved earlier by the board.

The county's Land and Water Legacy Program is a voter-approved program that allows the county to acquire and improve land and interests in land for the purposes of improving water quality of rivers, lakes, and streams; protecting drinking water sources; purchasing parklands; preserving wetlands and woodlands; and protecting land along water bodies from development.

The easement in Afton will be co-held by Washington County and the Minnesota Land Trust. The land is on Valley Creek, a tributary to the St. Croix River, and features a mix of steep forested hills that slope down to a floodplain, open areas, streams, and ponds.

The area is in the Valley Creek Corridor and contains multiple spring-fed ponds that, along with water flowing from an adjacent property, form one of the headwaters of Valley Creek and provide habitat for species, including native brook trout, rainbow trout, and brown trout. The property provides a year-round refuge for birds and other wildlife, including varied waterfowl, trumpeter swans, white-tailed deer, and a variety of woodland birds. Additionally, the property is adjacent to

another conservation easement and within three miles of 13 properties protected by the Minnesota Land Trust that cover more than 1,600 acres.

Previously, the County Board approved an \$85,000 contribution to the project. The Minnesota Land Trust is contributing \$360,000, and the landowner is contributing \$30,000 in donative value to the project.

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

County Board approves tentative labor contracts

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved tentative agreements with county labor bargaining units Dec. 15.

They are:

- the tentative 2021 Collective Bargaining Agreements with both the Exempt and Non-Exempt bargaining units represented by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council No. 5. The agreement calls for 0% general adjustment of salaries for 2021, with a one-time 2% of salary lump sum payment in January and a one-time \$1,000 lump-sum payment in July for employees, in addition to county contributions to health insurance premiums;
- the tentative 2021 Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Washington County Association of Supervisors. The agreement calls for 0% general adjustment of salaries for 2021, with a one-time 2% of salary lump sum payment in January and a one-time \$1,000 lump-sum payment in July for employees, in addition to county contributions to health insurance premiums;
- the approval of the compensation and benefits for 2021 for the Confidential Employees and the Confidential Supervisors. That agreement will be the same as for the bargaining units that have a tentative agreement, with a 0% general adjustment of salaries for 2021, with a one-time 2% of salary lump sum payment in January and a one-time \$1,000 lump-sum payment in July for employees, in addition to county contributions to health insurance premiums;
- approval of the compensation and benefits for 2021 for department heads and department deputy directors. That agreement will be the same as for the bargaining units that have a

tentative agreement, with a 0% general adjustment of salaries for 2021, with a one-time 2% of salary lump sum payment in January and a one-time \$1,000 lump-sum payment in July for employees, in addition to county contributions to health insurance premiums.

Contact: Angie Nalezny, Human Resources Department Director, 651-430-6075

County Board approves plats in West Lakeland Township

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved two plats in West Lakeland Township Dec. 15.

The plats are:

- a two-lot plat for the Anderson Addition. It is an abstract plat lying east of Stagecoach Trail North and northeast of Park Avenue North; and
- a two-lot plat for Fuller Bailey Farm lying east of Hillside Court North and north of 17th Street North.

Contact: Nancie Schwintek, Property Records and Taxpayer Services Division Manager, 651-430-6758

Bluestone Physicians Services will continue to do COVID-19 testing in county, add vaccination services

A Washington County contract with Bluestone Physicians Services to do COVID-19 testing in the county has been extended by the County Board to June 30, 2021.

The County Board extended the contract Dec. 15.

In addition, the County Board approved a contract with Bluestone Physicians to assist in managing COVID-19 vaccinations.

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. Bluestone Physician Services will continue to provide COVID-19 testing for high-risk and high-need populations in the county. The primary focus of its work will include targeting and offering testing at residential care facilities, such as long-term care and group home settings, but may be expanded to include other community-based settings.

In addition to testing, the second agreement with Bluestone Physician Services is for onsite vaccination services in long-term care settings, including site coordination, roster maintenance, consents, administration, and documentation of vaccines, tracking of adverse reactions, tracking and follow-up of a two-step vaccine, and reporting to the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection system.

That contract runs through Dec. 31, 2021, and has a not-to-exceed amount of \$500,000.

Contact: David Brummel, Public Health & Environment Department Deputy Director, 651-430-6662, and Jill Timm, Senior Public Health Program Manager, 651-275-7286

Children's Dental Services will use county buildings to provide services

Children's Dental Services (CDS) will continue to use Washington County buildings to provide services to uninsured and under-insured children, after the County Board approved a contract with the organization Dec. 15 that goes through 2025.

Since 2009, CDS has been providing preventative and intervention services one day a month at the Cottage Grove Service Center. Since that time, it has expanded to provide services one day a month in either Cottage Grove, Stillwater, or Forest Lake.

CDS serves children through age 26, and pregnant women. Services are provided in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clinic space on a day that is not scheduled for WIC or other services. CDS handles all scheduling, billing, and other logistics of providing the client care. The county promotes the services and provides the space. CDS returned to service in late summer 2020 with appropriate COVID-19 precautions in place.

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

County receives donation for oak savanna restoration in Lake Elmo Park Reserve

Washington County will receive \$4,500 to pay for oak savanna restoration in Lake Elmo Park Reserve, after the County Board accepted the gift from the family of Ardis Wegner Dec. 15.

Funds will be used to remove the buckthorn on 2.21 acres of land, and conduct two years of follow-up treatment, and pay for native seed, plants, and a deer fence.

The work will occur north of the Nordic Center, along the east side of Eagle Point Lake. Initial removal of buckthorn is expected this winter, with the majority of the restoration completed by 2023. The county has been conducting oak savanna restoration throughout Lake Elmo Park Reserve for the last six years, with the nearest project north of this project area. The county will be overseeing the contractors used to complete the work and the money will be kept in a stewardship fund.

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

County Board conducts public hearing on 2021 fee schedule, adopts schedule

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing on the county's 2021 fee schedule Dec. 15.

No residents spoke during the hearing. After the hearing, the County Board adopted the new fee schedule.

The county's fee schedule is governed by county policy, as well as state laws and rules. The policy states that when a single user is the beneficiary of a service, the costs of the service should be borne by that individual. Service delivery costs can be supported by revenue other than user fees when there is a public benefit provided by the service.

The county policy is to set fees that have a reasonable relation between the fee and the cost of providing the service, as well as a number of other considerations.

Programs throughout the county may require fees, and each is reviewed and considered for changes each year. Changes in fees are made to reflect changes in services offered, as well as any state legislative changes that affect county services and related fees.

Information on fees charged for a variety of services and programs may be found on the county's website www.co.washington.mn.us.

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

County Board conducts public hearing, adopts capital improvement plan

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing on the county's 2021-2025 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Dec. 15, and then approved the plan.

No residents spoke at the hearing. Comment letters were received from a number of county cities, including Cottage Grove, Hugo, Lake Elmo, Scandia, and Woodbury. Responses to those communities were included at the hearing.

State law requires the hearing, which covers the county's 2021-2025 CIP. The plan includes major roadway, parks, and facility projects in the county planned for the next five years. Along with those projects, specific projects for 2021 are included. Some of those major projects will be:

- the County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 15, or Manning Avenue and Highway 36 overpass; and
- signal and trail improvements at CSAH 14 and Interstate 694.

In addition, several county roadways will be designed in 2021, in preparation for construction in later years.

Major parks projects for 2021 include major renovation of the Historic Courthouse roof and dome, pavement improvements in Lake Elmo Park Reserve and the Central Greenway path, repair of the Farney Creek Dam in Lake Elmo Park Reserve, as well as a number of park maintenance projects throughout the county. Other projects include putting funds aside for a Northern Environmental Center.

In addition to bond funds, the capital improvement plan is funded by state and federal transportation aid, state sales tax, state bonds, and local contributions from municipalities where the project is located.

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

County Board conducts public hearing on sale of parkland in Big Marine Park Reserve

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing Dec. 15 to discuss the sale of 2.42 acres in Big Marine Park Reserve to the Disabled Veterans Rest Camp.

No residents spoke at the hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, the board approved the sale.

Washington County purchased 130 acres in 1994 for inclusion into Big Marine Park Reserve. The county recently received a request from the Disabled Veterans Rest Camp Association Inc. to sell 2.42 acres of this 130 acres for an improvement project for the camp. The Disabled Veterans Rest

Camp Association is the sole adjoining landowner to the 2.42 acres, which is inaccessible to the rest of the park, but is accessible to the rest camp.

The rest camp is a non-profit organization that provides relief and recreation to military veterans and their families as part of a continuous re-integration process, and outdoor activities provide for rest and recovery for veterans. The rest camp also reaches out to those children whose parents are on military deployment to provide opportunities for outdoor and land stewardship activities that they would not usually get the chance to do.

The Veterans Rest Camp is surrounded by Big Marine Park Reserve on the north and south sides, and the two are complementary to one another.

The camp's leadership wishes to expand, to meet additional needs of veterans and their families, and will use the additional land to create 23 camp sites for RVs. The area is already cut off from Big Marine Park Reserve, and is accessible to the camp.

Under state law, the county may sell park property upon completion of a public hearing.

The County Assessor's fair market value for the 2.42 acre parcel is \$17,400, with 90 percent being \$15,660, an amount for which the state allows the county to sell the land.

Because Washington County purchased the land for Big Marine Park Reserve with money from the Metropolitan Council, it must replace the land in the park reserve, which it will do by purchasing available land already surrounded by county-owned property.

Contact: Sharon Price, Property Manager, 651-430-4391

Library recognized for service in light of pandemic

The Washington County Library has been recognized for its rapid response to providing service to residents during the COVID-19 pandemic by being the first library in the state to provide curbside pickup of library materials.

The library was recognized by the Association of Minnesota Counties Achievement Award for its innovation; the Library was recognized by the County Board Dec. 15.

The Library launched curbside pickup March 19, the first library system in Minnesota to make curbside pickup available to its residents during the pandemic. Access to library materials supported

distance learning, provided access to information, and promoted the health and well-being of the communities of Washington County during the pandemic.

Curbside pickup greatly affected residents of Washington County, evidenced by the positive responses received via social media, email, chat, and telephone. Since March 19, almost 25,000 curbside pickups have been completed at Washington County Library, with almost 120,000 items picked up.

More recently, the Library added hotspots and Chromebooks for checkout to provide more opportunities for internet access to residents who may not have it.

Contact: Kim Ukura, Social Media Specialist, 651-430-8511

County Board approves incentive pay for Woodbury Drive project

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$120,000 payment to Meyer Contracting in early completion incentives for work on the Woodbury Drive and local roads improvement project.

The County Board agreed to the incentive payment Dec. 15.

The project reconstructed Woodbury Drive from a four-lane to six-lane roadway, and added turn lanes at intersections. The project included a trail along the western side of Woodbury Drive to complement the existing regional trail on the east side. Partnering with the City of Woodbury, the project will reconstruct and rehabilitate several local roadways in the area and add additional trail connections to improve the walkability in the commercial area.

The construction contract included up to \$220,000 in early completion incentives for the project, including \$120,000 for early completion of the project's first two stages, which the contractor achieved. The contractor earned \$7,500 per day for completion in less than 150 days, completing the work in 133 days.

Final work on the project will be done this coming summer, with completion scheduled for Oct. 15, 2021, with additional incentives of up to \$100,000 for early completion.

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

County Board requests speed studies on county roads

The Washington County Board of Commissioners authorized the County Engineer Dec. 15 to request that the Minnesota Department of Transportation perform speed studies on a number of county roadways.

According to state law, the authority to determine speed limits on a county highway resides with the commissioner of the Department of Transportation. It is normal procedure to request such a determination after a roadway has undergone major changes, such as reconstruction, expansion, or significant changes to the roadside character or access.

County State Aid Highway (CSAH) roadways where speed studies will be requested are:

- CSAH 18/20 (Bailey Road) from Highway 10/61 to Pioneer Drive;
- CSAH 19 (Woodbury Drive/Keats Avenue) from CSAH 16 to CSAH 10; and
- County Road 38 (Maxwell Avenue) from Interstate 494 to Highway 10/61.

Contact: Mitch Bartelt, Engineer II, 651-430-4349

County Board sets salaries for attorney, sheriff

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set salaries for 2021 for two elected county officials Dec. 15.

The County Board set the salaries of:

- Attorney Pete Orput, at \$192,112; and
- Sheriff Dan Starry, at \$172,394.

The salary increases are similar to those provided to union bargaining units that have settled for 2021. 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.

The County Board 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

County Board sets 2021 budget, levy

The Washington County Board of Commissioners set the county's 2021 budget and levy Dec 15.

The board certified:

- a tax levy of \$115.69 million for county operations, capital, and debt service;
- the Washington County Regional Rail Authority levy of \$660,000; and
- the board consented to the property tax levy set by the Washington County Community Development Agency at \$5.19 million.

The board has been reviewing the 2021 recommended budget, which will be partially supported by the levies, since late summer. This levy amount will produce a reduction in the county tax rate.

Expenditures for 2021 adopted by the County Board total \$288.51 million. Of that, \$220.36 million is operating expenditures, \$48.43 million is capital project funds, and \$5.87 million is for debt service.

The Board also adopted 2021 expenditures for the Regional Rail Authority of \$669,000.

Archives of the webstreamed meetings at which the board members discussed the budget are on the county website at www.co.washington.mn.us. Budget presentations may also be viewed on the website by using the search word "budget."

The board started the budget process in March, with the review and adoption of principles for staff to use to create a recommended budget. Staff from each department begin the process of developing the county budget from there.

The county administrator gathers that information to present a recommended budget to the board in August, before the board adopts a proposed budget and levy in September. A public budget meeting was conducted Dec. 1, before the levy and budget were adopted Dec. 15.

The budget has a county property tax levy in 2021 that is the same as it was in 2020, a 0% increase, which reduces the county's tax rate of 5.7%. The tax impact on a median-valued home in the county, that is experiencing a 2.2% increase in valuation, should see a \$28 decrease in the county tax, which is a 3.4% reduction from last year.

The budget continues to fund county core services, functions, and mandated services. County services provide a safety net of services, which have been important to residents in 2020, and it will likely be even more so in 2021. The budget provides funding for food security and housing assistance. The budget will continue the county's programs to address the opioid crisis and the issue of mental health

in the county jail, crisis response in the community, and protection of vulnerable adults and children. The budget funds law enforcement and public safety, and continues funding to maintain the county's roads and facilities.

Contact: Jennifer Wagenius, Deputy Administrator, 651-430-6007, and Jan Lucke, Deputy Administrator, 651-430-6003