



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

**Date:** Jan. 5, 2021  
**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 Jan. 5, 2021, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

### **County Board conducts annual organizational meeting**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted its annual organizational meeting Jan. 5. Commissioner Lisa Weik, District 5, was elected the board chair for the year. The board has a practice of rotating the duties of the board chair among the five members, with each commissioner serving as board chair for a year. Commissioner Wayne Johnson, District 4, was elected as board vice chair.

During the meeting, the board recognized Commissioner Fran Miron, District 1, who served as board chair during 2020.

The board also set its meeting schedule for the year. The board will meet most Tuesdays at 9 a.m. in the Government Center, with some exceptions. Some of the meetings will be scheduled as workshops only, during which the board will discuss policy issues, but will not take action. Residents may consult the county's website at [www.co.washington.mn.us](http://www.co.washington.mn.us) and see the county calendar for the full schedule of meetings for the year.

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

### **County Board approves contracts for county services for coming year**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved several continuing contracts Jan. 5 that will provide services to county residents in the coming year.

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

The contracts include:

- Satellite Tracking of People LLC (STOP) contract through Dec. 31, for electronic monitoring for juvenile and adult clients at an annual cost of up to \$150,000. Clients placed on electronic monitoring have increased 14% overall within the last three years, much of which is related to clients released from jail on pre-trial supervision with a condition of some form of electronic monitoring.
- Tubman contract through Dec. 31 that provides services to victims and families of domestic violence, including shelter, crisis intervention, counseling, advocacy, Orders for Protection assistance, and community presentations. In addition, Tubman is the community point of contact for the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) program, a risk assessment tool used by law enforcement officers in Washington County. The increase of \$7,881, or 4%, will help offset an increase to service expense since the previous adjustment in 2020.
- Youth Service Bureau (YSB) contract through Dec. 31 that offers diversion services for juveniles who would otherwise be brought to juvenile court in Washington County. The services are by referral, including the County Attorney's Office, law enforcement agencies, and schools. While on diversion, a juvenile may participate in community work service, an educational program, and/or early intervention services through the YSB. Juveniles are required to make restitution to the victim and complete the diversion conditions to avoid a formal court record. The 2021 contract is \$259,192, the same as 2020. During 2020, 434 youth were served at a cost per youth of \$590. Of the juveniles who participated, 91% had no further involvement in the Washington County justice system for 12 months. Youth provided \$1,703 in restitution, and 86 youth provided 1,204 work service hours.
- The Bridges II program contract for \$222,336 that goes through Dec. 31, 2022. It is a program designed to provide a rental subsidy for low-income tenants who are also diagnosed with a serious mental illness. Tenants covered by this subsidy pay between 30% and 40% of their gross income for rent, with the remainder covered by Bridges Program funds. The Washington County Adult Mental Health Initiative Grant covers the cost of the program with the Washington County Community Development Agency operating as the administrator.

- Washington Conservation District contract for \$300,000 through Dec. 31. The Washington Conservation District provides technical assistance and educational services to promote and apply soil and water conservation practices throughout the county. The contract is for \$260,000, plus a one-time additional amount of \$40,000. It provides partial funding for the organization's administrative activities, and services in local water management, land and water treatment, and public education. Included in the agreement is funding for the East Metro Water Resources Education Program.
- Visual Labs Inc., which provides software for body-worn cameras, data storage, and support services for up to 155 smartphones used as body-worn cameras. The contract, which is to run through Dec. 31, will not exceed \$228,780.

### **County Board approves labor agreement with captain/commander unit**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a tentative collective bargaining agreement with the Law Enforcement Labor Services Local No. 372 Jan. 5.

Consistent with agreements that have been reached with other bargaining groups in the county, the compensation and benefit terms for the Law Enforcement Labor Services (LELS) Local #372 Essential Captain/Commander Unit for 2021 are:

- effective Jan. 1, a zero general adjustment will be applied;
- effective Jan. 8, a one-time 2% of current salary lump sum will be paid;
- effective July 9, a one-time \$1,000 lump sum will be paid.

The agreement also sets out the county's contribution to health insurance costs.

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

### **County transfers road segment to City of Mahtomedi**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an agreement with the City of Mahtomedi Jan. 5 to transfer Mahtomedi Avenue between County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 12 (Stillwater Road) and Highway 244, or Mahtomedi Avenue, from the county to the city.

The roadway is controlled by Washington County as an orphan segment of old County Highway 79. County Highway 79 was transferred from Washington County to Mahtomedi in 1996 and is now

known as Old Wildwood Road and Lincolntown Avenue. The portion of Mahtomedi Avenue between CSAH 12 and Highway 244 was not included in that transfer.

With the reconstruction of County Highway 12 through downtown Mahtomedi, both the city and county had an interest in transferring Mahtomedi Avenue to the City of Mahtomedi. Washington County completed roadway improvements to prepare it for its transfer to the city. The roadway is in good condition and the City of Mahtomedi is agreeable to accepting it.

**Contact: Kevin Peterson, Engineer II, 651-430-4330**

### **Valley Tours will continue to lease space in Historic Courthouse**

Valley Tours will continue to lease 306 square feet of office space in the Washington County Historic Courthouse, after the County Board approved an annual lease for the space Jan. 5.

The courthouse is at Third and Pine streets in Stillwater, and is part of the county's parks system.

The agency has leased the space since 1995. The revenue from the lease is used for Historic Courthouse operations.

**Contact: Alex McKinney, Parks Manager, 651-430-4364**

### **Sheriff's Office will receive additional money for narcotics task force**

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive an additional \$90,000 from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Justice Programs, for funding of the Washington County Narcotics Task Force

The County Board accepted the grant Jan. 5. The money will be used to reimburse the Sheriff's Office for personnel expenses of the sergeant overseeing the task force during 2021.

**Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601**

### **County public health employees receive awards**

Two Washington County Public Health & Environment managers received Local Public Health Association (LPHA) of Minnesota Awards, and the County Board recognized them Jan. 5.

Public Health and Environment Deputy Director David Brummel and Senior Program Manager Jeff Travis recently received Leadership Awards from the association.

Brummel received the Emerging Leader Award for his work with LPHA's Executive Committee. Brummel represents the Metropolitan Region public health departments in this role. He is seen as a skilled communicator, policy maker, and team builder who has earned the trust and respect of colleagues statewide.

Jeff Travis received the Legislative Leadership Award for his work assuring that environmental health issues were adequately and accurately reflected in the association's legislative platform. He also significantly contributed to ongoing work related to streamlining and refining food safety roles between the Minnesota Department of Health and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

**Contact: Lowell Johnson, Public Health & Environment Director, 651-430-6725**

### **County will continue to provide housing support during pandemic**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved programs Jan. 5 to assist those who are experiencing homelessness and those who need rental assistance to find housing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The county has been providing assistance to county residents since the beginning of the pandemic last March, including the sheltering of homeless individuals, child care assistance, transportation assistance, and emergency food support. The county has been using federal coronavirus relief funding (CRF) to provide the services. The county was able to provide housing assistance to between 20 and 50 families each month, and received more than 1,100 applications for rental assistance and provided more than \$2.7 million in rental assistance through the end of November 2020.

The need to provide shelter for those facing homelessness and assistance to those impacted by the pandemic who are unable to make consistent and steady rent payments because of the pandemic has continued, and CRF funds are no longer available. The County Board made the decision to continue funding the programs, using the county's fund balance to pay for them. The county will provide:

- up to \$360,000 for sheltering costs for those experiencing homelessness. These funds are available through June 30; and
- up to \$350,000 per month for three months beginning Jan. 1 for rental assistance, damage deposit assistance, and unpaid utilities for individuals impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic that allows individuals to avoid eviction.

The Hotel Sheltering Program is designed to provide shelter to people who are homeless in Washington County. County staff work with those in shelter to locate more permanent housing and provide support that may stabilize their situation going forward.

Applicants for rental assistance must:

- be a Washington County resident;
- have a documented past due rent or utility bill for the period from March 1, 2020, to present;
- have a current income that is less than 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines; and
- submit an application to Washington County Community Services that is approved based on additional program criteria and available funding.

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