

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

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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 25, 2021, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board approves application for liquor licenses for Afton Apple Orchard

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved an application May 25 for renewal of an on-sale and Sunday liquor license from Cenco Farms Inc., doing business as Afton Apple Orchard in Denmark Township.

Washington County processes all liquor licenses for the townships within the county. The county is required by the state to review the liquor liability insurance certification provided by the applicant, and the Sheriff's Office, County Attorney's Office and the Department of Public Health & Environment complete compliance/verification checks.

The fees have been paid and the compliance checks completed.

Contact: Christine Piskura, Taxpayer Services and Elections Division Manager, 651-430-8272

County Board approves policy for naming county-owned buildings

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a policy May 25 for naming county-owned buildings.

The policy provides a description of what facilities will be affected by the policy, and outlines a process for considering names for facilities. The policy also sets out criteria for names, saying facilities should be given names that reflect the surrounding geographical and natural features, and

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the historical significance of the county. Facilities will not be named for individuals or cities. The County Board will be responsible for approving names for county-owned property.

Contact: Don Theisen, Public Works Director, 651-430-4304

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 May 25. The county administers the program for the Star Trail Association. 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, 2022. 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 2021-2022 snow season. The grant varies from year to year, but averages around \$42,000.

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

County will update septic system loan program

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved changes to the county's subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS), or septic system, program May 25 and agreed to use \$500,000 from the county's fund balance to support the program.

The SSTS loan program has been in place since 2014. The program, carried out in partnership with the Community Development Agency (CDA), provides low-interest loans to residents in need of replacing non-compliant SSTS. The county serves as a local lender in the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's AgBMP loan program. The loan payments are collected as special assessments on property tax statements. Washington County has more than 18,000 SSTS.

Demand for the program has been high and has led to a waiting list in recent years. In addition, opportunity exists to expand eligibility of the program to include both sewer hookups, and well improvements.

The changes will update the rules that govern the program, and expand the criteria for eligible projects.

At the same time, the board agreed to transfer \$500,000 from the county's fund balance into the program budget. The funds will remain in a separate revolving fund for use in the program.

Contact: Stephanie Souter, Public Health Program Supervisor, 651-430-6701

Facility in Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park named Ravine Landing

The park facility that will open in Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park in June will be named Ravine Landing, the Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed May 25.

An internal process that was guided by the Public Infrastructure Naming Policy was used to determine naming options. There were nearly 40 name suggestions. That list was reduced to the top five selected names. Ravine Landing was the chosen facility name to recommend to the board.

Contact: Sandy Breuer, Parks Director, 651-430-4371

County will purchase budget management system

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$146,900 contract with OpenGov Inc. May 25 to provide the county with a budget management system.

A budget management system offers the ability to build the county's budget, manage forms related to the budget process, calculate personnel costs, and act as a communication tool. The new software will be used to:

- do operating and capital budgeting;
- determine personnel costs;
- integrate workflow;
- create reports and dashboards; and
- incorporate the county's Capital Improvement Plan and Capital Equipment and Technology Plan.

Funding for the software will come from the county's capital/technology fund balance.

Contact: Jan Lucke, Deputy County Administrator, 651-430-6003