

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

Date: Sept. 7, 2021
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Sept. 7, 2021, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board makes appointments to watershed districts

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made appointments of watershed districts managers Sept. 7.

The appointments are:

- Victoria Dupre, Marine on St. Croix, who was appointed to a partial first term as manager on the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District, to a term expiring June 21, 2023; and
- David Bakke, Scandia, who was appointed to a partial first term as manager on the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District, to a term expiring Sept. 23, 2024.

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

County will receive grant from state Department of Veterans Affairs

Washington County will receive \$17,500 from the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, after the County Board approved the grant Sept. 7.

Washington County has received funding from the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) since 2012. The grant will allow the Washington County Veterans Service Office (VSO) to provide outreach to the county's veterans, assist in the reintegration of combat veterans into society, enhance services offered to veterans, reduce veteran homelessness, and enhance the overall operations of the office.

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Contact: Ryan Carufel, Veterans Service Officer, 651-430-6857

County Board agrees to use proceeds from tax-forfeited land for parks

The Washington County Board of Commissioners agreed Sept. 7 to set aside 20% of the proceeds of the sale of tax-forfeited land to be used for buying and maintaining county parks.

The ownership of property that forfeits because of the non-payment of property taxes rests with the State of Minnesota and the county is tasked with the management and disposition of the property.

When a tax-forfeited property is sold to a governmental agency or the public, the proceeds are deposited into the county's tax-forfeited sale fund.

From the net proceeds, the distribution as established in state law is:

- 20% of fund proceeds to the county for acquisition and maintenance of county parks and recreational areas in counties that have passed the appropriate resolution annually; and
- of the remaining funds, 40% is distributed to the county general fund, 40% to the school district, and 20% to the city or township.

The financial implications for the county vary by year, depending on the amount of sale proceeds from tax-forfeited land and maintenance costs.

Contact: Christine Piskura, Taxpayer Services & Election Division Manager, 651-430-8272

Sheriff's Office will continue to provide law enforcement for Landfall

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will continue to provide law enforcement services to the City of Landfall Village, after the County Board approved a new agreement with the city Sept. 7.

The new agreement will be effective Jan. 1, 2022. The county will furnish and supply all necessary labor, supervision, equipment, communication facilities, dispatching, and supplies necessary to provide the services. The city will pay the county the direct costs and expenses from the services of one full-time deputy, which includes salaries and fringe benefits.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

County will continue MOUD program with support from state

Washington County will continue the Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) program in its jail, with the assistance of a \$275,000 grant from the state Department of Human Services.

The County Board accepted the grant Sept. 7.

The program started in January and is supported by multiple county departments. The grant will extend a special project coordinator position through September 2022, and pay for suboxone used to treat inmates while in custody.

The expected long-term benefits of MOUD are:

- saving lives by preventing overdose;
- increasing retention in treatment;
- reducing recidivism, and
- creating a safer, more supportive jail environment.

In the first six months of the program, there have been:

- 92 nurse assessments;
- 80 provider visits; and
- 78 program participants.

Medications have cost almost \$40,000 in that time.

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

Minnesota Paving and Materials will repave Greeley Street in Stillwater

Minnesota Paving and Materials will repair and repave Greeley Street, or County Road 66, in Stillwater from north of Shelton Drive to Orleans Street, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$141,740 contract with the company Sept. 7.

The roadway is in poor shape, and requires continuous patching. Some pavement is rough with ruts. Funding will come from proceeds from the county's wheelage tax.

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

County Board recognizes September as National Preparedness Month

The Washington County Board of Commissioners recognized September as National Preparedness Month in the county Sept. 7.

National Preparedness Month creates an opportunity for residents of Washington County to prepare their homes, businesses, and communities for any emergency. Investing in disaster preparedness can help save lives and reduce economic devastation. All residents are urged to make preparedness a priority and work as a team to ensure that individuals, families, and communities are prepared for disasters and emergencies.

The county's Emergency Operations Center oversaw the county's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, community civil unrest, flooding, and a tornado. The county's emergency management includes training exercises, working with local communities to ensure that they have emergency plans, and working with agencies across the state to assure that county communities and residents are prepared for an emergency.

Part of emergency preparedness is public outreach to the community, and assisting residents in making a plan, preparing for disasters, and teaching youth about preparedness.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

County Board acknowledged City of Birchwood Village's 100th anniversary

The Washington County Board of Commissioners congratulated the City of Birchwood Village on its 100th anniversary Sept. 7.

The City of Birchwood Village will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of its incorporation Sept. 10. The commissioners adopted a resolution of congratulations, noting the community's early years as a summer retreat on White Bear Lake, with the city growing through the years as a permanent home to more residents. The resolution noted the attraction of the Wildwood Amusement Park that brought visitors to the community, as it continued to attract new residents.

The 2020 census reported that Birchwood Village is now home to 863 residents.

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