

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
FEBRUARY 4, 2025**

WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS CONVENES

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. in the Washington County Government Center, County Board Room.

Present: Commissioner Fran Miron, District 1
Commissioner Stan Karwoski, District 2
Commissioner Bethany Cox, District 3
Commissioner Karla Bigham, District 4
Commissioner Michelle Clasen, District 5

Also Present: Kevin Corbid, County Administrator
John Ristad, Assistant County Attorney Division Chief
Stephanie Kammerud, Administrative Assistant

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Board Chair Karwoski asked for comments from the public; none were heard.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Commissioner Miron moved, seconded by Commissioner Clasen, to adopt the Consent Calendar as follows:

1. Approval of the January 14, 2025, and January 21, 2025, County Board meeting minutes.
2. Approval of **Resolution No. 2025-007** as follows:

**2025 DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO MAKE ELECTRONIC
FUNDS TRANSFERS TO THE DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING
AND FINANCE DEPARTMENT OR THEIR DESIGNEE**

WHEREAS, an electronic funds transfer is defined in Minnesota Statutes 471.38 as a process of value exchange via mechanical means without the use of checks, drafts, or similar negotiable instruments; and

WHEREAS, a local government is authorized to make electronic funds transfers if it meets the eligibility requirements in state law; and

WHEREAS, one of the requirements is for the governing body to annually delegate the authority to make electronic funds transfers to a designated business administrator or chief financial officer or the officer's designee; and

WHEREAS, the county desires to utilize electronic funds transfers as authorized by statute.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of County Commissioners of Washington County delegates the authority to make electronic funds transfers to its Accounting and Finance Director, or their designee, as allowed under Minnesota Statutes 471.38.

3. Approve Agreement No. 17140 between the Minnesota Department of Revenue and Washington County for Collection of a Local Transit Sales and Use Tax.
4. Approve seven Countywide Service Contracts for Professional Development: Abeo Consulting Group; CCS Language Academy; CPS Human Resource Services; Dendros Group; George: Purpose People Performance; Performance Excellence Network; Six Directions Coaching & Consulting; for five-year terms, through January 31, 2030.
5. Approval to reclassify 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Senior Legal Assistant position to an Office Supervisor position.
6. Approval to add 1.0 FTE to Community Services Adult Services Division, Senior Social Worker.
7. Approval to add 1.0 FTE to Community Services Adult Services Division, Social Worker I/II, Civil Commitment.
8. Approval to add 1.0 FTE to Community Services Adult Services Division, Social Worker I/II, Forensic Case Manager.
9. Approval to modify Administration Policy #1038 Theft or Misuse of County Resources.
10. Approval to modify Human Resources Policy #5004 Communicable Disease.
11. Approval to modify Section #6 Recruitment, Selection, and Appointment of the Personnel Rules and Regulations.
12. Approval to modify Section #7 Requirement of Employment Evaluation of the Personnel Rules and Regulations.
13. Approval to continue the \$300 hiring incentive and the \$100 referral incentive for Lifeguards for the 2025 season.

14. Approval of **Resolution No. 2025-008** as follows:

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE DECLARATION FOR RECEIVING
STATE GRANT FUNDS FOR IMPROVEMENTS FOR
PAVEMENT PRESERVATION IN LAKE ELMO PARK RESERVE**

WHEREAS, Washington County is the recipient of certain state general obligation bonds appropriated by the Minnesota Legislature in Minnesota Laws of 2023, Regular Session, Chapter 72, Article 1, Section 17 (the “G.O. Bonding Legislation”); and,

WHEREAS, on November 12, 2024, the Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted said funds known as Grant SG-24P2-10-01 as reflected in the minutes thereof; and,

WHEREAS, under Section 6.04 of said Grant, Washington County represents it will record a Declaration on the improved property for the use of these bond funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes its Chair to execute on behalf of the County the Declaration and any other documents necessary for the County to complete the terms and conditions set forth in Grant SG-24P2-10-01.

15. Approve Amendment No. 1 to Law Enforcement Services Agreement No. 15928 with the City of Newport to add a 1.0 FTE Deputy Sheriff position.
16. Approve Contract No. 17089 with the City of Stillwater in the amount of \$13,500 per year for a period of up to five years.
17. Approval of **Resolution No. 2025-009** as follows:

DONATION FROM MONSTER ENERGY CARES FOUNDATION

WHEREAS, Washington County gratefully accepts donations, gifts, and bequests from public and private sources to enhance the programs and services it provides; and

WHEREAS, any gift, donation, or bequest becomes the property of Washington County; and

WHEREAS, the Washington County Board is authorized to approve donations, gifts, and bequests.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby approve and accept a donation of energy drinks valued at approximately \$20,000 from Monster Energy Cares Foundation to show appreciation for the first responders in Washington County.

The motion was adopted with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Miron, Cox, Bigham, Clasen, and Karwoski. Nays, none.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Resolution for Black History Month

Queeta Kekulah and Henok Fanta, Co-Chairs from the Black Employee Network (BEN) Employee Resource Group, presented a resolution proclaiming the month of February 2025 as Black History Month in Washington County. BEN Employee Resource Group will host events on Tuesday, February 11, Culture and Cuisine, A Soulful Celebration, and on Thursday, February 27, Black Arts and Culture, to celebrate Black History Month.

Commissioner Clasen moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-010** as follows:

2025 BLACK HISTORY MONTH RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, in 1925, Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and conceived and announced Negro History Week to be celebrated during the week encompassing the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas in February 1926; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, then President Gerald R. Ford expanded the celebration to a month and urged Americans to “seize the opportunity to honor the too often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every endeavor throughout our history”; and

WHEREAS, Black History Month is a month-long commemoration of the history and achievements of Black Americans in the United States celebrated annually in February; and

WHEREAS, we honor Black people's rich history and contributions, including those who identify as African Americans and across the African diaspora; and

WHEREAS, Black American communities celebrate with events and educational programs that focus on the past, present, and future; and

WHEREAS, all Washington County employees and community members should be aware of the rich history and contributions of Black people in Washington County and across the United States; and

WHEREAS, Washington County's Black Employee Network Employee Resource Group will host a celebration of culture and cuisine on Tuesday, February 11 and Black arts and culture on Thursday, February 27 to mark Black History Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim the month of February 2025 to be Black History Month in Washington County to recognize the amazing and everlasting efforts and accomplishments of Black descendants of the African diaspora; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Washington County Board of Commissioners extends its appreciation to the employees of the Black Employee Network Employee Resource Group for hosting the Black History Month events of *Culture and Cuisine*, *A Soulful Celebration* and *Black Arts and Culture*.

Commissioner Bigham seconded the motion, and it was adopted with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Miron, Cox, Bigham, Clasen, and Karwoski. Nays, none.

PUBLIC WORKS

Contract for Lake Elmo Park Reserve Swim Pond Play Area Site Work

Erin Clarkowski, Engineer II, presented a contract for site work at the Lake Elmo Park Reserve Swim Pond Play Area. Ms. Clarkowski reported that this project is identified in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) as #PARK-3019. This project includes upgrading the outdated equipment to a regional destination playground, with new nature and animal themed equipment, custom shade structures, and poured in-place surfacing. This project will provide improved accessibility with varied play experiences for multiple age groups, serving both caretakers and children.

Ms. Clarkowski reported that this project has two components, playground equipment and installation, and site work. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued for site work, nine bids were received, and D&D Contracting LLC submitted the lowest bid. Site work includes parking lot improvements, new sidewalks, retaining walls, benches, picnic tables, bike racks, drinking fountain, landscaping, and a drainage system. This project is funded by Metropolitan Council Park Modernization funds.

Commissioner Clasen moved to approve Contract No. 17128 in the amount of \$433,447 with D&D Contracting LLC for the Lake Elmo Park Reserve Swim Pond Play Area Project site work. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and it was adopted.

Contract for St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park Hilltop Improvement Project Building Bid Package

Ms. Clarkowski reported that the St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park Hilltop Improvement Project is included in the CIP as project #PARK-8013. This project is separated into four components: purchase of new playground equipment; installation of new playground equipment; site work bid package, and building bid package.

Ms. Clarkowski reported that the playground equipment purchase and installation contracts were approved by the board in August 2024, and the site work bid package was approved by the board in October 2024. Today's building bid package includes constructing the new restroom building and improvements to the hilltop park shelter. There were four bids received, and Parkos Construction Company submitted the lowest bid. Funding is through the Metropolitan Council Park Modernization and Legacy Funds.

Commissioner Bigham moved to approve Contract No. 17115 in the amount of \$550,600 with Parkos Construction Company for the St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park Hilltop Improvement Project Building Bid Package. Commissioner Miron seconded the motion, and it was adopted.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Legislative Updates

Deputy County Administrator Jan Lucke reported that the county hosted a legislative reception last week and received positive feedback from legislators. Staff are working on a second reception in April.

Ms. Lucke reported that Washington County's bills have been drafted, with the exception of wood waste, which is expected to be drafted soon. Staff continues to meet with chief authors to discuss strategy to move bills forward.

Resolution to Reimburse Body Armor Costs for Emergency Responders

Ms. Lucke reported that the State of Minnesota adopted rules to guide legislation allowing reimbursement for body armor vests for EMS and fire personnel, in addition to existing reimbursements for law enforcement and correctional officers. Emergency responders provide critical services to communities, and this funding will provide equipment that allows them to do their jobs properly, efficiently, and safely. This resolution urges Congress to pass legislation providing additional funding for body armor vests and broadening the eligibility to include fire fighters and rescue and EMS personnel.

Commissioner Bigham moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-011** as follows:

ENDORISING FEDERAL LEGISLATION TO REIMBURSE BODY ARMOR COSTS FOR ALL EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

WHEREAS, the Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership (BVP), enacted in 1998, allocated funds to reimburse up to 50% of the cost of body armor vests for law enforcement and correctional officers, the bill does not provide similar reimbursements for other first responders: EMTs, paramedics, and firefighters; and

WHEREAS, since fiscal year 2015, body armor vests have been directly attributable to saving the lives of at least 305 law enforcement and corrections officers (based on Office of Justice Programs data, April 2023). Forty-three of those body armor vests were purchased, in part, with BVP funds; and

WHEREAS, the proliferation of guns in the United States and increasing societal unrest has led to a significant uptick in violence against all emergency responders, including fire and EMS personnel, according to sources that include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and research published in the National Library of Medicine; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported in 2017 that 2,000 EMS professionals are injured each year in a violence-related incident. This results in lost workdays for EMS professionals, which is 22 times higher for EMS providers compared to the national average; and

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota recently adopted rules to guide 2023 legislation allowing reimbursement for body armor vests for EMS and fire personnel, in addition to existing reimbursements for law enforcement and correctional officers; protective vests, but not all states have approved similar funding; and

WHEREAS, emergency responders provide critical services to our communities, and we strive to provide equipment that allows them to do their jobs properly, efficiently, and safely.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners endorses the effort to provide federal funding for body armor for all first responders and those acting in a first responder capacity, and urges U.S. Congress to pass legislation providing additional funding for body armor vests and broadening the requirements to include fire fighters and rescue and EMS personnel, whether serving their community in public and private entities.

Commissioner Miron seconded the motion, and it was adopted with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Miron, Cox, Bigham, Clasen, and Karwoski. Nays, none.

Commissioners discussed having a letter drafted to legislators regarding federal funding concerns for Washington County. Commissioner Miron moved to request that staff draft a letter regarding federal funding concerns on behalf of the commissioners. Commissioner Clasen seconded the motion, and it was adopted.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioners reported on meetings and other events they attended. Please see archived livestreaming of the board meeting for full commissioner reports on the county's website washingtoncountymn.gov under "County Board of Commissioners."

BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

No board correspondence was received.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Clasen moved to adjourn. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and it was adopted.

The County Board meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

BOARD WORKSHOP WITH ADMINISTRATION

The board met in workshop session to discuss two potential Land and Water Legacy Program conservation easement projects in the City of Afton. Present for the workshop were Commissioners Miron, Cox, Karwoski, Bigham, and Clasen. Also present were Kevin Corbid, Jan Lucke, Jennifer Wagenius, and county staff.

Attest:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin Corbid".

Kevin Corbid
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stan Karwoski".

Stan Karwoski
County Board Chair