

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
AUGUST 12, 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.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Clasen moved to approve the County Board meeting agenda for August 12, 2025. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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

1. Appoint Commissioners Clasen and Karwoski to the canvass board for the special primary election for State Senate District 47 and appoint Commissioners Bigham and Clasen to the county canvass board for the special election for State Senate District 47.
2. Approval of **Resolution No. 2025-078** as follows:

**RESOLUTION APPOINTING JAMES “JIM” SCHOTTMULLER
TO THE COMFORT LAKE FOREST LAKE
WATERSHED DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 103D.311 requires the county board to appoint a member to fill a vacancy in the office of watershed district manager; and

WHEREAS, a person appointed a watershed district manager must be a voting resident of the watershed district who is not a public officer of the county, state or federal government, expect that a soil and water conservation supervisor may be appointed a watershed district manager; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 103D.311 also provides the process that must be followed in making appointments of watershed district managers; and

WHEREAS, a term is expiring for the position of watershed district manager and the county has undertaken all the necessary steps to make an appointment; and

WHEREAS, the county has provided the notice required to the townships and municipalities that are within the watershed; and

WHEREAS, the county has provided the required published notice; and

WHEREAS, the county has reviewed the applications submitted for the manager position and the list of nominees provided by the townships and municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the county has reviewed residency of the manager being appointed as well as the residency of the current managers, considered the experience of the individual being appointed to determine if he is able to represent the concerns of the entire watershed district, and reviewed any other material available to determine the ability of the managers to fairly represent the watershed district; and

WHEREAS, the individual being appointed manager was included on the list of nominees as presented by the townships and municipalities under Minnesota Statutes 103D.311, subdivision 3.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Washington County Board of Commissioners hereby appoints James “Jim” Schottmuller to a first full term on the Comfort Lake Forest Lake Watershed District, to begin on September 24, 2025, and end on September 23, 2028.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Washington County Board of Commissioners directs that a record of all appointments made be filed with the county auditor of each county affected by the watershed district, the secretary of the board of managers, and the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

3. Approve revisions to Administration Policy #6008, Meal, Mileage, and Other Authorized Expense Reimbursement for County Commissioners.
4. Approval of Cooperation Agreement No. 17609 between Washington County Community Services and the Washington County Sheriff's Office to provide Fraud Prevention Initiative services for a period beginning on the date of final signature, through June 30, 2027.
5. Approval of **Resolution No. 2025-079** as follows:

**MINNESOTA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY GRANT FOR
FAMILY HOMELESS PREVENTION AND ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM (FHPAP)**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 462A.204, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency is authorized to develop a program to assist families who are homeless or are at imminent risk of homelessness and that program is the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP); and

WHEREAS, under the Minnesota FHPAP, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency can award grants to counties to focus on their emergency response systems on homeless prevention and to secure housing for the homeless; and

WHEREAS, the Washington County Community Services Department has applied for and received FHPAP grant funding since 2007 and has contracted with community providers to utilize the funds to stabilize families in their existing homes, shorten the amount of time that families spend in emergency shelters and assist families with securing transitional or permanent affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, the Washington County Community Services Department has demonstrated the ability to perform the required activities of the Minnesota FHPAP; and

WHEREAS, the Washington County Community Services Department submitted a proposal to Minnesota Housing for FHPAP funding for the October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2027, grant cycle and was awarded \$814,000.00; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 462A.204 requires a sponsoring resolution of the county board to receive FHPAP grants.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Washington County, through its Community Services Department, is hereby authorized as an

entity charged with the administration of funds made available through the Minnesota Housing Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program in the County of Washington, in Minnesota.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Washington County's Board Chair and County Administrator are hereby authorized to electronically sign the contract and any further amendments or changes to the contract with the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency for the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) for the period of October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2027, and accept funds in the amount of \$814,000.00.

6. Approve revisions to Administration Policy #1024 Guidelines Governing Public Purpose Policy Expenditures.
7. Approve revisions to Human Resources Policy #5030 Telework.
8. Approve revisions to Human Resources Policy #5033 Non-DOT Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy.
9. Approve revisions to Human Resources Policy #5035 DOT Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy.
10. Approve revisions to Human Resources Policy #5017 Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.
11. Approve a Statement of Agreement for the Executive Assistant to the County Sheriff and to authorize the Director of Human Resources to sign the agreement on behalf of the County.
12. Approval of a 1.0 FTE Service Representative in the Property Records and Taxpayer Services Department.
13. Approval to extend a Special Project Inventory Specialist position in the Public Works Department.
14. Approve Joint Powers Agreement No. 17615 between the State of Minnesota, acting through its Commissioner of Corrections, and the County of Washington, acting through the Sheriff's Office, to provide meals, lodging, and supervision for State Incarcerated Persons (SIP).

The motion was adopted 5-0 with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Miron, Cox, Bigham, Clasen, and Karwoski. Nays, none.

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

2024 Financial Audit and Government Finance Officers Association Awards

Accounting and Finance Director Cat Piepho reported that Washington County has received a clean audit opinion from CliftonLarsonAllen for the 2024 financial statements. Ms. Piepho stated that this is the best outcome that can be received in an audit, and affirms that the county's financial reporting is reliable, transparent, and trustworthy.

Ms. Piepho reported that Washington County continues to maintain a strong fund balance, which allows flexibility and stability to help manage unexpected costs, delays in revenues, or economic downturns. It shows that the county is being financially responsible and planning ahead, which helps protect essential services, and puts the county in a good position for long-term investments. The county invested nearly \$100 million in capital infrastructure, buildings, and equipment during 2024. Major investments included road and bridge improvements, construction of the North Environmental Center, park enhancements, and Land and Water Legacy projects. The county issued \$25.9 million in general obligation bonds to support the construction of the new Central Service and License Center and Central Park building improvements in 2024.

Ms. Piepho reported that the county received more than \$3.2 million in bond premiums, due to Washington County's AAA credit rating and strong fund balance, which further reduced the amount needed to borrow for these projects. The METRO Gold Line project continued to advance towards its opening in March 2025, and the county invested more than \$41 million in 2024 to support these efforts.

Ms. Piepho reported that the county's Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust account demonstrated strong performance, increasing in value by \$18.6 million during 2024. This growth occurred despite the withdrawal of \$4 million to fund retiree health insurance obligations. The net gain reflects effective fund management and favorable market conditions, reinforcing the county's long-term commitment to meeting its retiree benefit obligations in a fiscally responsible manner.

Ms. Piepho reported that the county utilized \$25.9 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to support critical capital investments, such as the Emergency Housing Services Building, HVAC system upgrades, and information technology infrastructure improvements. The county earned \$3.5 million more in investment revenues over the previous year. County Program Aid funding increased by \$3.5 million. Overall, revenues exceeded expenditures and increased the fund balance of the General Fund by \$29 million.

Ms. Piepho concluded by announcing that Washington County has received three awards from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).

The GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting was received for the county's 2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The ACFR is an all-encompassing financial document, and this is the 39th year that Washington County has received this award.

The GFOA Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting was received for the county's 2023 Popular Annual Finance Report (PAFR). The PAFR was designed for reader appeal and understandability, and this is the sixth year that Washington County has received this award.

The GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award was received for the county's 2025 budget document. This award reflects the commitment of the County Board and staff to meet the highest principles of governmental budgeting, and this is the 28th consecutive year of Washington County receiving this esteemed award.

Audit Advisory Committee Report

Internal Auditor Melanie Greufe presented the 2024 Audit Advisory Committee report. Ms. Greufe reported that the Audit Advisory Committee was established in 1984 and meets quarterly. It is comprised of two citizen members, Joseph Rheinberger and James Honsvall, Commissioner Karla Bigham, and County Administrator Kevin Corbid.

Ms. Greufe has served as the county's internal auditor since 2016. The majority of the internal auditor's work is testing the internal controls of the county and determining whether the county is in compliance with federal and state regulations and county policies and procedures. Throughout the year, all payments that equaled or exceeded \$25,000 were tested, along with judgmentally selected samples of all payments under \$25,000. The process of disbursement testing and reporting to both the Audit Advisory Committee and the County Board is required by law and this reporting is in lieu of the board having to approve each payment at its board meetings. During the course of reviewing each of these disbursement testing periods, there were no written findings.

Ms. Greufe reported that the county also utilizes purchasing cards as a method for county employees to pay for county obligations and expenses. The use of these cards is efficient and allows for the testing and tracking of purchases to ensure compliance with all county policies. Ms. Greufe completed testing on random and judgmentally selected samples of all purchases made using the general use purchasing card and the uniform allowance purchasing card. During the review of purchasing cards in 2024, there was one issue regarding an unallowable transaction that was identified. Recommendations were made to the Audit Advisory Committee to increase staff training on allowable purchases.

Ms. Greufe completed random unannounced cash counts of the change and petty cash funds authorized for Washington County. The Department of Property Records and Taxpayer Services and the Sheriff's Office were selected in 2024. All petty cash and change fund accounts balanced.

Ms. Greufe reported that CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA), the county's external auditors, participated in three of the Audit Advisory Committee meetings in 2024. Ms. Greufe concluded that during 2024, there were no thefts or frauds identified.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Resolution for Minnesota Breastfeeding Month

Senior Community Health Specialist Lia Burg presented a resolution to recognize August 2025 as Minnesota Breastfeeding Month. Ms. Burg summarized the lactation projects and education supported by the Department of Public Health and Environment (PHE). Ms. Burg noted that the county was able to purchase a nursing mothers tent through grant funds, which is free of charge for local community events to borrow. In addition, PHE is working in partnership with Human Resources to develop a SharePoint page for employees to access lactation resources and designated lactation sites within the county buildings.

Commissioner Cox moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-080** as follows:

MINNESOTA BREASTFEEDING MONTH AND WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK

WHEREAS, the theme for the breastfeeding observance during August 2025 is "Prioritize Breastfeeding: Create Sustainable Support Systems". This theme emphasizes the importance of establishing long-lasting and equitable support structures for breastfeeding mothers worldwide. It highlights the need for policies, healthcare systems, and community initiatives that promote and facilitate breastfeeding, contributing to healthier families and a more sustainable planet; and

WHEREAS, chest/breastfeeding or providing breastmilk is recommended for optimal nutrition and healthy growth and development in the early months and years of life, and is fundamental to the well-being and prosperity for millions of young children to survive and thrive; and

WHEREAS, chest/breastfeeding has an impact on lifelong health for mothers and infants and is key to early brain development and health promotion; and

WHEREAS, chest/breastfeeding is one of the most cost-effective prevention strategies for many infections, chronic and acute diseases; and

WHEREAS, infant feeding is one of the most important decisions that a family makes; and

WHEREAS, families need support for their chest/breastfeeding efforts from family, friends, health care providers, support groups, the community, employers, and child care settings; and

WHEREAS, enabling caregivers to chest/breastfeed is key to certain health goals as it improves nutrition, promotes food security, and reduces inequalities; and

WHEREAS, Washington County is committed to enhancing the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program's support for breastfeeding families. While recognizing the program's efforts in promoting breastfeeding initiation, Washington County seeks to further improve breastfeeding rates, particularly within the first year of life, aligning with broader public health goals; and

WHEREAS, through the collaboration of WIC, the Washington County Breastfeeding Coalition, Statewide Health Improvement Partnership, and Family Health Nursing Team during the month of August will provide clinic educational displays and additional professional support and encouragement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners hereby acknowledges the role of chest/breastfeeding in achieving optimal health for infants and mothers by recognizing August 2025 as Minnesota Breastfeeding Month.

Commissioner Clasen seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0 with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Miron, Cox, Bigham, Clasen, and Karwoski. Nays, none.

PUBLIC WORKS

Square Lake Park Improvement Projects

Engineer Mike Kline presented three items for the Square Lake Park Improvement project. This project is identified as #PARK-6006 in the Capital Improvement Plan and is included in the parks long-range plan. The Square Lake Park facilities need repairs and upgrades to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. This includes repaving parking lots and the entrance road, addition of an automated gate at the park entrance, improving ADA access along the beach and fishing pier, and stormwater improvements.

Mr. Kline reported four bids were received for this project, and Winberg Companies, LLC is recommended for the bid award.

Mr. Kline reported that during the design phase, additional scope was added that was not included in the contract. The additional scope included design of an automated gate entrance system, additional stormwater modeling and design to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Grant, and a high-level design of a future decontamination station at the park.

Mr. Kline reported that this project will be funded by State Sales Tax, Transmission Line Tax, Metropolitan Council Bonds, Transportation Advancement Account III (TAA) and a Minnesota Board of Water & Soil Resources (Clean Water) Grant.

Commissioner Miron moved to approve a budget amendment to decrease \$124,600 in TAA III from RB-2204 and increase \$124,600 in TAA III to PARK-6006. Commissioner Bigham seconded the motion, and it was adopted 4-1.

Commissioner Miron moved to approve Contract No. 17574 in the amount of \$1,064,028.17 with Winberg Companies, LLC. Commissioner Bigham seconded the motion, and it was adopted 4-1.

Commissioner Miron moved to approve Amendment No. 1 to Contract No. 16699 with HR Green in the amount of \$79,214. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and it was adopted 4-1.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Executive of the Year

Dennis Osborn, Regional Director of D.A.R.E. America/International, presented Sheriff Dan Starry with the award for D.A.R.E. Executive of the Year. Sheriff Starry received this award for his commitment, leadership, and support of the D.A.R.E. Program.

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 washingtontcountymn.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 5-0.

The County Board meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

BUDGET WORKSHOP WITH COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

The board met in workshop session to review the proposed 2026 budget for the Community Corrections Department. Present for the workshops were Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Cox, Bigham, and Clasen. Also present were Kevin Corbid, Jan Lucke, Jennifer Wagenius, and county staff.

BUDGET WORKSHOP WITH COMMUNITY SERVICES

The board met in workshop session to review the proposed 2026 budget for the Community Services Department. Present for the workshops were Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Cox, Bigham, and Clasen. Also present were Kevin Corbid, Jan Lucke, Jennifer Wagenius, and county staff.

BUDGET WORKSHOP WITH PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

The board met in workshop session to review the proposed 2026 budget for the Department of Public Health and Environment, and the University of Minnesota Extension. Present for the workshops were Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Cox, Bigham, and Clasen. Also present were Kevin Corbid, Jan Lucke, Jennifer Wagenius, residents, and county staff.

Attest:

Kevin Corbid

Kevin Corbid
County Administrator

Stan Karwoski

Stan Karwoski
County Board Chair