

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
SEPTEMBER 23, 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 Bigham moved to approve the County Board meeting agenda for September 23, 2025. Commissioner Clasen seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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

1. Approval of the September 9, 2025, County Board meeting minutes.
2. Approve revisions to Policy #2105 Finance Committee.
3. Approval to establish Fund 779 Sheriff's Office Inmate Custodial Fund.
4. Approve Amendment No. 2 to Contract No. 13740, which extends the County's current participation in the Metropolitan County Consortium (MCC), a collaboration of counties who have agreed to partner in the coordination of Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) services, through December 31, 2027.

5. Approval of the plat of Maywood Meadows in May Township.
6. Approval of the plat of Glamors Farm in May Township.
7. Approve Amendment No. 1 to Joint Powers Agreement No. 16834 to allow the limited transfer of South Metro Private Well Pesticide Mitigation Grant funds, between categories of eligible activities by Dakota County, acting as fiscal agent for the joint powers agreement.
8. Approve Contract No. 17674 with Hagen, Christensen & McIlwain (HCM) Architects in the amount of \$213,900 for Architectural and Engineering Services for the Law Enforcement Center Improvement Project.
9. Approve Amendment No. 2 to Contract No. 15680 with Kraus-Anderson in the amount of \$605,154 for Construction Management services for the Law Enforcement Center Improvement Project.
10. Approval of **Resolution No. 2025-092** as follows:

**ACCEPTANCE OF A MONETARY DONATION FROM
POLLINATOR FRIENDLY ALLIANCE FOR THE PURPOSES OF
INSTALLING WILDLIFE FENCING**

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, Minn. Stat. 375.26 authorizes the county board to accept gifts, donations and bequests on behalf of the county; and

WHEREAS, County Road 4 between (County Road 15) and (May Avenue) along with its corresponding right of way is currently under the jurisdiction of Washington County; and

WHEREAS, Pollinator Friendly Alliance wishes to donate monetary funds to be used to install and maintain wildlife fencing along County Road 4 between (County Road 15) and (May Avenue); and

WHEREAS, Pollinator Friendly Alliance will donate \$48,000 to be used by Washington County to install 900 linear feet of 5' tall galvanized chain link fence on the south side of CR-4 at the outlet of Big Marine Lake, and to install 112 linear feet of 5-foot-high galvanized chain link fence ends to direct turtles to the tunnel underneath CR-4 on the north and south sides of CR-4; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby accept the monetary donations of Pollinator Friendly Alliance in the amount of \$48,000 to be used for the purpose outlined above, and Washington County agrees to coordinate the removal of the existing wildlife fencing, installation of the new fencing, and to maintain the newly installed wildlife fencing.

11. Approval of **Resolution No. 2025-093** as follows:

**ACCEPTANCE OF A MONETARY DONATION FROM
MINNESOTA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY FOR THE
PURPOSES OF INSTALLING WILDLIFE FENCING**

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, Minn. Stat. 375.26 authorizes the county board to accept gifts, donations and bequests on behalf of the county; and

WHEREAS, County Road 4 between (County Road 15) and (May Avenue) along with its corresponding right of way is currently under the jurisdiction of Washington County; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Herpetological Society wishes to donate monetary funds to be used to install and maintain wildlife fencing along County Road 4 between (County Road 15) and (May Avenue); and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Herpetological Society will donate \$4,000 to be used by Washington County to install 900 linear feet of 5' tall galvanized chain link fence on the south side of CR-4 at the outlet of Big Marine Lake, and to install 112 linear feet of 5-foot-high galvanized chain link fence ends to direct turtles to the tunnel underneath CR-4 on the north and south sides of CR-4.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby accept the monetary donation of Minnesota Herpetological Society in the amount of \$4,000 to be used for the purpose outlined above, and Washington County agrees to coordinate the removal of the existing wildlife fencing, installation of the new fencing, and to maintain the newly installed wildlife fencing.

12. Approve a Cooperative Agreement Between Carnelian Marine St. Croix Watershed District and Washington County for preservation, protection, and enhancement of water resources through the installation of beaver coexistence devices in Big Marine Park Reserve.
13. Approval of **Resolution No. 2025-094** as follows:

**ACCEPTANCE OF A MONETARY DONATION FROM
POLLINATOR FRIENDLY ALLIANCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF
INSTALLING AND MAINTAINING BEAVER COEXISTENCE
DEVICES IN BIG MARINE PARK RESERVE**

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, Minn. Stat. 375.26 authorizes the county board to accept gifts, donations and bequests on behalf of the county; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minn. Stat. 398.31 - 398.35, the Washington County Board of Commissioners has established numerous parks throughout Washington County that it operates and maintains, including Big Marine Park Reserve; and

WHEREAS, Pollinator Friendly Alliance wishes to donate \$10,000 to be used by Washington County to purchase and install two beaver coexistence devices, which the County will then own, that will be placed at two locations that are within the future Big Marine Park Reserve Park Boundary, in a drainage easement owned and maintained by the Carnelian Marine St. Croix Watershed District (CMSCWD); and

WHEREAS, Washington County will enter into a Cooperative Agreement with CMSCWD establishing permission for the placement of the beaver coexistence devices within the easement location.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby accept the monetary donation of Pollinator Friendly Alliance in the amount of approximately \$10,000, to be used for the purpose of installing and maintaining the devices in a cost-effective manner that protects biodiversity, park infrastructure and nearby neighbors' properties.

14. Approval of **Resolution No. 2025-095** as follows:

**RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT A DONATION FROM GREG AND
MARY PALANK FOR INSTALLATION OF A STEEL BENCH
WITH COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE
AT LAKE ELMO PARK RESERVE**

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

WHEREAS, the Minn. Stat. 375.26 authorizes the county board to accept gifts, donations and bequests on behalf of the county; and

WHEREAS, Washington County Parks has a wide array of donation opportunities for individuals and groups to provide support for the park system; and

WHEREAS, the Washington County Parks - Park Bench Program allows an individual or group to donate funds to install and maintain a bench to be used on a trail or near a park facility; and

WHEREAS, for a donation of \$3,500, a steel park bench with commemorative plaque may be placed along a paved trail or park facility and will be guaranteed for a minimum of ten (10) years; and

WHEREAS, Greg and Mary Palank have requested to place a steel park bench at Lake Elmo Park Reserve, near the playground, in commemoration of the many memories they have shared with their grandchildren at the playground and in recognition of their longtime enjoyment and use of Lake Elmo and the park since the 1970s.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby accept a donation in the amount of \$3,500 from Greg and Mary Palank for the installation of a steel park bench at Lake Elmo Park Reserve with commemorative plaque; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Washington County will maintain the bench site, including repair and replacement of the bench and plaque for a period of ten years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that after ten years, Washington County has the option to dispose of, replace, or relocate the bench and plaque as needed.

15. Approval of **Resolution No. 2025-096** as follows:

**RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT A DONATION FROM MICHELLE
KRIEG AND THE ALBRECHT FAMILY FOR INSTALLATION OF
A STEEL BENCH WITH COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE
AT BIG MARINE PARK RESERVE**

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

WHEREAS, Minn. Stat. 375.26 authorizes the county board to accept gifts, donations and bequests on behalf of the county; and

WHEREAS, Washington County Parks has a wide array of donation opportunities for individuals and groups to provide support for the park system; and

WHEREAS, the Washington County Parks - Park Bench Program allows an individual or group to donate funds to install and maintain a bench to be used on a trail or near a park facility; and

WHEREAS, for a donation of \$3,500, a steel park bench with commemorative plaque may be placed along a paved trail or park facility and will be guaranteed for a minimum of ten (10) years; and

WHEREAS, Michelle Krieg and the Albrecht Family wish to place a steel park bench at Big Marine Park Reserve near the boat ramp to honor the legacy of the Shady Beach Resort. The Shady Beach Resort, once situated near the boat ramp, was owned by the Albrecht Family for over 50 years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby accept a donation in the amount of \$3,500 from Michelle Krieg and the Albrecht Family for the installation of a steel park bench at Big Marine Park Reserve with commemorative plaque; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Washington County will maintain the bench site, including repair and replacement of the bench and plaque for a period of ten years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that after ten years, Washington County has the option to dispose of, replace, or relocate the bench and plaque as needed.

16. Approve Washington County's applications to the 3M PFAS Settlement Priority 2 Grant Program.

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

WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Resolution for the 2024 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report

Washington County Community Development Agency (CDA) Deputy Executive Director Karly Schoeman presented a resolution to approve the 2024 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for submission to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Ms. Schoeman reported that the CAPER details the progress toward meeting Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Consolidated Plan goals. The CAPER is a means to communicate to HUD and policymakers how funds are spent and the impact the programs make in the community.

Ms. Schoeman reported that program year 2024 accomplishments included Two Rivers acquiring 10 homes and making the necessary improvements, Habitat for Humanity constructing six homes in St. Paul Park, CDA funded nine home improvement loans, and MWF Properties finalized construction of 51 affordable units in Newport, of which four of these new units are HOME units. In addition, CDBG funding allowed Washington County Community Services to provide crisis assistance to 208 people, and resources for homelessness prevention to more than 2,000 people.

Commissioner Miron moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-097** as follows:

RESOLUTION APPROVING WASHINGTON COUNTY'S 2024 CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT AND HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMS AND AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF SUCH GRANT REQUEST TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, Washington County is an Entitlement Community for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program; and

WHEREAS, Washington County is entitled to HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funding through its participation in the Dakota County HOME Consortium with the city of Woodbury and the counties of Anoka, Dakota and suburban Ramsey; and

WHEREAS, the Washington County Community Development Agency (the "Agency") has entered into a Subrecipient Agreement with Washington County to administer and manage the CDBG and HOME programs (collectively, the "Programs"); and

WHEREAS, the Programs require the submission of a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (the "CAPER") every year in accordance with Chapter 91 of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the CAPER requires a fifteen day public notice and public hearing before approval; and

WHEREAS, the required public comment period for the CAPER was held from August 22, 2025, through September 16, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Agency held a public hearing on September 16, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Dakota County HOME Consortium will also hold a public hearing on September 23, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the CAPER must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development by September 28, 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, that the Washington County 2024 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report for the CDBG and HOME programs is approved for submission to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Resolution for Hispanic Heritage Month

Nicole Lopez from Public Health and Environment, and Cory Sindt from Community Services, presented a resolution on behalf of the Washington County Gente Employee Resource Group (ERG). Gente ERG began in 2023, with a vision of promoting, supporting, and connecting the Latino and Hispanic community within the Washington County organization. Gente ERG invites employees to attend one of the three mini celebrations planned for Hispanic Heritage Month, “Feel the Latin Ritmo”, as a time to come together, celebrate the culture, and build community.

Commissioner Bigham moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-098** as follows:

RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, THROUGH OCTOBER 15, 2025, AS HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

WHEREAS, Hispanic Heritage Month is observed annually from September 15 to October 15 because September 15 is the anniversary of independence for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, Mexico celebrates their independence day on September 16, Chile celebrates their independence day on September 18, and Día de la Raza is celebrated on October 12; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to recognize and celebrate the rich histories, vibrant cultures, and enduring contributions of Americans whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America and South America; and

WHEREAS, the Latino and Hispanic community has played an integral role in shaping the social, economic, cultural, and political fabric of our nation—from pioneering scientific innovation and entrepreneurship to enriching our arts, education, and public service; with language, music, dance, cuisine, and traditions that have become part of the American experience; and

WHEREAS, the first sizable group of Latino immigrants to Minnesota came from Mexico in the early 1900s, with many coming to Minnesota as seasonal workers to provide labor in the agricultural fields of the state, for the railroads, and for meat-packing factories; and

WHEREAS, later Latino immigrants became religious leaders, business professionals, and students looking for better opportunities, often challenging stereotypes of Latinos as poor migrant workers; and

WHEREAS, Latinos and Hispanics are one of the fastest-growing minority groups and comprise an increasingly important segment of Minnesota's workforce, having the highest labor force participation rate in the state; and

WHEREAS, Washington County is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that values diversity and uplifts the voices and talents of our Latino and Hispanic colleagues, partners, and communities through initiatives like the establishment of the Gente Employee Resource Group (ERG) in 2023 and the 2024 Bilingual Pay Differential; and

WHEREAS, our Gente ERG invites all employees to participate in one of our three mini celebrations for Hispanic Heritage Month, “Feel the Latin Ritmo”, as a time to come together, celebrate our culture, and build community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby proudly proclaim the period of September 15 to October 15, 2025 to be Hispanic Heritage Month; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board extends its appreciation to the Hispanic and Latino community and employees and reaffirms our dedication to celebrating Hispanic and Latino heritage, amplifying Hispanic and Latino contributions, and advancing equity and opportunity for all. Let this month be not only a celebration, but a call to action—to learn, to honor, and to build a future that reflects the full spectrum of our shared humanity.

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

Minnesota Safety Council Governor's Safety Award

Parker Prose, Safety and Risk Program Coordinator, announced that Washington County is a recipient of the 2024 Minnesota Safety Council Governor's Safety Award. Mr. Prose reported that the annual Governor's Safety Awards program has recognized Minnesota organizations that demonstrate exceptional safety performance. Applicants are evaluated on several years of injury data compared to the state and national industry averages, as well as the strength of their safety programs.

Mr. Prose reported that Washington County has received the 2024 Silver Achievement Award. This award reflects the county's comprehensive safety programs and incident rates that fall within the 50th to 75th percentile of both state and national averages. Washington County was one of the 199 employers honored through this program. This is the county's 33rd year to receive this award.

Resolution for Human Resource Professionals Day

Angie Nalezny, Human Resources Director, presented a resolution to recognize September 26, 2025, as Human Resource Professionals Day.

Commissioner Miron moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-099** as follows:

WASHINGTON COUNTY RESOLUTION FOR HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS DAY

WHEREAS, Human Resource Professionals Day will be recognized on September 26, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Human Resource Professionals Day serves as an annual occasion to celebrate the integral role of HR professionals in building and sustaining thriving workplaces; and

WHEREAS, the dedicated Human Resources team consistently demonstrates exceptional skills in areas such as benefits, diversity, equity and inclusion, employee relations, employee engagement, human resource information systems, professional development, risk management, safety, talent acquisition, and fostering a positive organizational culture; and

WHEREAS, they navigate complex challenges with empathy, integrity, and strategic foresight, ensuring the well-being and success of Washington County's most valuable asset – its employees; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of the Washington County Human Resources Department are fundamental to achieving the County's organizational goals and promoting a supportive and productive work environment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington County Board of Commissioners officially acknowledges and extends its gratitude to all of the Washington County Human Resources Professionals on this special day, recognizing their unwavering commitment to Washington County employees and the enduring success of the Washington County organization.

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

Change Order for County State Aid Highway 12 Reconstruction Project

Construction Engineer Allan Brandt presented a change order for the County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 12 Reconstruction Project, which is identified in the Capital Improvement Plan as #RB-2664. This project spans 1.3 miles between Highway 120 and Stillwater Road in the City of Mahtomedi. Project work included pavement replacement, turn lanes, traffic signals, and trail additions, drainage improvements, and replacing the culvert at Lost Lake.

Mr. Brandt reported that Forest Lake Contracting was awarded the bid in 2022 and construction began. There were several challenges during construction, including erosion issues, the Lost Lake culvert, and a shallow sanitary sewer that was discovered late in the project. During construction, there were 14 change orders necessary to complete the work.

Mr. Brandt reported that Change Orders 1 through 11 and 13 were approved administratively in accordance with county Procurement Policy #1202. Change Order 12, to reconstruct the sanitary sewer, was approved by the board in August 2023, as it exceeded the 7% contingency.

Mr. Brandt reported that Change Order 14 for \$142,387.68 compensates the contractor for cost escalation due to delay of the sanitary sewer work. The delay was the result of extensive material procurement lead times and utility relocations. This change order will be funded by State Aid, Local Contributions, and Planned Use of Fund Balance.

Commissioner Karwoski moved to approve Change Order No. 14 to Contract No. 14717 with Forest Lake Contracting for the CSAH 12 Reconstruction Project. Commissioner Miron seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0.

PROPERTY RECORDS AND TAXPAYER SERVICES

Resolution for Customer Service Week

Director Amy Stenftenagel presented a resolution honoring all Washington County employees and declaring October 6-10, 2025, Customer Service Week in Washington County.

Commissioner Clasen moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-100** as follows:



**RESOLUTION HONORING ALL WASHINGTON COUNTY
EMPLOYEES DURING CUSTOMER SERVICE WEEK
OCTOBER 6-10, 2025**

WHEREAS, the purpose of the work of Washington County employees is to serve the residents of Washington County; and

WHEREAS, the mission of Washington County is to provide exceptional services that enhance quality of life and promote a safe, healthy, and welcoming community for all; and

WHEREAS, the employees at Washington County live this mission every day providing a wide variety of high-quality external and internal services that enrich and enhance the lives of county residents; and

WHEREAS, Washington County employees embody the county's core values of being caring, collaborative, equitable, ethical, fiscally responsible, responsive, and sustainable in all actions; and

WHEREAS, prompt, friendly, and accurate customer service is essential in ensuring the highest quality of service for our community; and it is fitting to recognize dedication and excellence of all Washington County employees.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners wishes to extend its heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all employees of Washington County for the quality service they provide; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners wishes to specifically acknowledge Property Records and Taxpayer Services staff for its matchless customer service to all residents of Washington County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, in recognition of their exceptional commitment to serving the public, the Washington County Board of Commissioners proclaims October 6-10, 2025, Customer Service Week in Washington County, to honor all county employees for their dedication to service excellence while remaining *rooted in connection, growing with direction*.

Commissioner Bigham 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.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Resolutions to Approve the Preliminary 2026 Budgets and Levies

Deputy County Administrators Jan Lucke and Jennifer Wagenius presented the proposed 2026 budgets and levies.

Ms. Lucke reported that the countywide budget provides critical funding for mandated and core function services that impact lives and support the community. Ms. Lucke reported that the result of the county's recent community survey showed the rating for overall quality of services is well above the national benchmark, and slightly above the county's 2022 rating.

Ms. Lucke reported that Washington County's new slogan, Rooted in **Connection**, Growing with **Direction**, embodies the work that we do. The county's values, focus on inclusion, and employee and public engagement connect us and the direction taken with programs, projects, and services. The county is grounded in the mission, vision, and strategies outlined in the county's strategic plan, along with strong financial management, AAA bond rating, and the second lowest tax rate in the metropolitan area.

Ms. Lucke reported that the levy increase to support the proposed 2026 budget is 6.9%. The levy results in a 2.3% increase to the county's tax rate. The proposed levy has not changed since the July 29th presentation to the County Board. However, it is now spread across a slightly larger tax base, leading to a lower tax rate increase than was anticipated in July. The levies for the Land and Water Legacy Program and Regional Rail Authority remain flat.

Ms. Wagenius reported that the key factor influencing the proposed 2026 budget is meeting current obligations and commitments. Within that overarching theme are several major components that include county employees, operating technology, building operations, strategic priorities, and capital investments.

Ms. Wagenius reported that as a service organization with more than 40% of the budget allocated for wages and benefits, the employees who serve residents are a major influence on the annual budget. Labor agreements are open and to account for that unknown, typical general and wage adjustments are built into the budget. Employee health care costs are increasing. 2026 will be the first year of employee/employer contributions to the Minnesota Paid Leave program, as well as working to bring family medical leave administration back into the county, requiring the addition of a part-time person for these efforts. The proposed budget includes funding of the post-employment (retiree) healthcare costs and the higher costs related to that program with the county's trust.

Ms. Wagenius reported that in the Community Services Department, there are several high-need areas struggling to remain in compliance and experiencing significant wait lists. Washington County is not alone facing these challenges, and many counties across Minnesota are grappling with similar issues in critical programs such as MnCHOICES, Medicaid, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). To meet existing demand and avoid falling further behind, the budget includes an investment in staffing necessary to stabilize and strengthen these critical

service areas. There are also levy funds proposed within Community Services to fully fund the Co-Response program at its current level and to account for increasing child protection expenses. There are four new 50% levy funded positions for SNAP, and financial contributions to cover a partial year of the reduction in federal funds for SNAP administrative costs. Six 75% non-levy funded levy positions are included for MnCHOICES intake and reassessments. There are also three positions for on-site services and support.

Ms. Wagenius reported that other existing obligation expenses are to cover cost increases for fleet, equipment, and professional service contracts, due to the impacts of inflation and tariffs. The proposed 2026 budget also includes half of the funding needed to keep the current Human Trafficking Sergeant position, which is at risk as grant funds are limited or pulled back, a change in Public Health service delivery that adds a new position offset by reduced costs for contracted services, and regular election expenses.

Ms. Wagenius reported that in technology, funding for an upgrade to the county's Human Resource Information System that is reaching its end of life in 2027, is included in the proposed 2026 budget. The budget also accounts for ongoing software increases under existing contracts. The proposed 2026 budget recognizes the impact of inflation on technology equipment and licensing, and a position will be added to increase the endpoint support team.

Ms. Wagenius reported that in building operations, 2026 will see additional staff resources on the Park Grove and Stafford library projects. Also related to libraries is one-time funding for planning additional open access options, and funding for a library strategic facility plan, which will help plan and prioritize library projects, based on service area gaps, facility condition index data, and building renewal needs.

Ms. Wagenius reported that the proposed 2026 budget accounts for the first full year of the Emergency Housing Service Building operations with funding for the services from various sources including an increase in Local Affordable Housing Aid, a reallocation of existing emergency housing services programming funds, and a new housing support allocation from the state. The budget also includes one-time funding for the expansion of the county's electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.

Ms. Wagenius reported that with the identified project needs and the increase in square footage maintained, along with inflationary pressures related to building energy, repairs, and staffing, the typical 2.5% increase in rent could not keep up with organizational needs. To accommodate those pressures, the proposed budget includes a 4.5% increase in rent. That rent increase covers wage increases for building services employees, adds funds to the building repair fund, and allows for the funding of two additional employees in that division.

Ms. Wagenius reported that there is much progress being made on the priorities in the county's 2024 Strategic Plan. Although most of the activity on the plan is within department operating budgets, like the change to jail booking fees, there are some initiatives that require one-time funding.

Ms. Wagenius reported that the budget includes one-time funding for the implementation of the signage study recommendations at the North and South Service Centers, funding for ongoing work on the Climate Action Plan, the start of work on the county's required update to the Comprehensive Plan, and funding for referendum analysis related to the county's Land and Water Legacy Program.

Ms. Wagenius reported that there continues to be substantial growth of capital investments. Within facilities, funding is allocated from this year's Capital Redirect to fund the commitment to the Central Yard Waste site that the board provided direction on earlier this year, as well as construction dollars to begin construction on the Park Grove Library. For 2026, parks capital investment is flat. Within this year's planned projects, there is funding for the Hardwood Creek Trail Extension and some minor projects in the parks facilities. Most substantial is a planned investment in the Road and Bridge area of \$115.5 million through a combination of funding sources for road improvements, ranging from a grade separated crossing with ramps, to road preservation and reconstruction.

Ms. Wagenius reported that as the County Board and the state have increased investments in the delivery of road and bridge projects to respond to local infrastructure needs and population growth, the staffing to deliver the projects and related services has not grown proportionately. In order to correct course and provide the appropriate staffing levels, this budget includes redirection of wheelage tax growth and a small portion of existing wheelage tax, to fund 4.5 new positions in the Road and Bridge Division. Even with this redirection of wheelage tax, the investment in pavement preservation will grow as the county's road funding continues to be robust.

Ms. Wagenius reported that at a higher level, the planned growth in Debt Service and Capital Project levy was reduced from 5% to 2.5% in this budget. That move, along with an increase in the organization's planned debt issuance to \$40 million every four years, beginning with the 2027 issuance, allows for a balance of pay-as-you-go and debt funding for major infrastructure while increasing the overall investment in the county's Capital program and allowing funding for operations.

Ms. Lucke reported on 2026 revenue, with the recommended levy increase of 6.95%. Land and Water Legacy and Regional Rail levies remain flat. County Program Aid is formula-driven, and there is a minor increase for 2026. However, County Program Aid had grown more than 30% since 2024, thanks to the 2023 legislature, and we are still benefiting from this. Non-levy Revenue represents all funding sources not specifically itemized, such as Other Taxes, License & Permits, Intergovernmental Revenue, Fees for Services, Interest Earnings, and Miscellaneous Revenue. The increase is mainly from intergovernmental revenues for Road and Bridge capital, about half from state funding and half from federal and local funding. There is also a 4% increase in other taxes, mainly from the County Environmental Charge. Other Financing Sources include bonds and interfund transfers. Interfund transfers include money moving between departments. Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit project is entirely funded by transit sales tax, and there is no property tax levy being used to fund that project.

Ms. Lucke reported on 2026 expenditures. Client/Citizen-Related Support includes a broad range of expenditures in the human service area. Personnel Services includes payroll, benefits, and insurance costs for the 1,476 FTEs in the recommended budget. This increase is approximately

\$13 million, and includes anticipated settlements for 2026, a 7% increase in health care costs, and the expenses related to Minnesota Paid Leave. Services and Charges include a broad range of expenditures. The biggest cost drivers include additional funding for the Recycling and Energy Board joint activities and pass-through funds to the Community Development Agency. Materials and Supplies reflects inflationary pressures and tariffs on items the county purchases. The biggest cost driver in this category is an increase in technology costs. Capital Outlay includes all capital improvement projects, and this fluctuates more than the operating budget, as capital projects typically do not have linear spending patterns. Debt changes each year, based on the principal and interest schedule for the county's debt. Other Financing Uses is primarily interfund transfers, which may include contributions to fund balance.

Ms. Lucke reported that total expenses rose 20.3% this year, approximately \$47 million is capital and \$26 million is operating. Capital includes Capital Outlay, Debt Service and Gold Line, and \$40 of that \$50 million is the interchange at Highway 36 and Lake Elmo Avenue. Of the \$27 million operating increase, half is being driven by personnel wages and benefits.

Ms. Lucke reported that the net total number of FTEs in every department was held flat or went down, except for Public Works where additional staff are needed to construct and maintain a growing capital program. These staff are funded by wheelage tax and rent revenue. The recommended budget includes additional positions in other departments, and in these cases the new FTE are replacing expiring one to two-year special project positions within the department, therefore holding departments at net zero FTE. Ms. Lucke noted that the 2.5 FTE reduction in the Public Safety area includes 1.5 FTE probation officer and 1.0 FTE Sentence-to-Service, to allow a conversion to more electronic monitoring.

Ms. Lucke reported that the net levy increase with tax base growth often mirror each other as the market moderates. In comparing net levy to new construction in the community, there are significant levels of new construction value added to the county's tax base with pay 2026 new construction valued around \$900 million. All these factors result in a county tax bill that would be \$40 higher, per year, for a median valued home that had a median increase in its value. That increase results in a 4.1% increase.

Ms. Lucke reported that tax rate trends show a slight increase for 2026. There are many factors that go into the tax rate calculation, many of which we cannot control, such as growth in tax base and new construction. We are strong in these areas, however due to market appreciation, a slight down tick in new construction, and a 6.95% levy increase, the tax rate increased slightly from 2025 to 2026. It is still well below 2020 through 2022.

Ms. Lucke provided 2025 metropolitan area comparisons. Washington County is below the seven-county average in levy per capita and right at the five-county average, which excludes Hennepin and Ramsey counties, making Washington County the third lowest levy per capita in the metropolitan area, as well as third lowest of all 87 counties. When comparing tax rates, Washington County was the second lowest in the metropolitan area, and fourth lowest of all 87 counties. This means that the same valued property in any metropolitan county, except Dakota County, would pay more in county property tax than they do in Washington County.



County Administrator Kevin Corbid presented the five resolutions for the proposed 2025 levy and budget.

Resolution Certifying the Proposed Property Tax Levy Payable 2026 for Washington County

Commissioner Bigham moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-101** as follows:

**RESOLUTION CERTIFYING PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX LEVY FOR
WASHINGTON COUNTY PAYABLE 2026**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby certify to the Washington County Auditor-Treasurer the following proposed tax levy for payable 2026:

Washington County \$150,162,700

Commissioner Miron 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.

Resolution Certifying the Proposed Property Tax Levy Payable 2026 for the Washington County Regional Rail Authority

Commissioner Clasen moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-102** as follows:

**RESOLUTION CERTIFYING PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX LEVY FOR THE
WASHINGTON COUNTY REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY PAYABLE 2026**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners does hereby certify to the Washington County Auditor-Treasurer the following proposed tax levy for payable 2026:

Regional Rail Authority \$660,000

Commissioner Cox 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.



Resolution Adopting the Proposed 2026 Budget for Washington County

Commissioner Karwoski moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-103** as follows:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA RESOLUTION NO. <u>2025-103</u>						
Date: <u>September 23, 2025</u>		Department: <u>Administration</u>				
Motion by Commissioner: <u>Karwoski</u>		Seconded by Commissioner: <u>Miron</u>				
RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE WASHINGTON COUNTY Proposed BUDGET FOR PAYABLE 2026						
OPERATING FUNDS	EXPENDITURES	REVENUE OTHER THAN LEVY	PLANNED USE OF FUND BALANCE	GROSS LEVY	STATE AID (CPA)	CERTIFIED LEVY
General	\$183,340,900	\$92,711,500	1,867,800	\$88,761,600	\$14,515,600	\$74,246,000
Community Services	\$68,560,800	\$40,176,000	0	\$28,384,800	\$0	\$28,384,800
Library	\$11,096,900	\$693,200	0	\$10,403,700	\$0	\$10,403,700
Parks	\$5,050,800	\$2,452,200	8,400	\$2,590,200	\$0	\$2,590,200
Public Works	\$31,894,500	\$20,976,000	0	\$10,918,500	\$0	\$10,918,500
Subtotal:	\$299,943,900	\$157,008,900	1,876,200	\$141,058,800	\$14,515,600	\$126,543,200
CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDS						
Capital Bond Projects	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital Parks Projects	\$1,845,000	\$1,845,000	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital Projects - Other	\$13,568,000	\$5,742,400	1,000,000	\$6,825,600	\$0	\$6,825,600
Capital Land & Water Legacy	\$0	\$0	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital Repairs	\$2,000,000	\$1,332,800	667,200	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital Road & Bridge	\$100,044,900	\$95,344,900	4,700,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal:	\$117,457,900	\$104,265,100	6,367,200	\$6,825,600	\$0	\$6,825,600
DEBT SERVICE FUNDS						
Debt Service - General	\$15,582,800	\$0	0	\$15,582,800	\$0	\$15,582,800
Debt Service - Referendum	\$1,211,100	\$0	0	\$1,211,100	\$0	\$1,211,100
Subtotal:	\$16,793,900	\$0	0	\$16,793,900	\$0	\$16,793,900
Total Proposed Budget:	\$434,195,700	\$261,274,000	8,243,400	\$164,678,300	\$14,515,600	\$150,162,700
Total Washington County Proposed 2026 Levy:				\$164,678,300	\$14,515,600	\$150,162,700

Commissioner Miron 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.

Commissioner Clasen moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-104** as follows:

Date: September 23, 2025 Department: Administration
 Motion by Commissioner: Clasen Seconded by Commissioner: Bigham

<u>SPECIAL REVENUE FUND</u>	<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>OPERATING TRANSFERS AND REVENUE OTHER THAN LEVY</u>	<u>FUND BALANCE Contrib/(Use)</u>	<u>GROSS LEVY</u>	<u>STATE AID (CPA)</u>	<u>CERTIFIED LEVY</u>
Regional Rail Authority	\$849,800	\$189,800	\$0	\$660,000	\$0	\$660,000
Total Proposed Budget:	\$849,800	\$189,800	\$0	\$660,000	\$0	\$660,000
Total Washington County Regional Rail Proposed 2026 Levy:				\$660,000	\$0	\$660,000

Resolution Consenting to the Proposed Property Tax Levy Payable 2026 for the Washington County Community Development Agency

Commissioner Miron moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2025-105** as follows:

Pursuant to Minnesota Statute section 469.033 subdivision 6, the Washington County Board of Commissioners hereby consent to the special tax levy of the Washington County Community Development Agency in an amount not to exceed:

Washington County Community Development Agency **\$7,079,361**

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.

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.

EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION – PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Commissioner Cox moved to move into Executive (closed) session. Commissioner Bigham seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0.

The Board met in Executive (closed) session, the time being 11:25 a.m., to conduct the annual performance review of County Administrator Kevin Corbid. Pursuant to Minnesota Statute Section 13.43, performance evaluation feedback is private data on the employee, and the meeting may be closed to the public, pursuant to Minnesota Statute Section 13D.05, subd. 3(a). Present for the Executive session were Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Cox, Bigham, and Clasen, Angie Nalezny, and Kevin Corbid.

The Executive session closed at 12:24 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Bigham moved to adjourn. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and it was adopted 4-0.

The County Board meeting adjourned at 12:26 p.m.

BOARD WORKSHOP WITH PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

The board met in workshop session to discuss wood waste intake at the North Environmental Center. Present for the workshop were Commissioners Miron, Cox, Karwoski, Bigham, and Clasen. Also present were Kevin Corbid, Jan Lucke, Jennifer Wagenius, outside agencies, and county staff.

BOARD WORKSHOP WITH PUBLIC WORKS

The board met in workshop session to discuss expansion of community circulators in Washington County. Present for the workshop were Commissioners Miron, Cox, Karwoski, Bigham, and Clasen. Also present were Kevin Corbid, Jan Lucke, Jennifer Wagenius, outside agencies, and county staff.

Attest:

Kevin Corbid

Kevin Corbid
County Administrator

Stan Karwoski

Stan Karwoski
County Board Chair