



OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
OCTOBER 30, 2025

WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS CONVENES

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met for a special meeting 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, remote per Minn.Stat. 13D.02
 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

County Board Vice Chair Bigham conducted the meeting, due to Chair Karwoski attending remotely.

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

FEDERAL SHUTDOWN – SNAP ASSISTANCE

Jennifer Castillo, Director of the Community Services Department (CSD), and David Brummel, Director of the Department of Public Health & Environment (PHE), presented a resolution to consider county assistance related to the ongoing federal government shutdown and non-payment of November Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. This has created immediate challenges for families who rely on nutrition programs and SNAP benefits, including more than 5,000 Washington County households, which will be at-risk for increased food insecurity.

Mr. Brummel reported that earlier this week, the Minnesota Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) office verbally informed counties that another round of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Section 32 funding should be coming from the federal government, and the exact dollar amount should be known sometime this week. This WIC funding is expected to allow the county to continue the WIC program throughout November and into December. USDA confirmed in a letter to the state, that all November 2025 SNAP benefit allotments are suspended until federal funding is restored, or further direction is given by the Food and Nutrition Services.

Ms. Castillo reported that the local and state food shelves and food banks are anticipating a surge as SNAP recipients turn to them for help. This surge will impact populations beyond SNAP recipients, such as seniors, working families and children who already rely on food shelves and

food banks to help make ends meet. This anticipated food insecurity crisis is not only impacting Washington County but also the nation. While staff see this as a challenging moment, it is also seen as an opportunity to demonstrate Washington County's ability to be nimble and respond quickly to a crisis with compassion.

Ms. Castillo reported that today's request is asking the board to consider providing \$250,000 in one-time financial aid to local food banks and food shelves. This funding will be used to purchase food and groceries, compensate staff time and volunteer coordination, expand food storage and distribution needs, and purchase food cards and related administrative costs. This would be a short-term, one-time investment. It does not offset the impact of SNAP benefits being suspended. It is recommended that \$30,000 of the \$250,000 go to Second Harvest Heartland, to purchase Washington County-specific food credits and allow local agencies to place additional food orders when there is an increase in demand in November. The remaining funding would be distributed to local food shelves within Washington County. Allocations were determined based on organization size, volume of traffic, communities nearby, and proximity to SNAP households.

Ms. Castillo reported that this approach allows quick, local response customized to community needs, and CSD staff continue to process SNAP eligibility applications, so that when the federal government reopens, SNAP benefits can be issued as quickly as possible.

Mr. Brummel summarized the process of today's recommendations, including staff reaching out to food shelves for the necessary information needed to submit this request. Many of the food shelves have existing contracts with PHE for food distribution and delivery. They are categorized as Tier 1 and Tier 2, based on size and capacity, and differ in dollar amounts. However, the scope of services is the same.

Commissioner Cox moved to approve the resolution for Washington County assistance to food shelves and Second Harvest Food Bank for \$250,000.00, seconded by Commissioner Clasen.

WASHINGTON COUNTY ASSISTANCE TO FOOD SHELVES AND SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK

WHEREAS, the U.S. Federal Government shut down on October 1, 2025, after lawmakers failed to appropriate funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 or pass a continuing resolution; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services notified the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) that if the federal government shutdown continued into November, there would be insufficient funds to pay November Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits; and

WHEREAS, the USDA has directed states to hold the issuance files and delay transmission to state electronic benefit transfer (EBT) vendors until further notice; and



WHEREAS, in Minnesota, county governments acting as an administrative agent of the state and federal governments accept and process SNAP applications and determine eligibility; and

WHEREAS, county workers will continue to process and determine eligibility for new and existing recipients to ensure benefits will be available as soon as the federal government issues the funds; and

WHEREAS, SNAP helps more than 440,000 individuals in Minnesota, including roughly 10,400 individuals who reside in Washington County; and

WHEREAS, SNAP benefits provide roughly \$1.6 million in monthly food assistance to eligible Washington County households; and

WHEREAS, food shelves in Washington County and throughout Minnesota are already strained and are anticipating even higher demand if SNAP benefits are not paid to households starting on November 4, 2025; and

WHEREAS, Washington County strongly believes that providing food assistance to eligible county residents is the responsibility of the federal government and encourages an immediate resolution to the shutdown and the payment of SNAP and other federal benefits be reinstated; and

WHEREAS, Washington County expects that the federal government will reimburse the county for the county’s administrative costs for accepting applications and determining eligibility for all work that is done during the federal government shutdown; and

WHEREAS, Washington County desires to provide financial assistance to the food shelves and food bank in the county to ensure children and adults will continue to have access to healthy food, including those who are eligible for SNAP benefits; and

WHEREAS, county assistance can be utilized for the following allowable uses related to food distribution: food and grocery purchases, staff time, volunteer coordination, equipment utilized for food distribution, supplies, transportation, food card purchases, community food distribution, culturally relevant food support, food support for people experiencing homelessness, and related administrative costs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Washington County Board of Commissioners provides the following financial assistance to the organizations listed below:

Organization Name	Funding Amount
Open Cupboard	\$66,000

Basic Needs	\$33,000
Family Pathways	\$33,000
Valley Outreach	\$33,000
Second Harvest Heartland	\$30,000
Friends in Need	\$16,500
Hugo Good Neighbors	\$16,500
Community Helping Hands	\$5,500
Mahtomedi Area Food Shelf	\$5,500
Scandia Marine Food Shelf (Elim Lutheran)	\$5,500
St. Andrews	\$5,500
Total	\$250,000

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the county's financial assistance be provided as soon as reasonably possible after an agreement is executed with an entity that outlines the eligible uses of these funds, timing of the payments, and reporting requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assistance provided is one-time in nature, and the county is not committing to providing any additional assistance; any additional assistance would need to be considered and approved by the county board at a future meeting.

Vice Chair Bigham asked for comments from the public, and representatives from local food shelves came forward.

Jessica Francis, Executive Director of Open Cupboard in the City of Oakdale, commended Washington County on its responsiveness to support the needs in the community. Ms. Francis noted that the number of families at the food shelf is continuing to climb, and as the lines continue to get longer, this funding will help provide additional food and staffing, and it is greatly appreciated.

Jill Hughes, Executive Director of Friends in Need in the City of St. Paul Park, echoed previous comments on the number of people seeking food assistance, and expressed appreciation for Washington County's support and recognition of what they are going through.

Traci Maki, CEO of Valley Outreach in Stillwater, expressed gratitude for the support from the county, and suggested an amendment to the resolution. Rather than a hybrid approach that would designate \$30,000 to Second Harvest Heartland, Ms. Maki asked on behalf of the food shelves that the \$30,000 be pro-rated among the Tier 1 and Tier 2 food shelves, which gives more flexibility for food purchasing. Ms. Maki also suggested, depending on how long the federal shutdown continues, that perhaps the county would consider a large-scale food distribution effort.

Commissioner Clasen moved to amend the resolution to pro-rate the \$30,000 to the Tier 1 and Tier 2 food shelves, as suggested by the food shelf partners. 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.

The County Board recessed at 9:52 a.m. to make appropriate edits to the resolution.

The County Board reconvened at 9:57 a.m.

Resolution No. 2025-118, as amended, is as follows:

WASHINGTON COUNTY ASSISTANCE TO FOOD SHELVES

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WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services notified the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) that if the federal government shutdown continued into November, there would be insufficient funds to pay November Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits; and

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WHEREAS, Washington County desires to provide financial assistance to the food shelves and food bank in the county to ensure children and adults will continue to have access to healthy food, including those who are eligible for SNAP benefits; and

WHEREAS, county assistance can be utilized for the following allowable uses related to food distribution: food and grocery purchases, staff time, volunteer coordination, equipment utilized for food distribution, supplies, transportation, food card purchases, community food distribution, culturally relevant food support, food support for people experiencing homelessness, and related administrative costs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Washington County Board of Commissioners provides the following financial assistance to the organizations listed below:

Organization Name	Funding Amount
Open Cupboard	\$75,000
Basic Needs	\$37,500
Family Pathways	\$37,500
Valley Outreach	\$37,500
Friends in Need	\$18,750
Hugo Good Neighbors	\$18,750
Community Helping Hands	\$6,250
Mahtomedi Area Food Shelf	\$6,250
Scandia Marine Food Shelf (Elim Lutheran)	\$6,250
St. Andrew's Community Resource Center	\$6,250
Total	\$250,000

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the county's financial assistance be provided as soon as reasonably possible after an agreement is executed with an entity that outlines the eligible uses of these funds, timing of the payments, and reporting requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assistance provided is one-time in nature, and the county is not committing to providing any additional assistance; any additional assistance would need to be considered and approved by the county board at a future meeting.

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

Commissioner Bigham moved to authorize Risk Management, in consultation with the County Attorney's Office, to approve deviations from the county's standard terms and conditions in the contracts anticipated by the previous action. Commissioner Miron seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0 with a Roll Call vote as follows: Ayes, Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Cox, Clasen, and Bigham. Nays, none.

Deputy County Administrator Jan Lucke presented a letter to the county's Congressional delegation from the County Board. The letter indicates the action the County Board has taken today to use limited reserve funds to provide \$250,000 in financial assistance to food shelves and food banks in Washington County. The letter urges the federal government to honor its commitment to pay the federal share of the county's administrative costs for accepting applications and determining eligibility, including all work that is done during the federal shutdown.

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

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the board, Vice Chair Bigham adjourned the meeting at 10:14 a.m.

Attest:

Kevin Corbid

Kevin Corbid
County Administrator

Stan Karwoski

Stan Karwoski
County Board Chair