



**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNTY BOARD
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
APRIL 14, 2026**

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 Bigham asked for comments from the public; none were heard.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Cox moved to approve the County Board meeting agenda for April 14, 2026. Commissioner Karwoski seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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

1. Approval of the March 24, 2026, and March 31, 2026, County Board meeting minutes.
2. Approval of a new Financial and Budget Policy for Penny Rounding.
3. Approval of a 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Special Project Public Information Officer position in the County Attorney's Office.
4. Approve the 2026-2028 Tentative Agreement with the Law Enforcement Labor Services Local #620 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator Unit.
5. Approve the 2026-2028 Tentative Agreement with the Law Enforcement Labor Services Local #214 Deputy Sheriff Unit.

6. Approve comment letter regarding Brown's Creek Watershed District's 2027-2036 Watershed Management Plan.
7. Approve Joint Powers Agreement No. 18139 between the State of Minnesota, acting through its Commissioner of Public Safety on behalf of the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, and the Washington County Drug Task Force.
8. Approve Contract No. 18147 with IdentiSys Inc. in the amount not to exceed \$20,000 over five (5) years.

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

PRESENTATION OF THE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARDS

The Washington County Board of Commissioners honored employees recognized for exemplary performance in the areas of customer service, diversity/equity/inclusion, employee engagement, innovation, teamwork, and the County Administrator's Excellence in County Government Award.

Keegan Miller, Office of Administration, summarized the awards program process, which began with county employees being invited to nominate fellow employees for the awards. The nominations were reviewed by a six-member employee committee, which included Rachel Westmoreland from Community Services, Theresa Hoffer from the Office of Administration, Rob Parker from Information Technology, Samantha Parker from the Library, Richard Gearhart from Property Records and Taxpayer Services, and Douglas Berglund from the Sheriff's Office. The committee members presented the awards.

Customer Service Award

The recipient of the Customer Service Award is Alex Calero, Community Health Worker in the Community Services Department. Alex works on the Community Engagement Team that works with both Community Services and Public Health and Environment. Alex has played a key role in establishing community trust and uses his bilingual and multicultural skills to work with diverse and underserved communities. Alex has used his advocacy and influence to provide free park passes to low-income families, create a culturally responsive communication best practices guide, bring English classes closer to Spanish-speaking communities, and organize the Back2School event at Landfall, bringing valuable resources to the community, including blood pressure, dental, and vision screenings.

Alex is committed to meeting people where they are at. Earlier this year, Alex received a message on a Friday afternoon about a family in urgent need of food. The next day, Alex had delivered food to them from the food shelf. Alex followed up the next week to offer help for the family to access other resources and services. Alex serves his community with passion, dedication, and commitment. He has helped advance equity at Washington County and goes above and beyond in his level of service.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award

The recipients of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award are the following members from the Women's Empowerment Employee Resource Group (ERG): Kelly Duong, Social Worker II; Lia Burg, Senior Community Health Specialist; Emily Jorgensen, Planning Manager; Gina Solomon, Social Worker II; Alison Raveling, Office Specialist; Madigan Peterson, Planner II; Gao Lee, Case Aide; Erin Blaylock, Engineer II; Melissa Jungwirth, Library Services Supervisor; Ashley Hickey, Social Worker II; Favour Adetona, Library Services Assistant I; Theresa Hoffer, Records Manager; Whitney Theis, Senior Social Worker; Nissa Knutson, Social Services Supervisor; and Amy Wolfe, Senior Social Worker.

The Women's Empowerment ERG goes beyond serving employees. The group has led projects that positively impact Washington County community members, which is not typically a goal of employee resource groups. Women's Empowerment has four priority areas: Women's Health, Outreach and Events, Family Support, and Policy and Practice. Through the Family Support initiative, Women's Empowerment partnered with Building Services to install designated parking stalls at the Government Center for visitors who are pregnant or have small children. This project emerged from Women's Empowerment members' lived experiences. The parking stall signs are labeled with clear language and icons, so visitors with limited English proficiency can understand. Under the Women's Health priority, Women's Empowerment organized a feminine hygiene product donation drive. Employees provided products, which were then donated to Brittany's Place, an organization supporting female survivors of sex trafficking. Women's Empowerment extended the county's culture of care beyond its walls into the broader community.

Women's Empowerment initiatives promote equitable access, foster inclusive workplace engagement, and strengthen community partnerships. They are committed to building an inclusive culture where employees feel seen, valued, and inspired.

Employee Engagement Award

The recipient of this year's Employee Engagement Award is Jeff Hudson, Learning and Organizational Development Coordinator in Human Resources. Jeff consistently creates a climate of cooperation, trust, and mutual respect across Washington County. He approaches learning and organizational development with positivity, inclusivity, and a genuine belief in people's potential. Jeff's facilitation style encourages open dialogue, diverse perspectives, and shared problem solving, which strengthens relationships. Supervisors consistently report that Jeff's coaching has helped them support and engage with their teams. Jeff coordinates the monthly All-Supervisor meetings and brings in highly skilled presenters and timely discussion topics.

Jeff has also been pivotal to the success of the Emerging Leaders Academy. He created a strong business case to request funding for the program, which was launched in 2024 with more than 100 applicants. Jeff brought current supervisors into each session to provide practical, real-world perspectives. Participants received hands-on experience through mock interviews and a dedicated job-coaching session.

Jeff is committed to continuous improvement and ensuring employee voices matter. He frequently requests and implements feedback to further improve programs. Jeff's expertise, dedication, and passion have transformed leadership development in Washington County. Through his cooperative spirit, commitment to continuous improvement, and ability to connect employees to meaningful growth opportunities, Jeff has made a lasting impact on workplace culture.

Innovation Award

There were two co-recipients of the Innovation Award, Gerald Klebsch, Senior Social Worker, and Traci Thompson, Social Services Supervisor-Clinical, both from Community Services.

Family Resource Connections Coordinator Jerry Klebsch has actively built partnerships and strengthened community connections to advance the Family Resource Center's development. He plays a key role in outreach events, raising public awareness, and initiating services.

Jerry approaches his role with care and compassion, striving to ensure equitable access to resources for families who may face barriers. He holds a clear vision for what the Family Resource Center can become and how it can adapt to evolving community needs and budget changes. To establish the priorities of the Family Resource Center, Jerry recruited and created a Family Advisory Board to empower community member voices. Despite a limited budget for the Family Resource Center, Jerry leveraged strategic partnerships and braided funding streams to extend a grant's impact beyond its original scope.

When new challenges arise, Jerry actively seeks information, assesses situations, and develops thoughtful plans to provide support. His humility allows others to shine while he quietly drives meaningful progress. Jerry's efforts create a strong foundation for a sustainable, community-driven Family Resource Center that will have a long-lasting impact on Washington County.

Social Services Clinical Supervisor Traci Thompson has played a critical role in building and managing three mental health programs in Washington County, the Critical Response Unit, the Jail Social Work Team, and the Co-Response Team.

The Crisis Response Unit is a team of social workers who are available 24/7 to respond to mental health crisis situations by phone or in person. This team has maximized efficiency and reduced government spending by having social workers, who are trained mental health professionals, respond to crisis situations.

The Jail Social Work Team was developed to support the mental health of people in Washington County Jail custody. The team offers essential life preservation support, safety plans, intense therapeutic interventions, and other individual and group work. People in custody build their mental health coping skills and receive resources that can help them be successful after they leave Washington County Jail.

The Co-Response Team partners with law enforcement to assist with mental health calls. Social workers work closely with individuals, allowing law enforcement to focus on community safety. The Co-Response Social Workers help individuals navigate legal and mental health systems through case management, referrals, and support.

Traci was instrumental in researching, connecting with stakeholders, and applying for funding for these programs. Each of these initiatives removes stress from teams across Washington County and provides higher quality services to the community.

Teamwork Award

The recipient of the Teamwork Award is the Information Technology/Property Records and Taxpayer Services (IT/PRTS) team that worked on the Aumentum platform tax system upgrade and the OnBase homestead application project. The team includes: Vickie Kittilson, Senior IT Application Systems Analyst Developer; Mark Mandt, IT Systems Administrator; Jessica Arneson, Assessment Principal Specialist; Laurie Hendrickson, Assessment Specialist; Joanne Helm, PRTS Deputy Director; Adam Larson, IT Director; Susan Stempel, Assessment Specialist; Vinnie Vang, IT Application Systems Analyst Developer; Michele Burg, Assessment Coordinator; Eric Abraham, IT Deputy Director; Emily Jones, IT Project Manager; Kierstin Fure, Taxpayer Services Technician; Jenna Takemoto, Senior Taxpayer Services Technician; Joanna Siebenaler, Senior Taxpayer Services Technician; Donald Sill, Senior Taxpayer Services Technician; Leslie Villarreal, Assessment Support Division Manager; Tom Hauer, Property Records Division Manager; Julie Wetzels, Property Records Specialist; Thomas Shearen, Property Records Principal Specialist; Christine Piskura, Taxpayer Services Division Manager; Joy Russel, Taxpayer Services Principal Specialist; Grace Homball, Senior Taxpayer Services Technician; Jodi Abbott, Taxpayer Services Technician; Kristi Haan, Taxation Coordinator; Heather Bryant, Taxation Analyst; Ashley Merkt, Taxation Principal Specialist; and Jody Moran, Taxation Division Manager.

IT/PRTS collaborated to create a new online homestead application. The Assessment Support Division of PRTS processes an average of 7,200 homestead applications each year. In 2023, the electronic SharePoint application began to experience challenges. In response, PRTS and IT collaborated for nearly two years to design and successfully launch a new homestead application system using OnBase. The IT/PRTS teams worked closely to navigate changing requirements and unexpected challenges from the vendor, including increased costs and extended timelines. Assessment Support staff played a critical role with hands-on testing and by providing feedback that led to refinement.

The new online homestead application improves user experience by making it easier and faster to apply online. IT reduced the initial costs by taking on more development and testing work internally. Now, records are easier to organize, retain, and retrieve, particularly for audits. PRTS worked tirelessly to implement a major upgrade to the county's property tax system. Each member contributed their expertise to ensure the new system would meet operational needs, comply with statutory requirements, and support accurate and timely delivery service to community members.

The upgrade required numerous rounds of testing and refinement. Through the repeated testing, the team produced a final product that simplified processes, enhanced documentation, and cross-trained staff. Team members stepped outside of their usual responsibilities to assist one another, demonstrating their willingness to collaborate, share knowledge, and adapt to evolving challenges. While the launch was not without issues, the project led to an improved system, and reflects the county's commitment to accessible and responsive service.

Excellence in County Government Award

County Administrator Kevin Corbid presented the Excellence in County Government Award to two individuals, Dave Wilwert, Senior Accountant in the Accounting and Finance Department, and Emily Robb, Senior Public Health Program Manager of Nursing Services in the Department of Public Health and Environment.

Dave Wilwert has consistently demonstrated exceptional dedication and reliability since he joined the county in 2011. He leads the county's biweekly payroll process with precision, timeliness, and accountability. Dave and those individuals he works with in the payroll group take the responsibility to ensure every employee is paid accurately and on time. Dave has earned his Certified Payroll Professional designation through the American Payroll Association. He has served as key individual on the last human resource information system project, and is involved in the county's current effort as well. In his role, Dave must stay informed on regulatory and legislative changes related to compensation and payroll. Recently, he worked collaboratively with the Human Resources and IT departments to implement changes included in H.R.1, passed by Congress, and the Minnesota Paid Leave program, passed by the Minnesota Legislature. Dave is a positive influence on those he works with. His reliability, professionalism, and dedication to serving all of us is why he is being recognized today with this award.

Emily Robb has dedicated 25 years of service to the public health profession in the Department of Public Health and Environment. In her current role as Senior Program Manager of Public Health Nursing, she leads a team of supervisors and employees to deliver exceptional services to many county residents and clients. Emily places a strong emphasis on employee engagement and finding the right balance of providing direction and allowing supervisors to independently lead their units. She was described as having a unique way to address challenging situations, always ensuring all voices are heard and considered as decisions are made. Emily's leadership sets an example to others, and she is described by those she leads as practical, reliable, and fair. She excels at building trust and respectful, positive relationships within her department and throughout the organization, and she embodies county leadership.

ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

National Crime Victims' Rights Week

Tom Wedes, Assistant County Attorney, Assistant Division Chief, presented a resolution to recognize April 19-25, 2026, as National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Mr. Wedes recognized the Victim Witness Coordinators Christine VonDeLinde, Kelley Doolan, Shawna Kish, Jessie Dando, and Emma Hause.

Commissioner Karwoski moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2026-043** as follows:

PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

WHEREAS, crime in America has a devastating impact on victims and survivors, and tears at the social fabric of our society as a whole; and

WHEREAS, no victim or survivor should have to endure the trauma of victimization and its impact – physical, financial, emotional, spiritual and social – alone; and

WHEREAS, the commUNITY of crime victims and survivors, those who serve them, and countless allies work together to ensure that victims' needs are identified and met with quality, collaborative and comprehensive services; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 12,000 system- and community-based victim services programs across the Nation that help crime survivors and promote community safety, and over 32,000 laws that define and protect victims' rights; and

WHEREAS, 2026 is the 45th anniversary of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, first proclaimed by President Ronald Reagan in 1981; and

WHEREAS, this time-honored tradition unites all who care about crime, victimization and survivors to acknowledge and honor survivors, their challenges and their strengths.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Board of Washington, Minnesota, to hereby proclaim the week of April 19 to 25, 2026 as National Crime Victims' Rights Week reaffirming this County's commitment to our efforts to promote and strengthen the extensive commUNITY that supports and serves victims and survivors of crime; and with this proclamation we are amplifying our commitment to ensure that crime victims' rights and services are not only recognized annually, but provided daily.

Commissioner Cox 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.

PUBLIC WORKS

Work Zone Awareness Week

Tim Parkos, Senior Engineer Technician, presented a resolution recognizing April 20-24, 2026, as Work Zone Awareness Week, which is observed nationwide to promote the importance of work zone safety. In addition, Mr. Parkos reported that April 22 is Go Orange Day, which encourages people to wear orange to support the roadway safety industry.

Commissioner Miron moved to adopt **Resolution No. 2026-044** as follows:

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING APRIL 20th – APRIL 24th 2026 AS WORK ZONE AWARENESS WEEK TO PROMOTE WORK ZONE AWARENESS AND SAFETY IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

WHEREAS, in 1999, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) partnered with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) to create the National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW) campaign, held annually in April prior to the construction season in much of the nation; and

WHEREAS, National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW) is an event that takes place across the United States, with partnerships between state departments of transportation (DOT), national road safety organizations, government agencies, private companies, and individuals; and

WHEREAS, a safe roadway environment for our employees, residents, and visitors is a critical component of Washington County's goal of promoting the health, safety, and quality of life of citizens; and

WHEREAS, everyone deserves to get home safely, but excessive speed, driver distraction, fatigue, and impairment on roadways jeopardize the safety of road workers and road users alike; and

WHEREAS, FHWA has designated April 20th through April 24th, 2026 as National Work Zone Awareness Week; and

WHEREAS, the theme for National Work Zone Awareness Week in 2026 is "Safe actions save lives."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Washington County Board of Commissioners hereby designates April 20th – April 24th, 2026 as Work Zone Awareness Week in Washington County.

Commissioner Karwoski 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.

County State Aid Highway 32 Pedestrian and Safety Improvement Project

Design Engineer Kevin Peterson presented a contract for final design services of the County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 32 Pedestrian and Safety Improvement Project in the City of Forest Lake, which is identified in the Capital Improvement Plan as #RB-2609.

Mr. Peterson reported that this project includes full pavement replacement, the installation of a multi-use trail, stormwater enhancements, new turn lanes, a new signal at 12th Street SW and roundabout at 4th Street SW, and realignment of Forest Road. Mr. Peterson reported that this project received \$5,000,000 in Congressionally Directed Spending, sponsored by U.S. Rep. Pete Stauber. Mr. Peterson reported that one bid was received from SRF Consulting, Inc., and SRF was selected.

Commissioner Miron moved to approve Contract No. 18164 in the amount of \$857,728 with SRF Consulting, Inc. for final design of the CSAH 32 Pedestrian and Safety Improvement Project. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0.

CSAH 5 Improvement Project

Engineer Andrew Giesen presented four items related to the CSAH 5 (Olive Street) Improvement Project in the City of Stillwater, which is identified in the Capital Improvement Plan as #RB-2695. Mr. Giesen reported that this project includes new pavement and sidewalk, storm sewers and curb, repairs to segments of aging city utilities and replacing signage.

Mr. Giesen reported that six bids were received for this project, and A-1 Excavating was selected for the construction contract. Mr. Giesen reported that a maintenance agreement with the City of Stillwater will define maintenance responsibilities, and a cost agreement will define the design and construction responsibilities between agencies.

Commissioner Cox moved to approve Contract No. 18149 in the amount of \$2,643,705.00 with A-1 Excavating, LLC for the CSAH 5 Improvement Project. Commissioner Miron seconded the motion, and it was adopted 4-0.

Commissioner Cox moved to approve Cooperative Maintenance Agreement No. 17885 between the City of Stillwater and Washington County. Commissioner Karwoski seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0.

Commissioner Cox moved to approve Cooperative Cost Agreement No. 17886 between the City of Stillwater and Washington County. Commissioner Miron seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0.

Commissioner Cox moved to approve the use of Road & Bridge Fund Balance in the amount of \$81,300. Commissioner Bigham seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

National Association of Counties Conference Voting Delegate

Commissioner Cox moved to designate Commissioner Bigham as the voting delegate to represent Washington County at the National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference, occurring July 17-20, 2026, in New Orleans, LA. Commissioner Karwoski seconded the motion, and it was adopted 5-0.

Legislative Updates

Deputy County Administrator Jan Lucke provided the commissioners with a current legislative bill tracker, which is updated each week during the Minnesota legislative session. Ms. Lucke reported that both Commissioner Clasen and Commissioner Cox testified before the House Capital Investment Committee on the need for funding and the importance of the CSAH 18 (Bailey Road) and CSAH 19 (Woodbury Drive) Intersection Improvement project, and the County Highway 10, 17, and 17B Intersection Improvement project.

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

Board correspondence was received and placed on file.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the County Board, Chair Bigham adjourned the meeting at 11:09 a.m.

WASHINGTON COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY CONVENES

The Washington County Regional Railroad Authority (WCRRA) met in regular session at 11:09 a.m. in the Washington County Government Center, County Board Room. Present were Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Cox, Bigham, and Clasen. Also present were Kevin Corbid, County Administrator; John Ristad, Assistant County Attorney Division Chief; Stephanie Kammerud, Administrative Assistant; and county staff.

Official proceedings of the Washington County Regional Railroad Authority are available in the Office of Administration.

BOARD WORKSHOPS WITH PUBLIC WORKS

The board met in workshop session for guidance on the Historic Courthouse Wedding Rental Plan. Present for the workshop were Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Cox, Bigham, and Clasen. Also present were Kevin Corbid, Jan Lucke, Jennifer Wagenius, and county staff.

The board met in workshop session for guidance on the Transit Needs Study (TNS) draft recommendations. Present for the workshop were Commissioners Miron, Karwoski, Cox, Bigham, and Clasen. Also present were Kevin Corbid, Jan Lucke Jennifer Wagenius, and county staff.

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Corbid".

Kevin Corbid
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karla Bigham".

Karla Bigham
County Board Chair