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THE CITIZEN

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PHOTOS: Fete des Lacs Parade rolls through Centerville PAGE 16

City of Hugo ‘modernizes’ zoning, land use code

BY SHANNON GRANHOLM
MANAGING EDITOR

The city has finished a two-year process to update its zoning and land use code to set the stage for the preparation of city’s next comprehensive plan.

“One of the reasons to do this was not only to clarify the ordinance, but to provide some foundational work for the 2050 comp plan,” said Kendra Lindahl of Landform Professional Services. “We wanted to modernize the uses, standards, statute references and definitions in the code to improve the usability.”

In 2024, city staff contracted with Landform to complete an update to the residential zoning district rules

and regulations and update the multifamily design guidelines. Following the award of a Livable Communities Grant from the Metropolitan Council, the project expanded to include the entirety of Chapter 90 (Zoning and Land Use). Staff held two joint sessions with the Planning Commission and City Council and also held a developer roundtable.

“(The goal was to) make it a little bit more usable, make it more modern, something that actually matches what development is looking for,” City Planner Max Gort said. “The big example is lot width. Our code required an 80-foot-wide lot, but that’s just not hap-

SEE ZONING CODE, PAGE 8

BEFORE	AFTER
LA Long-term agricultural district	(NO CHANGE)
AG Agricultural district	(NO CHANGE)
RR Rural residential district	(NO CHANGE)
R-1 Large lot single-family residential district	(NO CHANGE)
R-3 Single-family detached residential district	R-2 Low-density residential district
CR-3 Central residential district	R-3 Single- and two-family residential district
R-4 Low-density multi-family residential district	R-4 Medium-density multi-family residential district
R-5 Medium-density multi-family residential district	R-5 High-density multi-family residential district
NS Neighborhood Services	REMOVED
C-1 Central business district	(NO CHANGE)
C-2 General business district	(NO CHANGE)
RC-1 Restricted commercial district	(NO CHANGE)
RI-1 Restricted industrial district	(NO CHANGE)

CITY OF HUGO | CONTRIBUTED

The above chart summarizes the updates made to the city’s zoning and land use code.



PAUL DOLS | PRESS PUBLICATIONS

The cast of “Grease” practices for their July 23-26 run at White Bear Lake Area High School’s Performing Arts Center. Pictured center: Oliver Grawe as Danny and Luisa Maruyama as Sandy.

‘Grease’ captures lightning-in-a-bottle talent

BY LOGAN GION
STAFF WRITER

White Bear Lake Area Schools production of “Grease” rolls into the high school’s Performing Arts Center July 23-26. While the show’s venue is neat, its threads are hip and its sets are

“grinchy,” the main highlight is the show’s stacked cast and crew.

“This is the last show of so many seniors who have been doing shows together since sixth grade,” said director Odelis Garcia Anderson. “We’re having so much fun.”

“We have a lot of talent, and we were able to utilize it in such a great way,” added Assistant Director Yahaira Nok-Chiclana, a White Bear alumna who played the lead in the school’s 2025 production of “Legally Blonde.”

SEE ‘GREASE’, PAGE 8

Relay for Life: ‘Inhale courage, exhale fear’

BY SHANNON GRANHOLM
MANAGING EDITOR

On May 13, 2022, Kari Moore lost her best friend from college to cancer. Since then, she’s joined the mission of fighting back against the disease.

“Every time the American Cancer Society finds a new option through research, helps a patient get to treatment, or supports another family at Hope Lodge, that’s another family that has a chance that Jenny’s family missed out on,” said White Bear Lake Area Chamber Executive Director Kari Moore. “So, when I can support their fundraising mission to fund these critical supports, it makes me feel closer to Jae.”

Moore and her best friend, Jenny (Jae) Vannelli, attended Moorhead State University (now Minnesota State University) together. Jae was diagnosed with leukemia at the age of 9. After a bone marrow transplant donated by her younger



CONTRIBUTED

Best friends (from left) Kari Moore, Jenny (Jae) Vannelli and Bobbie Bigwood.

brother, she went into remission. And that remission lasted until she was about 40 years old. She was diagnosed with leiomyosarcoma — a rare aggressive cancer that develops in muscles found in organs.

“She spent a couple of years fighting back, feeling good and repeating the cycle. Then she died at age 45,” Moore explained. Jae left behind five children ranging in age from 4 to 14. In 2022, Moore decided to move her family from Clarksville, Tennessee, back to her home state of Minne-

SEE RELAY FOR LIFE, PAGE 7

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CATCH OF THE WEEK



CONTRIBUTED
Lyle Swanson, of Hugo, shows off the walleye he caught while fishing in Black Duck, Minnesota.

Fairview breaks ground on major St. John's Hospital expansion

Fairview St. John's Hospital is expanding to meet the health care needs of a rapidly growing and evolving east metro. The hospital has broken ground on a transformative project that will significantly increase capacity and enhance access to care for people across the region.

The project includes approximately 200,000 square feet of new construction and 30,000 square feet of renovations, nearly doubling the hospital's current footprint. The expansion will increase emergency, surgical, heart and vascular, critical care and inpatient capacity while creating more coordinated, patient-centered spaces that can adapt as care continues to evolve.

"Generations of East Metro families have come to St. John's to welcome babies, receive care during emergencies and recover from illness," said Will Nicholson, MD, vice president of medical affairs and hospitalist at St. John's Hospital. "This expansion is an investment in those families and in our ability to meet the health-care needs of our community for decades to come."

For more than 160 years, St. John's Hospital has grown alongside the east metro. As the region's health care needs have changed, the hospital has expanded its services, technology and expertise to bring more advanced care closer to home. Through Fairview's partnership with University of Minnesota Physicians, patients have access to nationally recognized specialists, leading-edge research and the latest medical advancements without leaving their community.



RENDERING BY FAIRVIEW/HDR INC | CONTRIBUTED
Fairview St. John's Hospital in Maplewood breaks ground this week on approximately 200,000 square feet of new construction and 30,000 square feet of renovations, nearly doubling the hospital's current footprint.

"The East Metro is growing, becoming more diverse and bringing new healthcare needs with it," said Danielle Gathje, vice president of operations at St. John's Hospital. "By expanding capacity, advancing our heart and tertiary care services, bringing more specialists together under one roof, and improving the patient experience, we're making it easier for people to access high-quality, affordable and equitable care close to home."

Project highlights include:

- 14 new surgical suites built to current standards
- A new hybrid operating room to support complex vascular procedures
- A second dedicated heart surgery operating room to increase capacity for scheduled and emergency cardiac procedures
- Expanded robotic surgery capabilities, allowing for more minimally invasive procedures that can reduce recovery times

- and length of hospital stays
 - A significantly expanded emergency department
 - 36 new inpatient beds, including 24 intensive care unit beds and 12 intermediate care beds
 - Renovations and upgrades to laboratory, sterile processing, mechanical systems and other essential support services
- The hospital's design also includes space to support future growth and changing models of care. Existing patient care areas will receive updates and refreshes, while renovations throughout the hospital will improve functionality and the experience of patients, visitors and care teams.
- The project was designed in partnership with HDR Inc., a nationally recognized architecture and engineering firm specializing in health care facilities. The expansion is expected to be completed in summer 2028.

★ ★ ★ *Reader's Choice 2026* ★ ★ ★

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ONGOING EVENTS

CENTERVILLE MUSIC IN THE PARK
When: 6:30-8 p.m. Tuesdays
Where: Hidden Spring Park, 1601 LaMotte Drive, Centerville
Details: Local musicians perform at beautiful Hidden Spring Park from June to August each year. Bring your own lawn chairs and blanket. Next up is Lowdown Dirty Fools July 28.
Contact: 651-429-3232

CENTERVILLE MAIN STREET MARKET
When: 5:30-7:30 p.m. Thursdays
Where: Trail Side Park, 7145 Main St., Centerville
Details: Local artisans, live music, and food vendors prior to the Bald Eagle Waterski show. Parking at Centerville Elementary School.
Contact: facebook.com/Centerville-MainStreetMarket

WHITE BEAR LAKE FARMERS MARKET
When: 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Fridays
Where: Clark Avenue, between Second Street and Third Street
Details: A tradition since the 1970s, the farmers market features more than 50 vendors.
Contact: whitebearlake.org or 651-429-8526

CRIBBAGE
When: 1 p.m. Monday, July 27 and the 1st and 4th Monday of every month
Where: Rice Lake Centre, 6900 137th St. N., Hugo
Details: Senior citizens from Hugo and surrounding area are invited to an afternoon of cribbage. Coffee and refreshments served.
Contact: Alice at 651-429-4413

BURGERS FOR THE TROOPS
When: 5-8 p.m. Monday, July 27 and the 4th Monday of each month
Where: Hugo American Legion, 5383 140th St. N., Hugo
Details: Support military families with a meal of burgers/chips, sponsored by the Hugo Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Network. Family members of deployed military members eat free. Cash/checks only.

HUGO SENIOR CITIZENS PLAY ‘500’
When: 12:45 p.m. Thursday July 30, and every 1st, 3rd and 5th Thursday of each month.
Where: Rice Lake Centre in Hugo, 6900 137th Street N.
Details: Games begin promptly at 12:45 p.m. Refreshments and coffee will be served. All senior citizens from the area are invited.
Contact: Jim at 763-639-4756 or al-lenj4992@gmail.com.



CLPD | CONTRIBUTED

NIGHT TO UNITE
When: 6-9 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 4
Where: Multiple locations
Details: Celebrate community, meet your neighbors and connect with local police and fire crews—all while learning simple ways to keep your neighborhood safe. Officers and firefighters will be visiting neighborhood gatherings throughout your community. Don’t miss out—get involved and be part of a stronger, safer community.
Contact: Hugo: 651-430-7601; CLPD: 763-784-250; Lino Lakes Police Department: 651-982-2400

CURRENT EVENTS

INTO NATURE COMMUNITY RECEPTION
When: 6-8 p.m. Thursday, July 23
Where: White Bear Center for the Arts, 4971 Long Ave.
Details: Celebrate the beauty of summertime in White Bear Lake. View works of art painted “en plein air,” or outdoors, around the community from July 23-Aug. 27.
Contact: 651-407-0597 or wbca@whitebeararts.org

FOREST BATHING
When: 6-8 p.m. Friday, July 24
Where: Wargo Nature Center, 7701 Main St., Lino Lakes
Details: Awaken your senses and connect deeply to nature around and within you. Experience an immersive, meditative session of the Japanese practice of shinrin-yoku, or “forest bathing,” with certified Association of Nature and Forest Therapy guide Kirsten Welge.
Contact: 763-324-3350

BILL THE JUGGLER
When: 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. Saturday, July 25
Where: Hardwood Creek Library, 19955 Forest Road N, Forest Lake
Details: Bill shows off his skills with a little help from the audience in this zany comedy juggling act. The fast-paced show is geared towards chil-

dren and their families. Expect lots of audience participation. The program is funded with money from Minnesota’s Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.
Contact: 651-275-7300

NORTH STAR GAY RODEO
When: Friday, July 25 and Saturday, July 26; gates open at 11 a.m. and rodeo starts at noon both days.
Where: Deadbroke Arena, 5676 170th St N, Hugo
Details: Join top cowboys, cowgirls, and cowfolk from more than 17 states and Canada as they compete in classic rodeo events like bull riding and barrel racing, alongside crowd favorites like goat dressing and wild drag race. Whether you’re a longtime rodeo fan or attending for the first time, there’s something here for everyone.
Contact: https://nsgra.org

GIRL SCOUTS SUMMER NATURE FUN
When: 3-4 p.m. Sunday, July 26
Where: Tamarack Nature Center, 5287 Otter Lake Road, White Bear Township
Details: Girls in grades K-3 can enjoy a nature adventure and try out a new Girl Scout troop in the White Bear Lake/Hugo area.
Contact: forms.gle/956gkqLFH7sp7n529 or 651-303-1584

BOBBER-STYLE FISHING CAMP
When: 10 a.m.-noon Monday July 27 to

Wednesday, July 29
Where: Tally’s Dockside, 4441 Lake Ave. S.
Details: Kids who have completed grades 1-5 can expereince the fun of “bobber-style” catch and release fishing at various spots around White Bear Lake with a guide. Equipment provided to bring your own. Registration required.
Contact: 651-407-2018 or communityed.mahtomedi.k12.mn.us

ROE FAMILY SINGERS CONCERT
When: 2 to 2:45 p.m. Friday, July 31
Where: Hardwood Creek Library, 19955 Forest Road N, Forest Lake
Details: Enjoy original music and contemporary takes on old-time, traditional, and bluegrass tunes mixed into one roiling and rollicking river of fresh yet familiar American music at Hardwood Creek Library in Forest Lake. Fun for all ages, no registration required.
Contact: 651-275-7300

CONCERT IN THE PARK
When: 6 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 5
Where: Lions Volunteer Park, 5542 Upper 146th St. N, Hugo
Details: The Royal Order of Chords and Keys (R.O.C.K.) is a kindie rock band for families based out of Minneapolis. R.O.C.K is the brainchild of frontperson Aric Bieganek.
Contact: 651-762-6300

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The LORD is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1

Aging is challenging

Health issues have gotten in the way of my column writing. Pain in my lower back has created a great deal of discomfort that Tylenol and CBD cream do not totally relieve.

I've been to doctors in Florida, Wisconsin and Minnesota who specialize in vertebrae filling and nerve ablation.

I've also had physical therapy in four different locations with some success. The most recent therapist recommended I see a spine specialist. In the last week, I've had four steroid injections in the lower spine. That has given me some relief.

We are very fortunate to have good medical care and resources available to us locally. Dr. Moriarity has given me good direction for finding specialists.

Over 20 years ago, I had prostate cancer surgery at Mayo Clinic in Rochester. During the surgery, some cells escaped, so I have been treating that reoccurring cancer every four months under the guidance of Dr. Eugene Kwon at Mayo in Rochester, Minnesota. The treatment keeps the remaining cancer cells from multiplying and relocating.

Celebrating 90 years

In March of this year, our four children hosted a great birthday celebration at our rental home in Cape Coral, Florida. Over 80 people attended the BBQ dinner. Family, boaters and friends were represented from eight states.

Our great-grandson, Patrick, attended with his mom, our granddaughter Meredith, from California. He hugged me and commented, "You're the best great-grandpa ever!"

Our son Cameron prepared over a dozen racks of ribs. The girls took care of food placement, serving and all the clean-up. What a privilege to have family who pitches in whatever the need.

Lifestyle changes

As Carter indicated in his column last week, Kathy and I have moved to a senior living facility, New Perspectives in White Bear Lake. This is a major adjustment and not always easy. We are discovering a lot of friends who live here and many of them have been White Bear Press readers for years.

When I ask residents why they chose this facility most of them say, "Our children live nearby." They have given us a resident handbook of all the programs they offer and the extra care that is available. The theme of New Perspectives is "Living Life on Purpose."

A big benefit is three meals a day which are ordered from a menu. Each week, a calendar shows the activities for each day; Bingo night, various speakers, shopping expeditions, a walking club, morning exercise, chair dancing, movie night, coffee and conversation, "Did you Know?" sessions, social hour, and various card and board games.

Midterm elections

Voting is important for the future of our government at all levels. Primary voting begins in August and, often, the turnout is light.

Here in Minnesota, television and other media are carrying a lot of messages of what is good for our state and Congress. Our state has been overrun by fraudulent programs that have cost taxpayers hard-earned money.

Accountability has been lacking because voters have elected people without adequate experience in handling budgets and programs. Don't complain, just do your homework before you go to the polls to vote.

Remember, protection of our democracy depends on your participation by voting.

Gene Johnson is publisher emeritus of Press Publications.



Millions and millions of mayflies

On Monday evening, we loaded up the dog and drove to the St. Croix Boom Site to spend some time by the river. There, I noticed a mayfly. And then another. Then 10 more. Now,

100. Soon, the air around us was thick with mayflies swooping, flying, hovering and gliding. There were so many that we could literally reach out and grab them in our hands – millions and millions of mayflies.

If you like fish, then you must love mayflies.

They are a critical ingredient of freshwater food webs and a favorite food of walleye, smallmouth and largemouth bass, trout, catfish and panfish.

Mayflies spend 99% of their lives underwater, where they exist as nymphs. You can find them on rocks and among aquatic plants on the edges of lakes and rivers, and their larval form looks similar to a damselfly. They have six legs, an alien-like appearance, and a three-piece "tail" that is actually a modified set of gills. After spending almost a full-year underwater, mayflies go through incomplete metamorphosis and emerge as fully-developed adults with wings.

Once mayflies get their wings, their sole purpose is to mate (in mid-air!) and lay eggs. Most adults live only a few days before dying and, in fact, they don't even develop mouthparts or digestive tracts.

There are more than 3,000 species of mayflies worldwide and Minnesota is home to 105. Two – the Hexagenia bilineata and Hexagenia limbata – have synchronized hatches and can form swarms so large they actually show up on local weather radars. Along the Mississippi River in Red Wing, Wabasha and Winona, the Minnesota Department of Transportation turned off bridge lights for several days in mid-June to limit the number of mayflies on the road. Meanwhile, up on Mille Lacs, the mayfly hatch usually occurs around the 4th of July.

As abundant and strange as mayflies may be, they are harmless and actually a sign of good water quality. Mayfly nymphs graze on algae, fungi and decaying organic material, which helps to keep the water clean. They are also very sensitive to chemical pollutants, suspended solids from erosion, and decreased oxygen levels, and are one of the first creatures to disappear when a lake or river is in trouble.

During the 1950s-80s, the Mississippi River in Minnesota was too polluted to support an annual mayfly hatch. After the Federal Clean Water Act was passed in

1972, however, municipalities began working to improve their wastewater treatment systems and factories stopped dumping untreated chemicals into the water. Since then, water quality has gradually improved in many urban waterways. In 1987, the Mississippi River saw its first mayfly swarm in more than 30 years, and the hatches have continued every year since then.

Along with mayflies, there are several other aquatic insects that are considered bioindicators for water quality. Caddisfly larvae can be found in high quality rivers and streams where they attach to the undersides of rocks. The larvae build intricate, protective cases out of tiny pebbles, sand and twigs, which are truly works of art. Stoneflies, dobsonflies, alderflies and predacious diving beetles are also highly sensitive to pollution and will only be found in high quality rivers, lakes and streams.

You're most likely to see mayflies swarming in the late evening, just before and after sunset. If you live near the water, turning off exterior lights will help to keep them away from your driveway, house and yard. And if mayflies really bother you, have no fear. They only live for a few shorts days before flying off to the river in the sky.

Angie Hong is the coordinator for Minnesota's East Metro Water Resource Education Program.

THE CITIZEN | ELECTION LETTER GUIDELINES

- Election season is considered to be when filing first begins until the day of the election.
- Limited to 350 words. Paid letters running longer will be charged \$10 per 30 words after that.
- Letters are free unless endorsing a candidate, party or question on the ballot. Endorsement letters will have a \$50 fee. Please call 651-407-1200 to arrange payment by credit card or mail a check payable to Press Publications to 4779 Bloom Ave, White Bear Lake, MN, 55110. Endorsement letters are labeled, "paid letter."
- Letters for or against a

- candidate will qualify as paid letters.
- Submissions must include a full name, address and phone number for verification.
- Letter-writers must live, work or have another connection to Press Publications coverage area.
- Letters are meant to express opinions. If letter-writers include facts, they must attribute those facts to a reputable source.
- Due to space limitations, letters that don't address local issues are not guaranteed publication.
- Repeat unpaid letters by the same writer about the

- same subject matter will not be published. Repeat paid endorsement letters will be published as space permits.
- Four weeks (or issues) must pass between publication of unpaid letters from the same writer. Exceptions may be made for rebuttal letters at the editor's discretion.
- Submissions containing libelous or derogatory statements will not be published.
- Letters by campaign managers or candidates designed to champion the candidate's position on a specific issue will be accepted as paid letters.

- Letters reprinted as part of letter-writing campaigns are paid letters.
- All letters are subject to editing.
- We reserve the right to not publish any letter.
- The deadline to submit a letter is 5 p.m. Wednesday the week prior to publication.
- The last batch of letters to be printed before the Nov. 3 election will be printed in the Oct. 29 issue and must be received by 5 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 21.
- To submit a letter, email news@presspubs.com or mail/deliver it to Press Publications.

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WEEKLY WAG



Lucky is a sweet, smart girl and has so much love and companionship to offer. She arrived at Ruff Start Rescue as a surrender after her former family’s unfortunate circumstances. Lucky is still trying to figure things out and is a bit timid and shy, but she warms up quickly when trust is established.

Lucky is two-and-a-half years old. She is a Parson Jack Russell Terrier/Chihuahua mix, and she weighs 15 pounds. Lucky is doing very well in foster care, and she will do best in a new, loving forever home with a patient, caring, kind companion who will ensure her safety.

Lucky enjoys going for walks and lounging with her people on the couch. While there, she will lobby for a good belly rub. One of Lucky’s favorite things is spending time outside. So a forever home with a securely fenced yard where she can explore and hang out would be best. Lucky is social with other dogs and with cats. She is house trained and crate trained.

If you are interested in learning more about Lucky or adopting her, please fill out an application at www.ruffstartrescue.org. Once your application is received, Ruff Start Rescue will contact you as soon as possible.

COMMUNITY BRIEF

DNR rep says dead fish in Lake Peltier likely due to heat wave

The large amount of dead fish found in Lake Peltier is likely due to the lengthy heat wave. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources East Metro Fisheries Area Supervisor TJ DeBates said that, without any testing, however, the DNR cannot know for sure.

“As water warms up, fish get stressed out,” DeBates said. “We’ve had water temps in the mid-80s for a week and a half now.” He described that, like human beings, fishes’ immune systems become compromised and susceptible to viruses and bacteria when put under stress.

“This is probably not the first time we’ll be hearing about this during the week,” DeBates said.



Dead fish in Lake Peltier in Centerville.

LEANN MICHAEL | CONTRIBUTED

POLITICAL BRIEFS

3 candidates face off in Anoka County Commissioner District 3 Primary

Three candidates are on the Aug. 11 primary ballot for the Anoka County Commissioner District 3 race: Melissa Lewis, from Lino Lakes; Jeff Reinert, incumbent, from Lino Lakes; and Kevin Ryan, from Linwood Township.

The Minnesota primary election is Aug. 11. Early voting begins July 24 at the following locations:

- All Anoka County residents—Anoka County Government Center, 2100 Third Ave., Anoka
- Centerville residents—Centerville City Hall, 1880 Main St.
- Circle Pines residents—Circle Pines City Hall, 200 Civic Heights Circle
- Lexington residents—Lexington City Hall, 9180 Lexington Ave.
- Lino Lakes residents—Lino Lakes City Hall, 600 Town

Center Parkway

For more information, visit sos.mn.gov/elections-voting.

League hosts candidate forum with Washington County Sheriff candidates

The League of Womens Voters recently recorded a forum with the three candidates running for Washington County Sheriff— Jeremy Bolen, Henry Marthia and Brian R. Mueller. The three candidates are on the ballot for the Aug. 11 primary, and the top two candidates will then proceed to the general election Nov. 3. The forum is available on YouTube at: <https://lvw-wbla.org/candidate-forums/#candidate-forums>. The League plans to host other candidate forums once the filing period closes. For more information, visit lvw-wbla.org.

HUGO BITS AND PIECES

- Minnesota Statute 204B.21 requires election judges for precincts in a municipality to be appointed by the governing body of the municipality. So far, 68 judges have signed up to work elections within the city of Hugo for the primary and general elections.
 - Chilkoot Velo Cycling Club of Stillwater plans to host the Hero Gravel Classic Bicycle Ride Aug. 22. The 30- and 50-mile bicycle ride on gravel and paved roads will begin and end at the Bavarian Hunter Gasthaus Restaurant in Grant.
 - The board of trustees for the Hugo Firefighter’s Relief Association has requested an increase of \$2,000 per year of service to the lump-sum pension benefit. Resident and former firefighter Mark Koll shared his concerns with the City Council.
- “I was a retiree ... for 20 years, and every year our pension would go up \$100, \$200, maybe \$300. “It was always, ‘Well, we don’t have enough money for any more’ and now they are getting a \$2,000 increase,” Koll said. “The former retirees didn’t get the increase that I believe they deserve, and we were underpaid, and now the current fire department staff is getting overpaid ...”
- Koll provided some documents to the council, including a pension form that was filled out for a now retired firefighter. He pointed out that to qualify for a pension, a firefighter must respond to at least 20% of the calls. “This person did not reach that percent. They showed up to eight calls in two years and still received a pension. I would like to know why,” he said.
- City Attorney David Snyder told the council that public commentary doesn’t generally involve “direct interrogation on matters” especially relating to a personnel inquiry, and he encouraged council members to not ask questions or make any com-

- ments relating to a personnel issue.
- Koll said it wasn’t a personnel issue, since the person involved was no longer an employee with the city and retired.
- Mayor Tom Weidt encouraged Koll to talk to City Administrator Bryan Bear on the matter.
- A preliminary plat and planned unit development has been approved for Oneka Lake Reserve. (See “New developer takes over Oneka Lake Reserve project,” The Citizen, July 9, 2026.)
- Don Willenbring, of DRW Property Investments LLC, said they plan to start the project as soon as the city approves a grading permit. He said construction will begin in October or November.
- The city plans to purchase a 2027 Vactor sewer cleaning truck through a MnDOT cooperative purchasing contract for \$701,058. The public works department said the 2013 Kenworth Vactor truck has been unreliable due to the constant need for repairs.
- In addition to emergency sewer and stormwater backups, the truck is necessary for the cleaning of storm and sanitary sewer lines as well as sanitary wet wells, hydro excavation for potholing utilities and pumping of storage tanks and sumps.
- The city will spend \$184,701 to replace the playground equipment and wood fiber surfacing at Frog Hollow Park this year. The Parks Commission held a neighborhood meeting in May and gathered input on proposals from four playground designers. The Parks Commission recommended additions to the Play It Creations proposal, as it included more challenging features to interest older kids, net climbers and looped play options. Play It Creations is located in Hugo and offers unique and artistic playground equipment made with glass-fiber-reinforced concrete.

- The city has repealed and replaced Chapter 90 of its zoning and land use ordinance. The council also adopted new multifamily design guidelines. (See full story in this week’s issue.)
 - Council members are expected to attend various parties for Night to Unite Tuesday, Aug. 4.
 - The council will likely conduct its mid-year budget workshop sometime in September. The date and time have yet to be set.
- The next City Council meeting will be at 7 p.m. Monday, Aug. 3.

Shannon Granholm



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Minnesota Attorney

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POLICE REPORTS

The Washington County Sheriff's Office reported the following calls for service in Hugo:

- Residents in the 12000 block of Goodview Avenue N. reported their mailbox destroyed by a large rock overnight May 31-June 1. It will cost approximately \$100 for a new mailbox and post.
- In the Case of the Compassionate Canine Care, a resident in the 5000 block of 149th Street N. phoned Washington County Sheriff's Office deputies to surrender a dog at 11:22 a.m. June 1. Deputies reached out to Companion Animal Care and provided contact information to schedule the turnover.
- Residents in the 12000 block of Ethan Avenue N. at 11:55 a.m. June 1 reported an attempted (and failed) internet scam.
- A motorist on Frenchman Road and Elmcrest Avenue N. was arrested on a warrant at 3:45 p.m. June 1 following a traffic stop. The next day, at 4:44 p.m. June 2, the subject's vehicle was still at the scene of the previous arrest, causing a traffic hazard. The registered owner was advised to move the vehicle in a timely manner but didn't do it, so the vehicle was towed due to no registration and no insurance.
- A motorist was cited at 9:26 p.m. June 1 in the 5000 block of Frenchman Road for expired registration. A second motorist was cited for expired registration at 2:53 p.m. June 2 on Heritage Parkway N. and Europa Avenue N.
- A resident in the 4000 block of Fable Hill Parkway N. at 3:20 p.m. June 2 reported the homeowner's association next door for cutting down trees on the property line. In 2025, two trees were cut down and in April three more trees were cut down.
- Residents in the 13000 block of Europa Trail Way N. at 7:18 p.m. June 2 reported their mail stolen.
- A police radio was reported found at 7:28 p.m. June 2 in the 5000 block of Egg Lake Road. The radio belonged to the fire department and was returned.
- Residents in the 13000 block of Europa Bay N. at 2:47 p.m. June 3 reported receiving a call from Florida stating that they had missed jury duty and that there would be repercussions if the

complainants didn't follow certain instructions. The complainants called the county, which advised them that it was a scam. No personal or banking information was provided.

- Residents in the 12000 block of Ferrara Avenue N. at 6:14 p.m. June 3 requested more information on the rules about juveniles on electric bicycles.

• A resident in the 4000 block of 149th Street N. reported his neighbor at 9:47 p.m. June 3 for giving him the middle finger.

Deputies advised the complainant that it is not a crime to flip someone the bird. However, deputies promised to document the behavior if it continues. At 12:06 p.m. June 4, the complainant reported the same neighbor and his girlfriend for being intoxicated at 1:00 a.m. and yelling obscenities out their windows. The complainant didn't want any follow-up but wanted documentation only.

- Residents in the 4000 block of Empress Drive N. reported kids ding-dong ditching and garbage dumping at 5:01 p.m. June 4.
- A motorist was cited for driving after revocation and for failure to provide current proof of insurance at 10:43 p.m. June 4 in the 14000 block of Forest Blvd. N., after being pulled over for speeding. A different motorist was cited at 5:31 a.m. June 5 in the 5000 block of 145th Street N. for turning onto the highway from a side road and driving on the shoulder for several seconds with an unbelted child in the back seat.
- In the Case of the Runover Rabbit That Wasn't, deputies were ushered out to 149th Street N. and Everton Avenue N. about an injured rabbit that had already hopped away when deputies arrived on scene.
- The third time was not a charm for a motorist on Forest Blvd. N. and 145th Street N. at 8:50 p.m. June 5 who was cited for illegal window tint and no front license plate, after deputies had issued two written warnings for the same offenses to two other drivers earlier in the evening.
- While on Good Neighbor Days festival patrol around Lions Park in the 5000 block of Upper 146th Street N. at 2:32 a.m. June 6, deputies discovered three juvenile males lurking about after hours. The youths were identified and issued a curfew citation. Following multiple complaints of a male arguing and swearing at patrons at Good Neighbor Days at 5:21 p.m., deputies trespassed him from Lions Park. Deputies saw the same male on the property again at 6:00 p.m., this time driving a vehicle while intoxicated. He was arrested for DWI. A driver's license found during the event was turned into deputies at the WCSO tent at 9:28 p.m. The driver's license was returned to the owner's home address. A phone reported lost during the event at 9:53 p.m. was not found, however.
- Washington County Sheriff's Office deputies arrested a motorist for DUI in the 4000 block of 170th Street N. at 12:44 a.m. June 7.
- A motorist who failed to stop for a stop sign was cited at 12:04 a.m. June 7 in the 5000 block of 140th Street N. for that violation. A passenger was cited for not wearing a seatbelt.
- An unoccupied vehicle received a citation under the windshield wipers at 2:46 a.m. June 7 while parked in the 14000 block of Finale Avenue N. for displaying tabs that expired in May.

• A mailbox in the 5000 block of 159th Street N. jumped out into traffic and ran into deputies' squad car at 5:39 p.m. June 7. Deputies notified the homeowner of the squad vs mailbox incident and filed a report for all parties concerned.

• A motorist reported herself for falling asleep behind the wheel of a moving vehicle at midnight June 8 on 170th Street N. and Jeffrey Avenue N.

Although she drove off the roadway and damaged her vehicle, no one was injured.

- Deputies pulled over and cited a motorist for reckless driving in the 16000 block of Forest Blvd. N. at 10:46 a.m. June 8.
- The driver of a white truck was reported for being involved in a road rage incident at 3:42 p.m. June 8 on Frenchman Road and Oneka Parkway N.
- Residents in the 13000 block of Fondant Trail N. at 2:51 p.m. June 9 reported receiving a fraudulent message but gave out no personal information.
- A resident at an unknown location phoned at 3:27 p.m. June 9 wondering how to pick up their identification card from deputies, who said different deputies had the ID. The information was relayed to that deputy on how to turn the license over to the complainant.
- Following overnight thunderstorms, patrolling deputies came upon a tree blocking the roadway in the 12000 block of Everton Avenue N. at 4:22 a.m. June 10. The Hugo Public Works Department removed a downed tree branch on Jeffrey Avenue N. at 152nd Street N. at 5:10 a.m. Deputies were dispatched out to an electrical hazard in the 6000 block of 170th Street N. at 5:56 a.m. and used their red and blue lights for traffic control.
- After deputies responded to a suspicious open garage door on vacant property in the 13000 block of Goodview Avenue N. at 3:15 p.m. June 10. They discovered it had accidentally been left open after a recent real estate showing.
- A motorist in a rush was cited at 7:00 p.m. June 10 in the 4000 block of Frenchman Road for speeding 49 mph in a 35 mph zone. Meanwhile, a second motorist speeding only 45 mph in a 35 mph zone was issued a written warning at 9:10 p.m. in the 5000 block of Egg Lake Road N. At midnight June 13, a third motorist received a written warning for speeding 45 mph in a 35 mph zone on Egg Lake Road and Foxhill Avenue N. A fourth motorist was cited for speeding at 7:28 p.m. June 13 on 125th Street N. and Hilo Avenue N.
- A missing license plate report was filed at 11:58 a.m. June 11 from the 13000 block of Freeland Avenue N. Deputies provided a case number and advised the complainant to contact the Department of Vehicle Services for new plates. The old plate number was entered into the National Crime Information Center database as lost or stolen.

• Following a boat crash investigation, deputies received a report at 3:50 p.m. June 11 from the 13000 block of Isleton Avenue N. from the parties now admitting to the boat crash.

- In answering a disturbance report, deputies spoke to a resident in the 4000 block of 158th Street N. at 11:42 p.m. June 12 who stated his garage had been egged.
- Deputies responded to an unknown situation at 5:26 p.m. June 13 in the 12000 block of Goodview Avenue N. and discovered that nothing was happening at all except for kids just playing in the swimming pool and having fun. All was well.
- A potentially dangerous dog in the 6000 block of 145th Bay N. was reported at 7:16 p.m. June 13 for biting someone. Deputies rounded up the owner and dog and continued the investigation from there.
- Residents in the 5000 block of 135th Street N. reported the neighbors for playing loud music at 9:03 p.m. June 13. Deputies found the large gathering at a residence and advised everyone to turn the music down and be aware of their neighbors. However, at 9:33 p.m., deputies had to go out there again following an additional noise complaint. They heard the loud music again and advised the neighbors of city ordinance and possible citations.

Loretta Harding

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WHITE BEAR LAKE RELAY FOR LIFE: ‘Inhale courage, exhale fear’

FROM PAGE 1

sota so she could better support Jae’s family.

Last year for the first time, Moore walked the Relay for Life in White Bear Lake to support the cause and greet chamber members involved in the event. When she saw the Milk Mart Ice Cream truck, everything came full circle: that truck was hired to provide ice cream to those who attended Jae’s funeral.

“Relay for Life is a sad reminder of what I’ve lost. And it is the most spectacular demonstration of the community safety net that can be created inside of that vacuum,” Moore explained. “Walking into Relay for Life for the first time feels like walking into kindergarten; you don’t know what to expect, you might not have any friends (yet), but the people you need most in this moment are there waiting for you on the other side of the door.”

Moore says Jae’s mantra through her adult cancer journey was “inhale courage, exhale fear.”

IF YOU GO:
What: Relay for Life
When: 4p.m. Friday, July 31
Where: White Bear Lake Area High School, 5045 Division Ave.
Details: The 32nd annual White Bear Lake Relay for Life draws hundreds of cancer survivors and their caregivers, friends and families from across the metro for a fun, family-friendly evening of live music, powerful speakers, food trucks, online silent auction, games and fun
Contact: www.wbrelay.org

“Jenny was always fierce. She was strong and feisty. She refused to ever show weakness ... Maybe she had those traits because of her childhood leukemia; maybe she was always that person,” Moore recalled. “But when she got sick again at first, I thought that research had come so far and she was impossibly stubborn, and so she would be protected and would just get through it. In her last four years, she ended up going through a few cycles of illness-diagnosis-treatment-remission, and we mourned and celebrated every time.”

She added, “Watching her go through it after already beating it was deeply disorienting. So many people survive cancer. She had survived cancer. The unfairness of it was hard to reconcile.”

Losing Jae has taught

Moore to inhale courage and exhale fear.

“It’s in the small moments. It’s smiling when the song ‘Getting Jiggy with It’ comes on. It’s craving to watch ‘Friends’ or ‘The Sweetest Thing.’ It’s choosing to eat almond M&Ms before I eat my meal. It’s fiercely loving on and advocating for her five kids, and in doing so, it’s ending up at extra hockey games, wrestling matches, dance competitions or ice-skating shows.”

Managing Editor Shannon Granholm can be reached at 651-407-1227 or citizennews@presspubs.com.



Jenny did the survivor’s walk with Nolia (left) and Emma (right). Nolia and Emma are Bobbie Bigwood’s daughters.

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THURSDAY	6:00PM BINGO @ JIMMY'S 7:00PM BINGO @ WB BAR
FRIDAY	5:00PM MEAT RAFFLES @ WB BAR & DOC'S 6:00PM TRI-WHEEL @ WB BAR
SATURDAY	12:30PM BINGO @ SAK'S 6:00PM TRI-WHEEL @ WB BAR 5:00PM MEAT RAFFLE @ JIMMY'S

‘GREASE’: White Bear Community Education’s summer musical runs July 23-26

FROM PAGE 1

Many of the show’s principal characters played prominent roles in last fall’s “Rodger’s and Hammerstein’s Cinderella” or this spring’s “Dear Evan Hansen,” and have been featured in this paper’s Arts and Culture page as Emerging Artists.

Nok-Chiclana is excited to be working in the PAC, as construction on the space was completed after she graduated. “There’s so many more opportunities that we have,” she said.

Luisa Maruyama, who plays Sandy in “Grease” and literally soared as the Fairy Godmother last fall compared how the upcoming show is using the PAC’s capabilities. “We’re not flying a person, but we are flying sets. We’ll be flying in different backdrops to change scenes.” Maruyama noted that the drive-in movie scene will have a specialized starry background.

“We’re using the star drape for that and a couple other scenes as well,” said the show’s light designer Jacob Pasiuk, who was ISD 624’s first student to be admitted into the Hennepin Arts Technical Theater Career Pathway. For “Grease,” Pasiuk was excited to experiment with new angles of light and shadow. “There’s big reveal moments where the lights go up ... and the audience goes, ‘Whoa, didn’t see that there.’”

Attendees, however, will not be able to miss the cast dynamics.

“‘Grease’ is totally a show where you can be with your friends for a while and not think too much,” said Oliver Grawe, who plays Danny Zuko and received a Hennepin Arts Evaluator Shout-Out last fall. “‘Grease’ is so famous ... You know how great these people are.” Grawe is speaking not only about the characters, but also the people playing them. Graduating seniors play many of the show’s parts.

“We knew that this summer show would be our last hurrah as a generation of White Bear Lake,” said Lucas Maahs, who plays the greaser Roger and received Outstanding Performance in a Supporting Role from Hennepin Arts last fall. “We’ve gotten really lucky with such a talented group of seniors ... it’s the perfect ending for us.”

“Grease” was also an opportunity for the older cast members to pass knowledge on to the next generation.

“They all take a lot of time out of their lives to bond with younger casemates and talk to them — almost like older siblings,” said incoming sophomore Ben Storelee, who plays Teen Angel. “Most of the people who come to the show probably know it. I hope what’s taken away after seeing the show is not the story, but us.”

Performances of “Grease” run from July 23-26 at the White Bear Lake Area High School Performing



The cast of “Grease” runs a dress rehearsal. The cast consists of many Emerging Artists, featured in the monthly Arts and Culture page. Odelis Garcia Anderson directs with Yahaira Nok-Chiclan as assistant director.



Pictured center: Ethan Christensen practices choreography for “Greased Lightning.”

Arts Center, 5040 Division Ave., Door A. For tickets and more information, visit sites.google.com/isd624.org/wblas-summer-community-theatre/box-office.



Pictured center: Holly Flood, who plays Rizzo, poses with her Pink Ladies.

ZONING CODE: Update reduces nonconformities

FROM PAGE 1

pening anymore; 55 feet is kind of the new wide lot.”

“There aren’t a lot of substantive changes. We really wanted to reorganize it to be better organized and easier to read,” Lindahl explained.

The most significant changes include the addition of the Mixed Use (M-U) district, removal of the Neighborhood Services (NS) district and the renaming of the higher-density residential district. The M-U zoning district was added to provide an alternative to a planned unit development (PUD) in areas that are specifically guided Mixed Use in the Comprehensive Plan. While the areas may still develop as a PUD, the new standards establish a baseline for development.

“The purpose is to provide high-quality, walkable, mixed-use development at key intersections in the community,” Lindahl said, adding that areas zoned mixed use will remain in a “holding zone” until development is proposed.

The R-3 single-family detached residential district was changed to R-3 low-density residential, and the central residential district (CR-3) was changed to R-3 single- and two-family residential.

“The CR-3 district was full of lots and houses that didn’t meet code requirements for one reason or another, mainly because they are older lots, and they were all done before the zoning code was put in place,” Gort said. “The new R-3 district that replaces that CR-3 district is reducing nonconformities by 90%.”

Separately from the zoning code change, the city has also updated its multifamily design guidelines, which lay out site design, building placement and standards for townhomes.

“These are guidelines so when staff are meeting

with developers, (they can say) this is what we expect and really push to apply these standards,” Lindahl explained. She added that one of the things they spent a lot of time discussing with city staff was figuring out how to “incentivize” small buildings (eight or fewer units) or medium buildings (nine to 18 units).

To promote the smaller and medium buildings, additions were made to standards for large buildings to discourage developers from building those product types in Hugo.

Standards include:

- At least 33% of each exterior wall shall be composed of brick, natural stone or artificial stone. (Other buildings would be required to provide 25%.)
- The ground level of any three-story building and the first two stories of a building four stories or taller shall be visually distinct from the upper stories.
- A minimum of one-half of the required parking spaces shall be in an underground parking area or in a parking area below the building.

“We have come up with some good changes,” said Mayor Tom Weidt. “I really like the part where we are taking people out of being in violation of the ordinance. That is very helpful.”

The City Council ultimately approved the ordinance repealing and replacing the Zoning and Land Use chapter of the city code and new zoning map as well as the multifamily guidelines.

Managing Editor Shannon Granholm can be reached at 651-407-1227 or citizennews@presspubs.com.

PUBLIC SAFETY BRIEFS

Lino Lakes and White Bear Lake fire departments douse vehicle fire

The Lino Lakes Fire Department is publicizing safety tips to residents after a recent vehicle fire.



LINO LAKES FIRE DEPARTMENT | CONTRIBUTED
The aftermath of the July 13 vehicle and grass fire.

- If you experience a vehicle fire:
- Pull over safely
 - Move everyone away from the vehicle
 - Call 911
 - Never open the hood if you suspect the fire is in the engine compartment
- This reminder comes after the Lino Lakes and White Bear Lake fire departments responded to a vehicle fire July 13. According to a statement from LLFD, “From the moment the parking brake was set, it was less than 60 seconds to (get) water on the fire, with the fire under control within three minutes.” This time included firefighters suiting up in full PPE and breathing gear.
- Responders also performed a victim check and put out the surrounding grass fire.

CLPD announces new chief of police

Centennial Lakes Police Department is appointing Brian Goetzke as its new chief of police. Goetzke joined CLPD as a police officer in 2018 and became sergeant in 2020. CLPD commented that Goetzke has devoted his career to community protection and service; they are thrilled to announce him as their new chief.

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FINANCIAL PLANNING

A midyear money check, before summer gets expensive

BY SHIVAM VASHISHTHA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

July has a way of making extra spending feel ordinary. A few more trips to the grocery store. A higher electric bill after a hot stretch. More water used on the lawn. A weekend outing. A sports registration. A cart full of back-to-school items before anyone is ready to admit summer is moving that quickly.

None of those costs may feel dramatic on their own. But for households in White Bear Lake, Vadnais Heights, Hugo and Centerville, summer is a useful time to pause and look at where the year's budget is actually going.

Financial planning is often treated as something people do in January, around tax season or when a major life event forces the issue. July may be just as important though. Half the year is already gone, several seasonal expenses are still ahead and there is still time to make adjustments before fall and winter costs arrive.

One place to start is the utility bill.

Energy bills are not only a winter concern in our state. Everything including, but not limited to, air conditioning, dehumidifiers, fans, extra laundry, electronics and longer days at home can all push summer usage higher. In late June, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission approved an electric rate increase for Xcel Energy customers, allowing the company to collect about 5.8% more from Minnesota customers.

That does not mean every household's bill will rise by the same amount. The total still depends on how much electricity a household uses. But it does make summer habits a bit more important.

To save money, families do not necessarily need to make their homes uncomfortable. Rather, small changes can help: closing blinds during the hottest part of the day, replacing dirty air filters, using ceiling fans properly, running full loads of laundry and dishes and avoiding heat-producing chores during peak afternoon heat.

Water is another summer cost that can quietly grow.

Summer costs to check before fall		
Cost area	What to check	
 Electric bill	Usage compared with last summer	
 Water bill	Irrigation schedule and quarterly usage	
 Groceries	Weekly spending and eating out	
 Back-to-school	Clothing, supplies and activity fees	
 Emergency buffer	Whether one repair would go on a credit card	

In White Bear Lake, the city utility bills include water, sewer, trash and recycling charges. Whereas in Hugo, the city uses a conservation rate structure, meaning customers pay based partly on how much water they use, and the rate increases as usage rises. Moreover, Hugo also limits municipal water irrigation to odd-even days and prohibits irrigation between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Vadnais Heights has also put more attention on outdoor water use. The city's lawn and landscape watering policy limits residents to certain watering days and prohibits watering between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. The city notes that water loss is greatest during that window. It has also offered rebates for smart irrigation controllers, which adjust watering based on rain or soil moisture.

Those rules are not only environmental. They are also financial. Watering in the heat of the day wastes more water. A sprinkler timer set months ago can quietly affect a quarterly bill. For households trying to manage summer costs, checking the irrigation schedule may be as practical as checking the bank account.

Food costs are another place where small changes add up. Federal inflation data released in July showed that grocery prices were 2.7% higher than a year earlier, while food away

from home was 3.4% higher. That means the difference between cooking at home and eating out still matters, especially when summer schedules make convenience spending easier to justify.

July is also the beginning of another budget season: back-to-school spending.

Even families without children in school can feel the seasonal pull of sales, clothes, supplies, sports gear, electronics and household restocking. Minnesota does exempt general-use clothing from sales tax, but not everything bought for school or activities receives the same treatment. Backpacks, sports equipment and many protective items are taxable.

That makes a list more useful than a sale sign. Shoes, clothing, backpacks, activity fees, school supplies and technology can quickly become one large late-summer bill if they are not planned ahead.

A midyear financial check does not need to be complicated.

First, compare the last two or three utility bills with the same period last year. Look beyond the amount due and check the usage. If usage is higher, habits may need adjusting. If usage is similar but the bill rose, rate changes or fees may be part of the answer.

Second, write down known costs for August and September. It might be a good idea to include school expenses, sports or activity fees, insurance renewals, subscriptions, travel, car maintenance and any expected home repairs. Costs are easier to manage when they are visible before they are urgent.

Third, protect a small emergency buffer. Summer spending may feel harmless in the moment, but a household with no cushion is probably more likely to rely on a credit card when the car, furnace, appliance or medical bill arrives later.

The point of a July money check is not to stop enjoying summer. Rather, it's to keep ordinary summer spending from quietly taking control of the year.

A good budget is not built only around the biggest bills. It is built around the small ones people notice early enough to do something about.

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86757

School board unanimously approves 2 long-term facility maintenance plans

BY SARAH BAKEMAN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The White Bear Lake Area School Board unanimously approved two long-term facility maintenance action plans at the July 13 meeting – one for White Bear Lake Area Schools’ own buildings, and the other for the Northeast Metro District 916’s property. Director of Finance Andi Johnson presented an estimated \$12.6 million in maintenance projects for the district’s own buildings for the 2027-28 school year. A categorized list of planned projects and associated costs was provided in the meeting materials, with the highest projected cost being \$3 million for casework replacement, \$2 million for professional services and design, and \$1.9 million for boiler and steam system replacements. This presentation is routine — a long-term maintenance plan for White Bear Lake Area Schools’ properties is brought to the

school board every July. Following the board’s approval, the next step is for the Minnesota Department of Education to approve the plans. If that happens, the necessary revenue for the improvement projects will be included in the district’s property tax levy this fall. Though the district goes into each year with detailed project plans, Johnson addressed the changing nature of maintenance needs. “Because we’re planning for a year or two in advance, we recognize that facility needs change, priorities change and costs may change,” Johnson said. “The plan will remain responsive to those needs moving forward.” The board approved a second long-term maintenance plan for the Northeast Metro 916 school district. Northeast Metro 916 is an affiliated school district that provides specialized education, often for students with complex disabilities and behavioral needs, to

public school districts in the North Metro. The district also provides area learning centers and career and technical education that individual districts may not be able to run efficiently on their own. White Bear Lake Area Schools is one of 13 districts represented on the 916 School Board. It is a responsibility for all districts involved to pay a share of the 916’s long-term maintenance needs for its properties annually. A categorized list of expenses was provided in the meeting materials. This year, White Bear Lake’s share of maintenance needs is 9.3%, amounting to \$55,703. A packet was provided to School Board members disclosing what the other 12 districts that benefit from 916’s services are paying in, and what amounts they are responsible for. Each district’s contribution is based on a blended rate that takes net tax capacity into account. For a copy of meeting materials, visit: <https://www.isd624.org/about/school-board/meeting-materials>.

WHITE BEAR LAKE SCHOOL BOARD MEETING NOTES

- The board unanimously approved an estimated \$12.6 million long-term maintenance project plan for the district’s own buildings for the 2027-28 school year. The next steps are for the Minnesota Department of Education to also give approval, and then the necessary revenue needs to be included in the district’s property tax levy this fall.
- The board approved a second long-term maintenance plan for the Northeast Metro 916 school district. This year, White Bear Lake’s share of maintenance needs is 9.3%, amounting to \$55,703. Northeast Metro 916 is an affiliated school district that provides specialized education, often for students with complex disabilities and behavioral needs, to public school districts in the north metro. It also provides area learning centers and career and technical education that individual districts may not be able to run efficiently on their own.

- At the beginning of the meeting, School Board Member Daniel Skaar moved to add a “discussion on future classroom consolidation and the process the board uses to review such consolidations.” There was no second to this motion, though Board Member Chris Streiff Oji asked Chair Scott Arcand to restate how to add agenda items before meetings. She then noted, “when an agenda item is added the night of, I don’t know that I would be prepared to have a conversation about it.” Skaar claimed he has sent 10 emails requesting items to be added to the agenda beforehand, and all 10 have been denied.
- Skaar requested that the invoice register be moved from the consent agenda to the regular agenda and received a second. Director of Finance Andi Johnson then came up to answer questions Skaar had about June invoice items: over 2,000 invoice items coded by 3- or 4-word descriptions for each. Some

of the items, such as a new district vehicle and textbook expenses, Johnson could identify from memory. Others she could not address. “If you were to give me a heads up, I would be prepared to answer that,” Johnson said.

- During the public forum, parent Dan Arcand asked about BEAR Time — a daily, 30-minute flexible period built into the school day. Arcand said he has gathered from his third grade son and other parents that the time may lack structure and supervision. Kids in his son’s class spent the time looking up French swear words and watching Mr. Beast videos, he noted. “I’m just wondering if there’s supposed to be some sort of supervisor associated with that, or if it really is a do-whatever-you-want time,” Arcand said. “If that’s the case, could that be addressed and changed to something that’s a little bit more structured?” Arcand added that he did reach out to the school and has

not heard back. Chair Scott Arcand said the board would follow up with the school.

- The board unanimously voted to renew its membership in the Minnesota State High School League for 2026-27. The MSHSL is a nonprofit that regulates interscholastic athletic and arts programs for schools across Minnesota.
- The board unanimously approved a resolution relating to the election of School Board members. This covers election logistics such as polling locations and hours, publishing notices in the school newspaper, ballot preparation, and more. School Board elections will be held on Election Day, Nov. 3, 2026.
- The meeting ended with a closed portion to allow the board to discuss an evaluation of the superintendent.

Sarah Bakeman

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Agape hosts moms’ event

Agape Spanish Immersion Academy in Hugo will host a moms’ event from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Aug. 1. Whether you’re part of the Agape family or simply looking to connect with other women in the community, you’re invited to join in a morning of connection, encouragement and Bible study. The event will feature a 45-minute workout with uplifting worship music, drinks, charcuterie cups and build-your-own bouquet with The Bloom Bus. Tickets must be purchased in advance. To register, visit <https://events.sweatpals.com/9f05daee>.

Clean Bee’s Cleaning wants to fill backpacks

Clean Bee’s Cleaning & Organizing, based out of Hugo, would like to fill at least 10 backpacks with school supplies for local children before the first day of school. The business is in search of loose-leaf paper, erasers, markers, folders, boxes of Kleenex, dry-erase markers or financial donations. To donate, call owner Jourdon Roberts at 715-220-9207.

PUBLIC NOTICE

CITY OF HUGO

NOTICE OF TESTING OF DS200 VOTING EQUIPMENT
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Hugo will conduct a public accuracy test of the DS200 ballot scanner voting equipment at Hugo City Hall on Tuesday, July 28, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in preparation for the Primary Election to be held on August 11, 2026.
Michele Lindau, City Clerk
Published one time in The Citizen on July 23, 2026.

CITY OF HUGO

SUMMARY ORDINANCE 2026-549
NOTICE: THIS PUBLISHED MATERIAL IS ONLY A SUMMARY OF AN ORDINANCE OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE CITY OF HUGO. THE FULL TEXT OF THE ORDINANCE IS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION AT THE HUGO CITY HALL DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS.
SUMMARY OF REPEAL AND REPLACE OF CHAPTER 90 (ZONING AND LAND USE) ORDINANCE:
Chapter 90 (Zoning and Land Use) has been repealed and replaced in its entirety. This repeal and replace includes the official Zoning Map of the City of Hugo. The changes included numerous updates to the names, dimensional standards, and information included in each Zoning District. Additionally, the changes included updates to uses and performance standards for uses. Overall, the changes reordered sections and provided updates, improved usability and provided clarity to Chapter 90.
Please note this title and summary of this Ordinance clearly informs the public of the intent and effect of the Ordinance and conforms to Minn. Stat. § 412.191. This Ordinance shall be effective on the date that it is published.
The amended ordinance is available at City Hall for review.
Passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Hugo this 6th day of July, 2026.
Tom Weidt, Mayor
Attest: Michel Lindau, City Clerk
Published one time in The Citizen on July 23, 2026.

Carrier of the Month Mason Nickelson June 2026



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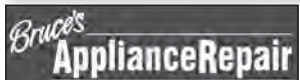


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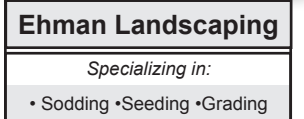
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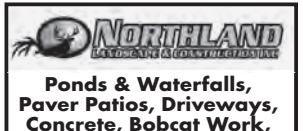
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North Oaks Company breaks new ground with Wilkinson Waters

BY LOGAN GION
STAFF WRITER

Construction has begun on Wilkinson Waters, a mixed use residential/ commercial development on Centerville Road between County Road J and Ash Street in Lino Lakes. Plans are to begin renting in 2028, developer Peter Stalland said during the groundbreaking ceremony held July 8 at the Wilkinson Waters project site. The development will include apartments and townhomes as well as small retail shops and possible office space.

“We’re going to see a European, Old English type of architecture,” Stalland said. “It’s going to be absolutely beautiful.”

North Oaks Company President Mark Houge highlighted the development’s proximity to Interstate 35E. “We want a place where people can live close to their work and have some amenities that make it a desirable place to hang out, (with) the walkability factor ... more of a neighborhood feel,” he said.

Though literature for Wilkinson Waters uses phrases like “luxury apartments,” Houge added that their target tenants are working families. “It’s not an overly large apartment development, but it’s large enough so that we can offer a wide variety of housing options.”

Because all of the tenants will have access to the various amenities, Houge hopes that Wilkinson Waters will be attractive to people who work in a variety of industries.

Houge also underscored that the development will have an extensive trail system that borders Centerville Road and connects to Ash Street.



JULIE OLIVER PHOTOGRAPHY | CONTRIBUTED

From left, White Bear Township Town Supervisor Steve Ruzek, Lino Lakes City Administrator Karen Anderson, Lino Lakes Council Member Julia Nelson and developer Peter Stalland break ground at the Wilkinson Waters site in Lino Lakes, near Centerville Road and County Road J.

“There’s a very large open space to the west, almost 30 acres that looks towards Wilkinson Lake to the south,” Houge explained. “And that’s gonna be a really nice amenity for not only the residents there at Wilkinson Waters, but also the community.”

Representatives from Lino Lakes, White Bear Township and Anoka County expressed enthusiasm for the project as well during the groundbreaking ceremony.

“This design and this density for this location, with the access is, I think, the right project,” said Anoka County Commissioner Jeff Reinert. “And North Oaks Development ... it’s always quality.”

“(North Oaks Company) is so good at restoring water quality,” said Lino Lakes Council Member Julia Nelson as she looked out at the building site, “All this farmland, while it was necessary ... it really impaired the water. So now, all they’ve done in the restoration

work — to me? That’s the best.”

White Bear Township Supervisor Steve Ruzek noted that in order to provide Wilkinson Waters with water and sewer utilities, joint powers agreements needed to be hammered out between North Oaks, Lino Lakes and White Bear Township. Now that the agreements have been squared away, Ruzek is enthusiastic about what lies ahead.

“This is a wonderful joint project,” Ruzek said. “This was a corner that needed some development, so I’m happy.”

Stalland is also excited about Wilkinson Waters’ geographic location. “You can’t have a better location—the interstate exchange, the (Centerville Road and Otter Lake Road) roundabouts ... I think it’s a beautiful spot for the southeast corner entrance into Lino Lakes.”

CALENDAR BRIEFS

Blacksmith hosts 7th annual golf tournament

Blacksmith Lounge and Broaster will host its annual golf tournament Monday, Sept. 14, at Forest Hills Golf Club in Forest Lake. Four-person teams are invited to participate. Shotgun start will be at 11 a.m. Dinner and prizes will follow the tournament at Blacksmith’s pavilion. For more information, or questions, contact Zack Wilson at 651-245-5387 or zkcjwilson@gmail.com.

Washington County Fair's 1st mascot to debut at Senior Event

A very young minipig named Baby Penny is the first fair mascot in Washington County Fair’s 155-year history. She will make her debut at the Senior Event on Wednesday, July 29, as part of her “royal duties.”

“Baby Penny is definitely being integrated in our fair this year,” said Marguerite “Margot” Rheinberger, who came up with the idea of having a fair mascot. There is a Baby Penny QR code on signs in and around the fairgrounds, and stickers at the entrance gates. Additionally, many vendors and others at the fair are honoring her in a variety of clever ways, Rheinberger noted. Rheinberger co-chairs the senior event.

The senior event will be held on the Main Stage, across from Building D on the fairgrounds in Lake Elmo. While the event is officially scheduled to begin at noon, Rheinberger highly recommends people come earlier for seating. Light refreshments will be served and door prize tickets given out until 12:30 p.m. Fifty door prize winners will each receive certificates for four pints of custard.

The musical entertainment runs from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Joe Sir and the Rockabilly Revels Band will perform “The Elvis Show: The Las Vegas Years.” There will be reduced gate admission for seniors until 1 p.m. on July 29. There is no cost for parking, admission to the senior event and refreshments.

The Washington County Fair runs from July 29 through Aug. 2. See: washingtoncountyfair.org. Call Margot Rheinberger at 612-406-2604 with questions about the senior event.



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CENTERVILLE TIDBITS

- The Centerville City Council resumed its full capacity after new Council Member Kale Kaluptzok took the oath of office from City Administrator Athanasia Lewis at the July 9 meeting. He fills the seat left vacant by the departure of David Kubat several months ago. Council conducted interviews and appointed Haluptzok at the July 22 meeting. Haluptzok grew up in Centerville and has been a small business owner for more than 10 years. Haluptzok’s term will expire in January 2027.
- The city is preparing for elections by appointing members to its absentee ballot board. At its June 22 meeting, council established an absentee ballot board in a proactive effort to further enhance local oversight, transparency and public confidence in election administration. The absentee ballot board will convene to accept, reject and process absentee ballots. The city’s absentee ballot board will also be required to appoint members. The city clerk and deputy clerk are the two employees who have overseen the city’s municipal elections for more than 25 years.
- The city’s Finance Director Bruce DeJong has worked with the city for eight years, and council (unanimously, with Council Member Linda Broussard-Vickers absent) approved the successful completion of his performance evaluation. Council members Anita Rios and Russ Koski commended him for his work. “Bruce has everything packaged for us and always explains things so that the council understands,” Koski said. Golden thanked him for “educating me on a lot of things.” With his successful performance review, DeJong will receive a raise, moving up from Grade 12 Step 7 to Grade 12 Step 8.
- In 2014, the city bought a brine tank to help apply brine to roads for winter de-icing operations. Using the brine tank allows salt to stick where it lands on the road surface and minimizes the amount that bounces off the road surface. That practice works for entities whose trucks reach higher speeds, but the city’s operations don’t achieve those speeds, so the city no longer uses brine for operations. However, the brine tank may still be of value to those high-flying entities, and staff

sought permission to declare the tank as surplus and sell it through an online action. Council unanimously approved this request from its public works department. Revenue will be credited to Fund 409 of the capital improvement fund. “I really appreciate that you’re going through equipment that is no longer of service to Centerville and looking for ways to save our pennies,” Rios said. Public Works Director Charlie Lehn thanked his staff for keeping an eye out for ways to save and for assessing the department’s equipment.

- The homeowner at 7025 Brian Drive will now install a new solid dog-eared 6-foot wooden fence in their yard. They have been given permission to install a fence in the side and rear yard setbacks within the city’s right-of-way/ drainage and utility easements after council approved an encroachment agreement.
- Council approved a special event permit on private property for the property owners on Mound Court for an Aug. 22 event at which a band will play and alcohol will be served. The party, from 3-6 p.m., is expected to host from 40 to 60 guests.
- As summer is party time, council also approved another special event permit on private property, otherwise known as St. Genevieve’s Annual Festival. The church also received a temporary on-sale liquor license for the event. St. Genevieve’s Church has held this festival every year for many years, and it is a wonderful community event with no incidents, said City Administrator Athanasia Lewis.
- Boy Scout Troop No. 136 held its annual award ceremony at Hidden Spring Park on July 9, as it has done each year. The troop was given a park facility permit as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Committee.
- At the May 14 meeting, council approved the purchase of a 2018 Kubota tractor from Crawford Equipment to replace the city’s 2001 Massey Ferguson tractor. Staff asked council to declare the Massey Ferguson tractor and its attachments as surplus to be traded in to help offset the \$29,300 purchase price of the Kubota Tractor. The trade-in should bring in \$11,300. Following approval by council, the net price of the new tractor is now



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New Council Member Kale Kaloptzok is sworn in by the City Administrator Athanasia Lewis as Mayor Nancy Golden looks on.

\$18,000, which will be financed by Fund 409 of the city’s capital replacement fund.

- With the state partisan primary election to take place on Tuesday, April 11, the city has set the dates for notarized affidavits of candidacy to be accepted (from 7:30 a.m. July 14 to 4:00 p.m. July 27). Affidavits of candidacy will be accepted for the office of mayor (two-year term); two council member seats (four-year terms) and one special election council member seat (two-year term). The filing fee is \$2. Those interested in running for office can find an affidavit packet from the Secretary of State’s Office website or from City Hall.
- Now that Centennial Lakes Police Department Chief James Mork has retired after 29 years of service, the new CLPD chief will be Brian Goetzke, who officially began as chief on July 1.

The council next meets at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 23, at City Hall, 1880 Main St.

Loretta Harding

More details on White Bear Lake trap team's national meet

The White Bear Lake trap team placed 63rd of 258 teams in the USA High School Clay Target League national tournament that concluded July 12 in Mason, Michigan.

In addition to sixth-grader Grayson Schwab placing 69th of about 1,800 entrants, hitting 98 of 100 birds, Blake Haas, a senior, led the team to nationals by averaging 23.10 of 25 in Minnesota, ranking eighth in the conference. At nationals, he posted a 97/100 score, placing him 190th of 1,800 athletes.

He had several 25 straights and one 50 straight, helping the team reach Sunday's team competition. This was the first time White Bear Lake team reached the final day in eight years attending nationals. After the final round Sunday, he gave

Coach Monty his last fired shell for the team, and a hug.

Seniors Aaron Thilmany and Zach Brock also maintained and out-performed their season averages to get the team to Sunday. Both posted 25 straights throughout the three days.

Jimmy Lightner provided a key performance for the team on Friday, posting a 47/50. Al Melde and Ben Svendsen also shot respectable scores as first time participants. Each athlete who attended nationals had to finish the season with a varsity level overall season average of 21 or higher.

The team made it to Sunday by placing 63rd of 238 teams with an overall score of 464/500.



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Pictured here are the three seniors who participated at nationals. From left, assistant coach Tim Schwab, Blake Haas, Zach Brock, Aaron Thilmany and head coach Jake Montgomery.

Centennial Lakes Fastpitch softball team wins tournament in Colorado

BY LOGAN GION
STAFF WRITER

Centennial Lakes Fastpitch 18U team, coached by Montana Miller, is gearing up for the Minnesota softball state tournament July 25-26. They've been gaining momentum this season, placing higher in each subsequent tournament. The team has now secured a win in United States Specialty Sports Association Softball Tourney of Champs in Colorado.

"This is our first time getting rings or any medal this season," Miller said. "This was our fourth tournament of the season ... we've been slowly building up, and then we finally came together and won."

Because club softball is not associated with a school district, high school girls from other areas, including White Bear, Roseville and Saint Anthony, joined the team.

"At the start of the season, they were all from a bunch of different teams, now morphed into one," Miller said. Team captain Sophie Soderberg, who plays second base and outfield, added that the team started playing together this past winter, which helped team members coalesce into one unit.

"It's just nice, everyone supporting you and having your back," Soderberg said.

Team support was crucial during the Colorado tournament, held July 11-12. Higher elevations and a scorching heat index meant the team had to take extra health measures, both physically and mentally.

"The heat kind of got to us," Soderberg noted. "It makes you feel more irritable and down on yourself." Soderberg mentioned that, besides hydration, she made sure to read when her teammates needed encouragement and when they needed space.

"When we have game after game when it's really hot and we're not used to the climate, to keep going out there and trying your best, I was super proud of them," Miller added. The team also had a one-week break before the tournament because of the Fourth of July holiday. They also traveled to Colorado early to bond and sightsee. Miller believes this rest was crucial to her team's well-being.

"Having that reboot, I think, was really important for them, too, because it can get to be a lot of softball in the summer when you're practicing or playing a game every day," Miller said. "Having a little break let them explore Colorado and take some time to heal themselves and settle in."

For Soderberg, coming in fresh helped her adjust to opponents' play styles. "If you notice you're missing a lot, and (the ball's) coming right past you—taking a deep breath, taking a step back and making sure you stay ready."

Greta Rust—who plays first base and, occasionally, third base—explained that her job is all about control.

"First base ... catch the balls that are coming in and out. Whereas third, it's called 'the hot corner,' you have a bunch of balls coming towards you at incredible speeds," Rust described.

"You have to make the plays cleanly and get the girls out." Rust did just that in the Colorado tournament, making a few double plays to propel her team forward.

Pitcher Hannah Hugger stated that she and the three other pitchers make it difficult for opponents to read the pitch.

"No two of us pitch similarly," Hugger said. "We have a wide variety of which pitches each of us throw, a range of speeds and spots we prefer to hit."

Coach Miller, a Centennial High School alumni and 2026 Hamline University graduate, made 29 pitching appearances for her college team this year. She believes that coaching for Centennial Lakes Fastpitch has made her a better player.

"When I'm talking to my pitchers, 'Make sure you hit this spot when you've got two strikes' or 'Know how to read what the batter is doing,' I can reflect on myself, like, 'Do I really do that when I'm in a game?'" Miller laughed. "If I'm telling my girls to be better players, then I also need to make sure I do that myself."

Looking ahead, Miller believes that if her team keeps their confidence, intensity and calmness, they will excel in the state tournament.

"Throughout this whole year, I've been super proud of them," Miller said. "I think they've finally started to gel with each other and start to trust their skills even more." At the Minnesota softball state qualifier, July 17-19, Miller's team placed third in their bracket.



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17-year-old hits hole-in-one

Chase Horstman, 17, of Centerville, hit a hole-in-one on hole number four on Sunday, July 12 at Oneka Ridge Golf Course in Hugo. Horstman, a senior at Centennial High School, used his 3-wood at 230 yards (from the blue tees).

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Fete des Lacs Parade rolls through Centerville



PHOTOS BY PAUL DOIS | PRESS PUBLICATIONS

As part of the annual Fete des Lac festivities, a Saturday morning parade featuring a variety of entries, including fire and law enforcement officials, high school sports teams, city ambassadors, dancers, musicians, local business representatives, aspiring politicians and more, traveled along the streets of Centerville. Preceding the official start of the parade, a group of scouts traveled ahead along the parade route and distributed hundreds of miniature American Flags to crowd members.

WASHINGTON COUNTY BRIEFS

Historic river cruise will focus on the romance of the river

John Kerschbaum, owner and operator of Gondola Romantica, will be the host for the St. Croix River Historic Cruise, a fundraiser for the Washington County Historical Society (WCHS). The cruise is scheduled from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 12.

The St. Croix River has been used as a main thoroughfare for centuries. Indigenous peoples used the river for fishing and travel; the Voyageurs used the river for travel in their large birch bark canoes. The lumber industry used the river to send logs down to the mills. Today, the river is a summer getaway.

This event will be held aboard one of the Stillwater River Boats and includes appetizers, a full cash bar and a chance to win a two-night stay at Postcard Cabins Kettle River. Tickets for the event must be purchased in advance. For more information, call the WCHS at 651-439-2298. To purchase tickets go to: <https://stillwaterriverboats.com/specials/>.

County Board receives \$1.2 million for homelessness prevention, assistance

The Washington County Board of Commissioners has accepted \$1.2 million in grant funds for homelessness prevention for families and for securing housing for families experiencing homelessness. The purpose of the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) is to provide supportive services and/or financial assistance to families, youth and single adults who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency awarded Washington County

\$814,000 in FHPAP funds for two years beginning Oct. 1, 2025, and ending Sept. 30, 2027. Washington County has been awarded \$1.2 million in additional funding, bringing the total FHPAP amount to \$2.014 million. The Minnesota Legislature recently approved an additional \$40 million in one-time FHPAP funds in response to the current rental housing crisis in Minnesota, with a goal to spend the majority of this additional funding by Dec. 31, 2026. Any remaining funding can be carried over into 2027.

The Washington County FHPAP Advisory Board recommended that the board allocate the additional funds to Washington County and existing FHPAP sub-grantees:

- Washington County (\$265,000)
- Community Action Partnership of Ramsey and Washington counties (\$210,000)
- Greater Twin Cities United Way (\$142,000)
- Solid Ground (\$333,000)
- Valley Outreach (\$250,000)

The county has received FHPAP grant funding since 2007. It 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.

Commissioners appointed to canvassing board for state primary, general elections

Commissioners appointed Commissioner Fran Miron, District 1, and Commissioner Michelle Clasen, District 5, to the Washington County Canvassing Board for the state primary election Aug. 11. The canvass-

ing board meeting will be held at 3 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 13, in the board room on the fifth floor of the Washington County Government Center.

Miron and Commissioner Bethany Cox, District 3, were appointed to the Washington County Canvassing Board for the state general election that will be held Tuesday, Nov. 3. The canvassing board meeting will be held at 3 p.m. Monday, Nov. 9, in the board room.

The Washington County Canvassing Board reviews and certifies the election results. This board is made up of the county auditor, the court administrator of the district court in the county, the mayor of the most populous municipality in the county (Woodbury), and two members of the County Board.

County Board approves construction contract, agreements for Safe Routes to School Trail Project

Commissioners approved a \$381,530 construction contract with Dresel Contracting Inc. for the County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 12 Safe Routes to School Trail Project in Mahtomedi.

The project will construct a new trail along the south side of CSAH 12 (75th Street North) from the signalized intersection at Mahtomedi Middle and High School to Inwood Way. It will also construct a second segment extending north from that intersection to the existing off-road pedestrian/bicyclist facilities located within the school campus. It is a joint project with the city of Grant, Independent School District (ISD) 832 and the state of Minnesota.

In addition to the contract and grant agreement, the County Board also approved the following agreements:

- A cooperative agreement with the city of Grant, to cover construction costs and maintenance of new infrastructure.
- A cooperative agreement with ISD 832 to cover construction costs and maintenance.
- An agreement with the state of Minnesota to cover construction costs, maintenance and terms of acceptance of SRTS funds.

County Board approves contract for Library Strategic Facility Plan development

Commissioners approved a \$180,000 contract with MSR Design to develop a Library Strategic Facility Plan that will guide investment in library buildings over the next 15 years. The county received proposals from six consulting firms. MSR Design was selected as the preferred consultant.

County staff identified the need for a long-term facilities plan to support decision-making and ensure library spaces continue to meet community needs. The plan will assess existing library buildings, identify current and future gaps in service based on geography and population, and develop recommendations that advance both countywide goals and the Library's 2024-2028 Strategic Plan. That plan established four priorities: improving service delivery, strengthening organizational culture, enhancing physical spaces and technology infrastructure and expanding the library's reach.

Community engagement for the strategic plan showed strong public support for library facilities, while also highlighting challenges related to space limitations and diverse user needs. The facility plan will translate those priorities into an infrastructure roadmap that supports equitable access to library services.

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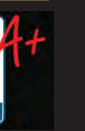
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