

Interviews are taking place today for Winona County's new Community and Environmental Protection Services director position. And the two being interviewed are John Shepard of Slayton, Minnesota and Jason Gilman of Onalaska. Gilman is Onalaska's Land Use and Development Director.

County Administrator Duane Hebert says they consolidated the emergency management, planning and environmental services departments recently.....all at a huge cost savings. Hebert said the county expects to extend an offer to one of the finalists early next week.

The county began its search for the director this spring, and two finalists, Shepard and Howard Blin, were selected in early June. But the county terminated the process after county commissioner Marcia Ward made statements about the applicants' ages..... hiring based on age is illegal. A second hiring process began later in June, and previous applicants were encouraged to reapply.