



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting
March 6, 2019**

The Regular Meeting of March 6, 2019, was held at the District Office Board Room, 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada, Minnesota, at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Cliff Aichinger, Vice President
Dianne Ward, Treasurer
Lawrence Swope, Manager

ABSENT:

Marj Ebensteiner, President
Pam Skinner, Secretary

ALSO PRESENT:

Tina Carstens, District Administrator
Tracey Galowitz, Attorney for District
Bill Bartodziej, Natural Resource Specialist
Chris O'Brien, Communications Coordinator
Bruce Copely, Crestview Addition Resident

Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager
Nicole Soderholm, Permit Inspector
Dave Vlasin, Water Quality Technician
Erin Anderson Wenz, Barr Engineering

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Aichinger at 6:30 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

3. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes from February 6, 2019

Dianne Ward requested on page four, under the District parking lot options, that they be listed in more detail.

Vice President Aichinger asked staff to review the agreement with Simon Properties regarding the Maplewood Mall to see if any updates are needed to the agreement.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve the consent agenda as amended. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

4. TREASURER'S REPORT AND BILL LIST

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve the March 6, 2019, bill list as submitted. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

5. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS

Bruce Copely stated that he has received a lot of questions and concerns from his neighbors regarding the high flood potential for spring. He stated that Tina Carstens responded to his concerns earlier today via email. He noted that, because of the high groundwater levels in his area, there is not a lot of room for additional water when the snow melts. He stated that the current conditions are setting up for a wet spring, which could cause problems. He reviewed the information for Crestview shown on the previous modeling. He stated that when things happen, they often happen quickly, and he wanted to ensure that the proper steps would be taken to prevent Crestview from flooding. He stated that Tina has assured him that flooding is a high priority item for the District. He asked if the modeling takes into account snowpack and frozen ground conditions. He stated that he is very interested in the options that will help to prevent future problems. Tina stated that Barr Engineering has been working on modeling with snowpack and that information is being used along with current water levels and frost levels.

Erin Anderson Wenz stated that her staff is looking at various levels of snowmelt in terms of water content. She explained that in this scenario they look at a ten-day snowmelt event and her staff will continue to run models regularly. She explained that model looks at no infiltration, frozen ground conditions, and all the snow melting within ten days. She stated that they will continue to be in communication with the cities and counties to ensure they are properly prepared.

Mr. Copely stated that he also reached out to someone at the city and county but did not receive a response as quickly as Tina replied. Tina noted that, based on the modeling information, the District would then communicate that information with the cities so that, if necessary, the city could then implement an emergency response plan. Erin stated that they continue to watch the weather and that there are additional CIP elements that are planned for construction this winter.

Vice President Aichinger stated that there will be updated information from the Corps of Engineers regarding river flooding, which does not relate to Snail Lake. Erin stated that flooding potentials also depend on how the snow melts. She explained that if the snow melts all at once, it can cause issues. Whereas if it melts in a few bursts, it does not have the same impact.

6. PERMIT PROGRAM

A. Applications

Permit #19-06: Launch Properties Tamarack – Woodbury

Nicole Soderholm noted that the Board previously approved a standalone wetland replacement plan for this property, which met the District requirements, and that is why that element is not included in this request. Vice President Aichinger asked for information on how the escrow and WCA surety prices were determined. Nicole explained that the WCA surety is based on the price of wetland bank credits in this region and the escrow is set at \$5,000 per acre of disturbance.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve Permit #19-06. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

Permit #19-07: Phalen Parking Lot Improvement – St. Paul

Nicole Soderholm stated that St. Paul is making improvements to parking lots around Lake Phalen. She noted that there is an existing rain garden on the site that was not used for previous project credit and therefore that will be expanded and used for this project. She was unsure of the timing of the project but noted that she would follow up to ensure that the project would not impact WaterFest. Lawrence Swope asked if there is a possibility for rain gardens at the other three parking lot sites. Nicole stated that the District did not look at treatment options above and beyond the required treatment. Vice President Aichinger noted that the topography around some of the other parking lots would not work well for rain gardens.

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve Permit #19-07. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

Permit #19-08: Cornerstone Medical Expansion – Woodbury

Nicole Soderholm explained that this full site plan was brought before the Board in 2006, with open space left for future development. She stated that the treatment was designed to meet the full build out, but was designed prior to the Atlas 14 figures. She stated that when the expansion plans were presented the applicant recognized that their stormwater treatment would need to be expanded to meet the current requirements.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve Permit #19-08. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

Permit #19-10: Gladstone Phase 3 – Maplewood

Nicole Soderholm stated that this is a unique partnership between the District and the City of Maplewood that created a living streets approach with BMPs and more narrow streets. She stated that this will reduce impervious surface of almost an acre and will provide a significant contribution to meeting the TMDL through the BMPs that will be completed.

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Cliff Aichinger seconded, to approve Permit #19-10. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

B. Monthly Enforcement Report

During February zero notices were sent.

C. 2019 Rule Revision Update and 45 Day Comment Board Action

Manager Swope commended staff for the thorough job they did reviewing and amending the rules.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to authorize distribution of the enclosed revised rules for 45-day review and comment period.

Tina noted that the Board should also set the public hearing date for the next board meeting in the motion. The motion was amended as follows:

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to authorize distribution of the enclosed revised rules for 45-day review and comment period and call for a public hearing on April 3, 2019. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

D. Inspection and Enforcement Charges Increase

Nicole Soderholm explained the calculation that she used to determine a more accurate charge for inspection and enforcement charges. Vice President Aichinger agreed that amount seems to be a better fit. Nicole noted that if approved, the new fee would be in place prior to the spring construction season.

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Cliff Aichinger seconded, to authorize an increase in permit inspection and enforcement changes to \$155 per inspection, for applicable inspections going forward. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

7. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

A. Applications

Permit #19-04 CS: Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church Phase 2

Paige Ahlborg stated that this is a smaller habitat restoration project. She stated that the church previously did two small rain garden projects the previous year and are excited to move forward with this project.

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve Permit #19-04 CS. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

Permit #19-05 CS: Maplewood Community Center

Vice President Aichinger asked if this project meets the District's cost per pound requirement. Paige Ahlborg confirmed that this is on the higher end of the scale, but is the only option available for that site and is still comparable to other projects. Vice President Aichinger asked if there would be signage to give the District credit. Tina Carstens agreed that a larger interpretive site-specific sign would be appropriate for this site.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve Permit #19-05 CS. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

B. Budget Status Update

Manager Ward noted that a public art line item was added. Paige Ahlborg confirmed that item was added for informational tracking purposes.

8. ACTION ITEMS

A. Snail Lake Shoreline Restoration Bid Review and Award

Paige Ahlborg provided an update of the pre-bid meeting that occurred with contractors to provide information on the project and District expectations, noting that all three contractors submitted bids. She reported that Applied Ecological Services was the low bidder. Bill Bartodziej stated that the contractor has a sound reputation and well qualified for this type of project.

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to accept the bids and award the Snail Lake Shoreline Restoration Project to Applied Ecological Services and direct staff to prepare and mail the notice of award, prepare the draft agreements and review the required submittals. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

B. 2019-2020 BMP Maintenance Program Contractor Selection

Tina Carsten stated that the three contractors and the projects to assign to each of them are shown in the amended request for board action that was passed out at the meeting. Paige Ahlborg noted that one of the contractors is a new contractor for the District and staff is excited to work with them. She noted that the District has worked with the other two contractors previously.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to award the 2019-2020 BMP Maintenance contract to Minnesota Native Landscapes, Outdoor Lab, and Sandstrom Land Management and direct staff to prepare the necessary documents and work with the selected contractor. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

9. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

A. Meetings Attended

Vice President Aichinger asked for an update on a recent meeting with Saint Paul Urban Tennis Center.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates No comments.

C. Staff Updates

Tina Carstens stated that staff is conducting interviews and offering positions for summer positions and interns. Vice President Aichinger asked how the turnout was for the Maplewood job fair. Chris O'Brien commented that it was a good event, with about 200 kids. He stated that they had some good conversations, noting that most of the kids they spoke with were seniors in high school. He explained that, while the intent of the District was not to directly recruit, they were able to educate the kids on what the District does. Vice President Aichinger asked if there was an interest from high school seniors in natural resources. Chris confirmed that the younger generation has interest in conservation and natural resources.

D. Twin Lake Public Meeting No comments.

E. CAC Update

Manager Swope asked about the District using Nextdoor. Chris O'Brien stated that the District is not able to be a member of Nextdoor, but has utilized members of the CAC to post about District events. Manager Swope stated that the City of Shoreview seems to have found a way around that because they send out official announcements. Chris stated that watershed districts are not allowed, most likely because they cover multiple cities, whereas the application is more neighborhood directed, which is why cities are allowed to post. He stated that there are workarounds, where CAC members could share information from the District. Manager Swope stated that he would be glad to share District information through his own Nextdoor account. Manager Ward stated that she would lean towards having an official account if possible.

F. Upcoming Board Information and Education Efforts No comments.

G. MAWD Legislation Updates

Tina Carstens stated that she received a new update that she will forward to the Board.

Chris O'Brien provided an update on the salt limited liability legislation.

10. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS

A. New Project Memo: Cottage Place Wetland Restoration

Vice President Aichinger stated that it seems that this would be a large investment for one wetland. He asked if there is an easier way to determine if something could be feasibly done that would provide a cost benefit improvement. Erin Anderson Wenz stated that this project does drain downstream to an area where a regional water quality improvement project could be completed. She stated that this site is unique in that it is a wetland area that has been degraded and is located on public land, so there is an opportunity for restoration. She stated that the water quality benefit could be quantified through modeling. She stated that the true benefit of the project would be habitat restoration and wetland restoration. She stated that part of the first task could be a visioning session to identify the goal. She stated that this is a different kind of project because it is located upstream in the watershed. She stated that if not for water quality would there then be a purpose for the District to complete a wetland restoration on this site to informally offset other impacted wetlands within the District. She reviewed the different tasks in the study and noted that, after each step, the question could be posed as to whether the Board would like to continue on in the study. Tina Carstens stated that this is an opportunity for the district to do a wetland restoration project and have public partners to do it with. Erin stated that this is a project that is very early in the process and therefore it would be reasonable to step into this. She noted that the full budget listed would include the full process through plans and specifications and advised that the Board could choose to step out at any time during the process.

Paige Ahlborg stated that this site arose through the targeting of a church in the area and then staff saw this wetland area that would create a large opportunity. Vice President Aichinger stated that perhaps wetland mitigation credits could be created through this project that could be used for future projects. Erin noted that this site is not large enough to provide actual bank credits. She stated that staff will continue to work on this and will check back in with the Board at regular intervals.

B. New Project Memo: Wetland Restoration Site Search

Tina Carstens stated that the hope would be to identify a number of sites and then prioritize. Vice President Aichinger stated that the District did a lot of wetland inventory when it completed the MnRAM previously.

C. Ongoing Project and Program Updates

i. Owasso Park Stormwater Master Plan

Manager Swope asked if Shoreview approved the plan. Paige Ahlborg stated that the city was considering it earlier that week and had not heard it wasn't approved.

- ii. Beltline Resiliency Study
- iii. Lake Owasso Emergency Response Plan

Erin Anderson Wenz stated that the Owasso plan includes locations of low homes where sandbags could be placed. She stated that this is a good opportunity to review how snowmelt could impact.

- iv. Twin Lake Public Meetings
- v. FEMA Flood Mapping
- vi. West Vadnais Lake Outlet Permitting

Manager Swope asked for additional details on the project and asked why West Vadnais Lake is not included in the District's boundary. Erin stated that VLAWMO will ultimately decide if an EAW would need to be done and that organization wants to take the lead. Tina noted that the lowering of West Vadnais Lake is a long process as it would take years to lower to the desired level and therefore this would not be a solution for 2019 potential spring flooding. Tina stated that the board should consider this a long term resiliency project and not one that will address immediate needs. Erin stated that she would want to ensure that all the stakeholders are onboard with the decision to lower West Vadnais and ensure that something is not missed along the way that could cause other impacts.

- vii. 500-Year Atlas 14 Modeling
- viii. Auto Lake Monitoring Systems
- ix. Maplewood Mall Monitoring
- x. Kohlman Basin Test Weirs
- xi. Wakefield Park/Frost Avenue Project
- xii. Targeted Retrofit Projects
- xiii. Roseville High School Campus Project
- xiv. BMP Design Assistance
- xv. Markham Pond Aeration

Tina Carstens stated that determinations were made last year on whether to go forward with the aeration. She stated that staff will submit the DNR permit application. Bill Bartodziej confirmed that monitoring was done last year and while there were some panfish that survived, the bigger game fish died, and the aeration will help to avoid the winter kill. He confirmed that he would work with the DNR to attempt to stock additional fish.

- xvi. Aldrich Arena Site Design

Tina Carstens stated that this is a partnership project between the County and the District and the joint powers agreement states that the County will construct the project, but the District has the authority to approve or disapprove of bid prices. She noted that a maximum not to exceed number was included. Paige Ahlborg explained how the cost estimate was developed. Erin Anderson Wenz stated that the cost is consistent with what was discussed the previous month. She reviewed the total estimate with contingency and replanting of the slope. She stated that entrance figures or public art could be pursued as a future phase to prevent delaying action on the project.

Manager Swope asked the PR benefit that would be provided through this project and how that would be measured. Chris O'Brien stated that the social media reach could be measured and interaction with website postings could be monitored. He stated that they could also interview local representatives to gauge input from residents. Paige stated that this is a very busy site, with the different events that occur at the site, and therefore there is a large audience that visits the site. Vice President Aichinger stated that you could also measure the reaction of people to the aesthetic of the site when visiting. Tina stated that there are good numbers on the number of people that visit the site. She stated that signage could be used, but perhaps there are additional opportunities to post information inside the arena.

- xvii. CIP Maintenance and Repair 2019 Project
- xviii. Natural Resources Program

Bill Bartodziej provided an update on a carp project. Manager Swope noted that Bill Bartodziej will be making a presentation on March 20th in Shoreview.

- xix. Education Program

Chris O'Brien provided an update on the recent Phalen Freeze Fest event. He also provided an update on a public art installation process.

Vice President Aichinger asked if the Adopt a Drain program would be District wide or whether that would be only for targeted areas. Chris O'Brien stated that the intent would be to roll out the program metro wide, but if the homeowner is not in a sponsored area, they would simply receive an email with information. He stated that staff has asked if the District could receive requests and the District could then send out the sign, even if the property is not in a sponsored area.

Manager Ward suggested stenciling the drain to identify that it is adopted. Chris stated that the District could work with Hamline to see if there would be interest as that would be a good way to promote the Adopt a Drain program. Vice President Aichinger stated that the person that adopts the drain could stencil the drain themselves.

xx. Communications Program

11. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS No comments.

12. REPORTS OF MANAGERS

Manager Ward stated that she attended a seminar about diversity and learned about a resource through the YMCA. Tina Carstens noted that there is a speaker series at the Science Museum on equity and diversity. Manager Swope asked the process for IT issues such as receiving spam or phishing emails. Tina stated that once staff is alerted, they notify IT. She stated that there was a training that staff and managers just completed that included some tips on identifying these attempts.

Vice President Aichinger commented that the environmental forum that was very well done.

13. ADJOURN

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Motion carried 3-0 (Ebensteiner and Skinner absent).

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Pam Skinner, Secretary