



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
May 2, 2018**

The Regular Meeting of May 2, 2018, was held at the District Office Board Room, 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada, Minnesota, at 6:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:**

Marj Ebensteiner, President  
Cliff Aichinger, Vice President  
Dianne Ward, Treasurer  
Dr. Pam Skinner, Secretary  
Lawrence Swope, Manager

**ABSENT:**

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Tina Carstens, District Administrator  
Amanda Staple, Recording Secretary  
Nicole Soderholm, Permit Inspector  
Bill Bartodziej, Natural Resource Specialist  
Viet-Hanh Winchell, Attorney for District  
Bruce Copley, Crestview Addition Resident  
Ashley Payne, Kimley-Horn  
Amy Thomas, Snail Lake Resident

Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager  
Brad Lindaman, Barr Engineering  
Erin Anderson Wenz, Barr Engineering  
Dave Vlasin, Water Quality Technician  
Chris O'Brien, Communications Coordinator  
Carol Stadler, Snail Lake Resident  
Steve LaBerge, Crestview Addition Resident

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Tina Carstens requested to add an item under the Administrator's Report, Item E, to discuss upcoming meeting dates.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Dr. Pam Skinner seconded, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Approval of Minutes from April 4, 2018

Manager Ward noted on page two, under the Stewardship Grant Program, it should state, "...~~homeowner~~ District could advertise in their association newsletter to alert other homeowners to the project and advertise the District program. She also noted that signage would be helpful."

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Dr. Pam Skinner seconded, to approve the consent agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

#### 4. TREASURER'S REPORT AND BILL LIST

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Cliff Aichinger seconded, to approve the May 2, 2018, bill list as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

#### 5. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS

Bruce Copley stated that the residents around Suzanne Pond have concern with putting a pipe in from North Gramsie Pond to Suzanne Pond, although recognize the benefits and support that element. He stated that they would like to see a written agreement that the City of Shoreview would maintain the level of 873. He stated that if a bigger pump is needed, they would like to see more details and have that happen. He stated that there were concerns with potential leakage from East to West Vadnais. He stated that it is the residents' belief that getting West Vadnais to 881 would be ideal. He asked the role of decreased well pumping by St. Paul Regional Water Supply (SPRWS) on the groundwater levels. He stated that the models in the proposal show that at certain starting levels there is no problem with the backdoor route through the Crestview Addition and homes near Snail Lake. He noted that the current starting level is 884.5. He stated that if there were a high-water event this weekend, a home on Snail Lake would be flooded. He asked what would happen if Snail Lake does not drop as the District believes that it will. He confirmed that he has given a copy of his comments to the District staff.

#### 6. PERMIT PROGRAM

##### A. Applications

##### Permit #18-08: Shoreview 2018 Street Improvement Plan – Shoreview

Nicole Soderholm noted that this is a street improvement project in Shoreview. Manager Skinner asked if the District is reviewing whether there are opportunities to treat additional water in these road construction projects. Nicole stated that staff does look for opportunities and provided an example of a project that was completed the previous year in a high priority area. President Ebensteiner asked if the rain gardens were included in the original scope of the project. Paige Ahlborg stated that is part of the cost-share program and noted that with the smaller projects there is not a lot of opportunity.

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Cliff Aichinger seconded, to approve Permit #18-08. Motion carried unanimously.

##### Permit #18-09: Keller Golf Course Practice Range Improvements – Maplewood

Nicole Soderholm provided details on the realignment project for the practice range. She stated that there are limited drainage areas for impervious surface. She noted that the filtration basin is oversized, and banked credits will be used for the remainder. She noted that Bill Bartodziej has offered to consult on the plantings.

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve Permit #18-09. Motion carried unanimously.

##### Permit #18-03 WCA: Nature Path Extension – Woodbury

Nicole Soderholm stated that this is a unique case in which a wetland replacement plan is not bundled with a project. She stated that this decision is solely on the replacement plan and would allow the developer to move ahead on the next steps. She stated that the project was first introduced one year ago to gain input from the Board on the mitigation requirements and noted that the Board stated that the project would require on-site replacement, or replacement within the watershed to follow the District's policy on no net loss of wetlands. She stated that the proposed design meets the two-to-one replacement ratio and the other District requirements. She noted that various other agencies have reviewed this plan and the Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) has met to review the plan. She advised that the comment period has expired, and the comments will be incorporated. She stated that if this is approved, there would be subsequent permit applications for the road construction and project permit. President Ebensteiner asked whether the area would be aesthetically pleasing and whether the path would be accessible to the public. Ashley Payne, Kimley-Horn, provided details on the proposed plantings that would be used. She noted that this would be a road extension, as Nature Path is the name of the road. Manager Aichinger asked, and received confirmation, that the depressions would also serve as wetland area and would be accounted for.

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve Permit #18-03 WCA. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Monthly Enforcement Report

During April, seven notices were sent to address: install/maintain inlet protection (1), install/maintain perimeter control (1), install/maintain construction entrance (1), stabilize exposed soils (1), contain liquid/solid wastes (1), and install/maintain energy dissipation (2).

**7. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM**

A. Applications

Permit #18-06 CS: Margaret Street Project – Rain Gardens

Paige Ahlborg stated that the City of St. Paul is doing a mill and overlay and is not required to meet the volume reduction standards. She stated that the District and the city collaborated and currently have five interested homeowners that would like rain gardens. She stated that there are Master Water Stewards lined up to assist.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Cliff Aichinger seconded, to approve Permit #18-06 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #18-07 CS: Willowbrook Reserve – Native Habitat Restoration

Paige Ahlborg stated that this is a native habitat restoration project and these funds will count as a match for the DNR grant that the applicant has been awarded.

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve Permit #18-08 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #18-08 CS: Wakefield Park Improvements – Rain Garden

Paige Ahlborg stated that this is more work for Wakefield Park project, noting that the funding will be used to add nicer, more native vegetation in the required rain garden and will also add another smaller rain garden.

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Cliff Aichinger seconded, to approve Permit #18-09 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Budget Status Update No additional comments.

**8. ACTION ITEMS**

A. Grass Lake and Snail Lake Optimization Study

Brad Lindaman stated that the purpose of the presentation tonight is to summarize what has been done thus far, update the Board on the cost versus benefit of the various options, discuss the recommendations with the Board, and seek approval from the Board for a path forward. The presentation is located on the District's website titled, "May Presentation on Snail and Grass Lake".

Brad provided background information on Snail Lake and the potential flooding concerns. He stated that the wet cycle continues with precipitation levels, and Snail Lake is responding accordingly with higher levels. He reviewed information on the low home survey that was completed. He provided data on a chart that includes data and the impact that a 100-year, 96-hour storm event would have depending on the starting elevation. Erin Anderson Wenz provided additional details on the chart that attempts to answer the question "what if the 100-year storm event happened today". She stated that the purpose of the chart is to show what would happen if the storm occurred at different beginning water levels. President Ebensteiner stated that it appears that only one home on Snail Lake would be impacted. Erin confirmed that one home on Snail Lake would be impacted under the most extreme circumstances. And if the water reached the 887.9 elevation, the water would travel through the backdoor route

into the Crestview Addition. Brad identified the backdoor route that is the primary overflow and then identified the secondary overflow which travels into wetland A. This overflow priority would be switched as part of an emergency response plan for the area.

Brad and Erin gave an overview of the three options evaluated to manage the Snail Lake area. Option 1: Implement Emergency Response Plan. Option 2: Add a Snail Lake outlet to Grass Lake after more storage is available in West Vadnais Lake. Option 3: Pump Snail Lake water to Sucker Lake.

Recommendations to the board include: partnering with the city of Shoreview to prepare and implement an emergency response plan for Snail Lake including a diversion of Snail Lake overland overflow from the Crestview Addition to Wetland A and further exploring a partnership with the city and county to install an off-peak drawdown pipeline that connects Snail Lake to Grass Lake.

Brad provided background information on Wetland A and discussed the request from the county to work with the District on determining future placement of trails throughout the park system based on the modeling that has been done. Brad noted that staff will provide the recommendations and ultimately the decision will be of Ramsey County. Manager Swope asked the responsibility of Shoreview towards the water coming into wetland A. Brad stated that Shoreview would not factor in much for this element and provided additional details. He stated that if they can further minimize Grass Lake water overflowing into this area, the wetland handles the water pretty well on its own. Staff recommendation is to provide guidance to the county regarding water levels in Wetland A to inform future placement of trails.

Brad next moved on to Grass Lake with the following management options discussed: do nothing further or lower West Vadnais Lake's 15 inch outlet under Highway 694 to elevation 881.

He stated that East Vadnais has been operating at a higher level than the targeted level. Erin noted that Grass and West Vadnais lakes roughly coordinate in water levels, but in past years Grass Lake is much lower than both East and West Vadnais Lakes. She provided data on the modeling that was done for the do-nothing further scenario, assuming that precipitations levels remain constant for the next three years. She stated that under that do-nothing further scenario, in the second year when the water rises above 884, water would flow from Grass Lake north into the parkland south of Gramsie Road. She then compared that data to the scenarios in which the lower 15-inch pipe under 694 is installed and the scenario that the lower pipe under 694 pipe is installed in addition to the Snail Lake outlet at 882 elevation. Manager Ward asked if there has been a correlation when SPRWS was pumping groundwater. Erin stated that they do have the data and it does appear to correlate but it is not an option for SPRWS to continue to pump from those wells.

She noted that there could be a substantial change in the shoreline for Grass and West Vadnais with the lowering of the outlet and therefore an EAW would be required. She stated that nothing seemed impossible but there were additional steps identified. Brad stated that a key piece of permitting would be to gain agreement from the majority of the property owners on both waterways. Manager Ward asked if the shoreline would be changed that much since the water levels have been so high, noting that perhaps the water levels would be better match the typical level for the lakes. Erin stated that the ordinance high water (OHW) mark would be used. She stated that about one to 1.5 feet of shoreline could be impacted. She explained how the acreage difference would be determined.

Manager Skinner noted that some of these projects will require a lot of staff time and therefore it would be helpful to see those additional costs, above the engineering and design costs. President Ebensteiner noted that the \$40,000 is just for the pipe and therefore there would be additional costs associated with that option. Brad stated that staff will continue to discuss the option with the DNR to determine what the additional costs would be. He noted that staff was able to gain some additional information on the steps that would be necessary to move

forward with that option after meeting with the DNR yesterday but explained that staff would continue to gain information on the costs.

Manager Aichinger stated that staff is simply recommending that the Board take the next steps on some of these options and that may not necessarily mean the actual project goes forward. Manager Skinner confirmed that the next steps would simply be to talk to the other parties involved and then bring that information back to the Board to continue discussions. Brad confirmed that this would simply start down the recommended paths and the Board could stop at any time. He stated that for Grass Lake, staff would recommend continuing to pursue lowering the 15-inch pipe under 694 with the DNR and VLAWMO.

Erin provided details on the lake levels for Grass Lake, West Vadnais Lake, and East Vadnais Lake. Brad noted that one study looked at a pumping system, which would be a very expensive option that would have capital costs, operational concerns, and water quality concerns. He stated that staff would not recommend that option. He stated that perhaps the District could promote infiltration from West Vadnais, through the berm, into East Vadnais. He noted that water quality would still remain as a concern. He stated that there is a really aggressive water quality goal for East Vadnais that is not met by West Vadnais. He noted that SPRWS does a lot of treatment to the water of East Vadnais. Manager Ward asked if the District should be concerned with the water quality of West Vadnais anyways because it is dirty water that is traveling into the District's watershed. Tina noted that she has spoken with staff at VLAWMO. She stated that the waterbody is listed on the impaired waters list and there is an improvement planned in the next five years. Brad stated that in respect to the draw down time staff would recommend continuing to pursue further lowering of East Vadnais below West Vadnais with the SPRWS; and to complete the proposed scope of work – West Vadnais Lake to East Vadnais Lake Gravity Flow – Feasibility Evaluation per scope summary. He stated that this could inform the added need to have SPRWS operate in a different way. He stated that the study would be important in informing a number of other options. President Ebensteiner stated that it would make sense to move forward on the study in order to inform other decisions. Tina noted that a lot of the paths will be concurrent, rather than waiting for the study to be complete.

Staff recommendations include continuing to pursue the lowering of East Vadnais Lake to the elevation of West Vadnais Lake with the St. Paul Regional Water Services and complete a scope of work to gravity flow water underground from West to East Vadnais Lake.

Next Brad moved on to North Gramsie Pond and reviewed the conclusions from the pumping study that was done the previous year. He reviewed the recommendations which include partnering with the City of Shoreview to install a pipeline at elevation 877 with a manual gate valve to link the North Gramsie Pond to Suzanne Pond. He then displayed a summary table of the recommendations as listed in the packet.

He stated that, if approved, the next steps would include meeting with the City of Shoreview and the County to discuss potential partnering and cost implications associated with the recommended options; preparation of ERPS for Snail and Grass Lake and seek formal agreements by the City of Shoreview to implement; make formal request to SPRWS to operate East Vadnais Lake at 881.0 for interim; prepare scope of work for information and studies and discuss with DNR; and conduct seepage study per scope of work in handout.

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Cliff Aichinger seconded, to direct staff to continue with the recommended actions. Motion carried unanimously.

Further discussion: Manager Ward noted that staff should keep in mind that there has been discussion that certain elements should occur first, before other elements. She also wanted to ensure that there are firm agreements in place with Shoreview to ensure that everyone is keeping up their maintenance responsibilities. President Ebensteiner noted that the proposed action does not include construction of any of the projects and simply moving down the paths to gain additional information.

Manager Aichinger asked the responsibility breakdown between the District and Shoreview for the pump for Suzanne Pond. Brad stated that he is unsure that the District would have a role in building that pipe. President Ebensteiner stated that the role of the District has not firmly been identified. She stated that the role of the District initially was to protect the one home at risk. Tina stated that the role of the District has changed throughout the process as this would build more resiliency into the watershed in that area overall. She stated that the recommendations outline the role of the District and where partnering is suggested that would define the role of the other entities.

Erin stated that the next logical steps would include the sequencing defined in the recommendation. She noted that other steps would follow after these recommended actions. Manager Aichinger stated that it would help to see a flowchart of actions that would occur following certain steps. President Ebensteiner stated that she is concerned that there is no real cost estimate for these actions. Brad noted that is why the process has moved slowly and knowledgeably so that at any time the Board can stop. Manager Skinner stated that it would be nice to keep a running total that includes the costs thus far, the cost for staff time and the additional elements. She noted that it would be helpful to have similar costs for other projects for comparison. President Ebensteiner stated that she is concerned with cost because this is just one project. Manager Aichinger noted that the big-ticket items have been weeded out and are not continuing.

**B. Review and Accept the 2017 District Annual Financial Audit**

**Motion:** Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Cliff Aichinger seconded, to accept the 2017 Annual Audit Report. Motion carried unanimously.

**C. Floodplain Modeling and Mapping Grant Agreement, Resolution 18-01**

Tina Carstens stated that there is no financial obligation for this request.

**Motion:** Cliff Aichinger moved, Dr. Pam Skinner seconded, to approve the grant agreement and adopt Resolution #18-01. Motion carried unanimously.

**9. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

A. Meetings Attended No comments.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates No comments.

**C. Washington County Meeting – May 21, 2018**

Tina Carstens reminded the Board about the joint meeting with Washington County.

**D. MAWD Summer Tour**

Tina Carstens asked the Board to respond if they are able to attend the tour.

**E. Discuss Upcoming Meeting Dates**

Tina Carstens proposed that the July 4, 2018, meeting be moved to July 11, 2018. She confirmed the consensus of the Board to change the meeting date. She stated that the October meeting date falls on a date that she will be attending an out-of-state conference and recommended changing the October meeting to October 10, 2018. She confirmed the consensus of the Board.

**10. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS**

**A. Ongoing Project and Program Updates**

- i. Beltline Resiliency Study
- ii. At Risk Subwatershed Feasibility Studies
- iii. Snail Lake and Grass Lake Study and Berm Raise Project
- iv. Snail, Grass and West Vadnais Lakes Outlet Permitting
- v. District Wide Atlas 14 Modeling
- vi. Wakefield Park/Frost Avenue Project
- vii. Targeted Retrofit Projects
- viii. Owasso Basin Improvements
- ix. Beltline/Battle Creek Tunnel
- x. CIP Maintenance/Repair 2018
- xi. Frost/Kennard Project
- xii. Willow Pond CMAC Project
- xiii. New Technology Report
- xiv. Natural Resources Program
- xv. Education Program  
Update on Solar Project

Tina Carstens stated that staff met with the contractor on site to talk about staging for the solar project. She stated that the engineering review found damage to the shingles. She stated that the adjuster for the insurance company is coming to look at the shingles the following day to determine if the District would have a claim and could have roof replacement prior to the solar installation.

Tina Carstens referenced Change Order #2 for the Grass Lake Berm. Brad Lindaman noted that this time extension is due to the road restrictions which were placed on the road. He stated that it is a reasonable request and would extend the completion date to the end of May. He noted that the contractor must also submit a water control plan.

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve Change Order #2 for the Grass Lake Berm Project. Motion carried unanimously.

President Ebensteiner stated that at some time she would like to devote some meeting time to reviewing the items on the report one-by-one to ensure that everyone is up to date.

Lawrence Swope referenced an article on the District's carp program that was featured in the *Star Tribune*. President Ebensteiner stated that it would be nice to have an article written on the tunnel project as well. Chris O'Brien stated that he could reach out in attempt to have an article written.

Tina Carstens stated that the Freshwater Society event was the previous week and noted that the District received an award. Chris O'Brien noted that the District will receive an award on May 17 for the redesign of the website.

**11. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS** No additional comments.

**12. REPORTS OF MANAGERS** No additional comments.

**13. ADJOURN**

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Pam Skinner, Secretary

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