



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
August 7, 2019**

The Regular Meeting of August 7, 2019, 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  
Eric Korte, Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator  
Nicole Soderholm, Permit Inspector  
Dave Vlasin, Water Quality Technician  
Kyle Kubitza, Water Quality Intern  
Mary Fitzgerald, District Inspector Intern

Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager  
Brandon Barnes, Barr Engineering  
Bill Bartodziej, Natural Resource Specialist  
Viet-Hanh Winchell, Attorney for District  
Burt Johnson, Twin Lake Resident  
Bruce Copley, Crestview Resident

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by President Ebensteiner at 6:31 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Approval of Minutes from July 3, 2019

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Cliff Aichinger seconded, to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve the August 7, 2019, bill list as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

**5. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS**

Bruce Copley stated that he is present to hear the Beltline Study presentation. He stated that the previous time he attended a meeting there were many residents from Twin Lake in attendance. He stated that Crestview looks at

what happened at Twin Lake as a positive opportunity, as that has shown that pumping downstream can be done without negative effects. He stated that residents would like to see that same thing done with the Grass Lake/West Vadnais area. He expressed support at looking at the options in more detail to get more water downstream.

President Ebensteiner asked how often Mr. Copley is in communication with residents in his neighborhood and how many neighbors. Mr. Copley stated that he often sees neighbors at gatherings and regularly communicates with about 50 neighbors through email and his newsletter. He stated that about eight people handle the majority of work in the larger group of 50, similar to a homeowner's association but more informal.

Burt Johnson stated that the Twin Lake Association was recently formed because of the recent issues and is composed of the 33 property owners along the lake. President Ebensteiner asked the number of homes that could be impacted by flooding. Mr. Johnson replied that two homes have been sandbagged and two additional homes were close to being sandbagged. He stated that many more homes could be at risk. He also stated that they are pretty sure there is now milfoil in the lake. He stated that they are aware that the District is working on many of the concerns of the residents of Twin Lake, including the possibility of routing water from West Vadnais around Twin Lake. He stated that he believes that the water from West Vadnais has introduced invasive species to the lake. He stated that the association would also like to see an outflow reestablished. He stated that he would personally like to help in any way that he can, whether that is speaking with MnDOT officials or elected representatives. He stated that there are also lakeshore restoration and invasive species issues that need to be addressed. He invited Managers and/or staff to come to a meeting with the lake association in order to have a dialogue and improve communication. He believed that would be much more productive.

President Ebensteiner agreed that both groups have the best objectives in mind. Tina Carstens stated that she is more than happy to have staff meet with the association members and then bring an update to the Board.

## **6. PERMIT PROGRAM**

### **A. Applications**

#### Permit #19-33: Battle Creek Playground – Maplewood

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve Permit #19-33. Motion carried unanimously.

#### Permit #19-34: 3M Building, 301 H Annex – Maplewood

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Dr. Pam Skinner seconded, to approve Permit #19-34. Motion carried unanimously.

#### Permit #19-35: 17<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Townhomes – North St. Paul

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve Permit #19-35.

Further discussion: Manager Ward noted that this permit included a number of critical provisions and asked if there is a reason that this was included on the agenda rather than postponing. Nicole Soderholm noted that special provision two can be easily accomplished. She noted that the remaining provisions are fairly typical provisions. She noted that the soils information has also been reviewed, relating to provision six.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### Permit #19-36: Luther Cadillac – Vadnais Heights

Manager Aichinger referenced the wetland delineation which stated that there were no wetlands identified but yet Wetland Conservation Act approval was received. Nicole replied that the approval was related to approval of the delineation and no wetland determination.

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve Permit #19-36. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Monthly Enforcement Report

During July, seven notices were sent to address: install/maintain inlet protection (1), install/maintain perimeter control (2), install/maintain construction entrance (1), stabilize exposed soils (1), contain/dispose of liquid and solid waste (1), and remove discharged sediment (1).

**7. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM**

A. Applications

Permit #19-19 CS: Negosso – Rain Garden, Porous Pavement, Habitat

Manager Swope asked why there is a \$15,000 limit as requests continue to come forward in excess of that amount and the Board is approving the requests. Manager Ward stated that because of the limitations on the policy, the reasons to allow excess should be clearly specified. Manager Swope agreed that the limit should either be raised, or clear rules should be laid out that identify the reasoning to allow additional funds to be requested. President Ebensteiner stated that these are private homeowners and it would make sense that \$15,000 is a good limit and if that is going to be exceeded the Board should discuss the request.

Manager Swope stated that his issue is with consistency and believed that if exceptions are going to be made there should be rules. Tina Carstens stated that the exception is included in the board packet write up and includes that this project would handle water from two properties. She noted that instead of completing the project in two phases, this is being completed at one time for a lesser cost. Manager Ward stated that it would be helpful to include information on exceptions for homeowners that might be interested. Paige Ahlborg stated that she could easily share that information.

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve Permit #19-19 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #19-20 CS: Kohlman Chain LVMP – Aquatic Vegetation Harvesting

Paige stated that the lake associations along the chain would like to do a lake survey to determine potential next steps. She noted that this study would be the starting point.

President Ebensteiner stated that it was her understanding that in the past there was discussion with this group on the topic and the determination was made that the group should make a plan. Bill Bartodziej confirmed that this study is the first step as previously discussed. He reviewed the different steps that had been previously discussed and the possibility of cost-sharing of the different steps.

Manager Aichinger asked for details on the applicant group listed. Bill replied that the group is receiving grant funds from that non-profit organization in addition to the contribution from the District and shoreline property owners. He stated that a third-party consultant will develop the plan and then he and Paige will continue to be involved, as well as a representative from the DNR and Ramsey County.

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve Permit #19-20 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Budget Status Update

No comments.

**8. ACTION ITEMS**

None.

## 9. PRESENTATION: BELTLINE RESILIENCY STUDY

Brandon Barnes, Barr Engineering, provided an update on Twin Lake water levels and the steps that have been taken since the last Board meeting. He reported that the City of Little Canada selected 871 as the target water level due to the location of sanitary sewer manholes and District staff worked with the City to amend its permit with the DNR and MnDOT.

Manager Aichinger asked what Little Canada would do if the lake reaches 871 and then exceeds because of groundwater. Brandon stated that the City is not interested in pumping groundwater and therefore that situation would provide the City with needed data to make future decisions.

He provided information on the schematics that were provided to MnDOT with the District's permit application that would divert the overflow from West Vadnais away from Twin Lake to Stymie Pond. He stated that MnDOT is currently reviewing the permit request and anticipated that there would be continued discussions because of concerns MnDOT has on this activity.

President Ebensteiner asked who would be fiscally responsible for that activity. Brandon replied that the District is the applicant and would be financially responsible. He stated that the first month would have an estimated cost of \$43,000 and there would be a lower operational cost each month following. Brandon stated that as a part of the resiliency study there were many options reviewed that would achieve the desired result. He noted that each option provides different benefits and has different impacts to the Phalen Chain, as well as how those impacts could possibly be mitigated. He reviewed the District flood risk management projects and the results that have been accomplished thus far in 2019 as well as the work that continues. He noted that upon completion of this work there would be a prioritized list of flood management projects and emergency response plans for implementation in 2020 and beyond. He stated that the Beltline resiliency study looked at the watershed above the Beltline interceptor to evaluate system level flood damage reduction options. He explained that the additional homes shown at possible risk of flooding is not only due to increased rainfall events but also because of the more accurate data that is available and the Atlas 14 information. He noted that the study information is available in draft form on the website and highlighted the different sections, noting that each phase includes two tabs: inundation and system modifications.

Manager Skinner stated that while she appreciates the different options that do not include purchasing property, she would always be interested in seeing the other option of purchasing specific properties. She noted that sometimes purchasing properties is more cost-effective and could provide a place for water storage. President Ebensteiner stated that sometimes it would just not be feasible to purchase the properties in question, using Hillcrest as an example.

Manager Swope asked if all the District flood control projects have been completed to protect only low lying homes. Manager Aichinger replied that the District projects are completed to protect homes, businesses, or infrastructure.

Brandon reviewed the different sections of the study, providing background information on the current path of water in the different study areas and possible modifications that could be made to the system.

Manager Swope stated there was a previous discussion about possibly increasing the capacity of Owasso Basin and asked for additional details. Brandon confirmed that a previous study did look at options for acquiring additional land but none of those options created enough live storage to prevent flooding on the remainder of the site, which is how the diversion route was chosen. He reviewed positive and negatives of the complementary options that were reviewed including the alternate high-flow Lake Owasso outlet and a seasonal operation of West Vadnais outlet.

Manager Aichinger stated that it would seem that drawing down West Vadnais in the winter would also lower Grass Lake and create capacity for spring melt and rains. Brandon confirmed that capacity would be a benefit of

the drawdown. He provided additional information on the other West Vadnais outlet option to increase capacity. He also reviewed the Beaver Lake outlet option that was reviewed. He highlighted the next steps which include preparation of documentation and then could include capital improvement projects and operation plans for structure modifications.

Manager Aichinger asked if the option to modify the weir structure in Keller Channel was reviewed. Brandon confirmed that was one option reviewed and is included in the study. Tina Carstens stated that both the Keller and Phalen channel modifications were included in the 2020 budget. Brandon provided additional details on the possible weir improvements. Tina asked and received confirmation that by completing the weir modifications at Keller and Phalen, that would remove all but one home on Gervais Lake from risk of flooding and would provide additional resiliency in the system.

## **10. PRESENTATION: DISTRICT WATER QUALITY MONITORING SUMMARY**

Eric Korte provided a summary of the 2018 water quality program. He provided background information on the lake and pond water quality monitoring process and the trophic state index that is used. He provided the 2018 trophic state information for all the lakes within the District, noting that there was roughly a 10 percent increase in trophic states from 2017 to 2018. He also provided a 30-year analysis for the lakes, noting that most of the lakes in the District have a positive trend during that period of time. He noted that under a 10-year trend analysis most of the lakes show no trend during that period. He provided more specific information on the water quality of Twin Lake noting that the lake is responding to climatic variability rather than a sustained decrease in water quality, noting that the lake is still meeting the water quality goals. He provided information on the Tanners Lake alum plant including details on the MS4 permit requirements and the plant results from 2018.

Manager Skinner stated that she would also like to see options for reducing the amount of alum or lessening the months of operation. Eric provided details on the recent upgrades to the alum plant. He also provided additional information on high levels of PFAS found in Battle Creek. Tina Carstens stated that Barr Engineering, MPCA and MDH are working to identify the source. She noted that there is a possibility that the District would receive funds from the 3M settlement for this purpose.

Eric provided information on the Frost Kennard spent-lime test chamber, iron enhanced sand filter, and Kohlman Basin test chambers. He provided details on future and current monitoring, highlighting Shoreview Commons Pond, in which the University of Minnesota will treat the pond with iron filing and the Willow Pond continuous monitoring and adaptive control filtration (CMAC) BMP, noting that it is not yet up and running but will be soon.

## **11. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

### **A. Meetings Attended**

Tina Carstens provided background information on some of the recent meetings she attended.

### **B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates**

Tina noted that a date was included for the Board brainstorming session as Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. She noted that the December Board meeting falls on the Wednesday of the MAWD Annual meeting and suggested moving that meeting to the following week on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

Motion: Cliff Aichinger moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to change the date of the December Board meeting from Wednesday, December 4, 2019 to Wednesday, December 11, 2019. Motion carried unanimously.

Paige Ahlborg noted that the January meeting falls on January 1, 2020.

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Dr. Pam Skinner seconded, to change the date of the January 1, 2020 Board meeting to Wednesday, January 8, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

C. 2020 Budget Discussions

Tina noted that the proposed budget information was included in the packet for discussion purposes, noting that a preliminary budget will be adopted and certified at the September meeting. She asked if there were any questions. Manager Aichinger asked where an electronic carp barrier would most likely be installed. Bill Bartodziej replied that the West Vadnais outlet would be one location, to prevent carp from moving into Owasso Basin. He noted that another high priority location would be between Owasso and Wabasso. He noted that this would be equipment rental to try out the method.

President Ebensteiner suggested perhaps hosting a carp fishing tournament as another method for removal. Bill confirmed that District staff has talked about that option in the past. He stated that ideally it would be a citizen run activity and the District could provide some assistance. Manager Skinner suggested perhaps that would be a good activity for the CAC.

Manager Aichinger referenced the West Vadnais Lake seasonal drawdown system and noted that he was surprised at the cost. Brandon Barnes explained that project would involve using another pipe to get water across the highway to another connection point. He stated that would provide additional capacity.

Manager Swope referenced the Cottage Place wetland restoration and asked for an update. Paige Ahlborg stated that is still in the first study phase to determine if that will be cost-efficient. Tina noted that she put a placeholder in the budget, noting that progress would depend upon the results of the feasibility study. She noted that the line item could be retitled as wetland restoration opportunity.

Manager Aichinger stated that he does not have any issues with the proposed budget total.

Manager Swope noted that many budget line items are decreasing while the flood risk reduction item is increasing. He recognized that will allow the District to move forward on some of the projects discussed by Brandon Barnes tonight during his presentation.

Paige Ahlborg stated that there are three Target stores within the District and the company is very excited about doing stormwater projects and provided additional details.

Tina stated that she will make the change in the line item title for wetland restoration and will send the proposed budget to the cities and counties for comments.

**12. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS**

A. Ongoing Project and Program Updates

- i. Twin Lake Emergency Response Management 2019
- ii. Owasso County Park
- iii. Beltline Resiliency Study
- iv. FEMA Flood Mapping
  
- v. West Vadnais Lakes Outlet Permitting  
Manager Ward referenced the West Vadnais Lakes Outlet Permitting item and asked if future dates could be included as well.
  
- vi. 500 Year Atlas 14 Modeling
- vii. Wetland Restoration
- viii. Auto Lake Monitoring Systems

- ix. Maplewood Mall Monitoring  
Manager Aichinger stated that he would like to be a part of the Maplewood Mall tree replacement process. He asked if the rain gardens would receive replacement during that process. Paige Ahlborg noted that if the rain garden is failing it would be replaced. She noted that there was more robust work on the rain gardens this year.
- x. Spent-Lime Pond Research Project
- xi. Iron Aggregate Pond Application Research
- xii. Wakefield Park/Frost Avenue Project
- xiii. Targeted Retrofit Projects
- xiv. Willow Pond CMAC
- xv. Cottage Place Wetland Restoration
- xvi. Aldrich Arena Site Design
- xvii. CIP Maintenance and Repair 2019 Project
- xviii. 2019 Tanners Lake Alum Facility
- xix. Natural Resources Program
- xx. Education Program  
President Ebensteiner stated that it is wonderful to see staff reaching out to those living in high-rises in terms of education and outreach.

**13. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

None.

**14. REPORTS OF MANAGERS**

None.

**15. ADJOURN**

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Cliff Aichinger seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Pam Skinner, Secretary