



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting
February 5, 2020**

The Regular Meeting of February 5, 2020, 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
Lawrence Swope, Treasurer
Dianne Ward, Secretary
Dr. Pam Skinner, Manager

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:

Tina Carstens, District Administrator
Laurann Kirschner, Attorney for District
Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager
Nicole Soderholm, Permit Inspector
Simba Blood, Natural Resources Specialist
Dave Vlasin, Water Quality Technician
Erin Anderson-Wenz, Barr Engineering
Matt Kumka, Barr Engineering
Sheena Denny, Ramsey Co Commissioners Office

Laura Lundell, Ferndale St. N, Maplewood
Sandra Hopkins, Ferndale St. N, Maplewood
Chelsa Johnson, 7th Place E, St. Paul
Cheryl LeClair-Sommer, Twin Lake, Little Canada
Alison Harwood, WSB
Bruce Copley, Crestview Addition
Nathan Warner, SHE
Stephen Mastey, Landscape Architecture

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes from January 8, 2020
- B. District Liability Insurance Coverage Waiver

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Further discussion: A change to the Also Present section was noted, it should state, "Stan Martin, ~~trailer park~~ Twin Lake."

It was noted that additional discussion will occur related to the minute format later in the agenda and additional discussion was requested related to the liability insurance coverage.

Manager Aichinger withdrew his motion.

A board member raised a concern as to whether the Managers are covered as individuals under the liability insurance. It was explained that this action limits a claim against an individual to \$500,000 or \$1,500,000 in total, and the Managers are covered by this insurance.

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve the Minutes from January 8, 2020 with the noted change. Motion carried 4 - 1 (President Ebensteiner opposed).

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve the District Liability Insurance Coverage Waiver indicating that the District does not waive the limits. Motion carried unanimously.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT AND BILL LIST

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve the February 5, 2020, bill list as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

5. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS

Cheryl LeClair-Sommer, Twin Lake resident, expressed concerns related to the actions that took place at the Vadnais Heights Planning Commission for the proposed Frattalone development. She referenced the petition from Mr. Martin and asked if the Board could address the procedure the District will follow, noting that she would prefer for the drainage to be free flowing.

Bruce Copley, Crestview Resident, stated that he was pleased to see two proposed actions on the agenda related to West Vadnais and Owasso Basin. He expressed concerns as to how the funding would be obtained and the timeframe for the start of construction, urging the District to begin as soon as possible. He commented that it would seem that pumping downstream now would be a cost-effective method to move some of the water and provide additional space in the lake. He referenced Item 10C, noting that he did not see adding capacity to West Vadnais Lake listed as an option, and was unsure if that was intentional.

6. PERMIT PROGRAM

A. Applications

Permit #20-03: Vadnais Sports Center Indoor Turf Facility – Vadnais Heights

Staff provided details on the proposed project noting that this would replace the collapsed dome with a permanent indoor facility. Staff confirmed that the project would use porous pavement, noting that an additional request appears under the stewardship grant program to assist with the cost of the above and beyond treatment.

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Aichinger seconded, to approve Permit #20-03. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #20-04: Caves Century Townhomes Water Quality Improvements – Maplewood

Staff stated that this permit is also related to the stewardship grant program request that appears later on the agenda.

A board member asked the purpose of the project and which stormwater would be collected and infiltrated. An applicant representative noted that this is a stormwater water quality project that will also protect the homes and driveways. The current landscaping is elevated higher than the driveways which causes water to pool and collect on the driveways and then discharge directly into the storm sewer system. The project will capture that water and treat it prior to discharging into the stormwater system. Additional details were provided by the applicant representative on the ground up tire method that will be used.

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Aichinger seconded, to approve Permit #20-04. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #20-05: Frost Lake Elementary Improvements – St. Paul

Staff provided details on the school project which will use underground infiltration, provide a decrease in impervious surface, and includes a maintenance agreement.

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve Permit #20-05. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #20-06: Johnson Parkway Trail – St. Paul

Staff stated that this city project includes a long length of trail that will run parallel to Johnson Parkway. Staff noted that an infiltration trench will be used to meet the volume standard and it was explained that the project meets the retention requirements and the trench proposed meets the linear cost cap.

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Aichinger seconded, to approve Permit #20-06. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #20-07: John Glenn Middle School Addition – Maplewood

Staff stated that this school project will also meet the District requirements with underground treatment.

A manager expressed concern with the trend in using underground treatment and the impact that could eventually have on the amount of impervious surface compared to pervious surface. Staff explained that the 12 member cities have ordinances that place a limit on the percentage of impervious surface that a site is able to have and therefore the District has chosen not to enact its own requirement as long as the other requirements (volume, rate, retention, etc.) can be met. A manager expressed continued concern related to the ecosystem, specifically the plants and animals that live within the water system and the impact that the trend in underground treatment could have on that ecosystem. Staff noted that the District cannot dictate land use as that falls to the municipality but attempts to address natural habitat in other ways.

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve Permit #20-07. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #20-08: Meadowood Villas – Woodbury

Staff presented the proposed project that would protect proposed homes.

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to approve Permit #20-08. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #19-21: WCA Gold Line Wetland Replacement Plan

Staff provided details on the Metro Transit request to approve the wetland replacement plan for the Gold Line project. It was noted that Metro Transit is at about 30 percent design phase and therefore this is a conservative plan for the wetland replacement.

A board member noted that it appears that the applicant made efforts to minimize the impacts where possible. Staff noted this permit is only for the wetland replacement and therefore the District will review the stormwater treatment plans once the project is further along in the design process. A board member questioned whether the District is still looking for opportunities to create or restore wetlands. Staff noted that the District has been working on the wetland restoration search which will be further reviewed by the Board at a future workshop.

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Aichinger seconded, to approve Permit #19-21. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Monthly Enforcement Report

During January zero notices were sent.

7. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

A. Applications

Permit #20-01 CS: Finucane – Habitat Restoration

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve Permit #20-01 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #20-02 CS: Hammes – Habitat Restoration and Rain Garden

Motion: Manager Ward moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve Permit #20-02 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #20-03 CS: Caves Century – Underground Treatment

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve Permit #20-03 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #20-04 CS: Vadnais Sports Center Turf Facility – Porous Parking

A board member commented that the cost seems high for 15 parking stalls. Staff explained that the 15 stalls will be provided through the grant program and the applicant will fund an additional 11 stalls as part of the permit approved earlier on the agenda. Staff confirmed that the cost falls within the allowed range for the cost per pound of phosphorus removal.

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve Permit #20-04 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Budget Status Update

No comments.

8. ACTION ITEMS

A. Eastside Boys and Girls Club Accept Plans and Solicit Bids

Staff stated that this project arose through the District's targeted retrofit program and was highlighted on the bus tour in 2018.

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve the preliminary design, estimated costs, and proposed project schedule and direct staff to finalize the design and bidding documents and solicit bid proposals. Motion carried unanimously.

9. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

A. Meetings Attended

No comments.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

Staff reviewed some of the upcoming meetings.

C. Administrator's Performance Review

Staff asked the Board to fill out the calendar that was distributed prior to the meeting with available dates in order to schedule a time to complete the performance review and the wetlands special meeting. It was the consensus of the Board to complete the performance review in February on the 26th or 27th.

D. Wetlands Special Meeting

It was the consensus of the Board to hold the wetlands special meeting in late April or in May, with the date to be determined.

E. Communications and Outreach Coordinator Position Update

Over 200 applications have been received, with about 10 percent of the applications seeming like a good fit for interviews.

F. Petition to Repair Ditch 16

A copy of the letter drafted by legal counsel was sent to Mr. Martin and distributed to the Board for their information.

G. Board of Managers Meeting Minutes

The Board discussed minute content and formatting, specifically whether the formatting should continue to provide full detail or be changed to follow the minimum requirements for minutes. The district attorney provided additional information as to the issue of legal liability. The district attorney instructed the board that there is more liability protection with minutes that show discussion on how the board reaches their decisions. Input was received as to whether it would be helpful to remove the names and simply highlight the topics that were discussed related to the discussion item. Additional input was received from those that prefer the current format of more detailed minutes. Staff noted that the meetings are also audio recorded and archived and that recording is available to the public if they make that request.

A board member asked to try a new way of formatting that does not include names in the discussion, is a shorter summary of the discussion, and as required include any actions taken.

H. Battle Creek PFAS Update

Information was provided in the packet regarding the discovery of PFAS in Battle Creek. A presentation will be provided to the Board at a future meeting to provide additional information. A board member requested additional information on the other materials in the barrels that could have leached out.

I. Stormwater Impact Fund Information

Information was provided in the packet related to the stormwater impact fund and how some of those funds will be used in 2020.

10. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS

A. Project Update Memo: Target Stores: North St. Paul and East St. Paul

Staff provided background information on how the District connected with Target to discuss potential projects for their three sites within the District boundaries. Target was interested in amending parking lots at two of the locations, going above the District requirements. The two parking lots are large with intermittent low points where drainage collects. All options were reviewed in order to find the most cost-effective option. The North St. Paul concept was presented which includes two tree trenches, one large rain garden, and an underground structure. A board member asked the cost per pound of phosphorus removal. A cost estimate was provided, and it was noted that the cost per pound of phosphorus removal would be on the higher end of the allowed range. Staff explained that it can be difficult to find opportunities such as this in developed urban areas and the cost to retrofit sites of this nature can have a higher cost. The plan is still in concept design and both parties are working together to find the most cost-effective manner to move forward. It was stated that an agreement would be developed that would require Target to take over ongoing maintenance and that Target would be responsible for replacement elements that may come forward in the future; using the replacement that occurred at Maplewood Mall as an example. The Beltline Resiliency Study shows this site as an opportunity to hold back water before it enters the system and therefore this project would be an additional priority for the District. The East St. Paul concept was reviewed with a tree trench, three small rain gardens, and removal of some parking stalls. The cost estimate for this project was

also provided. Staff noted that that these two projects could use funds from the opportunity fund, targeted retrofit fund, and stormwater impact fund.

It was the consensus of the Board to direct staff to continue to work with Target to modify the design and engineer's estimates for these two projects. It was noted that this would be on schedule to appear in front of the Board again in May with construction to be completed in 2020.

B. New Project Scope Summaries

- i. Ames Lake Flood Risk Improvements Feasibility
- ii. Keller Channel and Phalen Outlet
- iii. Owasso Basin Bypass Feasibility
- iv. West Vadnais to South of 694 Conveyance Feasibility
- v. Willow Creek Flood Risk Improvements Feasibility

These feasibility studies will move forward so that potential project costs could be available in time for the budgeting discussions in order to plan appropriately. Staff noted that these areas were identified as the highest risk and each feasibility study will identify potential projects for those areas. Staff explained in more detail as to how the District has begun to budget for some of these projects and the timeline that would be necessary to complete the feasibility studies and if it is decided to proceed with a specific project, additional project scope and plans would need to be developed.

C. Ongoing Project and Program Updates

- i. Beltline Resiliency Study

Staff distributed a document that includes the comments received on the Beltline Resiliency Study for the Board to review.

- ii. Twin Lake Flood Risk Mitigation Feasibility Study

Staff stated that there have been comments related to whether or not to install a gate. A presentation will be provided to the Board at the next meeting that will provide information on the different options. Staff noted that some of the concerns from residents have been related to the potential Frattalone development and it was suggested that the staff presentation provide input on the potential impact, or lack thereof, from that project.

- iii. FEMA Flood Mapping
- iv. West Vadnais Lakes Outlet Bypass and Off Season Pumping Evaluation

Staff provided a presentation on the possible effect that could be gained by pumping water from West Vadnais during the winter months until snow melt begins, which would be limited to 5 CFS due to MnDOTs requirements. Staff reviewed some the assumptions that were used for this modeling and explained that the results would depend upon the weather that occurs this year. Staff noted that the model shows that if the pumping is done for a short time and the rain is the same as it was in 2019, there would be an effect for a short period, but the elevation would return by May and would include times when the system would overflow. Some members of a board member commented that decreasing the water level would assist with the snow melt while others commented that it would seem to be a waste of money to pump the water only to have it return a short while later. It was noted that the feasibility studies will be important in determining if this would be a helpful action in a more long term solution.

Staff provided additional details on the potential lowering of the outlet and the benefit that could be provided. Staff stated that while the overflow cannot be eliminated, the number of times that occurs could be decreased. It would be the decision of the Board as to whether that would be helpful.

The Board discussed the possible pumping of West Vadnais. A board member commented that the pumping would seem to be an effort that would not provide a realized benefit to either West Vadnais or Grass Lake and the focus should instead be on the lowering of the outlet.

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to not pursue off season pumping of West Vadnais Lake in the short-term.

Further discussion: A comment was made that a Manager would like to pursue pumping but if that is not done, they would like to keep the idea on the table for the future. Another Manager was not convinced that the elevation of the lake would bounce back that quickly after pumping. The suggestion was made that perhaps this occur as an experiment. It was stated that while the modeling was based on assumptions, different conditions could occur that would reduce the benefit even further. The question was called for vote.

Motion carried 3 – 2 (Swope and Ward opposed).

- v. 500-Year Atlas 14 Modeling
- vi. Hillcrest Golf Course
- vii. Automated Lake Monitoring Systems
- viii. Iron Aggregate Pond Research Project
- ix. Targeted Retrofit Projects
- x. CIP Maintenance and Repair 2020 Project
- xi. Beltline/Battle Creek Tunnel Five-Year Inspection
- xii. Natural Resources Program
- xiii. Education Program

11. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

No comments.

12. REPORTS OF MANAGERS

Ramsey County recently held a well-attended meeting for the purpose of gathering public input on the Snail – Vadnais Regional Park master plan. St. Paul will be holding a public meeting to gather input on Hillcrest Golf Course.

13. ADJOURN

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Ward seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Ward, Secretary