



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting
March 4, 2020**

The Regular Meeting of March 4, 2020, was held at the District Office Board Room, 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada, Minnesota, at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT:

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

ABSENT:

Marj Ebensteiner, President

ALSO PRESENT:

Tina Carstens, District Administrator
Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager
Nicole Soderholm, Permit Inspector
Bill Bartodziej, Natural Resource Specialist
Dave Vlasin, Water Quality Technician
Viet-Hanh Winchell, Attorney for District
Erin Anderson Wenz, Barr Engineering

Bruce Copley, Crestview Addition
Steve LaBerge, Crestview Addition
James and Angela Malone, Twin Lake
Kyle Wahlstrom, Twin Lake
Pete Clashagel, Brown and Caldwell, MCES
Stan Martin, Twin Lake
Burt Johnson, Twin Lake

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes from February 5, 2020

A staff member explained that the February minutes were completed in the new format as directed by the Board. Two board members commented that they did not believe the new format accurately describes the discussion that occurred and preferred the format that uses names and provides more detail. Two board members stated that they would not like the names mentioned and felt that it is important that the minutes reflect the highlights of the discussion, noting that the new format is more readable. A discussion was led by a board member about whether the law required a roll-call for each vote, indicating how each board member voted. The District Attorney noted that the new format still exceeds the minimum requirement for minutes and roll call vote was not necessary for each vote. A board member suggested that the discussion be tabled until the full Board is present.

It was noted on page two, the first motion, it should state, "...3 4 – 1..." On page six, Item 10C iv, the discussion was about the bypass, not permitting. On page two, Permit #20-04, it should state, "~~The Board~~ A board member

asked...” On page five, Item G, it should state, “~~It was the consensus of the Board that~~ The Board agreed to try...” On page five, Item 10A, a statement should be added stating, “A board member asked the cost per pound of phosphorus removal.” On page three, Permit #19-21, a statement should be added stating, “The Metro Transit project is at the 30 percent design phase.” It was noted that all phrases “The board asked” should be replaced with “A board member asked”. On page six, Item 10C iv, it should state, “...shows that if the pumping is done for ~~the allowed timeframe~~ for a short time and the rain is the same as it was in 2019...”

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to approve the consent agenda as amended. Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

4. TREASURER’S REPORT AND BILL LIST

A board member asked about the staff salaries for 2020, noting that it is showing as under budget. Staff replied that is due to the vacant communications position. A board member asked about a negative balance showing for the Target retrofit projects. A staff member replied that the District is anticipating receiving grant funds from the Watershed Based Funding program.

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve the March 4, 2020, bill list as submitted. Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

5. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS

Bruce Copley, Crestview resident, stated that he was disappointed with the discussion of the potential pumping of West Vadnais Lake at the last meeting. He asked the Board to revisit the decision. He stated that the presentation by Barr only covered a one-time 30-day pumping. He believed that pumping year-round, when the ability presents itself, could provide additional capacity. He stated that representatives from the City of Shoreview and Ramsey County have also supported the pumping of West Vadnais Lake.

Steve LaBerge referenced the connection to Grass Lake/West Vadnais issue and stated that the Board has been aware of the Owasso Basin constraints for a minimum of three decades. He referenced the optimization report from 2005. He asked if there would ever be downstream water connections to address the problem or whether Grass Lake/West Vadnais would continue to serve as a dead-end.

Burt Johnson, representing Twin Lake Association, commented that he was not at the last meeting and it was difficult to follow the discussion that occurred with the new minute formatting. He reviewed the priorities of the association: a West Vadnais reroute, re-establish the outlet, and improve water quality.

Kyle Wahlstrom, Twin Lake resident, stated that he has photographs that he can provide to staff from February 14. He noted that the lake was frozen to the point where he could go inside the culvert, which has been modified with plastic tile and therefore is not the same size it originally was. He commented that erosion has occurred inside the culvert and the valve has been removed. He asked that the District review the modification of the culvert that directs water from the Frattalone property.

6. PERMIT PROGRAM

A. Applications

Permit #20-09: 7th Street Townhomes – North St. Paul

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve Permit #20-09. Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

Permit #20-10: NSP 7th Avenue Reconstruction – North St. Paul

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve Permit #20-10.

Further discussion: A board member stated that they are hopeful that the District continues to look for opportunities on these large linear projects. Staff confirmed that they do look for those opportunities, as are member cities. A staff member provided details on the underground and above ground treatment proposed for the project.

Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

Permit #20-11: MCES Battle Creek Interceptor Rehab – St. Paul

This is a sanitary sewer rehab project. A staff member explained that permitting is required because the project crosses the creek in multiple locations. A board member asked if there are potential dangers to be monitored because of the proximity of the culverts to the District’s pipe locations. Staff replied that they will survey the actual pipe locations in the spring and the applicant will be cautious in those locations. The staff member confirmed that the applicant would be responsible for any damage that could occur to the District pipes, noting that there will be monitoring equipment installed and monitored at least once per day. A representative for the applicant provided additional details on the project process for the creek crossing areas.

Motion: Manager Ward moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve Permit #20-11. Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

Permit #20-12: County Road D and Greenbrier SIP – Little Canada

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve Permit #20-12. Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

Permit #20-13: Menard’s Remodel – Maplewood

A staff member noted that additional volume was not able to be provided through this project, but that it would be an improvement as the site currently does not have treatment and this project will provide a mix of surface and subsurface treatment. A board member asked if the District has offered to cost share an element, such as tree trenches. Staff commented that it took a lot of work to get to this point and the proposed treatment does meet the District requirements, noting that they also mentioned opportunities such as the cost-share program to the applicant.

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to approve Permit #20-13. Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

B. Monthly Enforcement Report

During February zero notices were sent.

A staff member provided a brief update on work that is occurring under a temporary erosion control permit for the PFAS treatment facility in the City of Woodbury, recognizing that it is an emergency declaration.

7. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

A. Applications

None.

B. Budget Status Update

No comments.

8. PRESENTATIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

A. Eastside Boys and Girls Club Project Bid Award

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Ward seconded, to accept the proposal and award the Eastside Boys and Girls Club to Outdoor Lab Landscape Design Inc., direct staff to prepare and mail the notice of award, prepare the draft agreements and review the required submittals.

Further discussion: A Board member asked if this was the only bid received. A staff member confirmed that this was the only bid received but the District has worked with this contractor in the past and the bid is under the engineer's estimate.

Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

B. Project Update Memo and Presentation: Twin Lake Outlet and Operating Plan

Erin Anderson Wenz, Barr Engineering, reviewed the goals for this project and reviewed the proposed project details. A board member asked for details on the time of year identified for "summer". For this purpose, summer is identified generally for the months of March through early November. The releases during this time cannot be timed with confidence further downstream, meaning that releasing water from Twin Lake could increase flood levels on Gervais Lake during summer storm events. It was further explained why (in the original version of the Twin Lake outlet operations plan) the proposed valve would not be left open all year round as that could cause water to backflow into Twin Lake from the MnDOT system during intense storm events, impacting water quality, and would increase levels in Gervais Lake and Owasso Basin. A board member asked the difference that one inch of downstream water level increase would have. It was explained that if the gate were left open and a 100-year storm occurred, there could be one additional inch of flooding into homes on Gervais Lake. A board member stated that as this moves forward, there could be an opportunity to leave the gate open more during different times of the year, perhaps closing it prior to storm events and opening for a time after the storm event passes to allow additional water to exit Twin Lake. It was explained that the original proposed operating plan attempts to balance the risk for both residents on Twin Lake and those downstream on Gervais, providing 100-year flood protection to homes on both Twin Lake and Gervais Lake. A board member commented that this option, and type of gate, allows flexibility and additional opportunities in the future. A board member summarized the discussion of the Board in support of this type of gate with direction to evaluate additional opportunities for the gate to be open during the "summer" season. It was explained that while it would be nice to have additional opportunities to release water during the "summer" season, staff is unable to predict the risk to Gervais Lake during those months with any great degree of certainty because of the length of time it takes for the water to reach Gervais Lake from Twin Lake. A board member stated that moving the flooding risk from one area to another could have issues of liability. A board member suggested installing backflow prevention with a valve to provide additional flexibility.

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to move forward with plans and specifications for the Twin Lake Outlet and Operating Plan but with the option of having a backflow preventer and look at an operational plan that would allow for opportunistic discharge of water when water levels in Twin Lake are above 872.2 and to have flexibility built into the design to close the gate when downstream flooding is anticipated.

Further discussion: A staff member noted that the pumping that occurred the previous year did increase flood levels on Lake Gervais but did not cause flooding downstream on Gervais Lake because a 100-year storm event was not received during that time.

Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

C. New Project Scope: Watershed Management Plan Update Process

A staff member noted that the proposed scope and schedule were included for the Watershed Management Plan update, noting that the Board would hold a workshop on the topic.

9. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

A. Meetings Attended

No comments.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

No comments.

C. Communications and Outreach Coordinator Position Update

A staff member noted that a staff group is working to narrow the pool of candidates.

D. Board of Managers Meeting Minutes

No additional discussion.

E. Community Conversation: Water Management in Northern Ramsey County

Board members provided input on whether they would be attending the meeting.

F. Comments on Beltline Resiliency Study

A board member commented that all of the comments received should be made available to the public. A board member stated that within the report they would like to see the staff replies to the comments received. A staff member replied that a memorandum/table will be provided to the Board showing the staff replies to the comments which will be added to the study/report after acceptance from the board.

G. Governance Manual Table of Contents

A board member commented that this is a great idea and also suggested adding a section in the back in which amended policies could be added. A board member suggested developing a process for documenting and responding to citizen questions and also commented that they would like to see a more meaningful role for the Board Secretary and Board Treasurer.

H. Metro I-Net Joint Powers Agreement Discussion

A board member commented that they have experience with Metro I-Net and provided background noting that the company provides high quality service at a reasonable cost. A board member agreed that this is a good service but agreed that staff should keep an eye on the cost. A staff member stated that a concern the company brought up was that the costs change significantly if there are a different number of entities involved. It was noted that staff will keep an eye on that and will bring back the JPA.

Motion: Manager Ward moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to join the Joint Powers Agreement for Metro I-Net. Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.

10. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS

A. Ongoing Project and Program Updates

- i. Beltline Resiliency Study
- ii. Twin Lake Flood Risk Mitigation Feasibility Study
- iii. FEMA Flood Mapping
- iv. Lowering of West Vadnais Lake Outlet

A board member asked for a clarification on the timeline. A staff member provided an update on the timeline, noting that the District is still awaiting DNR and MnDOT permits.

- v. 500-Year Atlas 14 Modeling

A staff member noted that the maps are complete and will be provided to the Board.

- vi. Hillcrest Golf Course

A staff member provided an update on the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting held earlier in the day.

vii. Wetland Restoration Site Search

A board member suggested that the District's role in wetlands be better defined/explained.

viii. Battle Creek PFAS

A board member asked why it would be important to have a presentation on this topic. Another board member explained that ground water is important, as is water quality, and therefore it is helpful to know the impact that PFAS would have on ground and surface water. A staff member explained that the presentation provided to staff was eye opening and is important as to how the District would manage Battle Creek, as the presentation does discuss the impact on Battle Creek.

ix. 2020 Feasibility Studies Stemming from Beltline Resiliency Study

- a) Owasso Basin Bypass Pipeline
- b) Willow Creek Flood Damage Reduction
- c) Ames Lake Flood Damage Reduction
- d) West Vadnais to South I-694 Conveyance

A board member requested that consistent words are used in this document and the budget. A staff member explained that the language in the budget was not made to be specific and was meant to be a placeholder for a project that could move water out of West Vadnais Lake. The staff member explained that the feasibility study will identify the recommended method to move the water. Two board members stated that there are funds in the budget for this year and believed that a project should move forward this year. A staff member explained that funds are often budgeted that are not expended during the year. The staff member further explained the process that is necessary to look at the big picture and then go into more detail with the feasibility study and actually ordering the project. A staff member provided additional details on the timing and scope, noting that the understanding was that some of these elements would not move forward without the other elements being previously in place. A board member explained that often an item is placed in the budget as a placeholder and then a feasibility study is completed which provides the Board with the information necessary to determine if that is a feasible option.

x. Water Management Plan Updates

xi. Automated Lake Monitoring Systems

xii. Wakefield Park/Frost Avenue Stormwater Project

xiii. Targeted Retrofit Projects

xiv. Target Store Retrofit Projects

A board member referenced discussion from a previous meeting related to the cost per pound of removal of phosphorus. A staff member explained the acceptable range and noted that in areas of intense impervious surface, the District does support projects within the higher range. A staff member stated that the design is still being modified due to input received from Target since the last Board meeting, and the proposed cost therefore will likely decrease from the cost shown at the last meeting. It was explained that the District has completed some of the projects on the lower range first and is now moving along towards the projects further along the range. A Board member expressed concern with the process and stated that they would like to be more involved in these types of project reviews and would like to see formal motions before a project moves too far along. Staff indicated they would prepare information for the Board on the cost per pound of phosphorus removal for past projects.

xv. Aldrich Arena Stormwater Retrofit

xvi. CIP Maintenance and Repair 2020 Project

A staff member provided an update on the progress that has been made thus far.

xvii. Beltline/Battle Creek Tunnel Inspection

xviii. 2019 Tanners Lake Alum Facility Monitoring

xix. Natural Resources Program

A staff member provided information related to the electric carp management.

xx. Education Program

11. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

No comments.

12. REPORTS OF MANAGERS

A board member asked for an update on the ditch petition. A staff member replied that it is the opinion of legal counsel that the petition has been satisfied and staff replied to the recent email. A board member referenced an email received about a visitor presentation from a resident that could not attend. A staff person replied that the resident stated that they would not be attending the meeting and simply wanted to provide comments. The staff person stated that staff will reply to the email. A board member asked for an update on a recent insurance claim. A staff member replied that the District's insurance company denied the claim of damages and no further action is needed at this time.

13. ADJOURN

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Ward seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 p.m. Motion carried 4-0. President Ebensteiner absent.