



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
October 5, 2022**

The Regular Meeting of October 5, 2022, was held at the District Office Board Room, 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada, Minnesota, and via Zoom web conferencing, at 7:00 p.m. A video recording of the meeting can be found at <https://youtu.be/sIMwmvsc0Ko>. Video time stamps included after each agenda item in minutes.

**PRESENT:**

Larry Swope, President  
Dianne Ward, Vice President  
Dr. Pam Skinner, Secretary  
Val Eisele, Treasurer

**ABSENT:**

Matt Kramer, Manager

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Tina Carstens, District Administrator  
Brandon Barnes, Barr Engineering  
Nicole Soderholm, Permit Inspector  
Laurann Kirschner, Attorney for District  
Kristin Seaman, Woodbury Environmental Coordinator

Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager  
Tyler Olsen, Barr Engineering  
Dave Vlasin, Project Coordinator  
Evan Sieben, Woodbury Street Sweeping Manager

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by President Swope at 7:00 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (00:15)**

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve the agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was conducted:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Eisele	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA (00:38)**

- A. ~~Approval of Minutes from September 7, 2022~~
- B. Treasurer's Report and Bill List
- C. Permit Program
  - i. 22-26: 3M Avenue R Maintenance, Maplewood
  - ii. 22-27: 3M Lake Culvert Replacement, Maplewood
  - iii. 22-28: Pioneer Commons, Little Canada

D. Stewardship Grant Program

- i. 22-39 CS: Washington County Community Development Agency Budget Extension Request
- ii. 22-08 CS: Battle Creek Middle School Budget Extension Request

Motion: Manager Ward moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Further discussion: Laurann Kirschner stated that she has a correction for the minutes and asked that they be pulled.

Manager Eisele asked about the process that is involved when more money than was budgeted is spent in a specific category. Tina Carstens provided further detail on reallocation of funds. He referenced the wetland restoration projects and asked if that money is earmarked to be spent. Tina Carstens replied that there are not projects at this time, therefore those funds will carry over.

President Swope asked for clarification on Davey Resources. Paige Ahlborg replied that most of that cost was site maintenance, and some for the office patio.

The Board voted on the amended consent agenda.

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Eisele	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

A. Approval of Minutes from September 7, 2022

Laurann Kirschner stated that on page 12 of the packet, the roll call vote should be amended to state motion passed 3-1 rather than unanimously. Tina Carstens stated that she believes that Manager Skinner did end up voting in favor but would go back to review the recording.

Motion: Manager Eisele moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve the minutes from September 7, 2022 with the noted change.

A roll call vote was conducted:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Eisele	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**4. VISITOR COMMENTS (6:13)**

No comments.

**5. PERMIT PROGRAM (7:03)**

A. Applications

Permit #22-25: Xcel Energy Maplewood Gas Plant Variance – Maplewood

Nicole Soderholm stated that the Board approved the permits for the existing gas plant for Xcel but tabled the variance request related to concern over loss of buffer and requested to see what else could be done in terms of

enhancing vegetation to mitigate for that loss. She stated that the applicant proposes to remove invasive species and enhance the existing buffer area. She noted that the tree preservation plan was included as well.

Manager Eisele commented that he was happy to see some of the changes made. He noted that this pond is meant to contain spilled propane. Nicole Soderholm stated that hopefully it would never have to be used for that purpose as that is an emergency plan. She explained that this project will provide runoff pretreatment that does not currently exist onsite.

Manager Skinner stated that she also has questions related to the minimum and average buffers. She asked if the loss of buffer could be added in another area. Nicole Soderholm stated that the applicant is not proposing to add buffer to the west side of wetland three as the applicant does not own that land. She commented that the buffer loss has been minimized to the extent possible.

Brandon Barnes stated that the aerial overview helps to show how the facility is located relative to the wetland and also shows the native vegetation area between the facility and wetland. He commented that the opportunity to add additional native area is very limited and therefore they looked to improve the native area that exists by removal of invasives and replacing that with enhanced vegetation.

Manager Skinner commented that it appears that the minimum/average buffer is already not met on this site as it was constructed prior to the District rules. Nicole Soderholm stated that there will be additional buffer loss because of the added water quality treatment, therefore there is benefit that will be gained in return for the loss. She stated that given the project purpose and need the water quality treatment that will be provided, there is benefit in this project.

Manager Skinner asked the consequence of not approving the variance. Nicole Soderholm replied that would be problematic as there are safety issues that exist with the gas plant. Tina Carstens stated that if the water quality pond is not built, the wetland will not receive the benefit of the BMP. She stated that the buffer is being disturbed in order to provide the additional water quality treatment. She noted that the plan to enhance the buffer, which is currently not high quality, will also be a benefit from what currently exists.

Manager Skinner commented that she is still a bit troubled by this and the continuance of net loss throughout the district.

Manager Ward commented that she likes the changes that were made. She commented that this includes a lot of improvements, and the balance appears to be as good as it can be.

President Swope commented that he believes that the applicant did a good job of responding to the comments from the Board at the last meeting. He commented that it is not a loss of wetland, and these safety improvements are needed.

Manager Eisele commented that while the buffer will be smaller, it will seem to be more efficient.

Nicole Soderholm stated that while it may seem that the Board considers a lot of buffer impacts, the vast majority are temporary disturbance and not permanent loss. She stated that this is a unique project with unique conflicts.

Manager Skinner commented that she does appreciate the benefits.

Motion: Manager Ward moved, Manager Eisele seconded, to approve the wetland variance for Permit #22-25 with the proposed tree preservation plan and buffer vegetation enhancement plan which will include invasive species removal and supplemental planting/seeding.

A roll call vote was conducted:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Eisele	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Monthly Enforcement Report**

During September, 15 notices were sent to address: install/maintain inlet protection (2), install/maintain perimeter control (3), install/maintain construction entrances (1), stabilize exposed soils (3), contain/dispose of liquid and solid wastes (1), remove discharged sediment (1), implement proper dewatering (1), maintain/protect permanent BMPs (1), and complete required site inspections (2).

**6. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM (26:05)**

**A. Applications**

**Permit #22-29 CS: Woodbury Enhanced Street Sweeping**

Paige Ahlborg stated that staff is currently working with Barr Engineering to develop a pilot enhanced street sweeping program, noting that a potential grant program will come to the Board in December. She stated that other entities have completed similar studies. She stated that South Washington Watershed District has completed its study and that information was provided in the packet. She noted that the request from Woodbury has also provided more information on costs and how the District could develop its grant program. She commented on the cost effectiveness of enhanced street sweeping and explained that the entire city of Woodbury is within a priority area for the District. She noted the other benefits of enhanced street sweeping, such as reduced maintenance of BMPs and flood reduction. She provided details on the plan for enhanced street sweeping and explained that data will continue to assist the District in developing its grant program as well.

Tina Carstens stated that this would be a mini research project because the city will provide the data that can be used by the District to more specifically develop its own program.

Manager Eisele stated that he supports this and is interested in the data sharing.

President Swope commented that his issue would be that the Board has not decided whether it would like to endorse street sweeping. He stated that there is also not a policy on how the funding would be allocated and there is not currently a budget for this item. He asked what other cities would be told that perhaps would have liked to be part of the test. Paige Ahlborg stated that the District has a prioritization study and there are a number of priority ponds and impaired waters in Woodbury, whereas, for example, Shoreview does not fall into the same priority ranking. She stated that the District has received other requests from cities such as an iron enhanced pond filter in Shoreview, therefore there are different unique requests that have been honored in other communities. She commented that there are available funds in the stewardship grant program that could be used for this purpose.

President Swope commented that the District is still in the process of review and his concern would be to jump in with one city. His concern would be with the other cities.

Manager Skinner commented that 30 years ago, Oakdale did studies on street sweepers and even then, it was shown to be a very cost-effective method to reduce phosphorus. She commented that this is very cost effective, and the District could be prepared to move forward with this type of program in the future.

Manager Ward agreed with those statements but noted that before embarking on this, she would like to see information from the other cities; their policies and frequency of sweeping, as well as the benefit to this priority area. She was unsure that she was ready to move forward just because one city came to the District first. She asked how much has been spent on this process already. Tina Carstens stated that the District has not spent anything on this project specifically. Paige Ahlborg noted that another entity has already completed a study that the District has reviewed.

Manager Eisele commented that he sees this differently as he believes that this is an opportunity with a willing participant that will help to inform and provide more data to a program the District will be starting. He stated that this is an opportunistic investment that will provide data the District can use to make more informed decisions.

Manager Ward commented that she agrees but believes that the District should have been the lead in this pilot.

Manager Eisele agreed that would have been preferred but this is a willing participant that would like to involve the District.

President Swope commented that the District does not have a structure to work with at this point and asked what would happen if the District received a request from another community.

Manager Eisele asked if that request would be similar in detail, including a 50-page report with very detailed information.

Paige Ahlborg stated that staff has gathered existing sweeping data from all the cities, so they are aware that the District is looking into this. She commented that any city could have made a request, but Woodbury had already completed their study and brought this information and request forward. She commented that the other cities will appreciate this data that will be gained and could use that data to model their own programs in the future.

Manager Skinner commented that this is a time sensitive opportunity to cheaply remove phosphorus from impaired areas.

Manager Eisele stated that there is over \$150,000 available in the stewardship grant program and this request would only be \$50,000 of this. He again stated that he finds it helpful to work with a willing party.

President Swope commented that he would want to have a context in place for the program prior to providing funding. Tina Carstens stated that the board could look at this as a proven water quality BMP in a priority area that is eligible for up to \$100,000 in funding for BMPs.

President Swope asked if street sweeping is described as a BMP. Manager Skinner thought it was mentioned in the plan as such. Tina Carstens stated that street sweeping is a water quality BMP but unsure if it is called out specifically in the plan.

Brandon Barnes commented that they are working on the study to present the results to the Board in December. He stated that the study will indicate that there will be high priority areas in multiple municipalities. He stated that there are impaired waters that these areas drain to in Woodbury.

Manager Eisele stated that he believes that this will be beneficial, and this is a logical approach that can help to inform the policy that will be developed. He believes that this investment will be worth it and recognized that perhaps this is not funding that is eligible each year for a municipality. He stated that he feels comfortable trying this at a fairly low investment.

Manager Skinner agrees that this may be the cart before the horse, but the District does have time to figure out its program over the next year. She stated that she supports increased street sweeping in every community.

President Swope stated that he does not disagree that there would be benefit but does not like the process.

Manager Skinner commented that this does fit into the context of the grant program.

President Swope agreed that it basically would but asked why this is just coming forward now and not in the past. Tina Carstens stated that there has been a lot of talk about it, but the modeling exercise had not been completed that Woodbury and South Washington Watershed completed. She commented that it is important to sweep the drainage areas that go into priority water bodies.

President Swope stated that he found it odd that they swept the streets before the leaves fell and now want money to sweep the streets again after the leaves fall. He asked why they did not wait to sweep until after the leaves fell. Tina Carstens replied that they cannot be everywhere without additional work hours and equipment.

Evan Sieben stated that they have never pursued aggressive street sweeping like this because it has never been budgeted for. He commented that with the benefit that South Washington County has shown, they want to pursue this in order to improve the water quality in Woodbury.

Manager Eisele stated that they are attempting to show cost benefit through periodic street sweeping to address trash, lawn clippings, and pollutants. He agreed that the most benefit would be after the leaves fall.

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Eisele seconded, to approve application #22-29 CS.

A roll call vote was conducted:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Eisele	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	nay

Motion carried 3 - 1.

B. Budget Status Update

No comments.

**7. ACTION ITEMS (52:40)**

A. Watershed Excellence Award Winners

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve proposed Watershed Excellence Award winners.

Further discussion: Manager Eisele commented that the CAC was very thorough in its discussion of the candidates and noted that there was very strong agreement about those proposed. He commended the group for their review process.

A roll call vote was conducted:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Eisele	aye
Manager Ward	aye

President Swope            aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**8.        ATTORNEY REPORT (56:47)**

Laurann Kirschner highlighted work that she completed for the District in the past month including meeting notices and the street sweeping agreement for Woodbury that was just approved.

**9.        BOARD ISSUES, POLICIES, AND OPERATION (FOR DISCUSSION AT MEETING) (57:49)**

A.    Action Log: Additions, Deletions

No comments.

B.    Manager Topics

Manager Skinner commented on an intersection in Oakdale that has a large pipe with a high flow of water after storm events. She asked if that would be a safety issue and whether something could be done to reduce the risk of injury. She also referenced another location that has construction going on adjacent to a wetland. Tina Carstens confirmed that staff could follow up on those items.

President Swope referenced the MAWD newsletter and the awards for staff and administrators.

Manager Skinner stated that she would like to nominate Tina Carstens for the best administrator and noted that perhaps Tina can provide guidance to nominate the best staff member for the year as well. She believed that the Board should be nominating staff members each year. Tina Carstens explained how the Board could draft and submit a nomination. She noted that she has nominated staff members in the past and could do that.

Laurann Kirschner provided input on the process that should be followed to avoid violation of the open meeting laws. She confirmed that two members could be designated to work together on the nomination.

Manager Eisele commented that he could work with President Swope on the nomination.

Manager Eisele stated that perhaps a member of staff could work with them as well. Tina Carstens confirmed that the Communications Coordinator could assist.

**10.      NEW REPORTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS (1:07:53)**

A.    District Inspection Standardization and Mobile Data Collection Update

Tyler Olsen explained the purpose of the tool to standardize the inspection process and to create a prioritization framework for the CIP maintenance projects. He reviewed the methodology, different types of inspections, category development, criteria development, and scoring system.

Dave Vlasin provided input on testing of the tool and different sites that staff did when completing inspections while developing the tool and the process that was followed once the tool was developed and sites were inspected this fall.

Manager Eisele asked how this tool has changed the inspections. Dave Vlasin stated that perhaps it added one day to complete inspections this fall but believed that over time this would save time for him over the course of the year.

Tyler Olsen stated that once the framework was built, they put the data into Field Maps and highlighted the different features within the application.

Manager Ward asked if the past inspections would be available. Tina Carstens replied that the inspection history would be available to staff.

Manager Eisele asked if there would be ongoing maintenance of the tool. Tyler Olsen confirmed that they could add things into the tool as they go and provided additional details.

Manager Eisele commented that typically applications have ongoing maintenance costs and asked if that has been included. Tyler Olsen confirmed that there are some ongoing maintenance recommendations for the tool.

Tyler Olsen provided a live demonstration of the tool for the Board.

Manager Eisele commented that this might be of value and shared at conferences.

Manager Eisele asked if this information and ranking would be used in the development of the CIP projects. Tina Carstens confirmed that they do plan to use this information in the CIP development.

Manager Eisele asked if there is criteria for blockage such as fallen trees or debris. Tyler Olsen commented that there is blockage criteria. Dave Vlasin provided additional details, noting dropdown menus and the option to add photographs and mark the location.

Manager Skinner recognized that fallen trees can provide benefit to fish and wildlife in certain scenarios and asked if that would always be removed or whether it would remain in some scenarios. Dave Vlasin confirmed that they do recognize benefit of fallen trees in different scenarios and therefore they do not always remove those things. He stated that if there were blockage, they would try to address that as minimally as possible.

Tyler Olsen explained that once the data is collected it is then prioritized by the scores. He stated that every year there will be a threshold score to determine which sites should be reviewed for maintenance, other than those that are marked for review already. He provided an overview of the 2022 annual inspection and highlighted the future updates that are recommended.

B. Woodbury Target Store Retrofit Scope Summary

Tina Carstens stated that the scope summary was included in the packet and welcomed any questions the Board may have.

**11. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT (1:42:55)**

A. Meetings Attended

No comments.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

Tina Carstens highlighted upcoming meetings and events. She provided additional details on the annual MAWD meeting and different events included.

C. Ongoing Project Update

No comments.

D. WEFTEC Conference

Tina Carstens confirmed that she will provide an update to the Board after the conference.

**12. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS (1:48:40)**

Project Feasibility Studies

A. Interim Emergency Response Planning

- B. Kohlman Creek Flood Risk Feasibility Study
- C. Kohlman Creek/Wakefield Lake Diversion Feasibility Study
- D. County Ditch 17 Improvements Feasibility Study
- E. Phalen Village Feasibility Study
- F. Ames Lake Area Flood Risk Reduction Planning Study
- G. Owasso Basin/North Star Estates Improvements
- H. Double Driveway Pond Optimization Study
- I. Carver Ponds Improvement Study
- J. South Metro Mississippi River TSS TMDL  
Monitoring Water Quality and Special Projects
- K. Annual Water Quality Report Assistance  
Research Projects
- L. Kohlman Permeable Weir Test System
- M. Shallow Lake Aeration Study  
Capital Improvements
- N. Target Store Retrofit Projects
- O. Targeted Retrofit Projects
- P. Stewardship Grant Program – Street Sweeping
- Q. Lake Emily Subwatershed Regional BMP  
CIP Project Repair and Maintenance
- R. Beltline Five Year Inspection
- S. District Inspection Standardization  
New Technology Report
- T. Miyawaki Mini-Forest Assessment  
Program Updates
- U. Natural Resources Program Update
- V. Public Involvement and Education Program Update
- W. Communications Program and Website Update
- X. Citizen Advisory Committee Update

Manager Eisele referenced the Ames Lake item and asked for explanation on the acronym.

Brandon Barnes replied that stands for Saint Paul Water Resources Working Group and provided details on the work that group does and how frequently they meet. He stated that Barr met with them to gauge their interest in working with the District on different parcels in order to minimize flooding in an around Ames Lake. He stated that they are willing to move to the next step on a feasibility study and provided additional details on that process.

President Swope referenced Item T, noting that it was a fabulous report. He stated that it also seems that is a viable tool the District should have in its tool chest. He also stated that the website has turned out well and commented on features that he enjoys, such as the meeting announcement. He also enjoyed the lake level integration page information that was sent out today.

Manager Skinner commented that she also enjoys the website updates.

**13. MANAGER COMMENTS AND NEXT MONTH’S MEETING**

No comments.

**14. ADJOURN**

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Eisele seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.