



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
December 7, 2022**

The Regular Meeting of December 7, 2022 was held at the District Office Board Room, 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada, Minnesota, and via Zoom web conferencing, at 6:30 p.m. A video recording of the meeting can be found at [https://youtu.be/HSMKIm\\_0lpM](https://youtu.be/HSMKIm_0lpM). 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 (virtual)  
Matt Kramer, Manager

**ABSENT:**

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Tina Carstens, District Administrator  
Tracey Galowitz, Attorney for District  
Nicole Soderholm, Permit Inspector  
Matt Doneux, Natural Resources Technician  
Joe Tillotson, Natural Resources Intern

Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager  
Michael McKinney, Barr Engineering  
Erin Anderson Wenz, Barr Engineering  
Dave Vlasin, Project Coordinator  
Patrick Brama, Development Manager - Enclave Companies

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (00:20)**

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA (00:50)**

- A. Approval of Minutes from November 2, 2022
- B. Treasurer's Report and Bill List
- C. Permit Program
  - i. 22-37 – RWMWD 2023 CIP Maintenance and Repair
- D. 2023 BMP Service Agreement – Washington Conservation District
- E. 2023 BMP Service Agreement – Ramsey County

Manager Ward requested to remove Item C.i. to be considered with Item 7A.

Motion: Manager Kramer moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to approve the consent agenda as amended.

Further discussion: President Swope referenced a payment to the Fish and Water Conservation Fund in the check list and asked for details. Paige Ahlborg provided details on that payment.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**4. VISITOR COMMENTS (3:36)**

No comments.

**5. PERMIT PROGRAM (4:20)**

A. Applications

Permit #22-36: Enclave Apartments – Maplewood

Nicole Soderholm stated that the applicant is proposing to demolish the existing building on the site to construct apartments which would have both above and below ground storm water treatment. She stated that the application would include a variance for temporary wetland impacts. She stated that the deteriorating retaining wall would be removed, replaced with a larger retaining wall and the buffer would actually be restored.

President Swope commented that this seems to be a good development and he likes the work that will be done with the buffer and wetlands.

Manager Eisele commented that he likes the direction and asked for more details on the large range of potential impervious reduction as that is listed as eight to 36 percent. Nicole Soderholm explained that is not a range, noting that the existing condition is eight percent, and the new condition would be 36 percent which would result in a net increase of pervious area on the site.

Motion: Manager Ward moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to approve Permit #22-36.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Monthly Enforcement Report

During November, 10 notices were sent to address: install/maintain perimeter control (3), implement temporary soil stabilization (2), install/maintain inlet protection (1), install/maintain construction entrance (1), install/maintain energy dissipation (1), clean out temporary sediment basin (1), and sweep streets (1).

**6. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM (9:16)**

A. Applications - None

B. Budget Status Update

No comments.

C. 2022 Program Overview Presentation and 2023 Program Approval

Paige Ahlborg provided an overview of the 2022 stewardship grant program activity, project locations, and project allocation. She provided details on the 2022 BMP inspections and maintenance program. She highlighted the 2022 targeted retrofit projects. She stated that staff has begun planning for 2023 projects and identified the proposed 2023 priority subwatersheds. She noted that the Board will receive a presentation later on tonight’s agenda related to the street sweeping study and potential assistance. She reviewed the proposed 2023 stewardship grant coverage and requested approval from the Board.

President Swope asked if BMP inspections are only done when there is a contract in place for maintenance. Paige Ahlborg replied that there are maintenance agreements in place for BMP projects and inspections occur within the length of that agreement. She stated that they are also inspecting the projects that have a maintenance grant to ensure proper maintenance is being completed by the contractor.

President Swope stated that perhaps some of the Master Water Stewards could review some of the older rain gardens and BMPs to review whether they are still working. Paige Ahlborg stated that idea has been discussed and noted that she could follow up to determine if that could be pursued.

Motion: Manager Ward moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to approve the 2023 Stewardship Grant Program with requested changes.

Further discussion: Tina Carstens asked and received confirmation that the motion would include all the requested action items with the exception of street sweeping which will be discussed separately on the agenda.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Manager Ward asked how the residents amounts compare to other districts. Paige Ahlborg replied that some districts do not have maximums and instead use a calculation. She stated that the District is comparable to other local watersheds with the amount that is offered to residents.

Manager Eisele asked how residents would find out about the program, other than the website. Paige Ahlborg stated that the communications staff does work to market the program through its different communication streams and also through the member cities. She noted that when inspections or plantings are done, they have been using signage to increase interest from those that may pass by as well. Tina Carstens confirmed that there are available funds in the communications budget to market the different programs, including this program.

**7. ACTION ITEMS (29:35)**

A. 2023 CIP Maintenance and Repair Project Bid Review and Approval

Erin Anderson Wenz replied that bids were opened the previous day with eight bids received. The lowest responsible bidder was Miller Excavating Incorporated with a bid of \$517,633.33. She stated that while the District has not worked with that contractor, Barr Engineering does have experience with the contractor through other clients and has received positive feedback and references.

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Kramer seconded, to accept the bids and award the 2023 CIP Maintenance and Repair Project to Miller Excavating, Inc., and direct staff to prepare and mail the notice of award, prepare the draft agreements, and review the required submittals.

Further discussion: President Swope asked for details on the scoring of the projects included in the scope. Dave Vlasin provided an example where only a portion of the project would require maintenance.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Manager Ward noted that there is an item identified as needing maintenance and Ramsey County is going to complete that maintenance. She asked who would ensure that is completed. Erin Anderson Wenz replied that is the infrastructure of Ramsey County. Tina Carstens stated that the site was identified for maintenance and because it is Ramsey County property, Ramsey County has stated that they would complete the work. Dave Vlasin noted that Ramsey County is very responsive and noted that he would follow up to ensure it is completed.

Manager Ward also requested that a water level gauge be installed in Grass Lake to be monitored. Tina Carstens confirmed that they could follow up with Ramsey County to install a gauge in the spring.

C. Permit Program (Continued)

i. 22-37 – RWMWD 2023 CIP Maintenance and Repair

Motion: Manager Kramer moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to approve Permit 22-37.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

B. 2022 Targeted Retrofit Projects – Change Order No. 5

Erin Anderson Wenz noted that this change order pertains to an error that Barr made on the bid form that was not found until the project was underway and provided additional details.

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Kramer seconded, to approve Change Order No. 5.

Further discussion: President Swope asked the price of the change order and whether they are sure this would not happen again. Erin Anderson Wenz replied that the project is essentially complete with only plantings remaining.

She acknowledged that there were some bumps in this project and as a show of good faith, Barr Engineering will be deducting \$20,000 from their costs because of the issues that occurred.

Manager Skinner noted that this is the first time in her tenure on the Board that she can recall an issue like this.

Manager Ward commented that she supports the change order and was surprised to see that Barr Engineering did not offer to contribute more in terms of reducing their cost. Erin Anderson Wenz commented that typically Barr Engineering does not pay for a change in construction costs if that represents the true cost of the project. She recognized that Barr Engineering should have known about the Saint Paul permitting requirements, therefore it seemed reasonable to deduct the cost for creating the change orders and any inefficiencies in the design preparation. She stated that the District has then paid for the acceptable design and the work necessary for the field requirements.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

C. 2023 Budget and Levy Final Approval – Resolution 22-02

Tina Carstens stated that her memorandum did highlight changes that were made to the budget since the last review and welcomed any questions from the Board.

Manager Ward stated that she compared the budget status report to this information, and it appeared that there were some areas that could have been decreased to provide a zero percent change in the budget and noted some of those areas she felt could have been decreased. Tina Carstens stated that she would have to look at each of those general fund line items to review. She noted that the capital improvement funds have been accurately reviewed to determine carryover which cannot accurately be seen from the budget status report. She noted that she reviewed the five-year period to identify trends and ensure that the line item is not unusually high or low for one year. She stated that she followed the direction from the Board at the previous review to aim for five percent. She stated that the budget and levy have to be approved and certified tonight in order to provide it to the county by the end of the year.

President Swope stated that he does not mind five percent. He stated that in reviewing other entities there is an average between four and eight percent. He stated that he would prefer to keep funds available to ensure the District is able to complete a project and has contingency funds.

Manager Ward stated that she would prefer to see zero but understands the direction was for five percent. She recognized that action would be needed.

Manager Skinner commented that could see both sides and does not feel strongly either way. She stated that she can support the budget and levy as proposed as the District continues to do good things with its money.

Manager Ward noted that staff has been working to refine the budget and credited staff with their hard work.

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Kramer seconded, to approve the proposed FY 2023 General Fund and CIP budgets and Adopt Resolution 22-02.

Further discussion: Manager Eisele stated that he does understand the point of Manager Ward but also understood that it seems the District is going to be more ambitious in the upcoming year and would want to ensure the funds are available. He noted that he feels that this marginal increase will be well used.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**8. ATTORNEY REPORT (56:29)**

Tracey Galowitz reviewed the work legal staff has done for the District in the past month. She noted that she had a great conversation with Erin Anderson Wenz about the previously discussed project. She felt that it was great for Barr to come forward and ensure no added fees resulted to the District as a result. She felt that Barr handled that issue very well and thanked Erin Anderson Wenz for reaching out to her.

Manager Ward asked if there is a legislative update related to the ability to hold hybrid meetings. Tracey Galowitz replied that she did not have an update at this time. Tina Carstens noted that there was a resolution that was presented at the MAWD annual meeting which failed to move forward. That resolution would have allowed managers to attend online for an unlimited amount of meetings. She stated that there is still a resolution of support from MAWD that was adopted the previous year that would allow hybrid attendance for up to three meetings per year.

**9. BOARD ISSUES, POLICIES, AND OPERATION (FOR DISCUSSION AT MEETING) (1:04:00)**

A. Board Action Log: Additions, deletions

Manager Ward noted that Ramsey County has a different definition of equity and underserved areas and would like to review the differences to determine if any changes should be made. She stated that perhaps that is added to the list for 2023. Paige Ahlborg noted that staff also noted that and confirmed that she would be reviewing that.

**10. NEW REPORTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS (1:05:35)**

A. Street Sweeping Prioritization Study

Michael McKinney, Barr Engineering, provided background including the impetus for the study. He provided an overview of the street sweeping prioritization study including the project outline, street sweeping survey, and a summary of the existing operations. He reviewed the street sweeping evaluation including the baseline sweeping recommendation for one spring sweeping, one summer sweeping and two to three fall sweepings. He stated that they then developed street sweeping prioritization strategies and displayed a map which ranks the different prioritization areas. He stated that funding was provided from the District to the City of Woodbury to complete enhanced street sweeping in 2022 while the study was being completed. He stated that Woodbury sent their data from the enhanced street sweeping and reviewed that data with the Board noting that this was a very cost-effective use of funds for phosphorus removal. He explained how this could be incorporated into the stewardship grant program and reviewed key elements that they would like Board input on. He also explained how the baseline recommendation could be used.

Manager Eisele noted that five of the nine cities sweep under the baseline recommendation and asked if staff has reached out to determine if the cities could even reach that baseline. Michael McKinney stated that he does have different approaches to reach out to the member cities in the next steps. He noted that one of the questions will be whether the city believes it could reach the baseline with the equipment it has available. He stated that Woodbury contracted for the service and that would be an option for cities as well.

Manager Skinner commented that about 25 years ago they were doing recommendations in Oakdale and at that time there was a difference in the type of sweeper and asked if that was considered. Michael McKinney confirmed that was a focus in the beginning of the study, noting that they did ask the cities the types of sweepers they were using. He provided more information on the different types of sweepers and noted that the most effective method would be a tandem approach, using one type of sweeper followed by the other but recognized that is not always feasible. He stated that because there is not a huge difference between the two types of sweepers that was not taken into further account for this study. He confirmed that information on the study will be provided to the cities that mentions that tandem sweeping is the most efficient method.

Manager Ward asked if the information to the cities would include the impaired water bodies within the city boundaries to assist in showing the potential benefit to the city. Michael McKinney replied that they are still working to develop the draft that would be shared with the cities and were contemplating inclusion of prioritization areas within the city. He noted that it could be helpful to show the prioritization by sweeping zones within the communities, as most communities have street sweeping zones that assist in their planning. He recognized that cities are not always able to complete all the sweeping attempts in all zones, but the information could be helpful as cities could focus more on ensuring that the sweeping is completed in those higher priority zones.

Manager Ward commented on the importance of sharing educational information with the cities, as some cities would need to increase their street sweeping budget in order to meet that baseline recommendation. She asked if this study would cover the needs of the District or whether a second phase of the study would be recommended. Michael McKinney commented that this study did a good job of accomplishing the goals to identify the high priority street sweeping areas and identifying the baseline recommendation. He stated that if the stewardship grant program is enacted and all cities are brought up to the baseline recommendation, perhaps further analysis could be needed to determine if there would be benefit in increasing that.

Michael McKinney reviewed suggestions on how street sweeping could potentially be incorporated into the stewardship grant program through either targeted or application-based approaches. He noted that because funding was not specifically identified for street sweeping through that program in 2023 perhaps the District begin with a targeted implementation strategy which could segue into an application-based strategy.

Manager Eisele stated that he likes the idea of doing a staged approach and asked if there would be an initial step that could help offer grants to get cities closer to the baseline. Michael McKinney confirmed that would be the recommended approach and noted that he does have a ranking strategy to rank the cities that have the highest prioritization areas and where the most benefit could be gained.

Manager Skinner asked if there has been thought about equity. Michael McKinney confirmed that equity has been part of the discussion in prioritization. He noted that identifying the high priority areas in the District do provide equity without other considerations, such as the number of sweeps a city is completing each year. He noted that there is a real consideration for cities that perhaps are only completing two sweeps per year and the benefit that would be gained through getting that city up to the baseline recommendation whereas another city that is already exceeding the baseline recommendation may not have the same amount of return on additional sweeping.

President Swope asked how much money would be needed for this type of program and asked why it would be combined into the stewardship grant program instead of creating a separate program. He did not believe that funds had been limited within that program before, using the example of raingardens and that there is not a cap on the number of raingardens that could be created through that fund. Tina Carstens stated that they have earmarked funds within that program in the past, using the example of targeted retrofit projects and noted that eventually grew into its own program. Paige Ahlborg noted that public art is another example that has earmarked funds of up to \$50,000 a year total and \$15,000 per project max. She noted that they were not yet to the point in

the study to budget for this purpose in 2023. She stated that there was approximately \$125,000 in carryover from 2022 and perhaps that is set aside for this purpose and then they could plan to budget for it in the future.

Michael McKinney provided a few of the different strategies that could be used to develop a targeted approach. He also provided different things to consider when determining the funds that could be contributed towards enhanced sweeping efforts. He provided an example scenario of what it could cost for the city of Little Canada to reach the baseline recommendation and confirmed in that scenario the street sweeping was calculated for the entire city and not just the priority areas. He noted that if that were reduced to the priority areas, the cost would be reduced.

Tina Carstens noted a discussion that occurred after the presentation at the MAWD conference regarding “putting a bounty on phosphorus” which would essentially pay the city for the amount of phosphorus they remove through their street sweeping activities. Michael McKinney commented that is an interesting approach but noted that city may not have a good estimate of the current removal rates and therefore would have a hard time making those estimates. He noted that cities may need support to get that process started and determine what could be gained through reaching the baseline. He stated that he does like an incentivized approach, but his only concern would be with the planning perspective of the city to ensure that the math would work to make that investment. He stated that could be an interesting study, in how that amount could be set. He stated that a city could have difficulty in determining how that would work without completing an enhanced street sweeping for one year.

Manager Ward commented that this would be a macro strategy such as a targeted retrofit compared to a micro strategy such as a rain garden. She asked if there has been consideration of providing a stipend for people that adopt drains, as that is a small action that also helps to keep the material out of the storm drains at a much lesser cost. Michael McKinney confirmed that implementation of an adopt-a-drain program is mentioned in the study report as well. He stated that information can help a city target areas where people have not adopted drains. He stated that in his experience the adopt-a-drain program is typically done as a good Samaritan program but that is an interesting concept to incentivize that. Paige Ahlborg stated that staff has access to the adopt-a-drain program within the district. Tina Carstens commented that not everyone reports their removal rates, and it could be interesting to consider monetizing that.

Manager Kramer commented that he found this to be a very useful report and perhaps it could be shared with other entities. Tina Carstens confirmed that they would be sharing the information. Erin Anderson Wenz commented that this is a hot topic in the water community.

President Swope asked what the desired action of the board is at this time. He asked whether the intent would be to earmark funds within the stewardship grant program. He noted that if that were done, it could take funds away from other eligible projects and he believed that it should be budgeted separately. Tina Carstens recommended that the carryover from the 2022 stewardship grant program of \$128,000 be used for a targeted approach to offer this to the cities. She noted that they could then use that data to evaluate the program to determine if funding would be appropriate for 2024.

President Swope stated that he would prefer to keep the \$128,000 separate from the stewardship grant program and use the funds to determine how it could best be used and if there is interest from the cities. Tina Carstens recognized that it is a recurring action, but it would be made clear that these funds are available on a one-time basis for 2023. She stated that most of the cities will not be able to add enhanced sweeping to their program and would have to contract out for the service.

Michael McKinney commented that in terms of tracking progress and determining if the program works, it might be helpful to require the cities to complete weights per truck for each sweeping.



Tina Carstens stated that if the Board is supportive of moving forward with a targeted approach, using the \$128,000 from the stewardship grant program, staff would come back to the Board with that approach, the cities that would be targeted and the offers that would be proposed.

President Swope commented that he would encourage staff to work with the CAC to perhaps enhance the adopt-a-drain program as well. He noted that enhanced drain clearing could help to reduce the scope of street sweeping as well.

Manager Skinner noted that there would also be a benefit in education of the public.

Manager Ward noted that perhaps staff could do a press release on the study as that could help to increase interest by the cities.

Manager Eisele commented that when staff brings that proposal back, perhaps a communications strategy could also be included.

President Swope confirmed the consensus of the Board to direct staff to determine how to best use the \$128,000 in a targeted approach for enhanced street sweeping and perhaps enhanced adopt-a-drain program as well. He commented that he does see that there would be benefit but the program could be hard to control.

Manager Eisele stated that he would like the opportunity to talk more in detail when this comes back as well.

President Swope stated that as this evolves the District will receive more input from the cities that can help guide this forward. He noted that this is a great idea but recognized that it is in the infant stage right now.

**11. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT (2:32:57)**

A. Meetings Attended

No comments.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

Tina Carstens noted the upcoming holiday gathering for the Board and staff.

C. MAWD Annual Meeting

Tina Carstens provided an overview of the different activities at the recent MAWD annual meeting.

D. Wetland Workshop Date Planning

Tina Carstens noted that this has been postponed and confirmed a date of January 18<sup>th</sup>.

E. 2023 Meeting Schedule

Tina Carstens noted a potential conflict with the July meeting, scheduled for July 5<sup>th</sup>.

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Ward seconded, to change the date of the July meeting from July 5, 2023 to June 28, 2023.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
Manager Ward	aye
President Swope	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

**12. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS (2:41:08)**

- 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
- K. Kohlman Permeable Weir Test System
- L. Shallow Lake Aeration Study
- M. Target Store Stormwater Retrofit Projects
- N. Targeted Retrofit Projects
- O. Stewardship Grant Program – Street Sweeping
- P. Lake Emily Subwatershed Regional BMP
- Q. Beltline Five Year Inspection
- R. District Inspection Standardization
- S. 2023 CIP Maintenance and Repair Project
- T. Natural Resources Program
- U. Public Involvement and Education Program
- V. Communications Program and Website

President Swope asked for an update on the West Vadnais boundary change. Tina Carstens Stated that there is a meeting scheduled and noted that they should be able to move forward with that soon.

President Swope asked if there was an update on the land use policy. Tina Carstens stated that there is not update on that.

Manager Ward referenced the inspection grading report and asked if there would be a way to see more detail on how the sites were graded. Tina Carstens stated that she can obtain the scoring sheets for specific sites if requested.

Manager Ward stated that this year has gone by fast, and the Board should begin to think about the evaluation for Tina Carstens. Manager Skinner asked if that could be part of the January meeting. Manager Ward stated that could also occur in February, perhaps occurring the hour before the regular meeting. It was confirmed that the evaluation should be held the hour prior to the February Board meeting.

Manager Skinner complimented Bill Bartodziej on getting the \$77,000 grant. She was impressed with the amount of shoreline restoration that has been able to be completed.

**13. MANAGER COMMENTS AND NEXT MONTH'S MEETING (2:47:30)**

- A. Board Action Log

No comments.

**14. ADJOURN**

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Kramer seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.