



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting
March 1, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of March 1, 2023, 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/H0IPbXZn4a8>. Video time stamps included after each agenda item in minutes.

PRESENT:

Val Eisele, President
Dr. Pam Skinner, Vice President (via Zoom)
Matt Kramer, Treasurer
Benjamin Karp, Secretary
Mark Gernes, Manager

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:

Tina Carstens, District Administrator
Tracey Galowitz, Attorney for District
Nicole Soderholm, Permit Inspector
Kyle Kubitza, Water Quality Technician
Dave Vlasin, Project Coordinator

Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager
Brad Lindaman, Barr Engineering
Mary Fitzgerald, District Inspector
Matt Doneux, Natural Resources Technician
Eric Seaburg, Bolton & Menk

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Manager Eisele at 6:30 p.m.

2. ELECTION OF PRESIDENT PRO TEM (0:08)

Motion: Manager Eisele moved, Manager Kramer seconded, to elect Val Eisele as President Pro Tem.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Karp	aye
Manager Gernes	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
Manager Eisele	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (0:36)

Motion: Manager Kramer moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to approve the agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Karp	aye
Manager Gernes	aye
Manager Kramer	aye

President Pro Tem Eisele aye

Motion carried unanimously.

The members of the Board and staff introduced themselves.

4. RAMSEY-WASHINGTON METRO WATERSHED DISTRICT BOARD MANAGER OATH OF OFFICE (5:44)

Tracey Galowitz administered the Oath of Office to managers Kramer, Karp, Gernes, Eisele, and Skinner.

5. CONSENT AGENDA (7:37)

A. Approval of Minutes from February 1, 2023

B. Treasurer’s Report and Bill List

C. Permit Program

 i. 23-07: White Bear Lake High School South Baseball Field

D. Stewardship Grant Program

 i. 23-04 CS: DeLong, Rain Garden and Habitat Restoration

E. 2023 CIP Maintenance and Repair – Change Order No. 1

Motion: Manager Kramer moved, Manager Karp seconded, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Karp aye

Manager Gernes aye

Manager Kramer aye

President Pro Tem Eisele aye

Motion carried unanimously.

President Pro Tem Eisele thanked staff for the addition of the previous permits.

6. VISITOR COMMENTS (8:37)

No comments.

7. PERMIT PROGRAM (8:50)

A. Applications

Permit #23-03 WCA: Little Canada Twin Lake Boulevard Wetland Replacement Plan – for discussion only

Nicole Soderholm stated that staff is reviewing the wetland replacement plan related to a road improvement project for Twin Lake Boulevard and wanted to get input from the Board. She provided a brief overview and welcomed input from the Board.

Manager Gernes acknowledged that the replacement plan includes banking from outside of the District and asked the level of scrutiny that has been done for potential restoration onsite or within the District. He asked if replacement could occur in the fringe wetlands in that area to the west of the Saint Paul Regional Water road. He noted that perhaps there is available wetland restoration to the east in Vadnais Heights as well. Tina Carstens noted that those areas are owned by Saint Paul Regional Water and Ramsey County Parks and is not within the right-of-way area.

Nicole Soderholm stated that she can direct the applicant to consider project direct replacement, whether the property is owned by the applicant or not if that is the desire of the Board.

Tina Carstens provided more information on the sequencing that an applicant follows before attempting to use wetland credits.

Nicole Soderholm stated that staff does recognize that there is such a small area to restore wetlands and therefore that is a tall ask for the applicant. She stated that while it is better to avoid or minimize impacts, they were open to banking because of the small area of impact.

Manager Gernes stated that he has online sources that he used to review potential wetland restoration areas and provided that information to staff. He confirmed that he would also send the specific locations he was describing. Nicole Soderholm stated that she would pass on those suggestions and the applicant can respond.

President Pro Tem Eisele stated that he liked the technical questions asked by staff in the report and asked if feedback has been received from the applicant. Nicole Soderholm provided additional details noting that Bolton & Menk would be responding to the comments. She stated that the buffer comments are not related to the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) but would have to be addressed in the process of District permitting. She stated that the applicant did look at fencing and retaining walls but because of the grade, that would require more fill of the wetland. She stated that relocating the trail to the south side would increase pedestrian crossings and would not affect the largest portion of impact.

President Pro Tem Eisele commented that culverts are being installed and asked if there is a comprehensive plan with how that water will be managed. Nicole Soderholm stated that there is a full stormwater management report that will be part of the grading permit review.

President Pro Tem Eisele asked if water quality would be addressed as well. Nicole Soderholm confirmed that would be part of the grading permit application review.

Eric Seaburg stated that they continue to work through the process and hope to have a revision ready to provide to the District in the next few days.

Manager Karp commented that he would find it helpful to see the location of the utility easements and to see the difference in the line types shown on the map.

President Pro Tem Eisele asked if staff would be looking at the water path and how that fits in with the District. Nicole Soderholm confirmed that the hydrologic modeling separates the drainage areas for West Vadnais and Twin Lake and will be a part of the grading permit review.

Nicole Soderholm thanked the Board for its input, noting that this is earlier in the process and more details will come.

B. Monthly Enforcement Report

During January, one notice was sent to address: install/repair construction entrance.

8. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM (29:43)

A. Applications - See Consent Agenda

B. Budget Status Update

Paige Ahlborg provided a brief overview of the budget status update and the Stewardship Grant Program.

Manager Gernes asked how the \$5,000 threshold is applied to multiple phase projects. Paige Ahlborg stated that staff is not always aware if there is going to be a second phase. She stated that often times people do one project and then a few years down the road choose to do a second project.

President Pro Tem Eisele asked if new projects could be highlighted differently on the report to make those easier to identify when skimming the report. He also asked for details on the public art item. Paige Ahlborg replied that she can make that change. She provided more details on the City of Woodbury public art project.

9. ACTION ITEMS (34:59)

A. Board of Managers Annual Meeting

Tina Carstens provided an overview of the different actions before the Board under this agenda item.

- Election of Officers

Manager Karp nominated Val Eisele for the position of President.

There were no other nominations.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to elect Val Eisele as President for 2023.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Karp	aye
Manager Gernes	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
President Pro Tem Eisele	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Nominations were opened for the position of Vice President.

Manager Skinner commented that she would be willing to serve as Vice President.

There were no other nominations.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Kramer seconded, to elect Dr. Pam Skinner as Vice President for 2023.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Karp	aye
Manager Gernes	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
President Pro Tem Eisele	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Nominations were opened for the position of Treasurer.

Manager Kramer volunteered for the position of Treasurer.

There were no other nominations.

Motion: Manager Gernes moved, Manager Karp seconded, to elect Matt Kramer as Treasurer for 2023.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Karp	aye
Manager Gernes	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
President Pro Tem Eisele	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

Nominations were opened for the position of Secretary.

Manager Karp commented that he would be willing to serve as Secretary.

There were no other nominations.

Motion: Manager Kramer moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to elect Ben Karp as Secretary for 2023.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Karp	aye
Manager Gernes	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
President Pro Tem Eisele	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

- Liaisons to the CAC and Minnesota Watersheds

Tina Carstens provided details on the different liaison positions.

Manager Karp volunteered to serve as liaison to the District's Community Advisory Committee, and Manager Gernes volunteered to serve as the alternate.

Motion: Manager Kramer moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to appoint Ben Karp as the Liaison to the District's Community Advisory Committee.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Karp	aye
Manager Gernes	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
President Pro Tem Eisele	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

- Consulting Staff Selection

Tina Carstens reviewed the current consulting appointments, noting that action is required each year to reselect these consultants. She noted that next year staff will solicit proposals for those services.

Manager Skinner encouraged a member of the Board to make a motion to retain the existing consultants.

Motion: Manager Gernes moved, Manager Kramer seconded, to appoint Barr Engineering, Galowitz Olson, and Redpath and Company to continue as the consultants for 2023.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Karp	aye
Manager Gernes	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
President Pro Tem Eisele	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

- Official Designations

Tina Carstens reviewed the proposed designations before the Board.

Motion: Manager Kramer moved, Manager Karp seconded, to approve the 4M Fund with LMC: US Bank as the Official Bank of Deposit and *St. Paul Pioneer Press* as the Official Newspaper for 2023.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Karp	aye
Manager Gernes	aye
Manager Kramer	aye
President Pro Tem Eisele	aye

Motion carried unanimously.

10. ATTORNEY REPORT (44:57)

Tracey Galowitz welcomed the new members and looked forward to working with them.

11. BOARD ISSUES, POLICIES, AND OPERATION (FOR DISCUSSION AT MEETING) (45:35)

A. Board Action Log: Additions, Deletions

President Pro Tem Eisele provided a brief overview of the items on the log.

12. NEW REPORTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS (47:27)

A. Kohlman Creek Wakefield Diversion Flood Risk Reduction Feasibility Study

Brad Lindaman noted that Items A and B are updates while Items C and D are scope summaries. He referenced Item A and noted that as they moved forward in the study there were challenges that caused that item to not be feasible and therefore, they did not move forward on that approach. He stated that because the diversion was not feasible, they chose to focus further downstream and the option for PCU pond.

President Pro Tem Eisele asked if a motion were needed to move forward. Tina Carstens noted that this was intended to be an update and answer any questions. Brad Lindaman noted that staff provides a monthly update in the status report.

Paige Ahlborg provided more details on a potential partnership with Ramsey County.

President Pro Tem Eisele asked staff to provide a quick summary of why the diversion was not feasible. Brad Lindaman provided a brief overview of the challenges that would not make the diversion a feasible option.

B. Owasso Basin and North Star Estates Flood Risk Reduction Study Update

Brad Lindaman stated that this study was much more detailed than the summary memorandum update and provided an overview.

Manager Gernes noted that the three alternatives look to be similar. Brad Lindaman reviewed the details provided in the table which provide an estimated construction cost for the different options, related flood reduction level, homes in the flood zone, and unit cost.

Manager Gernes stated that all options appear to remove one home from the flood zone with some relief to businesses. Tina Carstens confirmed that the same level of benefit to homes and businesses is provided through each option, but different levels of flood storage would be provided.

President Pro Tem Eisele asked for clarification on potential scenarios and modeling. Brad Lindaman provided additional explanation on who would be responsible for certain elements in future development scenarios.

President Pro Tem Eisele noted the mention of wooden walkways in Little Canada and asked who would be responsible for ongoing maintenance. Tina Carstens stated that typically if infrastructure were constructed as part of a structure, the District would maintain it. She noted that there are times the City collaborates with other entities and part of that agreement may place the maintenance on the city rather than the District.

President Pro Tem Eisele noted the difference in cost between options two and three and noted that sometimes it is more economical to make a larger investment to start rather than coming back later to make additional improvements/adjustments. Brad Lindaman noted that they are focusing on areas under city ownership and expansion could potentially occur in the future. He stated that in the next month or two, staff will bring forward a more formal scope summary for the Board to review.

Manager Karp asked if the increase in cost for option three is due to the cost to purchase land. Brad Lindaman confirmed that is part of the cost, along with removal of debris.

C. Ames Lake Flood Risk Reduction Feasibility Study Scope Summary

Tina Carstens stated that this would be implementation of the project feasibility study.

Brad Lindaman provided a brief overview of the scope summary. He noted that this is a unique opportunity as the HRA has expressed interest in partnering on the project.

D. Kohlman Lake Aquatic Plant Management Effects: Phase I Scope Summary

Brad Lindaman provided background information on the work that has previously done on Kohlman Lake, noting that recommendations will come forward in phase II.

Tina Carstens stated that staff is also working with the DNR on this study. She stated that while the first phase is being completed, staff will bring forward a scope summary that provides details on the second phase as well. She confirmed that Kohlman is an impaired water body.

13. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT (1:26:52)

A. Meetings Attended

No comments.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

No comments.

C. Ongoing Project Updates

No comments.

D. Minnesota Watersheds Updates

Paige Ahlborg provided an update on the legislative event she attended.

Tina Carstens provided an overview on the priorities and tasks the group is focused on at this time.

14. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS (1:34:36)

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
- K. Resiliency Study for Non-Beltline Tributary Areas

Research Projects

- L. Kohlman Lake Aquatic Plants and Nutrients Study
- M. Shallow Lake Aeration Study

Capital Improvements

- N. Woodbury Target Store Stormwater Retrofit Projects
- O. Targeted Retrofit Projects
- P. Stewardship Grant Program Support
- Q. Lake Emily Subwatershed Regional BMP
- R. Pioneer Park Stormwater Reuse

CIP Project Repair and Maintenance

- S. 2023 CIP Maintenance and Repair Project
- T. 2023-2025 BMP Maintenance Program

Program Updates

- U. Natural Resources Program
- V. Public Involvement and Education Program

Brad Lindaman noted that there is a lot of information available in the StoryMap feature. Manager Gernes provided input how a feature of the tool he would find helpful.

15. MANAGER COMMENTS AND NEXT MONTH'S MEETING (1:38:52)

A. Board Action Log

President Pro Tem Eisele stated that he appreciated the additional information on the normalization tool for inspections and looks forward to the next steps.

16. ADJOURN

Motion: Manager Kramer moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.