



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
May 3, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of May 3, 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/VN-qyP7STas>. Video time stamps included after each agenda item in minutes.

**PRESENT:**

Val Eisele, President  
Dr. Pam Skinner, Vice President  
Ben Karp, Secretary  
Mark Gernes, Manager

**ABSENT:**

Matt Kramer, Treasurer

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager  
Mary Fitzgerald, District Inspector  
Eric Korte, Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator  
Dave Vlasin, Project Coordinator

Erin Anderson Wenz, Barr Engineering  
Laurann Kirschner, Attorney for District

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (0:55)**

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

**3. CONSENT AGENDA (1:31)**

- A. ~~Approval of Minutes from April 5, 2023~~
- B. Treasurer's Report and Bill List
- C. Stewardship Grant Program
  - i. 23-12 CS – Salina, Rain Gardens
  - ii. 23-13 CS – Woodlyn Avenue Impervious Surface Reduction

President Eisele requested to remove Item A from the Consent Agenda.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to approve the consent agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

A. Approval of Minutes from April 5, 2023

President Eisele referenced the approval of additional funds for the school project. He hoped that some of the concerns could be included in addition to the reasons for approval that were reflected. It was noted that the item was conditionally approved at that meeting.

Laurann Kirschner suggested not taking action on the minutes tonight and having this item come back at the next meeting so the Board can review the changes.

**4. VISITOR COMMENTS (5:33)**

**5. PERMIT PROGRAM (5:38)**

A. Applications - None

B. Monthly Enforcement Report

During April, 23 notices were sent to address: install/repair inlet protection (4), install/maintain perimeter control (3), contain liquid/solid wastes (2), repair erosion (1), install upgradient BMPs (1), maintain temporary sediment basin (1), maintain up to date inspection log (4), sweep streets (2), stabilize exposed soils (1), maintain/protect permanent BMPs (3), and dewatering issue (1).

Mary Fitzgerald provided more details on the different violations. She also provided more explanation on the steps that can be taken in private and public projects if there are repeated violations.

**6. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM (10:55)**

A. Applications – See Consent Agenda

B. Budget Status Update

Paige Ahlborg provided more details on the maintenance grant program.

**7. ACTION ITEMS (13:42)**

A. Lake Owasso Shoreline Restoration Phase 2 Bid Award

Paige Ahlborg stated that four bids were received with Sandstrom Land Management coming in with the lowest bid. She noted that the District has experience with that contractor and recommends approval.

President Eisele noted that some of the costs were lower than anticipated and asked if the line items were checked. Paige Ahlborg confirmed that staff has checked those items and again reiterated that the District has experience with this contractor. She noted that some of the differences in bids were due to the two years of maintenance required.

Motion: Manager Gernes moved, Manager Karp seconded, to accept the bids and award the Lake Owasso Shoreline Restoration Phase 2 Project to Sandstrom Land Management and direct staff to prepare and mail the notice of award, prepare the agreements, and review the required submittals. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Arbogast Underground Stormwater Filter Bid Award

Erin Anderson Wenz stated that nine bids were received, and all the bids were higher than the engineer's estimate, although some were not significantly higher. She explained some factors that come into play with different bids. She stated that Shoreline Landscaping was the lowest responsible bidder and noted that the District does have experience working with that contractor and its subcontractor.

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to accept the bids and award the 2023 Targeted Retrofit project to Shoreline Landscaping and direct staff to prepare and mail the notice of award, prepare the agreements, and review the required submittals. Motion carried unanimously.

President Eisele commented that in these scenarios it is helpful to have the information on the other projects the contractor has worked on.

C. District Holiday Schedule Changes for 2023

Manager Gernes commented that the information in the packet stated that federal agencies have been observing these two holidays. He asked if other local government entities/municipalities are observing Indigenous People's Day. Paige Ahlborg stated that some entities still call it Columbus Day but do still observe the holiday. Manager Gernes stated that he does not have an objection but was just wondering.

Manager Karp reiterated that it is essentially just a name change for the holiday.

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to add Monday, June 19, 2023 (Juneteenth) and Monday, October 9, 2023 (Indigenous People's Day) to the District holiday schedule and include them in subsequent years. Motion carried unanimously.

**D. Accept the 2022 District Annual Financial Audit**

Paige Ahlborg reported that the auditor provided a clean opinion with no findings.

President Eisele asked when budget discussions begin. Paige Ahlborg replied that begins in July/August and continues into the fall. President Eisele noted that there were some trends in the general fund that should be discussed during the budget discussions. He referenced the pension and whether that would be revisited in regard to inflation. He referenced the final compliance report and language found within, asking if there was informal communication of any issues. Paige Ahlborg confirmed that is standard language included in the report.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Skinner seconded, to accept the 2022 Annual Audit Report. Motion carried unanimously.

**8. ATTORNEY REPORT (29:33)**

Laurann Kirschner stated that things have been quiet, and she had nothing to report.

**9. BOARD ISSUES, POLICIES, AND OPERATION (FOR DISCUSSION AT MEETING) (30:00)**

**A. Adopt-A-Culvert**

President Eisele referenced the Adopt-A-Drain program and asked if it would make sense to have a similar program for culverts. Paige Ahlborg stated that drains are within the right-of-way and easily accessible, whereas culverts are sometimes on private property and not always in the safest location. She noted that culverts have additional capacity and therefore if there is blockage, flow can continue. She stated that staff regularly inspect District responsible culverts and trash racks and residents can also report a problem.

Dave Vlasin commented that it is rare that there would be a clogged culvert, but if he does observe that, he does the cleaning. He commented that there would be risk to allowing residents to clean culverts. It was noted that if the culvert falls to a municipality, the message is passed to that entity.

The Board agreed that although this was a creative suggestion, there would be risk in allowing residents to get into these situations and cleaning should be left to staff.

Manager Skinner stated that perhaps they could focus on education and advising residents to report issues on the website.

Manager Gernes stated that perhaps it would be helpful to have an exchange with the CAC as that group does have some ideas for initiatives that could be discussed.

President Eisele agreed that it would be nice to talk about those ideas, whether at this meeting or a future meeting.

**10. NEW REPORTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS (39:59)**

A. 2022 District Water Monitoring Report – Presentation by Eric Korte, Monitoring Coordinator

Erik Korte reviewed the objective of water quality monitoring and how that is completed for ponds and lakes. He also provided details on the trophic states index that is used along with the 2022 comparison. He also explained how the data is used over time to note trends.

President Eisele commented that residents can sometimes find this data confusing. The Board and staff discussed how the information could be simplified for the average reader.

Erin Anderson Wenz noted the recent changes in Kohlman Lake and provided details on the additional study that has begun. She explained the contaminants that the District reviews compared to the contaminants monitored by other agencies. She noted that fish advisories are found on the DNR or MPCA websites. She confirmed that staff could provide a link to those websites for residents to use.

Erik Korte reviewed the results from the different creeks and Beltline interceptor.

Erin Anderson Wenz explained when results would trigger additional study and/or action.

Erik Korte provided additional details on the results of the BMPs including the alum plant, Beam Avenue iron enhances sand filter, Frost Kennard spentlime chamber, and Willow Pond spentlime CMAC.

Erik Korte and Erin Anderson Wenz answered general questions of the Board and provided details on how the different BMPs are maintained. Erik Korte provided details on new monitoring studies and partnerships.

President Eisele asked what would be done in regard to the chloride that is prevalent throughout the system. Erik Korte stated that the District has been sampling for chloride in order to identify hotspots.

Manager Skinner commented that she would be in favor of looking more proactively as to what could be done, as prevention would be the best effort. Erin Anderson Wenz replied that identification of those hotspots is the first step as municipalities are not searching for those locations. President Eisele agreed that he would be interested in adding that topic to a future agenda for continued discussion.

Manager Gernes commented that this report was well written and easy to read. He stated that he would also be interested in the chloride hotspot data and bring that back to a future meeting. He stated that perhaps this would be an opportunity for public involvement.

The Board thanked Erik Korte for the great report.

B. Woodbury Target Store Retrofit – Concept Design Summary

Paige Ahlborg commented that this is the third and final Target project within the District. She commented that this is slated as a 2024 project. She provided an overview of the two concepts that were developed and stated that staff recommends moving forward with concept one.

Manager Skinner commented that she is pleased that Target was willing to add another store for continued projects.

President Eisele asked how the project would be funded. Paige Ahlborg replied that the project has been included in the proposed budget for 2024 within the targeted retrofit project and may also be eligible for stormwater impact dollars.

Manager Karp asked how final the design is for the rain garden boundaries. Erin Anderson Wenz stated that those details will come as they progress with the design.

**11. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT (1:52:15)**

A. Meetings Attended

No comments.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

Paige Ahlborg noted the upcoming WaterFest event and the rescheduled July meeting.

C. Board Action Log and Updates

President Eisele noted that interested Managers should alert staff if they would like to volunteer for WaterFest. He commented that it would be nice to have a presence of the Board at the event.

Laurann Kirschner provided clarification that the Board could all attend and volunteer, they just could not discuss District business.

President Eisele asked if there would be a carp fishing event this summer and the Board discussed that type of opportunity.

D. Minnesota Watersheds Updates

No comments.

E. Staffing Updates

No comments.

**12. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS (2:00:35)**

*Project Feasibility Studies*

- A. Interim Emergency Response Planning
- B. Kohlman Creek Flood Risk Feasibility Study
- C. Ames Lake Area Flood Risk Reduction Planning Study
- D. Owasso Basin/North Star Estates Improvements
- E. Carver Ponds Improvement Study
- F. Resiliency Study for non-Beltline Tributary Areas
- G. Street Sweeping Study
- H. Wetlands Workshop, Education, and Planning

*Research Projects*

- I. Kohlman Lake Aquatic Plants and Nutrients Study
- J. Shallow Lake Aeration Study

*Project Operations*

- K. 2023 Automated Lake-Level Stations

*Capital Improvements*

- L. Woodbury Target Store Stormwater Retrofit Projects
- M. Roosevelt Homes Targeted Retrofit Project
- N. Stewardship Grant Program Support
- O. Arbogast Stormwater Filtration BMP
- P. Pioneer Park Stormwater Reuse
- Q. Double Driveway Pond and Fish Creek Tributary Improvements

*CIP Project Repair and Maintenance*

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

*Program Updates*

- T. Natural Resources Program

- U. Public Involvement and Education Program
- V. Citizen Advisory Committee

President Eisele asked for details on the noted upcoming open house related to Kohlman Creek flood risk feasibility study. Paige Ahlborg stated that the city is leading its own flood risk reduction study that is funded through a grant it received. She stated that the city will use the comments received in its report. She stated that most of the issues were local flooding issues that would fall to the city, but staff did schedule some visits for potential stewardship grant projects.

President Eisele referenced the street sweeping study and asked if staff has reached out to those cities. Paige Ahlborg stated that the plan is to come forward in June with recommendations on which cities to move forward with in 2023. She provided details on the process that was followed and the review that was done to ensure the best water quality benefit.

President Eisele stated that perhaps they should revisit the concept of a wetland workshop, noting the more in-depth discussion on wetlands at the last meeting. He referenced Item K and asked if something was done to respond to the concerns. Erik Korte commented that the stations are now functioning correctly and in the future, they will not go on line until staff can ensure the equipment is accurately functioning.

Manager Gernes asked if staff can obtain data on the different webpages visited. Paige Ahlborg confirmed that staff can track the page views. Manager Gernes stated that perhaps a volunteer survey could be added asking what people are looking for.

President Eisele commented that it is unfortunate that Bill retired noting that he will be missed. He asked if there was a celebration. Paige Ahlborg confirmed that there will be an event and provided those details. He commented that the CAC update was great and perhaps it would be helpful to have a CAC presentation at a future Board meeting.

Manager Gernes stated that perhaps it could be engaging to involve the public in stream and lake monitoring.

Stephanie Wang commented that the CAC will focus on the Adopt-A-Drain program at WaterFest and noted that there are other ideas to help engage the public.

### **13. MANAGER COMMENTS AND NEXT MONTH'S MEETING (2:14:26)**

President Eisele commented that the June agenda is heavy and asked for priority on the items that should come forward. He stated that he will talk to Tina Carstens to determine if there would be a simplified way to provide data on these topics.

Manager Karp commented that having links to previous Board meetings and background data would be helpful to bring them up to speed prior to the meeting.

### **14. ADJOURN**

Motion: Manager Skinner moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.