



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting
June 5, 2024**

The Regular Meeting of June 5, 2024, 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/UaeK7TG3jIs>. Video time stamps included after each agenda item in minutes.

PRESENT:

Val Eisele, President
Ben Karp, Vice President
Mark Gernes, Secretary
Matt Kramer, Treasurer
Stephanie Wang, Manager

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:

Tina Carstens, District Administrator
Nicole Maras, Permit Coordinator
Laurann Kirschner, Attorney for District
Patrick Williamson, Natural Resources Specialist
Ashlee Ricci, Grant Program Specialist
Jill Beckman Ray, Resident
Meredith Ver Steeg, City of St. Paul

Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager
Lyndsey Flaten, Water Monitoring Technician
Brad Lindaman, Barr Engineering
Keith Pilgrim, Barr Engineering
Mary Fitzgerald, District Inspector
Beth Watrud, Resident

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (1:05)

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

Motion carried unanimously.

3. CONSENT AGENDA (1:17)

- A. Approval of Minutes from May 1, 2024
- B. Treasurer's Report and Bill List
- C. Permit Program
 - i. 24-25 Habitat for Humanity Beebe Road, Maplewood
 - ii. 24-26 Ramsey County Keller Park Tui Lub Expansion, Maplewood
 - iii. 24-27 RWMWD Kohlman Creek/County Road C Culvert, Maplewood
 - iv. 24-28 Sunrise Over Gervais, Little Canada
 - v. 24-29 Woodland Hills Church Pavement Reduction, Maplewood
 - vi. 24-30 Doctor G Center, Maplewood
 - vii. 24-31 Highwood Hills Rec Center Athletic Fields, St. Paul
 - viii. 24-33 Delaware Place, North St. Paul
- D. Stewardship Grant Program

i. 24-32 CS Applewood Pointe of Shoreview Phase 2

E. Woodbury Target Store Targeted Retrofit Project – Change Order no. 2

Manager Karp requested to remove permit 24-26 Ramsey County Keller Park Tuj Lub Expansion from the consent agenda and move it to the permits program section.

Motion: Manager Gernes moved, Manager Karp seconded to approve the consent agenda as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. VISITOR COMMENTS (4:12)

Beth Watrud provided comments on permit 24-28 Sunrise Over Gervais, Little Canada. Beth expressed concerns over nearby wetlands, habitat, pollution control into Lake Gervais as well as the safety concerns of having more homes in the area.

President Eisele stated he appreciated hearing Beth's concerns. President Eisele stated that the District does its best to ensure regulations are being met with minimal impact to water quality and stormwater management.

Beth Watrud questioned whether the new homes would have basements for severe weather concerns.

President Eisele stated that the plan the District reviews are about water management and runoff control.

Brad Lindaman explained that there are rules that state the lowest level must be above the 100-year flood plain of the area with a minimum of 2 feet between the 100-year flood plain and the lowest floor elevation. Brad explained that these are the types of things that are taken in to account when reviewing permits.

Jill Beckman Ray also commented on permit 24-28, Sunrise Over Gervais, stating that the new homes will be backing up to her property and expressed concerns regarding potential water issues on her property due to the development. Jill questioned who would be her point of contact if issues were to arise. Jill explained that the concerns she has with the wetland were addressed but she still had questions about the potential impacts on her home.

Laurann Kirschner explained that as long as the builders are compliant with the District's rules the enforcement would be a private matter between landowners. Laurann stated that district enforcement would solely rely on whether district rules were violated.

Nicole Maras stated that comments from Jill Beckman Ray were reviewed and communicated to Brandon Barnes throughout the permit review process. Nicole explained that issues were caught on an earlier design revision, which involved making sure there was no encroachment on the property to the south of the development.

Jill Beckman Ray expressed gratitude for the District taking her comments seriously through the permit review process and stated that she hopes it works out as planned.

Nicole Maras explained that if any concerns arise during construction to let the District know and stated that inspections would be happening throughout construction. Nicole explained some of the things that are done to make sure the elevations shown the plans are met during construction.

Jill Beckman Ray expressed further concerns over who would be responsible for the new water basin that will be installed.

Nicole Maras explained that an operation and maintenance plan with a signed maintenance agreement would be required to approve the permit. Nicole Maras stated that in some cases the City of Little Canada agrees to maintain the

basins and in other cases homeowners' associations take on maintenance of the basins. Nicole stated that in this case she believed a homeowner's association would be created for the four home.

Beth Watrud questioned if the amount of new hard surface from the proposed driveways had been looked in to.

Nicole Maras explained that impervious surfaces would be regulated by city ordinances.

5. PERMIT PROGRAM (16:48)

A. Applications

i. 24-26 Ramsey County Keller Park Tuj Lub Expansion, Maplewood

Nicole Maras provided background on the Tuj Lub expansion, noting that the original permit came through around ten years ago and now renovations are needed. Nicole explained some of the improvements that will be added with the expansion including adding artificial turf with a drainage system as well as infiltration basins for the small amount of hard surface proposed.

Manager Karp stated that as a member of the design team of this project he would be abstaining from voting and proposed a roll call vote be held.

Motion: Manager Kramer moved, Manager Wang seconded, to approve permit 24-26 Ramsey County Keller Park Tuj Lub Expansion, Maplewood. A roll call was performed.

Manager Karp – Abstained

Manager Gernes - Aye

Manager Kramer - Aye

Manager Wang - Aye

President Eisele – Aye

Motion approved.

ii. 24-32 Barge Terminal 1 Expansion, St. Paul

Nicole Maras explained that this permit applicant is requesting a variance for floodplain fill. Nicole provided details on the location of the project noting that the applicant and land owner is the St. Paul Port Authority. Nicole provided details on the project and stated that Army Corps of Engineers and DNR permits were triggered, noting that those permits were reviewed and approved. Nicole explained the District permit was triggered due to the work in the floodplain and the proposed rip rap fill. Nicole stated that the variance request is to fill the floodplain without provided compensatory storage with the reason being the modeling and calculations have demonstrated no increase in the 100-year flood level of the river. Nicole stated that modeling results and a FEMA No Rise certificate were received and explained that these were needed in the permit process. Nicole explained that the amount of fill is insignificant to the large floodplain.

President Eisele questioned if the modeling is revisited often or if there was a recertification from the 2013 and 2019 modeling time frames and asked if the assessment would need to be rerun.

Brad Lindaman explained that the existing model would be pulled and changes would be made as needed and explained the details of what is looked at when the model is rerun. Brad Lindaman confirmed that a no rise would have been shown in the modeling to receive the certification.

Manager Wang asked for more details on the calculations used.

Nicole Maras explained that results were requested for the amount of fill spread out across the floodplain to inform the rise in elevation, noting that none was shown.

Manager Karp asked if the District had run into the FEMA No Rise certificates in the past and wondered how it had been handled in those situations.

Nicole Maras explained that the area around the Mississippi River is a dynamic system and it is not uncommon to trigger permits for very small projects adjacent to the river due to entire properties being in the floodplain.

Brad Lindaman noted two or three similar situations in the past 10 years where the variance request was approved.

Motion: Manager Kramer moved, Manager Gernes seconded to approve permit 24-32 Barge Terminal 1 Expansion, St. Paul with the variance.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Monthly Enforcement Report

Nicole Maras provided an overview of the monthly enforcement report.

Manager Gernes questioned if the release of sediment that was thought to come from water moving through the grate at the site for permit #22-33 Ramsey County WBA/Larpenteur – Maplewood, St. Paul, had been repaired so that additional rain would not result in the same situation.

Nicole Maras explained that one of the practices advocated for was diversion. Nicole stated part of the problem was runoff from undisturbed sections of pavement making its way to the low point and crossing over disturbed soil.

Mary Fitzgerald explained that it is a unique and complicated intersection due to the slope of all four roads. Mary explained that this makes it tricky if all of the water is flowing in the same direction. Mary stated that diversion has been implemented so that water upstream goes into the existing catch basins instead of traveling over the site. Mary provided an update on the large trench drain discussed in May, noting that half of the section had been removed from the area of road under construction to try and keep the clean road going into the trench drain and keeping the disturbed road out of it. Mary explained some other measure that have been taken to correct the issue. Mary provided some additional ideas that could be brought to the site for consideration.

6. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM (31:26)

A. Applications – See consent agenda

B. Budget Status Update

President Eisele questioned if a green roof project was in any of the staff approved projects.

Paige Ahlborg stated that there are no current approvals for green roofs but noted that there may be some coming for discussion in the future.

Manager Wang commented that she would like maintenance of projects awarded grant dollars to be a priority to insure they remain in working order, noting that long term maintenance seems to be an obstacle.

Paige Ahlborg explained that maintenance is taken seriously, noting that annual inspections, maintenance newsletters and working with contractors are things being done to promote maintenance. Paige stated that it is also something that is discussed with grant recipients during the grant process.

Manager Wang suggested involving Water Stewards to help provide maintenance education.

Ashlee Ricci agreed that there are considerations to be taken for the future, noting that it could be involving Water Stewards, the Conservation Corps. or involving additional staff. Ashlee stated that she will be working with Lauren Hazenson to make sure the consistent communications on maintenance are going out.

President Eisele supported the involvement of the CAC for those looking for tips on maintenance and noted it is important to leverage the community.

7. ACTION ITEMS

A. District MS4 Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (38:41)

Nicole Maras explained that the MS4 is an annual requirement by the MPCA. Nicole explained that the District is regulated MS4, meaning that the District is owner and operator of a storm sewer system. Nicole stated that there are many different categories and requirements within those categories in which the District is required to complete and report on. Nicole explained there has not been an annual report submitted in the last few years due to the MPCA not having a completed form. Nicole stated data is continuously collected as if the reporting were still occurring. Nicole explained that since she was unsure of what the reports will entail, she included the District SWPPP application in the Board packet that outlines what the normal activities of the District are. Nicole stated that part of the process includes comments from the public as well as comments from the Board prior to submitting the annual report to the state. Nicole explained that noticing is typically done at the Board Meeting as well as posted on the District's website.

Manager Gernes asked if the State had ever commented on the District's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program.

Nicole Maras explained that the District had been audited in the past. Nicole explained details how what can be looked in the audit, noting that the last one had happened over 15 years ago.

Tina Carstens explained that approval is a part of the SWPPP application process.

Nicole Maras noted that the current SWPPP is approved. Nicole explained that she meets with District programs responsible for the different minimum control measures to make sure tracking is happening, especially in a time of not reporting to make sure data collection and storage is not slipping for when reporting on previous years activities will need to happen. Nicole provided more information on each program's responsibilities.

President Eisele stated that since there were no public comments, no further action would be needed.

B. County Road C Culvert Flood Risk Reduction Project Bid Award (45:05)

Brad Lindaman provided an overview of the progress that has taken place on the County Road C culvert and reviewed the previous information discussed with the Board. Brad stated that six bids had been received and noted that they were all generally within the range of the engineer's estimate. Brad provided more information on the bid estimate and the bid amount from the lowest bidder. Brad stated the District had not previously worked with the lowest bidder, Bituminous Roadways Inc., as a general contractor on a project but they have worked as a sub-contractor on District projects in the past. Brad provided more information on Bituminous Roadways Inc. Brad stated that if the project is awarded to Bituminous Roadways Inc. the request submittals, notice of award, contract will be provided and the performance and payment bond, and certificate of insurance will be gathered and reviewed. Brad expected work to start in late June or early July with an end date in early September. Brad provided more details on the project and noted that it is connected to roadwork being done by the County.

President Eisele asked for more information on permit 24-27 RWMWD Kohlman Creek/County Rd. C Culvert, Maplewood and asked if that permit was connected to this project.

Nicole Maras explained that they are the same project. Noting that the District's projects sometimes trigger the District's rules requiring permitting.

President Eisele questioned if there is interaction with the DNR on the permit.

Nicole Maras stated that Barr staff had been consulting with the DNR due to Kohlman Creek being a public water as well as making sure there are no wetland restrictions.

Manager Gernes questioned if there is tracking done on which companies submit bids and whether or not they've been awarded bids previously.

Tina Carstens confirmed that this information is tracked.

Brad Lindaman stated that there are repeat companies seen but sometimes they are just not the low bidder.

President Eisele suggested also tracking how the final amounts of the projects compare to the bid amounts.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Kramer seconded moved to approve the bid for the County Road C Culvert Flood Risk Reduction Project to Bituminous Roadways Inc., direct staff to prepare the notice of award prepare the agreements and review the required submittals.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. 2023 District Annual Financial Audit (56:03)

Tina Carstens provided an overview of the 2023 District Annual Financial Audit.

Motion: Manger Gernes moved, Manager Karp seconded to approve the 2023 District Annual Financial Audit.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Beltline Mississippi River Branch Outfall Replacement Accept Plans and Advertise for Bid (58:21)

Brad Lindaman provided details on the sink hole that occurred last summer and explained that this project would be the replacement of that section of the Beltline storm sewer, noting that it was about 50 feet from the river upstream. Brad explained that the project would entail replacement and removal of the pipe. Brad provided more details of designs that were reviewed for this project and provided details on the design chosen. Brad explained that the Beltline storm sewer discharges through a sheet pile wall at the river, which is under ownership of the St. Paul Port Authority and is used by barges. Brad explained that the wall also includes tie backs to hold it in place, noting that those tie backs will need to be taken into consideration during construction. Brad provided details on the engineers estimate and stated that this is an important piece of the Beltline storm sewer and a full replacement is needed in this section.

Manager Gernes noted that this location is very busy and wondered if there are any utilities would cause an issue during construction.

Brad Lindaman stated that the utilities that are known about are stated in the plans and explained that the contractor selected would have to do additional work to locate any unknown utilities.

President Eisele questioned if there is anything being put in place to reduce further failure outside of the pipe itself. President Eisele asked if the main problem is the age of the pipe or if the is something else going on.

Brad Lindaman stated that he believed that the age of the pipe is an issue and explained how the problem occurred in more detail.

Motion: Manger Gernes moved, Manager Karp seconded to approve the preliminary plans and outline specifications budget and scope of work and direct staff to finalize bidding documents and advertise the project for bid.

Motion carried unanimously.

E. Cottage Place Wetland Restoration Project Bid Award (1:13:01)

Paige Ahlborg provided details on the bids received, stating that out of the five bids that had been received Dimke Excavating came in with the lowest bid. Paige explained that this would be a new contractor to the District but not a new company, noting that they had good references and examples of work. Paige stated that the permit for this project would be seen at the July Board Meeting.

President Eisele questioned if the request Barr made to Dimke Excavating had been responded to.

Brad Lindaman stated that some of the information had been received and stated he felt that there was no reason for concern at this time.

Motion: Manager Wang moved, Manager Gernes seconded to approve the bid for Cottage Place Wetland Restoration project bid contingent upon Barr and District staff's satisfaction with the qualification evidence provided by the apparent lowest responsible and responsive bidder Dimke Excavating, award the project the project to Dimke Excavating at the bid price of \$314,197.25 and direct staff to request the required bonds and insurance information and execute the contract for the work.

Motion carried unanimously

8. ATTORNEY REPORT (1:15:38)

Laurann Kirschner provided information on the work the attorney's office has been doing including contract, insurance and bond reviews. Laurann stated that they will be working closely with Barr and District staff to make sure contract requirements are being met. Laurann provided and update on the Fish Creek appraisals for easements, noting that an appraiser has been found and they will be visiting the site the next few weeks.

9. BOARD DISCUSSION TOPICS (2:06:26)

No comments.

10. NEW REPORTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS (1:17:30)

A. Managing Lake Internal Loads Presentation – Keith Pilgrim, Barr Eng.

Keith Pilgrim began his presentation by providing an overview, noting that he will be discussing Kohlman Lake as well as Wakefield Lake. Keith provided information on studies that have been completed within the District including sediment management analysis in 2018, internal load analysis in 2020, and cost benefit analysis for internal loading control options in 2022. Keith proceeded to discuss phosphorus fraction and gave details on how this can contribute to internal loading and detailed what was found in the lakes sampled, noting that there is a good dispersion of different compositions amongst the lakes in the District. Keith provided more details on the internal loading process and how they cause algae blooms, noting the difference in processes between iron bound phosphorus and organic phosphorus and how they enter the water column. Keith continued on to discuss the alum treatment that took place in Kohlman Lake, noting that the phosphorus levels are back up to pre-treatment levels. Keith explained how sediment cores were collected and the concentrations found within the sediment cores. Keith provided more details on iron bound phosphorus and how it interacts with aluminum. Keith explained that once aluminum gets it old transforms into other

molecules and no longer binds to phosphorus. Keith went on to give more detail of the graphs provided in the presentation, noting that the data shows that the alum treatment had run its course.

President Eisele questioned if residents were being engaged to help ensure organic phosphorus loading, such as grass clippings, are managed.

Tina Carstens explained that this is a part of the continual education program. Tina stated that upstream projects had also been completed to help address the external loading. Tina noted that many residents have worked with the District to implement natural shoreline and educating on external loading is ongoing.

Keith Pilgrim continued on the discuss internal loading found within Wakefield Lake, noting that it is a dynamic system. Keith continued to provide details on what the loading and flushing of Wakefield Lake looks like. Keith explained that Wakefield Lake contains a higher concentration of organic phosphorus in the lake bottom sediment. Keith continued on to explain that there is a strong relationship in all District lakes between the amount of iron and how much iron bound phosphorus is produced. Keith stated that due to this finding his hypothesis is that if you add more iron you can make more iron bound phosphorus. Keith provided some information on pumping more oxygen into the water column to make sure the iron bound phosphorus stays formed would be an option to look into. Keith gave more details on aeration and the challenges in shallow lakes. Keith highlighted oxygen saturation technology, a new method for adding oxygen to water and provided details on how that system works.

Manager Kramer left the meeting at 8:14 PM.

President Eisele asked for more information on how the oxygen saturation technology would work and questioned if it would reach deeper parts of lakes where more phosphorus was found in the sediment.

Keith Pilgrim explained that it would be designed to reach the deeper areas.

Manager Gernes questioned if the technology being discussed would need electricity.

Keith Pilgrim stated the electricity would be needed and explained more details on what would need to be worked out if this system were to be installed, noting that this is the beginning stages of discussion. Keith went on to provide more details on how the oxygen saturation technology system works and explained some of the pros and cons of the system. Keith noted there are a lot of things to consider when determining if this is the right approach. Keith stated that the experimental part of using this new technology would be the engineering piece as well as if it will practically work to oxygenate the sediments.

Manager Gernes questioned if there was information on how fish in Kohlman Lake and Wakefield Lake can affect the treatments.

Keith Pilgrim explained that carp can have an impact on how the aluminum migrates down. Keith stated that having fish doing some mixing could potentially be a good thing, but also noted that too much fish activity could cause faster migration.

President Eisele asked what next steps should be looked at given the recommendations.

Tina Carstens explained that the information was brought to the Board to keep in mind as budgeting for 2025 starts, as well as to find out if there was support for an alum treatment as well as support from the board to continue to review the options available.

Manager Karp expressed support for an alum treatment at Kohlman Lake and exploring the oxygen saturation technology system in Wakefield Lake.

Manager Gernes stated that the Kohlman alum treatment makes sense. Manager Gernes stated he had more questions on the oxygen saturation technology suggested for Wakefield Lake.

President Eisele stated that he was curious about other direct air technologies exist. President Eisele expressed support in further investigating the use of oxygen saturation technology.

Keith Pilgrim stated that there are other techniques that could be looked into to give more options.

Brad Lindaman stated that because the technology being discussed is a conceptual design a feasibility study would be completed to look at more of the details to see what it would actually take to get this system put into place.

The board discussed support of moving forward with budget planning for an alum treatment on Kohlman Lake in 2025 as well as a research project to explore the use of oxygen saturation in Wakefield Lake.

Barr Engineering will prepare scope summaries for those two projects for review by the board.

B. Tanners Lake, Battle Creek Lake, and McKnight Basin Outlet Operation Plans Scope Summary (informational item)

No comments.

11. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT (2:09:45)

A. Meetings Attended

No comments.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

Tina Carstens reviewed the upcoming meetings and dates.

C. Staff Anniversaries

No comments.

D. Board Action Log

No comments.

E. Minnesota Watersheds Updates

No comments.

F. Staff Organizational Chart

No comments.

12. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS (2:14:27)

Project Feasibility Studies

A. Ames Lake Area Flood Risk Reduction Planning Study

B. Phalen Village Flood Risk Reduction

C. Resiliency Study for Non-Beltline Tributary Areas

D. Owasso Basin/North Start Estates Improvements

E. Street Sweeping

F. Maplewood Mall 2024 Assessment

G. Payne-Phalen Natural Resources Inventory

H. Watershed Approach to Retrofit Projects

Project Operations

I. Lake-Level Station Maintenance and Rain Gauge Installation

Capital Improvements

J. Woodbury Target Store Stormwater Retrofit Project

K. Roosevelt Homes

L. Targeted Retrofit Projects 2024

M. Pioneer Park Stormwater Reuse

N. Fish Creek Tributary Improvements

O. Cottage Place Wetland Restoration

P. County Road C Culvert Project

Q. Kohlman Creek Flood Risk Reduction Projects: Final Design

CIP Project Repair and Maintenance

R. Routine CIP Inspection and Unplanned Maintenance Identification

S. 2024 CIP Maintenance and Repairs Project

T. Beltline Mississippi Branch Outfall Replacement Project

Program Updates

U. Natural Resources Program

V. Public Involvement and Education Program

W. Communications and Outreach Program

13. MANAGER COMMENTS AND NEXT MONTH'S MEETING (2:24:09)

President Eisele asked if the CAC could be leveraged to help in targeted areas or specific projects and better utilize their knowledge.

Manager Karp suggested that he bring this question to the CAC at the next meeting for discussion.

Tina Carstens stated each year the CAC is leveraged in this way and has a plan for the rest of 2024. The board will have an opportunity to discuss the CACs 2025 work plan as the year progresses.

Manager Gernes communicated ideas for project engagement through the CAC.

14. ADJOURN

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.