



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting
April 2, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of April 2, 2025, 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/aNUC8Ev7uxE>. Video time stamps are included after each agenda item in minutes.

PRESENT:

Val Eisele, President
Ben Karp, Vice President
Mark Gernes, Secretary
Stephanie Wang, Treasurer
Gabi Grogan, Manager

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:

Staff:

Tina Carstens, Administrator
Paige Ahlborg, Assistant Administrator
Lauren Hazenson, Communications Program Manager
Nicole Maras, Regulatory Program Manager
Mary Fitzgerald, Regulatory Specialist
Paul Erdmann, Natural Resources Program Manager
David Vlasin, Project Coordinator
Kyle Kubitza, Monitoring Technician
Kendra Kloth, Regulatory Technician

Consultants:

Tracey Galowitz, Attorney for District
Brandon Barnes, Barr Engineering

Visitors:

Paul Tragiai, Resident
Bob Terry, Resident
Richard Sawdey, Visitor

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (0:13)

President Eisele requested to move item 3F Pioneer Park Stormwater Reuse Project – Change Order No. 3 to action item 7D.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

3. CONSENT AGENDA (1:09)

- A. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from March 5, 2025
- B. Treasurer's Report and Bill List
- C. Permit Program
 - i. 25-07 RWMWD Maplewood Toyota Retrofit, Maplewood
 - ii. 25-09 Little Canada Pioneer Park Stormwater, Little Canada

- D. Stewardship Grant Program
- i. 25-08 CS Ley
 - ii. 25-09 CS Applewood Pointe of Shoreview Phase 3
 - iii. 25-10 CS Washington County Community Development Authority
 - iv. 25-11 CS Pitrina Park Terrace HOA Phase 2
 - v. 25-13 CS Woodbury 2025 Street Sweeping

E. ~~Beltline Mississippi River Branch Repairs – Change Order No. 3~~

F. ~~Pioneer Park Stormwater Reuse Project – Change Order No. 3~~

President Eisele asked for information on what drove the new permit application for increased flood storage for permit application 25-09 Pioneer Park Stormwater, Little Canada.

Nicole Maras explained a permit was triggered due to the area of disturbance being over one acre as well as floodplain rules. Nicole stated that mapping showed a large area of the park being inundated in a 100-year event.

President Eisele questioned if this permit was related to other work being completed at Pioneer Park.

Nicole explained the City of Little Canada had been looking to add additional capacity to the stormwater reuse system, noting the District led stormwater reuse project. Nicole explained that the work being proposed would tie into the stormwater reuse system.

Manager Gernes asked for details of the compensatory storage being provided in permit application 25-07 RWMWD Maplewood Toyota Retrofit, Maplewood.

Nicole Maras provided details of the compensatory storage and noted that it would be provided on site, adjacent to the wetland.

President Eisele asked for more information on the Beltline Mississippi River Branch repairs and the ownership of the repaired deadmen and tie backs.

Brandon Barnes stated that they are owned by the St. Paul Port Authority. Brandon explained that they were disturbed during the completion of the Beltline stormsewer outfall repairs and the problem had been identified at that time. Brandon explained that if the deadmen and tie backs had been covered back up in the condition, they were found in, it could cause a failure at the Beltline stormsewer outfall.

Manager Gernes asked whether having a clearer understanding of the locations would have led to a different approach to the Beltline stormsewer repairs.

Brandon explained that the repair designs were based on the hydraulic capacity needed at that location. Brandon stated that the geometry of the pipe was selected based on the smallest footprint for the hydraulic design at the location and while the repairs may not have changed there would have been a better estimate of the total cost.

Tina Carstens stated that due to it being uncovered during the District's project and the potential for a failure or damage to the District project it was necessary to complete the repairs and replacement. Tina explained that the District would continue discussions with the St. Paul Port Authority in regards to recouping partial costs.

Manager Gernes stated that he could understand the District covering the entire cost if the damage had been done by the District, noting that the District had only uncovered the failure. Manager Gernes stated that he felt it made sense for St. Paul Port Authority to share in the repair costs.

President Eisele agreed that the cost should be shared. President Eisele requested item 3E Beltline Mississippi River Branch repairs – change order no. 3 moved to action item 7E for further discussion and approval.

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

Motion withdrawn.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Gernes seconded to remove item 3E Beltline Mississippi Branch repairs, change order no. 3 from the consent agenda and move it to action item 7E.

Motion carried unanimously.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion moved to action item 7E.

4. VISITOR COMMENTS (22:00)

Bob Tragiai introduced himself stating that he was a resident that lived on the east shore of Lake Owasso. Bob noted that he had a shoreline restoration grant from the District. Bob stated that he was concerned with the lake level of Lake Owasso. Bob explained that he had noticed loss of shoreline and wanted to address further loss to protect the shoreline restoration work being done.

Tina Carstens provided information on the monitoring and inspection completed to make sure there are no points of backup due to blockages. Tina also provided information on water level monitoring that is done by the District.

Bob Tragiai also saw large amounts of ice heaving on the shoreline and wondered if anything could be done to help with or prevent further damage.

Tina Carstens stated that staff would follow up with the resident after the meeting. Tina provided Bob Tragiai with information on where the Lake Owasso level information could be found on the District's website.

5. PERMIT PROGRAM (28:44)

A. Applications

i. 25-08 Woodbury High School Addition, Woodbury

Nicole Maras provided details of the project at Woodbury High School, noting that two small additions and parking lot improvements were being proposed. Nicole stated that the plans included at grade filtration basins, and surface filtration basins due to poor soils. Nicole noted that there were some jurisdictional issues with the wetlands on the site. Nicole stated that portions of the on-site wetlands were considered historical, and portions were considered excavated for stormwater purposes. Nicole explained that a wetland delineation was completed and WCA approvals had been requested. Nicole noted the WCA approvals included an exemption request for a new flared end structure on the southeast corner of the wetland. Nicole provided details of the flared end structure's location. Nicole stated that there was a variance request for disturbance to the buffer.

Manager Wang asked for more information on the larger filtration basin being proposed. Manager Wang noted that a pollinator garden had been planted by the Woodbury Environmental Club students in that area. Manager Wang suggested an opportunity to engage with the Woodbury Environmental Club with the plantings on-site or in other restoration areas.

Nicole Maras explained that the work would be completed with contractors hired by the property owner, which was Woodbury High School. Nicole stated that she would share information on the location of the student's pollinator garden with those working on the project.

President Eisele asked for more information on the two encroachments in the plans provided.

Nicole Maras clarified that there would be areas with temporary disturbance while the proposed flared end within the boundary of the wetland would be a permanent disturbance. Nicole noted that WCA approval had been given for the permanent impact.

President Eisele asked for more information on the jurisdictional challenges at the site.

Nicole explained the process of review that took place to determine the boundaries of the wetlands. Nicole noted that once arial photos and grading plans were provided it was determined that the site had both historical wetlands and areas that had excavated for stormwater purposes adjacent to the historical wetlands.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Gernes seconded to approve permit application 25-08 Woodbury High School Addition, Woodbury.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Permit Program Monthly Memorandum

Nicole Maras provided an overview of the permit program monthly memorandum which included violations given over the past month, meetings of interest and a summary of projects that were resuming or starting up that will be inspected throughout the field season. Nicole provided an update on the Gold Line site noting that while much of the work had been completed there was still work to be done with the permanent stormwater facilities and confirming who will be owning and maintaining BMPs.

6. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM (39:13)

A. Applications – None

B. Budget Status Update

Paige Ahlborg provided an update on the Stewardship Grant program budget. Paige noted that there had been some staff approvals and the five approvals included in the consent agenda. Paige stated that site visits were picking up for the season, and there were many incoming consult requests and a few projects carried over from the previous year.

7. ACTION ITEMS

A. Roosevelt Homes Phase 3 Bid Awards (40:33)

Brandon Barnes provided details of the earlier phases of the Roosevelt Homes project, noting that the third phase included conveyance improvements to get water from the parking lot into the basins that were constructed in phase one. Brandon stated that four bids had been received, with Shoreline Landscaping being the lowest responsible bidder. Brandon noted that the bids had been higher than the engineer's estimate. Brandon explained that the noticeable difference was in the mobilization costs. Brandon provided details on the work to be completed and explained that the additional coordination needed with the property owner could be reason for the higher-than-expected bids.

Motion: Manager Gernes moved, Manager Wang seconded to accept the bids and award the 2025 Roosevelt Homes Phase 3 project to Shoreline Landscaping and Contracting, direct staff to prepare and mail the notice of award prepare the agreements and review the required submittals.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Maplewood Toyota Contactor Selection (45:30)

Brandon Barnes provided details of the Maplewood Toyota Contractor Selection. Brandon explained that this project did not meet the threshold to go out for public bid, noting that there had been requests for quotes. Brandon reviewed the engineer's estimate of probable cost and the lowest quote received.

Motion: Manager Grogan moved, Manager Karp seconded to approve the selected contractor, and direct staff to prepare contracts and review required submittals.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Cochran Recovery Services Contractor Selection (48:04)

Brandon Barnes provided information on the proposed work to be completed at the site. Brandon noted that similar to the Maplewood Toyota project quotes were received by request. Brandon reviewed the quotes and compared the lowest quote to the engineer's estimate.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Gernes seconded to approve the selected contractor and direct staff to prepare contracts and review the required submittals.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Pioneer Park Stormwater Reuse Project – Change Order No. 3 (50:58)

Manager Wang asked for confirmation that part of the problem was created due to the city being unable to locate or mark irrigation lines. Manager Wang asked if marking the irrigation lines was something that could be done in the future.

Dave Vlasin stated that due to irrigation lines being a private utility with little ability to map the District would not know the location unless the information were provided by the city.

President Eisele stated that he had found that mapping of irrigation systems could be expensive and not consistently accurate.

Manager Wang questioned if there would be more issues with digging at this location with the approval of permit application 25-09 Little Canada Pioneer Park Stormwater, Little Canada.

Brandon Barnes stated that mapping of irrigation lines would be the city's responsibility for 25-09 Little Canada Pioneer Park Stormwater, Little Canada, noting the two projects were separate. Brandon stated that the only connection between the two projects would be hydraulic.

President Eisele questioned why the District would cover 75% of the repairs when it was clear in the contract that the contractor would take responsibility.

Dave Vlasin stated that the District was covering the majority of the cost due to the location of the irrigation line not being labeled correctly. To keep a good relationship with the contractor, he felt it was a fair split. Dave provided details of the conversations that were had with the contractor.

Manager Gernes stated he was comfortable with the 75% but would like a more even split.

President Eisele stated he would feel more comfortable if the costs were evenly split due to the wording in the contract.

Dave Vlasin stated that more discussions could be had with the contractor.

Manager Karp stated that with the inability to locate the irrigation lines he felt that the split was fair.

Manager Wang stated that she felt comfortable with accepting the 75% based on the discussions that were had.

Motion: Manager Wang moved, Manager Grogan seconded to approve Pioneer Park Stormwater Reuse Project, Little Canada, Change Order No. 3.

Motion carried unanimously.

E. Beltline Mississippi River Branch Repairs – Change Order No. 3 (16:29)

See consent agenda discussion.

Tina Carstens explained that the work had been completed at the direction of staff. Tina stated that a discussion on cost sharing would be had with St. Paul Port Authority while still paying the contractor for the completed work.

Manager Gernes agreed that the contractor needed to be paid.

President Eisele stated that the Beltline storm sewer repairs needed to be completed, and there should not be a delay caused to those repairs.

Manager Karp stated that he also agreed with moving forward with the contractor payment.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Wang seconded to approve the change order with instructions to staff and the attorney to work with the St. Paul Port Authority on the cost sharing associated to the Beltline Mississippi River Branch Repairs Change Order No. 3.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. ATTORNEY REPORT (1:07:08)

Tracey Galowitz provided an overview of the work the attorney's office completed over the past month. Tracey highlighted work being done on small projects and helping to determine the processes related to small projects as well as working to close out the County Rd. C project.

9. BOARD DISCUSSION TOPICS (1:09:01)

President Eisele provided details of the Minnesota Watersheds legislation event that occurred on March 21st that he and Manager Karp attended.

10. NEW REPORTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS (1:14:13)

A. 2025 Engagement Initiatives Presentation, Lauren Hazenson, Communications and Outreach Program Manager
Lauren Hazenson began her presentation discussing the difference between communications and engagement and explained how they are utilized to build relationships and provide information. Lauren went on to discuss the goals of the public engagement plan for the management plan update. Lauren stated that goals of engagement during the management plan update are to look for ways to expand engagement opportunities, prioritizing equitable engagement practices, and reduce barriers by increasing accessibility. Lauren explained that feedback data gathered will help paint a more complete and representative picture of people's values and concerns regarding water quality, flood risk management and erosion control. Lauren explained that the District is moving towards the involvement phase of working with the public to make sure their concerns are reflected in the management plan update. Lauren discussed the steps to achieve more public involvement and the tools that would be implemented to reach that goal. Lauren provided details of the multiple engagement formats that would be utilized such as open houses, event tabling, Kiosks or QR codes at public buildings and an interactive website.

President Eisele asked for more information about the attendance at previous tabling events.

Lauren Hazenson provided details of past tabling events and their attendance. Lauren noted that tabling was a great way to reach a wider audience as well as meeting community leaders. Lauren provided details of how event locations were chosen as well as how the community survey conducted in 2024 was used to target areas of low visibility. Lauren discussed locations where Zan Associates would be conducting outreach and engagement and areas that District staff will focus on. Lauren highlighted the public kick-off that will be happening on May 31st at Lake Phalen. Lauren provided background information on Zan Associates and explained why they were chosen to help with engagement for the management plan update. Lauren continued on to discuss the reporting and evaluation step of the engagement plan which included mid-point reporting and internal assessments. Lauren stated that through the engagement plan the District hoped to continue building and expanding community partnerships as well growing District visibility and presence.

Manager Wang asked for information on the strongest community partners the District currently had.

Lauren Hazenson stated that the East Side Boy and Girls Club as well as the Ramsey County Master Gardeners were organizations that the District worked closely with. Lauren went on to highlight upcoming events to celebrate the District's 50th anniversary, including Watershed Week. Lauren stated that the goal of the Watershed Week events were to provide opportunities to engage with new people. Lauren proceeded by discussing other engagement initiatives which included an outreach and engagement volunteer pilot program, EMWREP high school career exploration, District 2 stewardship grant outreach, spring webinars and Ramsey County Master Gardener mentorships. Lauren also provided information on new staff members, happenings in the education program, and District branding.

Manager Gernes stated that he thought the plan looked great and appreciated the information.

Manager Wang asked what success would look like with this plan.

Lauren Hazenson stated that she felt success would be learning something new about the community.

President Eisele expressed excitement with moving forward with the engagement plan.

11. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT (1:40:47)

A. Meetings Attended

No comments.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

No comments.

C. Staff Anniversaries

No comments.

D. Board Action Log

No comments.

E. Minnesota Watersheds Updates

No comments.

12. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS (2:05:17)

Project Feasibility Studies

A. Manufactured Homes Resilience Evaluation

B. Evaluation of Compliance with South Metro Mississippi River Total Suspended Solids (TSS) Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

C. Street Sweeping

D. Roseville Central Park Flood Risk Reduction Feasibility Study

E. Stormwater Model Updates

Monitoring Water Quality/Project Monitoring

F. Annual Water Quality Report Assistance

Planning

G. Watershed Management Plan Update: Phase 1- Stakeholder Engagement

H. 2025 Grant Applications

Research Projects

I. Wakefield Lake Aeration Feasibility Study

Project Operations

J. Lake-Level Station Maintenance and Rain Gauge Installation

K. Lake-Level Station Forecast Integration

Capital Improvements

L. Roosevelt Homes

M. Targeted Retrofit Projects 2025

N. Pioneer Park Stormwater Reuse

O. Fish Creek Tributary Improvements

P. Cottage Place Wetland Regeneration

Q. County Road C Culvert Replacement

R. Kohlman Creek Improvements

S. Lake Wabasso Outlet Replacement

T. Kohlman Lake Alum Treatment

CIP Project Repair and Maintenance

U. 2025 CIP Maintenance and Repairs

V. Beltline Mississippi Branch Outfall Replacement Project

W. Beltline and Battle Creek Storm Sewer Five-Year Inspections and Beltline Detailed Survey

Program Updates

X. Natural Resources Program

Manager Wang asked for more details on the three locations that were monitored for goldfish and asked why the goldfish were being found in those locations. Manager Wang questioned if they could be found in other places.

Paul Erdman provided details on how the goldfish problem was recognized. Paul discussed a plan to work with Carp Solutions to see if the goldfish are causing water quality problems. Paul explained that it is thought that the goldfish are being dumped from home aquariums. Paul highlighted the opportunity for additional outreach and education around dumping goldfish.

Manager Wang noted that it may be an opportunity to include education in school programming and looked forward to seeing more information.

Y. Communications and Engagement Program

13. MANAGER COMMENTS AND NEXT MONTH'S MEETING (2:15:07)

Manager Karp stated that he would be interested in opportunities to see work being completed around the District.

Tina Carstens stated that there would be opportunities for touring sites.

14. ADJOURN

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.