



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

The Regular Meeting of May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 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 is available at <https://youtu.be/uD6llrNp04Q>. Video timestamps are included after each agenda item, in minutes.

**PRESENT:**

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

**ABSENT:**

**ALSO PRESENT:**

**Staff:**

Paige Ahlborg, Assistant Administrator  
Nicole Maras, Regulatory Program Manager  
Mary Fitzgerald, Regulatory Specialist  
Patrick Williamson, Natural Resources Specialist  
Lauren Hazenson, Communications and Engagement Program Manager  
Kendra Kloth, Regulatory Technician  
Dave Vlasin, Project Coordinator  
Ashlee Ricci, Grant Program Specialist  
Eric Korte, Monitoring and Research Program Manager  
Cooper Klotzbach, Inspector Intern

**Consultants:**

Laurann Kirschner, Galowitz-Olson PLLC  
Erin Anderson Wenz, Barr Engineering

**Visitors:**

Unnamed Zoom Attendee, Visitor  
Kristine Williams, St. Paul Port Authority  
Ellen Stewart, City of St. Paul  
Brandon Bohks, Bolton & Menk  
Ashleigh Harless, Bolton & Menk

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA (0:12)**

President Eisele proposed moving item 3Ei from the consent agenda to 6Ai Stewardship Grants.

Motion: Manager Grogan moved, Manager Karp seconded to approve the agenda as amended. A roll call was performed.

Manager Wang - Aye  
Manager Karp - Aye  
Manager Gernes - Aye  
Manager Grogan - Aye  
President Eisel - Aye

Motion approved.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA (0:57)**

- A. Approval of Special Board Workshop Minuets April 1, 2026
- B. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes April 1, 2026
- C. Treasurer’s Report and Bill List
- D. Regulatory Program
  - i. 26-12 The Heights Park, St. Paul
  - ii. 26-13 Kath Oil Filling Station, Little Canada
  - iii. 26-14 St. Paul Point Douglas Trail, St. Paul
- E. Stewardship Grant Program
  - i. 26-14 CS Urban Bird Collective East Side Nature Walk, Bike, & Kayak Program
  - ii. 26-15 CS Metro Blooms Sustainable Landcare Training
  - iii. 26-16 CS Urban Roots Youth Internship Program
  - iv. 26-17 CS District 1 Community Council East Side Water Steward Series

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Grogan seconded to approve the consent agenda. A roll call was performed.

Manager Wang - Aye  
Manager Karp - Aye  
Manager Gernes - Aye  
Manager Grogan - Aye  
President Eisel - Aye

Motion approved.

**4. VISITOR COMMENTS (04:56)**

No comments.

**5. REGULATORY PROGRAM (05:52)**

- A. Applications
  - i. 24-17 The Heights II, St. Paul (retroactive variance request)

Nicole reviewed details of the The Heights project, noting that permit application 24-17 had been approved in April 2024 and construction was ongoing. Nicole provided additional context and explained that the site had been evaluated for the presence of wetlands in 2020 with an approved delineation. Nicole explained that there were some offsite locations that contained wetlands that hadn’t been included in the original evaluation for the purposes of buffer. Nicole noted that these wetlands weren’t discovered until recently. Nicole stated that there were a number of retroactive buffer variance locations that were being requested as an amendment to the 24-17 permit.

Manager Gerenes asked if the wetland areas had been identified at all in the 2020 delineation.

Nicole Maras stated that a small corner that extended off site that had been identified, which would equate to wetland 4 but that was the only piece that had been identified.

Brandon Bohks provided more information on the previous delineation and provided context to how these wetlands were identified. Brandon provided information on the MNRAM classifications for the wetlands.

Nicole Maras provided information on the wetland buffers and noted where the buffer requirements were not met. Nicole noted that the buffer requirements were not met under the solution or existing conditions.

Nicole Maras provided more site and buffer requirement details. Nicole explained that if the variance request does not get approved the site would not be meeting the stormwater treatment rules for the development.

Ashleigh Harless provided more information on the building designs and site. Ashleigh confirmed that the variance is for the original design.

Nicole provided more details of the site and O&M responsibilities.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Grogan seconded to approve permit application 24-17 The Heights II, St. Paul retroactive variance request.

Manager Wang - Aye  
Manager Karp - Aye  
Manager Gernes - Aye  
Manager Grogan - Aye  
President Eisel - Aye

Motion approved.

**B. Regulatory Monthly Memorandum**

Nicole Maras reviewed the monthly regulatory memorandum. Nicole provided updates on long term projects such as drafting rule revision language, Lower Phalen Creek daylighting and the Creek to Croix project in Washington County. Nicole reviewed updates to the regulatory web page and stated that the wetland delineation season was starting and noted application will be coming in. Nicole discussed the possibility of increasing inspection enforcement fees that haven't been increased since March 2018.

The board discussed different ideas around increased inspection fees.

Laurann Kirschner provided information on what statute allows for fees.

Nicole Maras stated that she would bring more information on inspection fees to the Board once more information is gathered.

**6. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM (1:17:28)**

**A. Applications**

**i. 26-14 CS Urban Bird Collective East Side Nature Walk, Bike, & Kayak Program**

Stewardship Grant application 26-14 CS Urban Bird Collective East Side Nature Walk, Bike, & Kayak Program was pulled from the consent agenda due to Manager Wang recusing herself from discussion and voting due to her position on the Board of Urban Bird Collective.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Grogan seconded to approve Stewardship Grant application 26-14 CS Urban Bird Collective East Side Nature Walk, Bike, & Kayak Program. A roll call was performed.

Manager Wang - Abstained  
Manager Karp - Aye  
Manager Gernes - Aye  
Manager Grogan - Aye  
President Eisel - Aye

Motion approved.32

**B. Budget Status Update**

Ashlee Ricci reviewed the budget status report.

## 7. ACTION ITEMS

### A. District Office Improvements Project Approval of Plans and Authorization to Advertise for Bid (1:20:32)

Paige Ahlborg provided an overview of the District office improvement plans and expected cost. Paige noted that there was an increase in cost due to some additional work being added to the project. The additional work included items such as boat storage, re-grading of sidewalks to comply with ADA standards and updates to the trash enclosure and additional mechanical storage area.

Manager Karp requested more information on the cost-benefit analysis for the project.

Erin Anderson Wenz provided more information on the current parking lot conditions and some details cost benefit of the heated parking lot.

Paige Ahlborg stated that this project would also be used as a demonstration to show alternatives to using chloride.

President Eisele stated that he would also like to see more information on the return on investment for the heated element of the parking lot. President Eisele asked for more information on the demonstration aspect of the project and how it would be utilized as a demonstration site.

Ashlee Ricci provided more details of other heated systems that had been installed through Stewardship Grant funding. Ashlee noted that all the projects seen so far were for small areas, such as sidewalks. Ashlee stated that having a larger scale demonstration would be helpful to see if makes sense to continue to support heated systems through the grants program and what a large-scale heated surface would mean for chloride reduction. Ashlee said finding out how much snow could be melted and how quickly would be very useful to be able to show landowners how useful the heated pavement systems can be.

Manager Gernes stated that the District office site has been utilized as a demonstration site for other projects such as the solar system and green roof. Manager Gernes stated that he would ask that benchmark documentation and monitoring efforts were put in to writing so that it can be used by others to show what the heated systems have to offer.

Manager Wang stated that with the significant increase and unknowns of the project she was not comfortable with putting the project out to bid yet. Manager Wang stated that she would like to see the breakout of the costs before putting the project out to bid.

The board requested to see more information on the cost breakdown of the project and how it will be used as a demonstration before voting to advertise for bid.

Motion: No motion was made. Voting was postponed until June pending more information.

### B. Thirty Twenty Project Bid Award (1:48:11)

Paige Ahlborg provided information on the Thirty Twenty Project, noting that the bids came in under the engineers' estimate. Paige stated that Sandstrom was the low bid and noted the District had worked with them in the past.

Motion: Manager Gernes moved, Manager Karp seconded to accept the bids and award the Thirty Twenty Estates Targeted Retrofit project to Sandstrom Land Management. Direct staff to prepare and mail the notice of award, prepare the agreements, and review the required submittals. A roll call was performed.

Manager Wang - Aye  
Manager Karp - Aye  
Manager Gernes - Aye

Manager Grogan - Aye  
President Eisel - Aye

Motion approved.

C. 2025 District Annual Financial Audit (1:49:27)

Paige Ahlborg provided an overview of the 2025 District Annual Financial Audit.

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Grogan seconded to accept the 2025 Annual Audit Report. A roll call was performed.

Manager Wang - Aye  
Manager Karp - Aye  
Manager Gernes - Aye  
Manager Grogan - Aye  
President Eisel - Aye

Motion approved.

**8. ATTORNEY REPORT (1:51:49)**

Laurann Kircshner discussed the work the attorney's office completed throughout the month of April. Laurann noted that the work included contract document review. Laurann provided an overview for the rules of abstention when voting.

**9. BOARD DISCUSSION TOPICS (1:54:45)**

**10. NEW REPORTS AND/OR PRESENTATIONS**

A. 2025 RWMWD Water Monitoring Report and Presentation (1:55:34)

Eric Korte provided a review of the 2025 RWMWD Water Monitoring Report. Eric began the presentation by discussing the lake and pond water quality monitoring process. Eric reviewed information on the 2025 state standards for lakes and the 10 year lake trend analysis for lakes within the District. Eric provided information on Creek water quality monitoring and details for the 2025 state standards and 10 year creek trend analysis. Eric continued the presentation by providing information on the Alum plant and the drawdown that had been completed in 2025. Eric went on to review BMPs such as the iron enhanced sand filter, Frost Kennard spentlime chamber as well as other BMPs throughout the District. Eric moved on to discuss chloride hot spot and PFAS monitoring. Eric provided information on the switch to a new lab for sample testing and noted the savings the District saw by switching while also noticing better testing abilities.

The managers discussed ways to best utilize and share the data collected to help people better understand what is happening with bodies of water within the District.

B. Water Quality Management Scope Summary (2:45:09)

**11. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT (2:46:02)**

- A. Meetings Attended
- B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates
- C. Staff Anniversaries
- D. Board Action Log
- E. Minnesota Watershed Updates

**12. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS (2:47:06)**

*Project Feasibility Studies*

- A. Five-Star Estates Feasibility Study
- B. Chloride Reduction Strategy
- C. Tanners Lake, Battle Creek Lake, and Battle Creek Resiliency Feasibility Study
- D. RWMWD Stormwater Model Updates
- E. Studies Stemming from Creek Walks
- F. Battle Creek Subwatershed Feasibility Study
- G. Street Sweeping
- Monitoring Water Quality/Project Monitoring*
- H. Annual Water Quality Report Assistance
- I. Special-Project BMP Monitoring
- J. Water Quality Data Management
- Watershed Management Plan Update*
- K. Watershed Management Plan Update, Phase 3: Draft Plan Development
- Lake Studies and TMDL Reports*
- L. 2026 Grant Applications
- Project Operations*
- M. 2026 Tanners Alum Facility Monitoring
- N. Lake-Level Station Operation Maintenance and Rain Gauge Installation
- O. Phalen and Keller Lakes Level Station Forecast Integration
- Capital Improvements*
- P. 2026 Targeted Retrofit Projects
- Q. Double Driveway and Fish Creek Tributary Improvements
- R. Ames Lake Improvements
- S. Kohlman Creek Flood Risk Reduction Projects
- T. Kohlman Lake Alum Treatment
- U. Wakefield Lake Aeration
- CIP Project Repair and Maintenance*
- V. Routine CIP Inspection and Unplanned Maintenance Identification
- W. 2026 CIP Maintenance and Repairs
- X. RWMWD Office Exterior Improvements
- Program Updates*
- Y. Natural Resources Program
- Z. Communications and Engagement Program
- AA. Community Advisory Committee

**13. COMMENTS AND NEXT MONTH'S MEETING (2:50:33)**

**14. ADJOURN**

Motion: Manager Karp moved, Manager Gernes seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.