Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District

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Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting
August 7, 2013

The Regular Meeting of August 7, 2013, was held at the District Office Board Room, 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada, Minnesota, at 6:33 p.m.

PRESENT:
Paul Ellefson, President
Bob Johnson, Secretary
Marj Ebensteiner, Manager
Jen Oknich, Manager (left at 8:03 p.m.)

ABSENT:
Dr. Pam Skinner, Treasurer

ALSO PRESENT:
Cliff Aichinger, District Administrator
Bill Armstrong, Attorney for District
Paige Ahlborg, Permit Inspector
Amanda Staple, Recording Secretary
Brad Lindaman, Barr Engineering
Bill Bartodziej, Natural Resources Specialist
Tina Carstens, Assistant Administrator
Carrie Wasley, Ramsey Conservation District

1. CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order by President Ellefson at 6:30 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Motion: Bob Johnson moved, Marj Ebensteiner seconded, to approve the minutes of the July 3, 2013, regular meeting, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Motion: Bob Johnson moved, Marj Ebensteiner seconded, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. CONSENT AGENDA
The following items were approved as part of the motion to approve the agenda:

A. Change Order #5 – CIP Project Maintenance & Repairs 2013

5. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS
No comments were made.

6. PERMIT PROGRAM
Permit #13-22: 3M Building 280 Soil Correction - Maplewood
Motion: Bob Johnson moved, Marj Ebensteiner seconded, to approve Permit #13-22. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Enforcement Report
During July, nine (9) notices were sent to address: install/maintain perimeter control (3), dewatering issue (2), permanent BMP maintenance (1), sweep streets (1), construction entrance (1), and stabilization (1).

7. BMP INCENTIVE PROGRAM

BMP #13-31: Bruentrup Heritage Farm, Pervious Parking
Brad Lindaman provided additional information.

Motion: Bob Johnson moved, Marj Ebensteiner seconded, to approve BMP #13-31. Motion carried unanimously.

BMP #13-32: Washington Conservation District – Pervious Parking and Bioretention
Brad Lindaman explained that this request is separate from the green roof that is also being discussed.

Motion: Marj Ebensteiner moved, Bob Johnson seconded, to approve BMP #13-32. Motion carried unanimously.

BMP #13-33: Christ Episcopal Church, Rain Gardens
Motion: Marj Ebensteiner moved, Bob Johnson seconded, to approve BMP #13-33. Motion carried unanimously.

BMP Project Year to Date Update
Paige Ahlborg stated that at the last meeting the Board had requested an update on the BMP projects in a year to date format. She presented the draft document that she developed to track the BMP projects for the year, including the types and amounts approved. She noted that the total is nearing the budgeted amount so staff had made the decision to shy away from larger projects and instead focus on residential projects for the remainder of the year.

8. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS

Hmong Village Parking
President Ellefson noted that this project is almost complete and confirmed that the District will be reimbursed a portion of the cost.

BMP Design Assistance
Brad Lindaman noted that there are two churches that Barr is working with during the design process to ensure the best BMP placement and design.

CIP Maintenance/Repairs 2013
Brad Lindaman referenced the change order approved under the Consent Agenda and noted that the language included in the change order is correct and the staff report should state that the project should be complete by August 27th. He advised of an upcoming meeting date to attempt to resolve some outstanding issues with the County.

LID Conference Display Boards
Tina Carstens advised of the two display boards that she created for the conference, one featuring the Maplewood Mall project and the other highlighting the living streets project.

Health and Safety Manual – No comments made.

Highway 36/61 Intersection
Cliff Aichinger discussed the project timeline noting that the entire project should be complete prior to the year's end.

Impervious Surface Reduction
President Ellefson stated that he believes the fact sheets will be beneficial.

Kohlman Macrophyte Treatment
Bill Bartodziej stated that staff found the treatment to be effective and would conduct another survey this month. He stated that some residents have expressed dislike of the coontail, which is found on the lake. He noted that algae is building up on top of the coontail, but noted that is not a byproduct of the alum treatment. Brad Lindaman confirmed that if coontail was not so abundant, the algae would be more dispersed through the lake.

Maplewood Mall Monitoring
Cliff Aichinger stated that staff is attempting to obtain a better picture through this gathering of data in order to provide a more accurate picture. He explained that the weather and amount of rainwater affect the groundwater levels and that the groundwater flow appears to be affecting the monitoring results.

9. WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT – 7:00 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING
Motion: Marj Ebensteiner moved, Bob Johnson seconded, to open the public hearing for the Watershed Management Plan Amendment at 7:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Cliff Aichinger noted that a summary sheet was enclosed in the Board packet regarding the comments received, noting that most were grammatical. He advised that those changes had been made and posted on the website and no further comments had been received.

There were no attendees that wished to present any comments or testimony.

Motion: Marj Ebensteiner moved, Bob Johnson seconded, to close the public hearing at 7:01 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

8. (continued) PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS

Maplewood Mall – Phase 2, 3, 4 – No comments made.

MnRAM Assessment - No comments made.

Tanners Alum Facility Monitoring
Brad Lindaman provided additional information on the pump and pH system programming.

Watershed Management Plan Update - No comments made.

WRAPP – Phase 1 - No comments made.

WRAPP – Phase 2
Tina Carstens noted that the TAC will meet the following week at the District offices.

Natural Resources Program
Bill Bartodziej provided an update of the work being completed at Keller Golf Course. President Ellefson noted that there is a large amount of work being completed at Keller Golf Course, in addition to the District work, and believed that it would be beneficial for the Managers to tour the site when the work is complete.

Bill Bartodziej referenced Casey Lake and noted that there is a large amount of cattails popping up in the lake. He advised that staff will meet with the DNR the following day to discuss the issue and possible removal of the cattails.

Education Program – No comments made.

10. REPORTS OF MANAGERS
A. President's Report - No comments made.

B. Administrator's Report
Meetings Attended
Cliff Aichinger provided a brief update regarding the meetings with Menards and the City of Maplewood.

Bob Johnson noted that there is usually an update on the building at this point in the meeting and stated that he believed that the building could use some paint. Cliff Aichinger noted that the entire building will be painted and advised of some seal work that will also be done.

Strategic Communications Plan Update – No comments made.

Citizens Advisory Committee Update – No comments made.

Spoon Lake Bridge Project
Cliff Aichinger provided a brief update, noting that the high water is not the fault of the District.

Stormwater Steering Committee Status
Cliff Aichinger advised of a meeting held two weeks prior and the decision was unanimous to continue the Stormwater Steering Committee. He noted that the PCA would like the group to continue but will no longer be providing the staff support for the meeting that they had in the past. He stated that several members will be meeting with an outside group to determine if they would be willing to provide staff support to this Committee. He stated that the group is also going to reach out to other organizations to determine if they would be willing to assist. He advised that there is some level of interest from an outside organization to providing the staff support for the Committee but they would first need to determine how that staffing would be funded.

President Ellefson noted that perhaps a shorter name could be chosen as the group continues to evolve.

2014 Draft Budget – Will be discussed under item 11.B.

Recognition for Jack Frost
There was discussion on how to best recognize Jack Frost for his years of service as Board Manager and Treasurer, who resigned earlier this year. Cliff Aichinger noted that he would draft a letter and bring it back at the next Board meeting for signatures.

Watershed Management Plan Citizen Involvement Approval
Tina Carstens stated that there is a lot going on this fall. She mentioned the idea of a Board workshop that would review the history of the Plan and look at the gaps to determine what is missing for the next round of Plan modifications. She noted that the workshop could be Board only or could combine the Board and staff. She asked for Board input and stated that she would prefer for the workshop to take place prior to September 17th. She also briefly reviewed the chart, which includes the steps of this two-year process. She noted that the process would require approval from BWSR and letters would also be sent to other agencies to advise them that the District is beginning the process.

Brad Lindaman suggested that the staff be present for at least the first half of the workshop, which focuses on the history of the District and Plan, because of the tenure and experience in the process that the staff has. President Ellefson agreed that staff should be a part of that because of the wealth of knowledge that could be shared. It was the Board consensus to hold the workshop with Board, staff and Barr Engineering.
Cliff Aichinger stated that he believed the information could be provided in one meeting of two to three hours and noted that a date would need to be chosen as well. He advised that staff would send out an inquiry to determine the date and time.

President Ellefson clarified that the Board would be asked to provide approval of the process, if found suitable, and to send the letters to BWSR and the other agencies. He confirmed that the Managers should also decide their roles through the workshop and an email would be sent to determine the best date and time for the workshop with staff to occur.

Motion: Marj Ebensteiner moved, Bob Johnson seconded, to approve of the Watershed Management Plan update process, citizen participation process and schedule. Motion carried unanimously.

President Ellefson confirmed the organizations listed to receive letters in the report. He noted that there were a few more agencies and organizations that perhaps should be alerted to this process as well. Tina Carstens confirmed that the agencies listed are required to be notified of the process at this time and noted that additional notification can be sent to additional agencies and organizations at a later date.

Motion: Bob Johnson moved, Marj Ebensteiner seconded, to approve of the letters regarding the Watershed Management Plan update process to BWSR and the stakeholders as required. Motion carried unanimously.

President Ellefson confirmed that the next step would be to schedule the workshop to occur with both the Board and staff.

Tina Carstens confirmed that the meeting would need to occur in the first two weeks of September. She advised that she will send out an email that would ask for available dates and times for everyone and she could determine the date and time that would work best for everyone.

Additional Items – No comments made.

C. Treasurer's Report and Bill List

Bob Johnson noted that a check to him was listed as $550.00 and reflected the correct amount. Cliff Aichinger confirmed that those checks were listed incorrectly, that the incorrect check amounts have been voided and presented Bob Johnson with a new check in the correct amount.

Motion: Bob Johnson moved, Marj Ebensteiner seconded, to approve the August 7, 2013, bill list as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Jen Oknich left the meeting.

11. SPECIAL ORDERS

A. Watershed Management Plan Amendment Approval – Resolution 13-06

Motion: Marj Ebensteiner moved, Bob Johnson seconded, to approve Resolution 13-06. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Preliminary 2014 Budget Review

Cliff Aichinger provided additional information on how the preliminary budget is drafted and the parties that collaborate on the process. He noted that a few items were highlighted to spark discussion as well as items that could be amended if desired. He stated that he included reasonable projects that were justified but noted that the total is higher than what he hoped. He stated that the proposed budget increase is currently at 8.35 percent with the increase to the levy at 19.76 percent. He noted that the previous year the levy had been increased by almost 30 percent, because there was less grant money being received and program needs that still need to be funded.

Marj Ebensteiner questioned if the levy would increase every year or whether there would be times when the budget would remain flat.

Cliff Aichinger noted that the budget is highly affected by the projects for the year and advised that there have been times when the budget had remained nearly flat for a few years at a time.

Marj Ebensteiner questioned if anyone has ever complained in regard to the levy increases. Cliff Aichinger confirmed that there had not been any recent concerns in regard to increases in the levy. He explained that last year's levy increase was by far the most significant one-year increase in more than 20 years, but was not met with significant concerns from the public or elected representatives. He noted that once the property values for the year are known he would be able to determine the impact per home for the levy.

President Ellefson noted that this is simply a discussion and the budget is not being approved at this time. He noted that in the 20 plus years that he has been a Manager there has not been any pushback from the residents in regard to the proposed levy amounts.

Cliff Aichinger noted that roughly three percent of a property owners total property tax bill is for the District. He noted that the past three or four surveys that have been given regarding water, residents have said that they would be

willing to give more in return for improved water quality. He identified a few new items proposed in the budget that could be adjusted if desired.

Marj Ebensteiner stated that she is on the Board because she believes the District should be doing projects, so she was unsure that anything should be cut. She stated that if there were cuts to be made, she would not even know where to start.

President Ellefson noted that this is a complex process and advised that he relies on the expertise of staff for those matters.

Cliff Aichinger explained that in some instances the District is spending money before it is reimbursed, whether through grants or tax payments, and advised that this proposed budget would help to build the reserves, which will in turn help to solve the cash flow problem the District faced this year. He confirmed Board consensus with the budget as proposed and advised that he would then send out copies to member cities for input.

Motion: Marj Ebensteiner moved, Bob Johnson seconded, to publish a notice for the budget public hearing to occur at the September 4, 2013 regular Board meeting at 7:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

12. MANAGER PRESENTATIONS

Bob Johnson advised of a booklet that he had prepared which includes all the lakes within the District and believed the information could be made more complete by staff and then shared with the new Managers.

President Ellefson referenced the LID Symposium and asked if interested Managers should register for the event. Tina Carstens confirmed that there are three registrations spots available. Marj Ebensteiner stated that she would be interested in a portion of the event but would not be able to attend the entire event. Tina Carstens confirmed that interested Managers can contact her and she will take care of the registrations. She noted that she extended invitations to city engineers and did receive a positive response from one member city.

Marj Ebensteiner thanked everyone for the meeting tonight as she found it very enjoyable and interesting.

13. ADJOURN

Motion: Bob Johnson moved, Marj Ebensteiner seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert E. Johnson, Secretary