



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting
September 2, 2020**

The Regular Meeting of September 2, 2020, was held at the District Office Board Room, 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada, Minnesota, at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Marj Ebensteiner, President
Cliff Aichinger, Vice President
Lawrence Swope, Treasurer
Dianne Ward, Secretary
Dr. Pam Skinner, Manager

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:

Tina Carstens, District Administrator
Brad Lindaman, Barr Engineering
Simba Blood, Natural Resources Specialist
Viet-Hanh Winchell, Attorney for District

Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager
Nicole Soderholm, Permit Inspector
Dave Vlasin, Water Quality Technician
Erin Anderson Wenz, Barr Engineering

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve the agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

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|-----------------------|-----|
| Manager Skinner | aye |
| Manager Ward | aye |
| Manager Swope | aye |
| Manager Aichinger | aye |
| President Ebensteiner | aye |

Motion carried unanimously.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes from August 5, 2020
- B. Treasurer's Report and Bill List
- C. Permit Program
 - i. 20-28 Anchor Block Storage Facility, North St. Paul
 - ii. 20-30 Anchor View Apartments, North St. Paul
 - iii. 20-31 Woodspring Hotel Maplewood, Maplewood
- D. Stewardship Grant Program
 - i. 20-41 CS Caproni, porous pavers

- ii. 19-29 CS Windsperger Budget Adjustment
- iii. 20-14 CS Carver Lake Parking Lot Budget Adjustment
- E. East St. Paul Target Store Stormwater Retrofit – Change Order No. 1

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Ward seconded, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner aye
Manager Ward aye
Manager Swope aye
Manager Aichinger aye
President Ebensteiner aye

Motion carried unanimously.

4. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS

There were none.

5. PERMIT PROGRAM

A. Applications

Permit #20-29: Shoreview Snail Lake Trail Extension – Shoreview

A Manager stated that the report mentions that the wetland boundary was conservatively estimated at 887, which seemed high. Nicole Soderholm explained that was conservatively estimated and therefore is upland of the actual wetland boundary because the delineation was not completed.

A Manager noted the permeable pavement that will be used for the trail and asked staff for details. Nicole Soderholm stated that Ramsey County has been using permeable pavement for some of their trails and therefore have experience with that type of management. She stated that this is a collaboration between the County and City of Shoreview.

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve Permit #20-29 with the provisions and variance.

A roll call vote was performed:

Manager Skinner aye
Manager Ward aye
Manager Swope aye
Manager Aichinger aye
President Ebensteiner aye

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Monthly Enforcement Report

During August, three notices were sent to address: install/maintain inlet protection (1), sweep streets (1), and contain liquid/solid wastes (1).

6. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

A. Applications – See Consent Agenda

B. Budget Status Update

A Manager thanked staff for inclusion of the recently approved requests.

7. PRESENTATIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

A. 2021 Preliminary Budget and Levy Public Hearing

- i. Approval of 2021 Preliminary Budget and Levy Certification to Ramsey and Washington Counties – Resolution 20-01

President Ebensteiner opened the public hearing.

Tina Carstens stated that the changes made since the last review were highlighted in the Board packet. She also compared the proposed levy to the levy adopted the previous year. She explained how the budget is allocated by program area, noting that 85 percent of the budget is allocated to projects and programs implementation. She provided similar budget percentages broken up by Watershed Management Plan goals.

Brad Lindaman provided details on the four homes that are at risk of flooding near Gervais Mill Pond and the project that could provide the quickest improvement.

A Manager asked for details on the groundwater next steps planning. Tina Carstens stated that there has been discussion in the past few years related to groundwater and what the District can do, noting that those funds were meant to be a placeholder to cover that goal. Brad Lindaman agreed that is a placeholder and provided additional background information on the connection between groundwater and surface water. Erin Anderson-Wenz noted that budget could also be used to fulfil the District’s role in providing information to other agencies, municipalities, and entities.

A Manager stated that staff has done a great job to reduce the levy increase to below one percent. It was noted that many other entities have come forward with a zero percent increase. It was recognized that the increase is proposed at .6 percent but would like to see that increase at zero percent because of the challenging times. Tina Carstens stated that the organization has a healthy reserve level and could take from that to make a zero percent levy increase and not impact the budget.

A Manager commented that they did not feel uncomfortable with the proposed increase. Another Manager agreed that they felt comfortable with the proposed levy amount. Another Manager commented that they would prefer to move funds from the reserve to present a zero percent increase. A Manager asked if this information was published in a physical paper. Viet-Hanh Winchell replied that the information was published and reviewed the publications.

A Manager agreed that, if possible, the levy should remain stable this year but noted that they would support the small increase as proposed. It was the consensus of the Managers that they would prefer to shift the funds from the reserves if the intent is to present a zero percent levy increase. Tina Carstens confirmed that she could shift those funds from the reserve in order to present a zero percent levy increase when the Board adopts the final budget and levy in December.

Motion: Manager Swope moved, Manager Aichinger seconded, to close the public hearing.

A roll call vote was performed:

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| Manager Skinner | aye |
| Manager Ward | aye |
| Manager Swope | aye |
| Manager Aichinger | aye |
| President Ebensteiner | aye |

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Manager Aichinger moved, Manager Swope seconded, to approve the draft budget for purposes of the preliminary levy and approve resolution 20-01.

Further discussion: A Manager reaffirmed the consensus of the Board to present a zero percent levy increase and that adjustment should be made by using reserve funds prior to the final adoption in December.

A roll call vote was performed:

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| Manager Skinner | aye |
| Manager Ward | aye |
| Manager Swope | aye |
| Manager Aichinger | aye |
| President Ebensteiner | aye |

Motion carried unanimously.

8. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

A. Meetings Attended

No comments.

B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

No comments.

C. COVID-19 Update

Tina Carstens provided an update and noted that she has not heard comments from residents that it has been difficult to reach staff during this time. She noted that masks are required to be worn in the office and when working in the field, or other situations when social distancing cannot be maintained. She confirmed that at least one staff person is at the office every day and some staff come and go throughout the day to get tools and equipment.

D. Conference Virtual Events

Tina Carstens stated that if the Managers are interested in attending any upcoming virtual conference events, please alert staff so that the proper registration can be completed.

7. PRESENTATIONS AND ACTION ITEMS (Continued)

B. Current Project Walk Through Presentation

Erin Anderson Wenz provided brief details on the Beltline Resiliency Study and its phases, noting recent conversations with Little Canada about North Star Estates. She noted that the city does not have interest in changing that site as the soils are conducive for a mobile home park and the mobile home park assists the city in achieving its affordable housing goals. She reviewed some of the next steps related to North Star Estates and the information that would be gathered.

Brad Lindaman provided background information on the weir. A Manager commented that, whenever possible, they would prefer for water to flow through a creek rather than a pipe, as that is an amenity to the people and the ecosystem.

Erin Anderson Wenz reviewed details on the proposed creek bed cleanout along with the other proposed projects for phase one, two and three of the Beltline Resiliency. She stated that the District is working with FEMA to update

the flood mapping. She provided an update on the status of the different ongoing projects in the District including Hillcrest Golf Course, the auto lake monitoring systems, retrofit projects, Aldrich Arena, Wakefield Park, the Keller weir, Phalen outlet projects, Twin Lake outlet project, West Vadnais Lake outlet, the alum plant, and potential projects that were identified in the different feasibility studies. She stated that staff is working to develop a tool that could help to prioritize projects within the watershed and determine which projects should be pursued first. She stated that once the tool is developed, staff will bring the model back before the Board to gain additional input on the tool.

A Manager asked if staff could do another update in about three months with similar projects and a brief update on the different items and projects.

9. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS

A. Ongoing Project and Program Updates

- i. Owasso Basin Flood Risk Reduction Feasibility Study
- ii. West Vadnais to South I-694 Conveyance Feasibility Study
- iii. Willow Creek Flood Risk Reduction Feasibility Study
- iv. Ames Lake Area Flood Risk Reduction Feasibility Study
- v. FEMA Flood Mapping Updates
- vi. Hillcrest Golf Course
- vii. Water Management Plan Updates
- viii. Automated Lake Monitoring Systems
- ix. Targeted Retrofit Projects
- x. Target Store Stormwater Retrofits
- xi. Kohlman Permeable Weir Test System
- xii. Aldrich Arena Stormwater Project
- xiii. Keller Channel Weir and Phalen Outlet Resiliency Modifications
- xiv. Twin Lake Outlet Construction
- xv. CIP Maintenance and Repair 2020 Project
- xvi. Beltline/Battle Creek Tunnel Inspection
- xvii. 2020 Tanners Lake Alum Facility Monitoring
- xviii. Internal Load Management Discussions
- xix. Wakefield Lake Internal Loading Study
- xx. Natural Resources Program
- xxi. Education Program

10. REPORTS OF MANAGERS

A Manager commented that they discovered an issue with the stormwater gardens that were installed on properties owned by seniors. It was explained that the seniors are unable to maintain the stormwater gardens and it has become a safety concern for some. The Manager hoped that the District staff could help to find a solution to that problem. A Manager commented that the CAC has asked for ways to volunteer, such as maintaining rain gardens. It was noted that perhaps staff could reach out and develop a list of seniors that would like assistance and then CAC members could complete that needed maintenance. Paige Ahlborg stated that the contractor completes one seasonal clean-up for the rain gardens in that neighborhood, but noted that staff can talk about that issue more in attempt to coordinate additional cleanup using the CAC members.

A Manager suggested that perhaps a mailing could be sent out, or some form of outreach, that would allow residents to call with maintenance concerns. The Manager asked the number of rain gardens in the District. Paige Ahlborg estimated at least 300 rain gardens through the cost-share program and then the additional ones that were completed through permits.

A Manager thanked staff for posting the previous Board Zoom meetings on YouTube for viewing.

11. ADJOURN

Motion: Manager Ward moved, Manager Swope seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m.

A roll call vote was performed:

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| Manager Skinner | aye |
| Manager Ward | aye |
| Manager Swope | aye |
| Manager Aichinger | aye |
| President Ebensteiner | aye |

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Ward, Secretary