



**Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
October 2, 2019**

The Regular Meeting of October 2, 2019, was held at the District Office Board Room, 2665 Noel Drive, Little Canada, Minnesota, at 6:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:**

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

**ABSENT:**

Cliff Aichinger, Vice President

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Tina Carstens, District Administrator  
Amanda Staple, Recording Secretary  
Brad Lindaman, Barr Engineering  
Simba Blood, Natural Resources Specialist  
Dave Vlasin, Water Quality Technician  
Bruce Copley, Crestview Addition  
Allison Harwood, WSB  
Greg Windsperger, Crestview Addition  
Liz Jones, Gold Line  
Joey Diederichs, Civil Site Group  
Mitch Caron, Mendota Heights  
John Bilotta, U of M Water Resources Center

Paige Ahlborg, Project Manager  
Tracey Galowitz, Attorney for District  
Nicole Soderholm, Permit Inspector  
Eric Korte, Water Quality Monitoring Coordinator  
Trevor Romanko, 5 Star Mobile Estates  
David Filipiak, SRF  
Chelsa Johnson, Metro Transit  
Andi Moffatt, WSB  
Joel Larson, Hampton Companies and Suite Living  
Jeremy Larson, Mahtomedi, MN  
Kevin O'Neill, Landowner

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Dianne Ward requested to add an item under Ongoing Projects and Program Updates, Item 19, titled 10 Year Plan Update.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Minutes from September 12, 2019
- B. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes from September 16, 2019

Lawrence Swope stated that there is a motion related to increasing the per diem and noted that he would like to see more detail added to that item. He provided the following statement to be added, "The Board discussed the recent legislative increase of the per diem for watershed Board members from \$75 to \$125 per meeting. The

Board decided that to maintain consistency with other watershed organizations and to keep current with the financial requirements of future Board members, the Board compensation should be increased.”

Tina Carstens noted that the audio recording stopped working after 20 minutes and therefore the minutes after that point were very brief.

Lawrence Swope referenced the special meeting minutes. He suggested a statement to be added related to the flooding of wetlands. “Staff and Barr will engage the Board in a review of the RWMWD wetlands stewardship role with respect to the impact of temporary and permanent flooding. This will include determination if the changed condition of the wetland area is a detriment or an improvement to the ecological environment.”

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Dr. Pam Skinner seconded, to approve the consent agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. TREASURER’S REPORT AND BILL LIST**

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve the October 2, 2019, bill list as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **5. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS**

Bruce Copley, Crestview Addition resident, stated that the persistent high-water levels in two landlocked water bodies continues to cause problems. He stated that lowering Snail Lake may assist in the problems and hoped that the Board would consider reverse augmentation. He stated that the emergency response plan has only partially been completed as Shoreview is having problems finding a contractor and is awaiting Barr Engineering to complete the design. He asked the Board to help Shoreview find a suitable contractor and ensure that the work by Barr Engineering is completed in time for Shoreview to install the pump prior to the spring. He referenced the system modification tab on the Beltline Resiliency Study, noting that details have been removed and asked if that would be replaced. He asked the starting conditions for the Beltline Resiliency Study. He stated that he continues to be surprised as the member cities within the RWMWD are not interested in pursuing the lowering of West Vadnais Lake and believed that the RWMWD should be leading the effort.

#### **6. PERMIT PROGRAM**

##### **A. Applications**

##### Permit #19-42: American Indian Magnet School Addition – St. Paul

Nicole Soderholm noted that this is for an addition to an existing school in Saint Paul.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve Permit #19-42. Motion carried unanimously.

##### Permit #19-43: CDI Medical Office – Maplewood

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve Permit #19-43. Motion carried unanimously.

##### Permit #19-44: 5 Star Mobile Estates Soil Correction – Vadnais Heights

Dr. Pam Skinner asked if this development is one of the mobile home parks at risk of flooding.

Nicole Soderholm explained that this project will remove contaminated soil and replace with clean soil. She noted that staff anticipated this question and the conclusion was that this was not a large enough area to provide meaningful containment.

Tina Carstens noted that the area with soil replacement does not have homes on it.

President Ebensteiner noted that she had the same question, noting that if this was a low area, perhaps it could be made lower to store water.

Dr. Pam Skinner asked if the homes in this park would be inundated under a 100-year event.

Lawrence Swope asked if this area would be considered in the Beltline Resiliency Study.

Brad Lindaman explained that this area is not included in that study.

Tina Carstens noted that these homes may be above the 100-year elevation but could still be at risk of flooding.

Brad Lindaman stated that because Twin Lake is landlocked and this is a relatively small area, staff is more concerned with the volume of water flowing through and therefore detaining the water longer would not provide a measurable benefit to Twin Lake.

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Dr. Pam Skinner seconded, to approve Permit #19-44. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #19-45: Villages on McKnight Clubhouse – St. Paul

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Dianne Ward seconded, to approve Permit #19-45. Motion carried unanimously.

#### B. Metro Transit Gold Line Presentation

Chelsa Johnson, Metro Transit, stated that they will be publishing their environmental assessment on Monday, which will begin the 30-day comment period. She stated that this will be Minnesota's first bus rapid transit (BRT) with 21 full amenity stations along the corridor serving two counties and five municipalities. She stated that they are seeking federal funding, which is why the environmental assessment was completed. She reviewed the purpose and need for the Gold Line. She displayed the proposed alignment for the project and highlighted some of the other project elements including new park and ride facilities, stormwater facilities, pedestrian connections/trails, BRT exclusive bridges, underpasses for dedicated guideway, and BRT/roadway bridge/pedestrian trail. She provided details on the proposed project schedule, noting that they hope construction to be complete in 2024.

Allison Harwood, WSB and Associates, stated that the wetland impact numbers are from the environmental assessments are based off the 15 percent design, which is a high-level design. She identified the proposed impacts within each alignment section, noting a total proposed 15 percent design impacts at 2.65 acres. She stated that they do anticipate reduction in the impacts with advanced design, estimating perhaps a reduction of one acre. She identified some of the proposed impacts along alignment D3. She reviewed some of the minimization efforts that will be considered as the design process continues. She stated that the impacts would be replaced with bank credits and noted that the WCA application will come forward in October or November.

Tina Carstens asked if all the impacts would be permanent or whether there would be temporary impacts as well.

Ms. Harwood noted that those were permanent impacts but there would be temporary impacts as well.

David Filipiak, SRF, stated that there are other project considerations as well noting that a fair amount of time has been spent on volume control. He reviewed some of the elements that have been considered, noting that stakeholders would prefer biofiltration and bioinfiltration. He stated that they have also been reviewing rate control, floodplain compensatory storage, and erosion control. He stated that there has been and will continue to be considerable coordination with RWMWD staff and other stakeholders. He stated that since 2018 they have identified and studied over potential 60 BMP locations throughout the 10 mile stretch and thus far 30 to 40 sites

are still in consideration. He stated that they have appreciated the cooperation and assistance from the project partners and District staff throughout the process and continued process.

President Ebensteiner asked if the BMPs would provide aesthetic improvement along the corridor.

Mr. Filipiak stated that he would hope that would be a result. He noted that there are a lot of constraints throughout the corridor. He provided the example of Grace Church, which is an historic property, and they received a comment that the BMP could not include anything that would take away from, or compete with, the historic aesthetic of the building. He stated that he prefers things that blend into the environment, rather than geometric shaped items.

Nicole Soderholm stated that the WCA wetland impact application will be the first thing to come before the Board and noted that any major concerns about that should be provided to the applicants now.

Brad Lindaman referenced the no net loss policy with respect to the one to one ratio within the District boundary.

Nicole Soderholm stated that there has been an exception to the no net loss policy for another linear road project and asked for input from the Board.

Dianne Ward stated that additional information on size will be helpful.

Lawrence Swope stated that he prefers mitigation within the District compared to purchasing credits outside of the District.

Dr. Pam Skinner asked and received confirmation that staff is tracking the amount of wetland impacts and replacements in the District. She stated that perhaps it would be helpful to consider a policy that would require mitigation or credits downstream to treat the water that the District releases downstream.

Brad Lindaman referenced the construction timeline and asked the anticipated duration.

Ms. Johnson anticipated construction would be about two years.

Nicole Soderholm explained that the WCA application would come before the permit.

Mr. Filipiak stated that design will occur over the next 12 to 18 months with construction proposed from 2022 to 2024. He stated that he would prefer to have one permit for all construction activity but noted that if required to be split between contractors they would apply for separate permits. He stated that they are going impact wetlands during this linear project as there is limited space to complete improvements and mitigation onsite.

#### C. Woodbury Suite Living Wetland Discussion

Nicole Soderholm provided details on a potential application that came across her desk which involved filling of a wetland. She noted that she explained the no net loss policy to the applicant and believed that this wetland issue should be discussed before the actual permit be reviewed. She stated that the project would propose to impact about 2,500 square feet of wetland. She noted that the intent tonight is to have a discussion on mitigation requirements for the potential project.

Joel Larson, CEO of Hampton Companies and Suite Living, stated that they have completed Planning and Zoning review with Woodbury. He stated that they are attempting to work within the District rules and are here to talk about possible ideas.

Joey Diederichs distributed a proposed site plan for the site, noting that the wetland was discovered this spring under wetter than normal conditions. He stated that the wetland lies in the middle of the site, which would make it difficult to develop anything other than a single-family home on the site.

President Ebensteiner stated that basically the applicant would like to build on top of the wetland.

Mr. Larson confirmed that they would like to fill the wetland in order to build on the site.

Mr. Diederichs stated that there are no banked credits within the District and therefore their proposal for mitigation would be to purchase credits in Washington County at a ratio of two to one.

Dr. Pam Skinner stated that she is concerned that this will become a trend as the area is built out and the only area left for development would be wetlands. She stated that perhaps this be a topic for a future Board workshop as this will continue to come forward. She stated that a natural wetland has amenities that cannot be generated through a newly created wetland.

Mr. Diederichs noted that there would be a pond and filtration basin onsite to treat and hold water. He explained that the wetland does not treat a large volume of water and therefore water coming out of the pond and filtration basin would be cleaner than water in the wetland.

Dr. Pam Skinner asked if there could be multiple buildings around the wetland feature.

Mr. Larson stated that one building would be needed for the project, it would not be feasible to have three buildings for this purpose.

Kevin O'Neill, property owner, stated that Woodbury is in favor of the project as there are no one story senior housing products of this type available in the community. He stated that this is a good project and they would like to see if the District could work with them.

Mr. Diederichs stated that they did look at onsite mitigation but with buffer requirements that would not be possible. He noted that if a variance to wetland buffers was granted, they could mitigate at a ratio of one to one onsite.

Dr. Pam Skinner noted that there are two of these applications tonight and her concern is that the Board should consider its policy moving forward.

Mr. O'Neill stated that the wetland does not have natural vegetation and noted that there are other natural elements on the site that will be protected.

Tina Carstens asked if there have been conversations with the City on this.

Nicole Soderholm stated that she did express her concern with filling the wetland, but the discussion was limited to that topic.

President Ebensteiner referenced the stormwater pond that would be constructed and asked the features that pond would have that would make it an improvement.

Mr. Diederichs stated that the wet pond would allow sediment to settle and when that overflows it would lead to the filtration basin that would allow the water to filter. He confirmed that the pond would hold water year-round. He confirmed that a robust mix of natural plants would be planted around the pond.

Tina Carstens stated that the District has allowed one to one mitigation onsite with variance to the buffer requirements.

Mr. Larson stated that they could increase the area around the pond, but they would require a variance from the setback as the building would fall within the required buffer.

Tracey Galowitz stated that when the Costco application came forward, the Board made Costco rework the project. She stated that it would not be unprecedented to require additional information on why this is the only proposed building site and building size. She stated that if the Board is not convinced that the policies cannot be met the applicant could be requested to rework the plans.

Tina Carstens commented that the applicant could be asked to rework the plans or show the sequencing.

Brad Lindaman noted that the sequencing process would need to be strengthened along with articulating a variance request for the buffer and providing details on the stormwater management requirements. He noted that the sequencing would be the main element that will help decide whether this will be able to move forward and therefore that element should be robust. He noted that this will be challenging because of the process set forth in the rules.

Nicole Soderholm noted that the application would also need to go before the TAC.

Mr. Diederich asked if variance requests from the buffer have been approved in the past.

Brad Lindaman confirmed that has been done in the past but for an existing wetland. He noted that this would be new as the wetland would be filled and the buffer variance would be for a newly created wetland.

Dr. Pam Skinner noted that she also appreciates the preservation of upland trees. She noted that the Board does consider the whole picture.

Mr. Larson noted that they have worked with the adjacent landowner as well to potentially increase that pond to accept water from the site in order to preserve existing trees.

President Ebensteiner suggested that the applicants continue to work with staff on the elements discussed tonight.

#### D. Monthly Enforcement Report

During September, 19 notices were sent to address: install/maintain inlet protection (3), install/maintain perimeter control (5), install/maintain construction entrance (1), sweep streets (2), stabilize exposed soils (1), contain/dispose of liquid and solid waste (2), remove discharged sediment (2), implement proper dewatering (1), maintain temporary sediment basin (1), and maintain proper records (1).

### **7. MINNESOTA RESEARCH COUNCIL PRESENTATION**

John Bilotta, University of Minnesota Water Resources Center, provided background information on the Minnesota Stormwater Research Council, which is administered through the Water Resources Center at the University of Minnesota. He noted that the group is much more than the University of Minnesota and involves private engineers and staff from other colleges in Minnesota. He provided details on the purpose of the Council and the funding that has been received in 2017 and 2018. He noted that this has become a well-funded program to help tackle some of the urban stormwater challenges. He stated that the Council does not rely on one source of funding and instead has relied on pooled funding sources, acknowledging that RWMWD has been a funding partner. He stated that legislators have been impressed that the Council was able to leverage local dollars from the Clean Water Land and Legacy dollars. He stated that over the past two years the funds have been invested in 11 projects involving over 50 researchers, noting that the projects are split between rapid response (12 month) and integrated (18 month). He provided details on four different research projects that the Council is working on. He stated that since 2015 a

lot of time was spent identifying the research priorities, noting that eight major areas of research were identified as priorities and are included in the stormwater research roadmap. He stated that the program was funded for another biennium at a rate of \$1,500,000. He explained that there is a technology transfer element to each of the research projects. He noted that over the next year they will spend time looking at the element of technology transfer and training. He identified the activities that will occur for the remainder of 2019 and through 2020. He thanked the District for contributing funds and expertise.

President Ebensteiner thanked Mr. Bilotta for his presentation.

Lawrence Swope asked how the District works with the Council.

Tina Carstens noted that the District has a seat at the table, noting that Cliff Aichinger was a member of the Council until recently and noted that Bill Bartodziej will replace him. She noted that other District staff have been involved and Barr Engineer has also been a part of the research projects. She stated that the District has contributed \$25,000 per year for funding as well.

## **8. STEWARDSHIP GRANT PROGRAM**

### **A. Applications**

Permit #19-25 CS: Cedar Lakeside Apartments – Shoreline Restoration

Motion: Lawrence Swope moved, Dr. Pam Skinner seconded, to approve Permit #19-25 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

Permit #19-26 CS: Harding Arena – Habitat Restoration

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve Permit #19-26 CS. Motion carried unanimously.

### **B. Budget Status Update**

Dianne Ward referenced the remaining budget remaining and asked for details.

Paige Ahlborg stated that there were funds budgeted for the Snail Lake buffer restorations and therefore those funds will carry over. She noted that staff will continue to look for additional opportunities, including options for permit applicants to go above the permit requirements.

## **9. ACTION ITEMS**

### **A. Watershed Excellence Awards Approval**

President Ebensteiner noted that the list of nominations included in the packet.

Motion: Dianne Ward moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to approve the proposed Watershed Excellence Award winners. Motion carried unanimously.

## **10. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

### **A. Meetings Attended**

No comments.

### **B. Upcoming Meetings and Dates**

Tina Carstens highlighted the upcoming meetings and events.

### **C. MAWD Annual Meeting and Resolution Process**

Tina Carstens stated that a draft resolution was provided to the Board that could be submitted to the MAWD Resolution Committee. She explained that these are priorities for the District that the District would be asking for

MAWD to support. She provided details on the draft resolution regarding flood risk mitigation efforts within the urban area. She noted that there has been a comment made that the language should be cautious to avoid being exclusive to non-metro areas.

President Ebensteiner agreed that there are flooding issues outside of urban areas as well.

Dr. Pam Skinner asked if the draft resolution could be amended to not be exclusive of non-urban areas.

Tina Carstens stated that there are funds available for flood risk, but it can become difficult for metro areas to rise to the top of that list. She explained that DNR staff has stated that funding is very competitive as metro areas do not have the land available to compete with large cost-effective solutions that can be achieved in non-urban areas. She stated that when the draft resolution is reviewed by the MAWD Resolution Committee, they can also make suggestions to tweak the language.

Lawrence Swope acknowledged that metro areas are much more constrained than rural areas.

President Ebensteiner asked if this would apply to areas like Duluth and Rochester.

Tina Carstens stated that the language states Twin Cities metro area. She noted that she was told that the draft resolutions should be kept general as that would allow MAWD to make suggestions and would not pigeonhole the potential resolution.

Tracey Galowitz noted that the language is inclusive but simply asks that some funds be earmarked for the Twin Cities metro area.

Tina Carstens confirmed the consensus of the Board to send the draft resolution for review by the MAWD Resolution Committee.

D. Special Work Session Meeting Regarding Beltline Resiliency Study

No comments.

E. CAC Meeting Update

No comments.

**11. PROJECT AND PROGRAM STATUS REPORTS**

A. New Project Scope: Hillcrest Golf Course Study of Existing Conditions

No comments.

B. Ongoing Project and Program Updates

i. Twin Lake Emergency Response Management 2019

ii. Beltline Resiliency Study

Tina Carstens noted that the Beltline Resiliency Study work session will most likely occur in December, dependent on scheduling ability. She noted that the report would be made available to the Board prior to the special meeting in order to allow appropriate discussion by the Board and staff at the special meeting.

iii. FEMA Flood Mapping

iv. Snail, Grass and West Vadnais Lakes Outlet Permitting

v. 500 Year Atlas 14 Modeling

vi. Wetland Restoration

Lawrence Swope referenced the wetland restoration site search. He noted that he would like to see additional discussion on wetlands in general.

Tina Carstens stated that a ranking was provided of the sites along with the scoring system that was used. She stated that the information was simply provided to the Board to review.

Brad Lindaman explained that the scoring system comes directly or indirectly from the State and BWSR. He explained that a few applicants came before the Board tonight with the intent of purchasing credits outside of the District. He noted that the intent of this would be to be able to create a bank of credits that could efficiently be used for mitigation purposes. He noted therefore the scoring criteria were based on the criteria that BWSR considers when determining whether that could become banked credits. He stated that the desktop study of the ranking occurred based on the criteria. He explained that because so much information is known on Cottage Place, more can be determined in ranking. He noted that he would not recommend doing that level of information gathering on each of the potential sites.

Tina Carstens stated that the Board could review the scoring criteria and then provide input on additional elements that they would like to see in the scoring/ranking process.

Brad Lindaman reviewed some of the potential next steps.

Dianne Ward stated that there has been discussion related to vulnerable areas, primarily related to the Beltline study and stated that she would be interested if a large wetland near that area could tie into flood control.

Lawrence Swope asked how wetlands are accounted for in situations like tonight where the developer identified a wetland that was previously not identified.

Brad Lindaman stated that just because a wetland is not identified in the desktop review, does not mean it does not exist and this is not a unique circumstance where a wetland is brought to the attention of the District through potential development.

Tina Carstens noted that the Board can review this information and further discussion can occur at a later date related to the prioritization and scoring system.

Brad Lindaman noted that this would perhaps be a good workshop topic.

President Ebensteiner noted that it would be helpful to go through an example of ranking a wetland during that discussion.

- vii. Auto Lake Monitoring Systems
- viii. Maplewood Mall Monitoring
- ix. Spent Lime Pond Research Project
- x. Wakefield Park/Frost Avenue Project
- xi. Targeted Retrofit Projects
- xii. Target and Motel 6 Stormwater Retrofit Projects
- xiii. Willow Pond CMAC
- xiv. Cottage Place Wetland Restoration
- xv. Aldrich Arena Site Design
- xvi. CIP Maintenance and Repair 2019 Project

Dianne Ward asked what would happen if the maintenance and repair items are not completed by the contract deadline, specific for Item 16.

Dave Vlasin replied that the District may have to add the item to the 2020 CIP program in the end. He explained that site conditions have changed onsite compared to the bid project scope.

Brad Lindaman confirmed that the problem is not with the contractor but is instead due to the site conditions.

- xvii. Natural Resources Program
- xviii. Education Program
- xix. 10 Year Plan Update

Dianne Ward noted that it would be helpful to have additional information on the 10 Year Plan update process.

Tina Carstens noted that a scope summary will come before the board at a later date with the work starting in 2020.

## **12. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

No comments.

## **13. REPORTS OF MANAGERS**

No comments.

## **14. ADJOURN**

Motion: Dr. Pam Skinner moved, Lawrence Swope seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Pam Skinner, Secretary