



Wednesday, January 18, 2023

## CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

MCWD Office, Board Room

[www.minnehahacreek.org](http://www.minnehahacreek.org)

### Board of Managers:

Sherry White, President; William Olson, Vice President; Jessica Loftus, Treasurer;  
Eugene Maxwell, Secretary; Richard Miller, Manager; Arun Hejmadi, Manager; Steve Sando, Manager

*Board Liaison: Manager Miller*

### Citizens Advisory Committee Members in attendance:

Emily Balogh, Marcy Bean, Dan Flo, Lisa Fowler, Robert Glisky, Laurie Goldsmith, John Iverson,  
Suzanne Jiwani, Drew McGovern, Rich Nyquist, David Oltmans, Marc Rosenberg, Denise Tennen

### Citizens Advisory Committee Members absent:

Cassy Ordway

### MCWD Staff:

Samantha Maul, James Wisker

### Guests present:

John Salditt, Peter Rechelbacher, Bill Bushnell

6:35 pm

1. **Committee Meeting Call to Order and Roll Call**  
*Executive Officer Nyquist calls the meeting to order.*  
Introduction of new members – **Maul**

Maul introduced the four new members for 2023: Marcy Bean, Robert Glisky, Suzanne Jiwani, and Denise Tennen.

2. **Approval of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)**  
*Iverson, Oltmans – All approved.*  
2.1 January 18, 2023 agenda
3. **Approval of Minutes (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)**  
*Iverson, Flo – All approved.*  
3.1 November 9, 2022 minutes

A CAC member noted that the last meeting's discussion of the diagnostic had rich content, especially when the group reflected on the CAC's role as advisors to the organization and the Board of Managers. They also suggested that this conversation continue into future meetings. Maul stated that the insights from the conversation are included in the diagnostic's Summary of Findings, which was recently accepted by the Board, and that the CAC will hold space throughout the year to revisit the discussion.

**4. Action Items**

**4.1 2023 Executive Team Election - Maul**

Maul briefly explained the role of the Executive Committee and described the duties of each position: Chair, Vice-chair, and Executive Officers. Maul invited current and previous Executive Committee members to share their experiences on the committee. Maul explained the election will be decided with a simple majority and all members are eligible to nominate or be nominated, then opened the floor to nominations. Nominees were asked to briefly share why they were pursuing the position.

For the office of Chair, Nyquist (*Flo, Iverson*) and Flo (*Oltmans, Fowler*) were nominated. There was a motion to close nominations (*Oltmans, Iverson*). Nyquist was elected to Chair.

For the office of Vice-Chair, Flo was nominated (*Iverson, Goldsmith*). There was a motion to close nominations (*Iverson, Flo*). Flo was elected to Vice-chair, unopposed.

For the two Executive Officer positions, Tennen (*Tennen*), Iverson (*Iverson, Rosenberg*), and Goldsmith (*Rosenberg*) were nominated. There was a motion to close nominations (*Oltmans, Iverson*). Iverson and Goldsmith were elected to the two Executive Officer positions.

2023 Executive Committee:

Rich Nyquist, Chair

Dan Flo, Vice-chair

Laurie Goldsmith, Executive Officer

John Iverson, Executive Officer

7:15pm

**5. Discussion Items**

**5.1 MCWD “Look Ahead” – Wisker**

Wisker began by thanking outgoing CAC leadership in attendance, Salditt; Rechelbacher; and Bushnell, for their contributions to the organization, especially their input to re-align MCWD and its programs, support the development of the Climate Action Framework, and advise throughout preparation for the Lake Nokomis Groundwater and Surfacewater Evaluation Town Hall. Manager Miller also expressed his gratitude for their stewardship through challenging times and periods of organizational transition.

Wisker introduced himself to new members and outlined the agenda for the presentation. Wisker then began by explaining the long-term strategic planning context of the organization, sharing that 2022 was the midpoint, marking five years since MCWD’s last comprehensive watershed management plan in 2017 and five years until the next plan will be released in 2027. The 2017 plan built off the organization’s Balanced Urban Ecology vision, focusing on partnering with land-use decision makers to create impactful projects and policies that produce community and water resource benefits. Since the 2017 plan’s release, MCWD has been focused on aligning its programs around the plan’s direction to target areas of greatest need for regional benefit. A series of projects in the Hopkins and St. Louis Park area, called the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, exemplify this focused approach. Data collected in the area indicated that this stretch of creek was a major source of pollution. MCWD partnered with public and private partners to develop projects to manage stormwater, expand floodplain, and

restore the health of the previously ditched and degraded stretch of creek. The landscape of projects implemented in this area allowed MCWD to work with partners to integrate nature into the built environment of this geography, connecting people with valuable green spaces. The capstone project of the Minnehaha Creek Greenway is 325 Blake Rd., a project that will provide public access for two miles of Minnehaha Creek, treat over 250 acres of stormwater, and in collaboration with the City of Hopkins, result in significant housing development. The design of MCWD's section of the project is about 95% completed. The parcel, previously a cold storage facility, will result in close to 70 acres of greenspace. The other projects along the Minnehaha Creek Greenway are demonstrating significant water quality benefits downstream, and the final round of investments in this area may result in the delisting of Lake Hiawatha from the MPCA's Impaired Waters List.

Wisker explained that farther upstream, in the upper watershed, MCWD is also employing a focused strategy to treat water that discharges into Lake Minnetonka. The Six Mile Creek-Halsted Bay subwatershed also has impaired waters, and local development has provided great opportunities for proactive water resource protection with partners. One significant project in this area is MCWD's habitat restoration program, which has resulted in the restoration of 2500 acres of in-lake habitat. This program is in its closing stages, so MCWD is prepared to begin evaluating its success and considering its potential application in other areas. MCWD has also utilized Alum dosings to improve water quality in Lake Wassermann. The District, working closely with the City of Victoria, built the Lake Wassermann Preserve, a waterfront park with a shelter, nature play area, fire ring, picnic area, and an interpretive watershed walk that nearby residents enjoy. The data collected here suggests that MCWD's work in and around Lake Wassermann has resulted in significant water quality improvements.

Wisker shared that in 2022, MCWD made structural changes to the organization, building capacity and setting a focused, 5-year direction for policy and engagement toward climate action with the approval of MCWD's Climate Action Framework (CAF). The District ended 2022 on a celebratory note with the receipt of three awards: an Engineering Excellence Award for Arden Park, an Ambassador of Excellence award from the National Weather Service (NWS), and the MN Department of Natural Resources' watershed of the year. Over the last year, MCWD did a retrospective analysis to look back and identify core principles for success to build a foundation for the future. Now, the District is primed to chart a plan for the future. MCWD continues to focus on partnership and integration with the land use community, which was formalized with the launch of its Land & Water Partnership Initiative. Staff have engaged with a technical advisory committee to build out this program, which will come before the CAC later this year. MCWD is also completing the Long Lake Creek Roadmap, which outlines project priorities in the Long Lake Creek subwatershed.

Looking ahead, MCWD will build on previous work analyzing climate data and chart a course for climate action over the next few years. Changing weather patterns will impact all the watershed's communities. The recently approved CAF includes three pillars that lean on MCWD's history of relying on sound-science, partnership, and resilience. Wisker explained that between 2023 and 2027, MCWD will begin building a cohesive plan that brings these elements into focus to adapt, evolve, and overcome. The Gray's Bay Dam, the only piece of infrastructure owned by the District, will also be a key focus. MCWD will continue to work with the NWS and U.S. Geological Survey to monitor real-time flow and

response throughout the watershed. This data allows MCWD to pursue the development of a computer model that will understand and predict how water moves through the watershed, giving water managers across MCWD's 29 communities a visual representation of the key patterns of flooding and drought. Current engagement with the technical advisory committee will serve as an on-ramp to future climate work, allowing MCWD to work with partners and implement a climate plan that is actionable, clear, and detailed.

Wisker shared that with a clear horizon for upcoming capital projects and policies, many of the District's key initiatives will be shared at CAC meetings throughout 2023. Wisker concluded the presentation by asking CAC members for questions and reflections on the material shared. CAC members asked about the partners involved and key milestones for developing a climate-focused watershed management plan in 2027.

8:10pm

## 6. Informational Items + Updates

### 6.1 CAC Member Updates

- Maul read the Board's Resolution of Recognition for Bushnell and presented items of recognition for outgoing CAC members Bushnell, Rechelbacher, and Salditt.
- Rosenberg shared about a recent exhibit at the MN Science Museum focused on water quality.
- Nyquist shared that he recently heard about a stormwater project in Edina focused on increasing pipes to alleviate flooding, which presented an opportunity to address a neighbor's concerns and highlight the District's work. Wisker noted that the project may involve collaboration between Edina and MCWD.

### 6.2 Board Liaison Updates

- Manager Miller shared another note of gratitude for the CAC's contributions and thanked outgoing members for their years of service to MCWD.

### 6.3 Staff Updates

- Maul encouraged CAC members to check out the most recent News Release on MCWD's website, which highlights the recent awards received.
- Maul shared an update on the progress of the website and noted that the CAC will be engaged in Beta testing later in 2023.
- Maul explained that a 2022 elections summary was recently presented to the Board and provided a few highlights and key changes from the 2022 election.
- Maul shared that the Long Lake Creek Roadmap will be coming before the Board in the following week and presents a clear strategy for implementing water quality improvements in the Long Lake Creek subwatershed.
- Maul noted that 325 Blake Rd. is nearing 100% design, suggesting that the project will be out to bid in early 2023.
- Maul updated the CAC on the progress of the Land & Water Partnership Initiative, noting that the upcoming meeting represents the midpoint in the technical advisory process.

8:37pm

## 7. Adjournment

*Balogh, Flo – All approved.*

### Upcoming Meeting

Wednesday, March 15, 2023 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting (Manager Olson, Board Liaison)