

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, August 5, 2020**

Members Present

Balough, Bushnell, David, Flo, Girard, McGovern, Nyquist, Oltmans, Ordway, Rechelbacher, Rosenberg, Salditt

Managers Present

Manager Olson

Others Present

MCWD Staff: James Wisker, Kim LaBo, Becky Christopher, Kate Moran

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Third virtual meeting of the 2020 Citizen Advisory Committee.

Meeting chaired by Rechelbacher and called to order at 6:34 p.m.

Salditt motioned to approve the agenda, Girard seconded, motion approved.

Two errors were identified in the July 7, 2020 CAC minutes – the next meeting date and the total 2021 budget and levy numbers. Staff agreed to make these corrections to the minutes.

Girard motioned to approve the July 7, 2020 CAC meeting minutes, seconded by Balough, minutes approved.

Discussion Items:

COVID Impacts and CAC agenda setting for 2020/2021 - Wisker

Purpose:

Staff facilitated a discussion with the CAC to understand member's perceptions on how the pandemic is impacting CAC meeting operations and agenda setting.

Background:

On March 11th, 2020 the World Health Organization declared a world-wide pandemic due to the spread of the coronavirus. This action was shortly followed by the U.S. Federal Government and the State of Minnesota declaring a state of emergency on March 13th, 2020. Disruptions caused by the pandemic have been felt within every sector of society, including the watershed district. Since mid-March, the District office has remained closed to the public, staff continue to work remotely and all meetings are being held virtually.

As a result of the District making changes in its overall operations to protect the health of board members, staff and the general public, the operations and agenda schedule of the CAC were effected. Work groups which met remotely were formed in lieu of regularly scheduled CAC meetings and the pace of the climate conversations series was disrupted. As it became evident remote meetings would need to continue for the foreseeable future, the CAC meetings transitioned to a virtual platform in June.

During a Q3 CAC Executive Team Meeting, committee members provided feedback on disruptions in CAC workflow due to COVID-19 and identified a need to further discuss these impacts with the full CAC. At the August 5, 2020 CAC meeting, staff facilitated a discussion with CAC members to better understand member's views on this topic.

Next Steps:

The CAC Executive Committee Team will meet with staff to debrief the meeting, identify key themes of the discussion and work with staff to develop an action plan in response.

Long Lake Creek Subwatershed Partnership – Christopher

Purpose:

Staff provided an update on the Long Lake Creek Subwatershed Partnership. The presentation was primarily a briefing with the intention that it will inform future discussions regarding the District's project implementation model, including how the District conducts system level planning, develops project opportunities, and plans for staff and financial capacity across its focal and responsive project areas.

Background:

The CAC was briefed on lake water quality issues within the Long Lake Creek Subwatershed and the partnership and coordination efforts underway with municipal and non-profit partners. In the District's role as technical lead, the District is assessing issues, identifying opportunities and developing a roadmap for the partnership to reach its water quality goals. The roadmap will include not only project opportunities but also non-project strategies, roles, timeline, and potential funding sources.

District staff completed the natural resource assessment, which included both a nutrient and biotic assessment, and began efforts to understand and integrate land use plans to identify project opportunities.

As part of this process, staff identified four key management strategies:

- 1) Stormwater management
- 2) Stream and wetland strategies
- 3) Land use specific strategies
- 4) Lake internal loading strategies

As a result of integrating the District's technical assessments with partners' land use plans and conducting an initial engineering analysis, staff identified 51 potential projects or strategies. From this initial list, staff grouped the opportunities into three tiers based on potential load reduction, cost/benefit, timing considerations, land ownership, project complexity, and other considerations. The top tier (16 projects) represents projects that are most cost-effective and appear to be most feasible to implement. The second tier (12 projects) includes projects (or project alternatives) that are less cost-effective or may be less feasible, but are still worth further consideration. The third tier (12 projects) are projects that are not being recommended based on low estimated load reduction.

Next Steps:

Staff is in the process of further refining multiple project options through discussions with the partners and determining how they will be advanced. For implementation, the District will transition to primarily a supporting role, likely in the form of technical and financial support.

In the long-term, the District may choose to take the lead on implementation of certain projects to which it is well suited, such as internal load management. Staff will use the results of the partner discussions to develop the Implementation Roadmap. The Roadmap will lay out the priorities, roles, timeline, and funding strategy for the currently identified suite of projects as well as the partnership's approach for ongoing coordination and adaptive management as new opportunities are identified.

Salditt motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Girard. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Next Meeting is Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.
Board of Managers Liaison Manager Maxwell