

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, September 2, 2020**

**Members Present**

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

**Managers Present**

Manager Maxwell

**Others Present**

MCWD Staff: Trevor Born, Kim LaBo

**Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

Fourth virtual meeting of the 2020 Citizen Advisory Committee.

Meeting chaired by Rechelbacher and called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Nyquist motioned to approve the agenda, Rosenberg seconded, motion approved.

Bushnell motioned to approve the August 5, 2020 CAC meeting minutes, seconded by Salditt, minutes approved.

**Discussion Items:**

**Phase One of the Website Redesign -Born**

Purpose:

To report on the first phase of the website planning process and seek committee members feedback on the progress to date.

Background:

To achieve the Outreach Program's new strategic direction, MCWD has been preparing to re-launch a new website in 2021, replacing a site that is almost 10 years old and suffers from bloat, information overload, and outdated design. This re-designed website has the potential to deliver value to the District's variety of stakeholders by satisfying their requests for information while communicating the value MCWD's work delivers and providing transparency around its practices.

To ensure the website achieves these goals, MCWD selected the marketing firm Vendi in a competitive process to help develop a content plan which sets the stage for designing and building the site in 2021. MCWD has sought input from a variety of sources to inform this plan. In particular, MCWD sought to tap the expertise of the CAC at the beginning of the process to provide directional input on goals, strategy, and key content. Input from CAC members included participating in an online user survey, focus groups, a website work session on Feb. 5, 2020 and consultant-led planning workshops.

Based on the input gathered, MCWD and Vendi defined the following overarching website goals, in order of priority, which the CAC reviewed at its Feb. 5 meeting:

1. Connect people to the information they value
2. Highlight the value MCWD provides
3. Provide transparency and organizational information

#### Core Model Process:

With those goals and principles established, MCWD and Vendi have collaborated on a content planning process known as Vendi's "Core Model Process" to define the architecture of the site and the core content required to achieve its goals. Those core sections are:

- Permits: Leveraging the power of the online permitting portal currently in development, the primary goal of this section is to ensure that a user can enter in the specific location and type of project they are considering, and be provided information about the exact steps that will be required to obtain approval. Users will be able to indicate a project location and type on a map and then learn what rules are triggered, what they will need to comply, what steps they must take to obtain approval – and also be able to enter the application process. Secondly, this section will emphasize the potential for partnering with MCWD to achieve win-win outcomes. It will feature a page with information about partnering with the District, a connection to the responsive model, and case studies on a handful of successful partnerships.
- Water Data: Most users are not interested in watershed-wide data in aggregate, but in information about a specific water body that is relevant to them. To meet this need, the centerpiece of the Water Data section will be an interactive map that allows a user to choose the water body that is most relevant to them and view monitoring data, learn about the surrounding subwatershed, and find links to additional partner agency information. Within this section is also a “Water Budget” page that provides real-time water levels fed by the RESNET remote sensor network and information about how MCWD leverages technology and partnership in its operation of Gray’s Bay dam.
- Recreation: Core to MCWD’s brand is the idea that healthy natural systems underpin quality of life in our communities – and recreation is one of the primary ways people interact with water resources within the District. The recreation section will feature a map that highlights select recreational opportunities throughout the watershed that are relevant to the District’s mission: Paddling, boat launches, beaches, regional parks, and regional trails. Key District-related recreational opportunities, such as the Minnehaha Creek Greenway or Six Mile Marsh Prairie, will be particularly highlighted. The section will also feature the highly-trafficked resources on paddling Minnehaha Creek and boating Lake Minnetonka
- What You Can Do: This section serves users who are actively interested in taking action to protect clean water. The section is organized according to the five most common categories of request with the question, “I would like to”:
  - Use best practices on my property – e.g., installing raingardens

- Educate myself – e.g., water science basics, water governance
- Educate others – e.g., curricula for teachers, materials for community meetings
- Take action in my community – e.g., joining community groups, adopting a drain
- Support MCWD’s work – e.g., statements of support for an MCWD project

Within each category are hubs of information that include curated information, referrals, and funding opportunities.

- Projects: Project web pages highlight the impact of MCWD’s most important initiatives. The emphasis of these project pages is providing a clear up-front snapshot of the rationale for building the project and its key outcomes, while situating each project within the context of the watershed. Each page will also allow for a variety of community engagement tools that can be selectively displayed based on the needs of the project. This section also includes definitive landing pages for each Focal Geography, highlighting the latest work and the overall value of the focused work.
- About Us: The About Us section provides any user a generalized understanding of what MCWD is and does, regardless of their level of prior knowledge. It also provides more sophisticated information about MCWD’s Balanced Urban Ecology approach. Finally, it provides key organizational information such as Board and CAC members, financial information, and upcoming meetings.

CAC Discussion and Feedback Summary:

At the September 2 CAC meeting, staff summarized the results of the Core Model Process plan and sought the committee’s feedback on the overall content plan.

Below are several considerations CAC members identified during the discussion:

1. The District should be careful about being viewed as a one-stop shop for all permits. It needs to recognize that many projects require permits from additional agencies as well.
2. A “zero based budgeting” approach to content that identifies which items are absolutely necessary could help protect against the website becoming bloated. Content planners should be judicious about what content is added, because each piece of content has long-term overhead for upkeep.
3. Given the website is the public face of the organization, it is important to have an effective process for ensuring that content stays up to date
4. A good practice is to build acceptance criteria into the request for proposals.
5. The site should have the option to display an urgent message banner at the top of the home page

## **Update: Evaluation of 2020 Citizen Advisory Committee - LaBo**

### Purpose:

To update committee members on recent efforts to synthesize CAC discussions regarding CAC operations enhancements, 2020 CAC agenda focus and the strategic alignment of the CAC in 2021.

### Background Context:

Following a Q3 CAC Executive Team Meeting, the CAC met on August 5, 2020 to discuss disruptions in CAC workflow due to COVID-19, and potential solutions. The CAC Executive Committee Team met with staff to identify key themes of the discussion and to develop an action plan.

The three themes that emerged from these discussions are 1) Remote meetings impede rich and vibrant discussion 2) A consistent flow of organizational information maintains CAC connection to MCWD priorities 3) Focus on strategic edge content is most rewarding and potentially offers MCWD the most value.

Based on the above themes, the following areas of action were developed 1) Create operational guidelines to enhance meeting discussion 2) Craft a written framework for maintaining the flow of information to the CAC 3) Develop an agenda plan for the remainder of 2020 for distribution to the CAC.

### Action Step Update

At the September 2, 2020 CAC meeting, staff reviewed the below 2020 agenda plan, which was based on organizational priorities and CAC focus to date.

#### 2020 CAC Agenda Plan:

- September – Website Content Strategy
- October – Climate Conversation #3
- November – Responsive Model and Permitting Status, and Public Process
- December – Climate Conversation #4

It was noted the agenda plan may need to be refined or amended as content is further developed.

Staff also reported the written guidelines for committee operations improvements would be developed by staff and brought back to the CAC Executive Team and full CAC in October for review and discussion. Near term operational improvements, such as sending virtual meeting notifications the day before monthly CAC meetings, are being tested out in the interim.

The final action item, conducting a strategic evaluation of the CAC, will be further discussed with the CAC Executive Committee and the Board before a process or timeline for conducting the evaluation is developed.

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

**Next Meeting is Wednesday, October 14th, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.**

Board of Managers Liaison Manager Dick Miller