

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF**
2 **THE MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT**
3 **BOARD OF MANAGERS**

4
5 November 16, 2017
6

7 **CALL TO ORDER**
8

9 The regular meeting of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers was
10 called to order by President Sherry White at 7:00 p.m. on November 16, 2017, at the
11 MCWD offices, 15320 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, Minnesota.
12

13 **MANAGERS PRESENT**
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15 Sherry White, Richard Miller, Brian Shekleton, Bill Becker, William Olson, Kurt
16 Rogness, Jessica Loftus.
17

18 **MANAGERS ABSENT**
19

20 None.
21

22 **DISTRICT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT**
23

24 Lars Erdahl, Administrator; Kelly Dooley, Water Quality Manager; Anna Brown,
25 Planner-Project Manager; Chris Meehan, Engineer, Michael Welch, Counsel.
26

27 **MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR**
28

29 None.
30

31 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
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33 Manager White added discussion and consideration of action on a letter to the City of
34 Orono on the District's Big Island Nature Park easement. *Manager Becker moved and*
35 *Manager Shekleton seconded approval of the agenda as amended. Upon vote, the*
36 *motion carried 7-0.*
37

38 **CONSENT AGENDA**
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40 Manager Olson noted the need to change the November 9 minutes to note that Manager
41 Rogness, not he, voted against the motion at line 318. Manager Rogness concurred.
42 *Manager Rogness moved and Manager Miller seconded approval of the consent*
43 *agenda, consisting of approval of the minutes of November 9, 2017, as amended, and*
44 *approval of the checking account with checks 38637 to 38697 for a total of*
45 *\$287,457.37, direct payroll deposits of \$74,382.66 and electronic fund withdrawals of*

46 ***\$866,595.31 , for a total of \$1,226,435.34, and the surety account as well as acceptance***
47 ***of the 325 Blake Road checking account. Upon vote, the motion carried 7-0.***

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49 **REGULAR AGENDA**

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51 **Board Committee and Task Force Reports**

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53 For her president's report, Manager White reminded managers that the District will have
54 its annual governance policy review in January and that Manager Olson and Manager
55 Miller will represent the board on the focus group convened to look at topics for the
56 Citizens Advisory Committee to address in 2018.

57

58 Manager Miller reported from the Policy and Planning Committee meeting held just
59 before the board meeting this evening, noting that the committee had a lengthy discussion
60 of the District's priorities and agenda for next year as well as the agendas and scopes of
61 work for the Operations and Programs Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee.
62 He stated that the PPC is working to mesh all committees' work plans and objectives.

63

64 Manager White noted that the upcoming events are as shown in the agenda for the
65 meeting.

66

67 **PUBIC HEARINGS AND PRESENTATIONS**

68

69 **Six Mile Marsh: Total Phosphorus Sink or Soluble Phosphorus Source?**

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71 Kelly Dooley came before the Board of Managers to present a review of monitoring,
72 research and diagnosis of the issues causing excess phosphorus in Halsted Bay. She
73 introduced Brian Beck from Wenck Engineering, who assisted with the analysis. She said
74 that the presentation will be a reprise of one that was given at a lake management
75 conference in Denver and recently at the Water Resources Conference in St. Paul. She
76 noted that in the Six Mile Marsh subwatershed there are six impaired lakes and that the
77 District has been keen to determine the appropriate prioritization and scope of work for
78 addressing phosphorus in Halsted Bay. She said the District is considering external
79 improvements such as restoring upgradient wetlands as well as internal improvements
80 such as controlling carp. Other options include an alum-treatment facility and stormwater
81 management facilities. But a significant unknown is the degree to which Six Mile Marsh
82 is contributing phosphorus to the bay. Ms. Dooley turned to Mr. Beck, who noted that the
83 question is whether Six Mile Marsh is a phosphorus sink or an exporter of soluble
84 phosphorus. He said that a basic analysis shows that the wetland removes total mass of
85 phosphorus, but when split into particulate and ortho or soluble phosphorus, the equation
86 is a little bit more complicated. The study discovered that the wetland is exporting
87 soluble phosphorus. In the spring when there is high flow, phosphorus settles out as
88 particulate but in the summer the marsh exports soluble phosphorus into the bay, causing

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89 and coinciding with algae blooms. He stated that reducing upstream contribution of
90 phosphorus to the wetland will help, but that half of the watershed load to the bay is from
91 the marsh. The research and analysis indicate that the marsh transforms phosphorus and
92 that treating at the point of release with alum will improve Halsted Bay.

93
94 In response to a question from Manager Miller, Ms. Dooley stated that internal loading in
95 Halsted Bay can be controlled by managing carp in the bay at the same time alum is
96 applied. In response to a question from Manager Olson, Mr. Beck stated that the soluble
97 phosphorus is consumed by algae. Ms. Dooley added that because the marsh is an
98 exporter of soluble phosphorus the treatment with alum should occur at the outlet of
99 marsh. She noted that the District has received Lessard-Sams funding to address the
100 problem. Ms. Dooley noted as well that the Three Rivers Park District has approached the
101 District about potentially acquiring land at the outlet of Six Mile Marsh such as would
102 facilitate the construction of an alum-treatment system, but the talks are at a very
103 preliminary stage.

104
105 Chris Meehan added a bit of detail on the improvement sequence, noting that the first
106 point of attack is to manage the carp, which is in fact a matter of getting rid of large
107 amounts of the fish, than sealing phosphorus on the bottom of the bay with the alum.
108 Then watershed restoration upstream from Halsted Bay can effectively improve water
109 quality. In response to a further question from Manager Miller about the acquisition of
110 the Three Rivers Park District land, Anna Brown came before the managers and stated
111 that Three Rivers Park District is sorting through title issues and has made a preliminary
112 plat application to subdivide the property in a manner that would facility the
113 contemplated purchase by the District. When the process is complete the District and
114 TRPD will enter concerted discussions of a purchase.

115
116 In response to a question from Manager Olson Mr. Meehan stated that dosing alum into
117 the discharge from the marsh precipitates the soluble phosphorus and causes it to drop out
118 of the water column and not be available to algae. He stated that the treatment plan would
119 be to pull water from the wetland, treat it, then discharge clean water back into the
120 system. The managers thanked Mr. Beck and Ms. Dooley for their presentation.

121
122 **ACTION ITEMS**

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124 **Resolution 17-071: Approval of Design Scope for Wassermann West Park and Natural**
125 **Resource Improvement**

126
127 Anne Brown came again before the Board of Managers and stated that the design for the
128 improvement of Wassermann West Park has not changed since the managers reviewed
129 and discussed it last week. She stated that the proposed action is to award the contract
130 and to approve the scope of work. ***Manager Olson moved and Manager Rogness***
131 ***seconded adoption of Resolution 17-071. Upon vote, the motion carried 7-0.***

132

133 Big Island Easement Letter

134

135 President White noted that she had several changes to the draft letter distributed at the
136 committee meeting prior to the regular meeting, and she wished to discuss them with the
137 full board. She said she would like to change the focus of the letter to emphasize the
138 ecological value of the easement and the ecological values that it is meant to protect. She
139 stated that the letter also should emphasize that the District will pursue legal avenues to
140 enforce the easement and be clear about that, but stress that in the first instance the
141 District intends to work with the city to keep moving forward. She stated that the letter
142 presently talks about the shoreline, but the approach should be broader than that. The
143 managers discussed the District's history of projects on Big Island, including the 2008
144 collaboration with the city to correct shoreline degradation, then further work on
145 shoreline degradation and other improvements. Manager Olson pointed out that the
146 District has worked on two different parts of Big Island. Manager Miller emphasized the
147 letter should cite the entirety of the District's contributions to costs of improvements
148 because the total represents the public investment in preservation of its ecological values.
149 Manager Olson concurred. President White stated that she would work with counsel and
150 staff to revise the letter before having the administrator send it out to the managers for
151 feedback. The managers were directed to provide their notes to the administrator.

152 ***Manager Miller moved and Manager Olson seconded approval of President White's***
153 ***proposed approach to completing and sending a communication to the City of Orono***
154 ***regarding the Big Island Nature Park. Upon vote, the motion carried 7-0.***

155

156 **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

157

158 Mr. Erdahl noted that with various special meetings this is the fourth week in a row that
159 the managers have met and he appreciates their dedication. Mr. Erdahl noted that he is
160 working through the human-resources process and gaining more familiarity with the
161 accounts-payable process and dealing with the transition of several staff members.

162

163 **ADJOURNMENT**

164

165 There being no further business, the meeting of the Board of Managers adjourned at 7:45
166 p.m.

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168 Respectfully submitted,

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170

171

172 Kurt Rogness

173 Secretary