

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

January 11, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers was called to order by President Sherry White at 7:00 p.m. on January 11, 2024, at the MCWD offices, 15320 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, Minnesota.

MANAGERS PRESENT

Sherry White, William Olson, Arun Hejmadi, Stephen Sando, Jessica Loftus, and Eugene Maxwell.

MANAGERS ABSENT

Richard Miller.

DISTRICT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT

James Wisker, Administrator; Becky Christoher, Director of Policy Planning; Jill Sweet, Research & Monitoring Technician; Brian Beck, Research & Monitoring Program Manager; Chris Meehan, District Consulting Engineer; and Louis Smith, District Counsel.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Manager Maxwell, seconded by Manager Hejmadi, to approve the Agenda as distributed. Upon vote, the motion carried 6-0 (Manager Miller absent).

MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Sando to approve the items on the Consent Agenda consisting of approval of the December 28, 2023 Board meeting minutes; approval of the General Check Register, including check numbers 42474 through 42482 in the amount of \$71,507.83, electronic funds withdrawals of \$4,833.49, Managers Per Diems and Reimbursements of \$6,897.50, employee reimbursements of \$44.02, and payroll electronic funds withdrawals and disbursements of \$0 for a total of

\$83,282.84; the Surety Check Register Bremer Bank fee of \$37.00; the Wire Check Register in the amount of \$0; and approval of the following resolutions:

Resolution 24-001: Approval of District Funds Depository:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby names Bremer Bank as the 2024 official depository of District Funds for its four bank accounts;

Resolution 24-002: Approval of District Funds Depository for Noncash Financial Assurances

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby names Smith Partners as the 2024 official depository of noncash financial assurances for the District;

Resolution 24-003: Approval of the District’s Official Newspaper

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the MCWD Board of Managers hereby designates the Star Tribune as the official newspaper of the District for 2024;

Resolution 24-004: Approval of the 2023 MCWD Pay Equity Report and Authorization to Submit to the State of Minnesota

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby approves the 2023 MCWD Pay Equity report and directs staff to submit the 2023 MCWD Pay Equity Report to the State of Minnesota Management and Budget before the January 31, 2024 deadline; and

Resolution 24-005: Resolution Supporting Boundary Adjustment Between Lower Minnesota River Watershed District and Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers supports the submission LMRWD’s petition to BWSR pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 103B to alter the boundaries of the LMRWD and MCWD;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MCWD Board of Managers supports a boundary adjustment as described in Attachment B, and authorizes the MCWD District Administrator to sign a Letter of Concurrence in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 103B to be included in the petition to BWSR to adjust the common boundary of the LMRWD and MCWD; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the MCWD Administrator is authorized to fulfill all responsibilities of the MCWD to implement the boundary adjustment as approved by BWSR.

Upon vote, the motion carried 6-0.

BOARD, COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS

President's Report: President White noted that she and Mr. Wisker had a productive meeting recently with Hennepin County Commissioner Fernando.

Operations and Programs Committee Report: None.

President White noted the upcoming meeting schedule presented in the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARINGS & PRESENTATIONS

Public Hearing for Proposed Rule Revisions

President White opened the public hearing on the proposed revisions to MCWD's rules. Ms. Becky Christopher appeared before the Board of Managers to review the purposes of the rules revision, the process of engaging the Technical Advisory Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee, and a summary of the proposed revisions.

No one appeared to provide testimony or comments. Ms. Christopher noted that no comments have been received to date, and once the comment period closes, the staff will bring final recommendations for adoption of proposed rules revisions. President White closed the public hearing and thanked Ms. Christopher for her presentation.

ACTION ITEMS

Election of Board Officers and Appointment of Committee Assignments

President White declared nominations open for president. Manager Maxwell nominated Sherry White for president. There were no further nominations, and nominations were closed. Upon vote, the managers elected Sherry White president, 6-0.

President White declared nominations open for vice president. Manager Maxwell nominated William Olson for vice president. There were no further nominations, and nominations were closed. Upon vote, the managers elected William Olson vice president, 6-0.

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President White declared nominations open for treasurer. Manager Maxwell nominated Jessica Loftus for treasurer. There were no further nominations, and nominations were closed. Upon vote, the managers elected Jessica Loftus treasurer, 6-0.

President White declared nominations open for secretary. Manager Olson nominated Eugene Maxwell for secretary. There were no further nominations, and nominations were closed. Upon vote, the managers elected Eugene Maxwell secretary, 6-0.

President White proposed the committee assignments to be the same as the previous year as follows:

Operations and Programs Committee: Manager Loftus, Chair; Managers Olson and Hejmadi;

Policy and Planning Committee: Dick Miller, Chair; Eugene Maxwell, Stephen Sando.

It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Hejmadi to confirm these appointments. Upon vote, the motion carried 6-0.

Resolution 24-006: Authorization to Execute a Contract with the University of Minnesota to Evaluate the Effectiveness of Carp Management as a Watershed Management Strategy

Ms. Jill Sweet appeared before the Board of Managers to review the request for board action. She reviewed the MCWD's successful implementation of the Six-Mile Creek-Halsted Bay Habitat Restoration Project with a grant from the Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. She reviewed recent engagement with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Department of Natural Resources that highlighted the need to better understand the variables that may affect carp management effectiveness and the impact of carp management on vegetation conditions and water quality. The MCWD recently adopted a memorandum of understanding with these two agency partners that outlines a systematic approach where each agency will bring its unique perspective and data to evaluate MCWD's carp management dataset.

Discussions with the agency partners led the MCWD staff to conclude that the University of Minnesota is the most suitable research organization to take on this research work. She reviewed the proposed scope and schedule, which includes data compilation and analysis, preliminary results, and a final report appropriate for academic literature and conferences. Ms. Sweet noted that the proposed contract with the University of Minnesota study is for a lump sum of \$64,947.

It was moved by Manager Hejmadi, seconded by Manager Olson to adopt Resolution 24-006: Authorization to Execute a Contract with the University of Minnesota to

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Evaluate the Effectiveness of Carp Management as a Watershed Management Strategy as follows:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the District Board of Managers hereby authorizes the Administrator, on advice of counsel, to execute a contract with the University of Minnesota to evaluate the effectiveness of carp management as a watershed management strategy, in an amount not to exceed \$64,947.43.

Manager Hejmadi asked if staff had plans for addressing any gaps or holes in the data, and Ms. Sweet noted that staff and partners are open to supplementing the data set as necessary. In response to a question from Manager Sando, Ms. Sweet confirmed that this contract is for research only. In response to a question from Manager Maxwell, Ms. Sweet noted that the data set will focus on the Minnehaha Creek watershed, but will be of interest elsewhere.

Upon vote, the motion carried 6-0.

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

None.

BOARD INQUIRIES, ISSUES, AND IDEAS

President White requested that MCWD climate mitigation steps be identified as part of the 2025 budget process. Mr. Wisker noted that the MCWD Climate Action Framework provides for an inventory of mitigation measures, which will be a resource in this process.

STAFF UPDATES

American Geophysical Union Conference Report

Mr. Brian Beck appeared before the Board of Managers and reported on staff attendance at the recent conference of the American Geophysical Union. He explained why the staff attended the conference, what they learned, and the application of this learning to MCWD's work. Research and monitoring staff had attended the conference in prior years, and felt that broader attendance among the staff would promote cross-disciplinary thinking and cross-team function. Many of the sessions promoted a deeper understanding of climate change, mitigation and adaptation and a stronger connection of science and policy. For example, staff returned with a deeper understanding of exposure to climate risks, vulnerability of sectors of the population, and steps to gaining resilience for those vulnerable communities. Staff also explored the power of personal

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experience, the development of community narratives, and frameworks for community-centered engagement. The managers thanked Mr. Beck for his presentation.

Administrator's Report

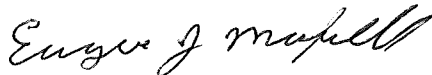
Mr. Wisker reported on the following item:

1. As District engineer, Stantec has agreed that engagement of work with municipalities in MCWD requires a waiver from the administrator. Minnetonka Beach has requested that Stantec provide services in relation to a drinking water project, and Mr. Wisker plans to grant the waiver, while also keeping the Board informed of this situation.

Adjournment

There being no further business, President White declared the meeting of the Board of Managers adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Eugene Maxwell, Secretary