

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

May 23, 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 May 23, 2024, at the MCWD offices, 15320 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, Minnesota.

MANAGERS PRESENT

Sherry White, William Olson, Richard Miller, Jessica Loftus, Arun Hejmadi, Stephen Sando, and Eugene Maxwell (attending remotely as duly noticed).

MANAGERS ABSENT

None.

DISTRICT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT

James Wisker, Administrator; Deb Johnson, Office Manager; Brian Beck, Research & Monitoring Program Manager; Michael Hayman, Director of Project Planning; Chris Meehan, District Consulting Engineer; and Louis Smith, District Counsel.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Manager Miller, seconded by Manager Sando, to approve the Agenda as distributed. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried 7-0.

MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

INTRODUCTION OF STAFF

Mr. Brian Beck appeared before the Board of Managers and introduced two new field assistants who will be working with the Research & Monitoring team, Miller Kimball and Leif Nelson. Msrs. Kimball and Nelson shared a few words about their backgrounds and the work they are doing in the watershed. The managers welcomed them to the District.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Hejmadi, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda consisting of approval of the May 9, 2024, Board meeting minutes; approval of the General Check Register, including check numbers 42551 through 42565 in the amount of \$48,240.67, electronic funds withdrawals of \$136,196.74, credit card charges of \$3,696.65, managers per diems and reimbursements of \$1,194.97, employee reimbursements of \$117.97, and payroll electronic funds withdrawals and disbursements of \$154,937.30, for a total of \$344,384.30; the Surety Check Register including payment of \$27.00 in fees to Bremer Bank, and check number 2209 for partial surety release for permit 18-002 in the amount of \$2,500, for a total of \$2,527.00; and Wire Transfers to Hennepin County for payment on 2013B in the amount of \$46,468.75 and payment on 2020B in the amount of \$74,125.00 for a total of \$120,593.75.

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried 7-0.

BOARD, COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS

President's Report: None.

Citizens Advisory Committee Report: Manager Maxwell reported that he attended the recent CAC meeting which included briefings on the capital improvement program, the Land & Water Partnership program, and plans for the upcoming field trip.

Manager Sando noted that he had paddled Minnehaha Creek earlier in the day and it looked great.

Manager Loftus thanked Ms. Johnson for updates to the check registers, including details on credit card transactions.

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

PERMITS REQUIRING A VARIANCE OR DISCUSSION

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS & PRESENTATIONS

None.

ACTION ITEMS

None.

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

Strategic Action Plan

Mr. Wisker reviewed the purpose of the strategic action plan, and its context in the MCWD’s planning process. He noted the Board’s strategic planning workshop in February 2024 identified priorities, which had been further refined by the staff and the Citizens Advisory Committee to provide five-year areas of strategic focus:

1. Expand our portfolio of high-impact capital projects;
2. Develop meaningful climate action policy for the watershed;
3. Cultivate strategic partnerships and grown brand advocacy;
4. Enhance data-driven decision making; and
5. Invest in people and organizational culture.

Mr. Wisker reviewed how the draft strategic action plan addressed these five focus areas. President White noted the potential value of setting acquisition targets. Mr. Smith noted the different measures for water quality outcomes intended for the capital projects and asked if it would be possible to frame more comparable measures. He offered comments on how section 3 could be oriented for any external audiences reviewing the plan. Manager Olson asked about the timeline and trend analysis for de-listing water bodies. Manager Hejmadi asked about the next steps in this process and the level of detail anticipated to inform work planning and budgeting. Manager Loftus said that this plan is a great foundation and provides the right level of detail for the managers. Manager Miller expressed his appreciation that the goals are science-based and this creates long term goodwill for the District.

Mr. Wisker stated that staff would work to fine-tune the draft plan for the Board’s consideration at a future meeting.

BOARD INQUIRIES, ISSUES, AND IDEAS

None.

STAFF UPDATES

Administrator’s Report

Mr. Wisker reported on the following items:

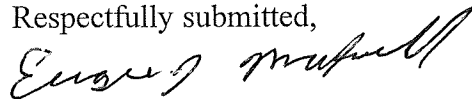
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1. Lake Minnetonka is at elevation 929.6. Rain on May 21 in the watershed was measured at 2.3 inches in 24 hours, and one inch fell within a 90 minute period. Minnehaha Creek flow peaked at 396 cubic feet per second in Minneapolis, and as of today it is back down to 194 cfs. The MCWD held back discharge from Gray's Bay dam in anticipation of the May 21 rainstorm, which helped to manage creek flow.
2. The Spring field trip was postponed and rescheduled for May 30.
3. MCWD recently attended a meeting of the Lake Minnewashta Association to share an overview of the District's mission and work, which was well received. MnDOT work on Highway 5 is of interest and there will be further outreach to the Project Office.
4. In response to a question from Manager Olson, staff reached out to the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board to learn about planned repair work at Minnehaha Falls. The work is in the early concept stage and staff will continue to be in communication about the project.

Adjournment

There being no further business, President White declared the meeting of the Board of Managers adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Eugene Maxwell, Secretary