

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

4
5 **May 23, 2024**

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7 **CALL TO ORDER**

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

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13 **MANAGERS PRESENT**

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

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18 **MANAGERS ABSENT**

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20 None.

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22 **DISTRICT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT**

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

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28 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

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33 **MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR**

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35 None.

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37 **INTRODUCTION OF STAFF**

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

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47 **CONSENT AGENDA**

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49 *It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Hejmadi, to approve the items*
50 *on the Consent Agenda consisting of approval of the May 9, 2024, Board meeting*
51 *minutes; approval of the General Check Register, including check numbers 42551*
52 *through 42565 in the amount of \$48,240.67, electronic funds withdrawals of*
53 *\$136,196.74, credit card charges of \$3,696.65, managers per diems and*
54 *reimbursements of \$1,194.97, employee reimbursements of \$117.97, and payroll*
55 *electronic funds withdrawals and disbursements of \$154,937.30, for a total of*
56 *\$344,384.30; the Surety Check Register including payment of \$27.00 in fees to Bremer*
57 *Bank, and check number 2209 for partial surety release for permit 18-002 in the*
58 *amount of \$2,500, for a total of \$2,527.00; and Wire Transfers to Hennepin County for*
59 *payment on 2013B in the amount of \$46,468.75 and payment on 2020B in the amount*
60 *of \$74,125.00 for a total of \$120,593.75.*

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

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65 **BOARD, COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS**

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67 President's Report: None.

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

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

75

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

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

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81 **PERMITS REQUIRING A VARIANCE OR DISCUSSION**

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83 None.

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85 **PUBLIC HEARINGS & PRESENTATIONS**

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87 None.

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90 **ACTION ITEMS**

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92 None.

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94 **BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS**

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96 Strategic Action Plan

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

102

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

108

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

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

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124 **BOARD INQUIRIES, ISSUES, AND IDEAS**

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126 None.

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128 **STAFF UPDATES**

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130 Administrator’s Report

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132 Mr. Wisker reported on the following items:

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Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
Board of Managers
5/23/24

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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