

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

4  
5                                   **July 11, 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 July 11, 2024, at the MCWD  
11                                   offices, 15320 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, Minnesota.

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13                                   **MANAGERS PRESENT**

14                                   Sherry White, William Olson, Richard Miller, Jessica Loftus, Arun Hejmadi, and Eugene  
15                                   Maxwell.

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18                                   **MANAGERS ABSENT**

19                                   Stephen Sando.

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21  
22                                   **DISTRICT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT**

23                                   James Wisker, Administrator; Michael Hayman, Director of Project Planning; Gabe  
24                                   Sherman, Planner – Project Manager; Chris Meehan, District Consulting Engineer; and  
25                                   Louis Smith, District Counsel.

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28                                   **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

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33                                   **MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR**

34                                   None.

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37                                   **CONSENT AGENDA**

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39                                   *It was moved by Manager Maxwell, seconded by Manager Hejmadi, to approve the*  
40                                   *items on the Consent Agenda consisting of approval of the June 27, 2024, Board*  
41                                   *meeting minutes, and the following resolutions:*

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43                                   ***Resolution 24-039: Acceptance of Donation***

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45

46 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***  
47 ***Watershed District Board of Managers hereby accepts the donation of \$300***  
48 ***from the Gleason Lake Improvement Association and authorize the deposit of***  
49 ***the donation into the District's general fund;***  
50

51 ***Resolution 24-040: Approval to Release Request for Qualifications for Legal Services***  
52

53 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***  
54 ***Watershed District Board of Managers hereby authorizes the District***  
55 ***Administrator to issue a request for qualifications for legal services; and***  
56

57 ***Resolution 24-041: Authorization to Execute Maintenance Declarations for Lost Lake***  
58 ***Commons Project***  
59

60 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***  
61 ***Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the MCWD Administrator,***  
62 ***on advice of counsel, to execute the First Amendment to Declaration and the***  
63 ***Lost Lake Commons Maintenance Declaration.***  
64

65 ***Upon vote, the motion carried 6-0.***  
66  
67

68 **BOARD, COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS**  
69

70 President's Report: President White noted that she would be attending the Lake Walk  
71 dedication this coming Saturday in Wayzata, and an upcoming tour of Blake Road  
72 reconstruction.  
73

74 Operations and Programs Committee: Present White noted that the Operations and  
75 Programs Committee did not meet.  
76

77 President White noted the upcoming meeting schedule presented in the agenda.  
78

79 **PERMITS REQUIRING A VARIANCE OR DISCUSSION**  
80

81 None.  
82

83 **PUBLIC HEARINGS & PRESENTATIONS**  
84

85 None.  
86  
87  
88

89 **ACTION ITEMS**

90

91 **Resolution 24-042: Authorization to Award Contract for Minnehaha**  
92 **Parkway Phase I Project Feasibility**

93

94 Mr. Gabe Sherman appeared before the Board of Managers to review the request for  
95 board action. He reviewed the recently approved Cooperative Agreement for Integrating  
96 Planning and Water Resource Projects in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed in  
97 Minneapolis and noted that the agreement provides for a first phase of three initial  
98 partnership projects. Three high-impact projects were selected from the Minnehaha  
99 Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan to proceed with feasibility study. Together with  
100 partners Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board and the City of Minneapolis, MCWD has  
101 led a process to issue this request for proposals for the feasibility work.

102

103 Mr. Sherman traced the RFP process and review of proposals with partners. The multi-  
104 agency selection team unanimously recommended that Stantec be selected and awarded  
105 this contract for feasibility work. *It was moved by Manager Hejmadi, seconded by*  
106 *Manager Miller, to adopt Resolution 24-042: Authorization to Award Contract for*  
107 *Minnehaha Parkway Phase I Project Feasibility as follows:*

108

109 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***  
110 ***Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the District Administrator, on***  
111 ***advice of legal counsel, to execute a contract with Stantec Consulting Services***  
112 ***Inc. for engineering, design, and consulting services for the Minnehaha***  
113 ***Parkway Phase I Project Feasibility study, in accordance with the developed***  
114 ***scope of work as the Administrator may refine it, and in an amount not to***  
115 ***exceed the amount set forth in the proposal, and authorizes the Administrator to***  
116 ***execute contract amendments in his discretion up to an additional 10 percent,***  
117 ***in aggregate, of the contract amount.***

118

119 Manager Maxwell stated that he appreciated great staff work to advance this project, and  
120 wondered whether the MPRB worker strike would impact this project. Mr. Sherman said  
121 that his impression is that this work will continue to advance notwithstanding the strike.  
122 Manager Miller asked if the staff sees opportunities for noticeable project excellence in  
123 this first phase of projects. Mr. Sherman noted that this first phase of work is largely  
124 technical analysis, but the design phase will be an opportunity to address this aspect. Mr.  
125 Wisker stated that he agreed that the MPRB strike will not impact this technical, desktop  
126 work and that at the design phase a landscape architect will be identifying sites for visible  
127 distinction, including the Nicollet site as one example. Manager Olson noted that past  
128 MCWD projects have achieved a “destination quality” and established high expectations  
129 for future projects.

130

131 Manager Hejmadi asked how the collaborative process is working among the staff of the  
132 three agencies, and Mr. Sherman said the process is working well, with the main  
133 challenge being the stress of other duties. Nevertheless, this RFP process has met the  
134 desired schedule. Manager Hejmadi asked how MCWD assumes a leadership role while  
135 also assuring that others stay involved, and Mr. Sherman noted regular check-ins at key  
136 milestones keep everyone engaged. In response to another question from Manager  
137 Hejmadi, Mr. Sherman described the intended community outreach process that will be  
138 based on the MPRB's model for engagement. Given that the MPRB Master Plan is  
139 already approved, this work will largely be in an informing mode, and once schematic  
140 designs are developed, more community engagement will follow. Mr. Wisker noted that  
141 staff is working on both an internal communications process among the three partner  
142 agencies, as well as external communications.

143  
144 Manager Loftus expressed the need for determined leadership to assure that the MCWD  
145 can complete its responsibilities without being too dependent on others' projects. Mr.  
146 Sherman noted that some MCWD project responsibilities will be necessarily dependent  
147 on other partners' elements, such as trails and bridges. Mr. Wisker noted that in a  
148 collaboration working within a complex system, barriers can often arise, but the best  
149 approach is simplicity, to identify simple steps where the work can start and gain traction.  
150 He noted that the next phase of work will involve critical site control issues.

151  
152 *There being no further discussion, upon vote, the motion to adopt Resolution 24-042*  
153 *carried, 6-0.*

154  
155 **BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS**

156  
157 None.

158  
159 **BOARD INQUIRIES, ISSUES, AND IDEAS**

160  
161 Manager Miller inquired about the state of maintenance work beyond Minnehaha Falls,  
162 noting that it appears that MPRB has not addressed some maintenance needs. Mr.  
163 Wisker noted that the topic of these maintenance responsibilities will be a part of  
164 planning new work to revisit needs and cooperative opportunities.

165  
166 **STAFF UPDATES**

167  
168 **Administrator's Report**

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170 Mr. Wisker reported on the following items:

- 171  
172 1. Rain continues above normal averages. Lake Minnetonka is at elevation  
173 929.8. The Gray's Bay Dam is currently discharging at 300 cubic feet per

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174 second. At Hiawatha, Minnehaha Creek is flowing at 230 cubic feet per  
175 second. Two recent un-forecast pop-up showers resulted in 1.7 inches of rain  
176 in 48 hours. This precipitation quickly pulsed the level of Minnehaha Creek  
177 from localized runoff. Warmer dry weather is forecast in the coming week.  
178 Manager Olson noted some problems he is having accessing water level data  
179 on the MCWD web site, and Mr. Wisker offered to assist and evaluate the  
180 user experience. Manager Miller noted that in Edina, landowners along the  
181 Creek have commented on how much they rely on the MCWD web site.  
182

- 183 2. Staff is working on preparation of the July 23 Policy Steering Committee  
184 meeting for the collaboration with Minneapolis and MPRB. The agenda will  
185 include celebration of early achievements, discussion of long-term planning,  
186 and communications planning.  
187
- 188 3. Mr. Wisker noted that Josh Wolf is leaving his position with MCWD and  
189 thanked him for his time of service and assistance in transition planning. He  
190 noted that Stantec will be assisting with some operations and projects duties in  
191 this transition. The managers thanked Mr. Wolf for his service to the District.  
192

193 **Adjournment**

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195 There being no further business, President White declared the meeting of the Board of  
196 Managers adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

197  
198 Respectfully submitted,

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200  
201 Eugene Maxwell, Secretary