



MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT
QUALITY OF WATER, QUALITY OF LIFE

Meeting: Board of Managers
Meeting date: 12/18/2025
Agenda Item #: 7.3
Board Consent Item

Title: Selection and Authorization to Execute a Contract for Government Relations Services

Resolution number: 25-076

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Recommended action: Approval of Resolution 25-076

Schedule: 12/18/2025: Staff recommendation to Board for Approval
12/19/2025 - 12/30/2025: Contract Negotiations
1/2/2026: New Contract Start Date

Budget Considerations: Fund name and code: 4-4002-2320 Contract Services
Fund budget 2026: \$69,000

Past Board Action: Resolution # 25 – 054 Authorization to Release RFP for Government Relations Services

Background:

Under Minnesota Statute 103B.227 a Watershed District is required to solicit interest via an open request for proposals (RFP) process for professional or technical consultant services at least every two years. The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's (District's) current Government Relations consultant contract expires on December 31, 2025.

At the October 9, 2025, Board meeting, the [Board of Managers adopted Resolution 25-054](#), and authorized the release of a request for proposals (RFP) for Government Relations Services. The RFP was published on October 10, 2025, with a deadline of November 10, 2025, and included the following general scope of services for government relations on retainer:

1. Provide lobbyist services during the regular legislative sessions and advocacy services for the remaining months of the agreement.
2. Meet annually with MCWD staff and Board Members to develop a legislative policy agenda that supports the District's strategic priorities.
3. Provide legislative research and updates on legislative proposals that may affect the MCWD and its operations.
4. Conduct regular verbal briefings with MCWD staff during the legislative session.
5. Provide monthly written reports to MCWD staff during the legislative session on proposals that may affect the MCWD and its operations.
6. Meet with MCWD staff and Board Members to debrief and adjust the policy agenda, after each legislative session.
7. Provide legislative representation for the MCWD by coordinating with others interested in legislation, meeting with legislators, attending appropriate committee hearings, developing written lobbying materials and providing or arranging testimony before legislative committees as needed.

Proposal Review:

The District received three proposals: one from the current vendor, Joel Carlson, one from Park Street Public, and one from Scott Government Relations. Staff evaluated all three proposals and found them to demonstrate a clear understanding of the District's government relations needs and experience representing local government in natural

resource contexts. However, both Park Street Public and Scott Government Relations' proposals came in at a higher price than that of Joel Carlson, the incumbent, whose proposal remained consistent with past years.

As the incumbent, Joel Carlson also brings familiarity with MCWD's team, projects, policy initiatives, and partnership approach, and has established a track record of strong representation for MCWD in the state legislature, including assisting MCWD in securing state grant funds from both the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) and the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) to support mission-driven projects.

Recommendation:

Based on the proposals received, staff recommend the selection of Joel Carlson and request authorization to execute a Government Relations contract with a term expiring December 31, 2027, in an amount not to exceed \$28,000 per year or \$56,000 for the term of the contract.



RESOLUTION

Resolution number: 25-076

Title: Authorization to Execute a Contract for Government Relations Services

- WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes 103B.227 requires watershed districts to solicit interest proposals for professional services before retaining the services of a consultant at least every two years; and
- WHEREAS, the professional services contract for the government relations consultant expires on December 31, 2025; and
- WHEREAS, the District approved the release of a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Government Relations Consultant at the October 9, 2025, Board meeting; and
- WHEREAS, the District received three responses to the Request for Proposals; and
- WHEREAS, staff reviewed the responses based on a demonstration of an understanding of state, regional, and local watershed management, and understanding of the District's priorities, the experience and expertise of the firm, and cost; and
- WHEREAS, Joel Carlson's proposal is cost competitive and offers continuity of services as the incumbent with existing knowledge of the District's needs, priorities, team, and approach; and
- WHEREAS, based on its review, staff recommend that the Board select Joel Carlson as the District's government relations consultant.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby selects Joel Carlson as the government relations consultant and authorizes the District Administrator to execute a new two-year contract with a termination date of December 31, 2027, for government relations services on retainer for an annual amount not to exceed \$28,000 or \$56,000 for the term of the contract.

Resolution Number 25-076 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: December 18, 2025.

Date: _____

Secretary