

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

**March 12, 2026**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers was called to order by President Sherry White at 7:09 p.m. on March 12, 2026, at the MCWD offices, 15320 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, Minnesota.

**MANAGERS PRESENT**

Sherry White, William Olson, Eugene Maxwell, Stephen Sando, and Ricardo Bonner.

**MANAGERS ABSENT**

Arun Hejmadi (monitored meeting remotely).

**DISTRICT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT**

James Wisker, Administrator; Gabe Sherman, Planner - Project Manager; Nick Ayers, District Consulting Engineer; and Louis Smith, District Counsel.

**OATH OF OFFICE**

Mr. Smith administered the oath of office to Manager Bonner. The managers welcomed Mr. Bonner to the Board.

**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

President White recommended the following committee assignments:

Operations and Programs Committee: Olson, chair; Hejmadi; and Bonner.

Policy and Planning Committee: Maxwell, chair; Sando; and Schaefer.

*It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Maxwell to confirm these committee assignments. Upon vote, the motion carried, 5-0.*

**Election of Treasurer and Secretary**

President White noted the vacancy in the office of Treasurer with the departure of Manager Loftus. She recommended that Manager Maxwell be elected Treasurer, and Manager Hejmadi be elected Secretary. *It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by*

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*Manager Maxwell, that Manager Maxwell be elected Treasurer, and Manager Hejmadi be elected Secretary. Upon vote, the motion carried, 5-0.*

**MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR**

None.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Maxwell, to approve the agenda as distributed. Upon vote, the motion carried, 5-0.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Manager Maxwell, seconded by Manager Bonner, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda consisting of approval of the February 26, 2026, Board meeting minutes, and the following resolutions:*

*Resolution 26-028: Authorization to Execute Agreement for BWSR Storage and Water Quality Grant*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the District Administrator to execute a grant agreement with the Board of Water and Soil Resources to support the 2027 Plan engagement and development;*

*Resolution 26-029: Authorization to Implement Human Resource Adjustments*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby authorizes and directs the Administrator to reclassify one of the Policy Planning Coordinators, Kate Moran, to a Senior Policy Planner;*

*Resolution 26-030: Honoring the Leadership and Service of Steffanie Musich*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby expresses its deep gratitude for her years of public service and extends its sincere appreciation and best wishes to Commissioner Musich for continued success, health and happiness in all her future endeavors;*

*Resolution 26-031: Honoring the Leadership and Service of Richard Miller*

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby formally recognizes Manager Richard “Dick” Miller for his leadership, vision, and enduring contributions to advancing Balanced Urban Ecology and to restoring and protecting the land and water resources of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed; and***

***Resolution 26-032: Honoring the Leadership and Service of Jessica Loftus***

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby formally recognizes Manager Jessica Loftus for her leadership, strategic insight, and enduring contributions to advancing the vision of a Balanced Urban Ecology, building an organizational culture of excellence, and restoring and protecting the land and water resources of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed.***

***Upon roll call vote, the motion carried, 5-0.***

**BOARD, COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS**

President’s Report: President White noted that she and Mr. Wisker recently met with Hennepin County Commissioner Irene Fernando.

Operations and Programs Committee Report: Manager Olson reported that the Committee met earlier in the evening and received a staff briefing on the Minneapolis Thriving Waters Partnership, including progress to date and the current status of the Cedar Avenue Stormwater Project. Staff also provided an overview of the long-range planning approach being implemented in Minneapolis, beginning with the recently completed Cedar Lake Management Unit Plan draft.

President White noted the schedule of upcoming meetings presented in the agenda.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**Public Hearing to Consider Minor Plan Amendment**

President White opened the public hearing to obtain public input on the proposed minor plan amendment to MCWD’s Watershed Management Plan. Ms. Rachel Baker appeared before the Board of Managers and noted that MCWD staff have proposed a minor amendment to the MCWD Watershed Management Plan (WMP) to incorporate internal lake nutrient load management (e.g., alum or similar treatment) as a potential pollutant load reduction strategy within the Minnehaha Creek Subwatershed. She noted that this amendment will support ongoing joint planning efforts with the City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), specifically the development of the Cedar Lake Management Unit (MU) Plan,

and position the partners to pursue future state grant funding for water quality improvements at Cedar Lake.

President White invited members of the public to comment. Mr. Gary Dukes, 5128 – 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Minneapolis, appeared before the Board of Managers to express his support for the plan amendment to and stressed the need for an alum treatment to address water quality in Lake Nokomis.

Ms. Rachel Crabb, Water Resources Manager for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, appeared before the Board of Managers. She expressed her appreciation for the cooperative work with MCWD staff to address Cedar Lake and Lake Nokomis issues. She stated that the proposed plan amendment would help to address critical internal nutrient sources in conjunction with upstream work. In response to a question from President White, Ms. Crabb stated that the MPRB has begun discussions to explore alternative sources of funding in the event that the project does not receive state funding.

MPRB Commissioner Kedar Pashpande addressed the Board of Managers through interactive technology. He expressed his appreciation for the cooperative work done by the MCWD and the MPRB.

There being no further comments, President White declared the public hearing closed.

#### **PERMITS REQUIRING A VARIANCE OR DISCUSSION**

None.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

None.

#### **BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### **Board Engagement in the 2027 Watershed Management Plan**

Ms. Becky Christopher appeared before the Board of Managers, noting that staff is seeking feedback from the Board of Managers on the proposed approach for engaging the Board in policy development and stakeholder engagement for the 2027 Watershed Management Plan. She reviewed the topics and schedule for Board agendas, and a proposed public agency meeting schedule and subwatershed groupings with proposed manager liaison assignments.

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President White proposed that she and Manager Olson serve as the liaisons to the Policy Advisory Committee. *It was moved by Manager Maxwell, seconded by Manager Sando to confirm these appointments. Upon vote, the motion carried 5-0.*

*It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Bonner to confirm the staff recommendations for Subwatershed Group liaison assignments. Upon vote, the motion carried 5-0.*

In response to a request from Mr. Wisker, *it was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Maxwell, that Cara Gehren, City of Victoria, and Leslie Yetka, City of Minnetonka, be added as members of the Technical Advisory Committee. Upon vote, the motion carried, 5-0.*

### **BOARD INQUIRIES, ISSUES, AND IDEAS**

None.

### **STAFF UPDATES**

#### **Administrator's Report**

Mr. Wisker reported on the following items:

1. Staff has learned that ProTree is unable to execute the tree removal work for the Cedar Lake Regional Trail connection project. That contract has been cancelled by mutual agreement and the work will be incorporated into the scope for the full project.
2. MCWD has received a \$75,000 grant from the Board of Water and Soil Resources to support modelling work, and a \$100,000 grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to support planning for resilience. These grant agreements will be coming to a future board meeting for approval.
3. Mr. Wisker will be participating in a panel discussion about housing costs and watershed regulation on March 19 at the St. Anthony Falls Laboratory. Mr. Smith will be the keynote speaker.
4. Plans are set for an event to recognize Managers Miller and Loftus for their service, to be held on March 27.

The managers thanked Mr. Wisker for this report.

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**CLOSED SESSION**

*Upon recommendation of counsel, it was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Bonner to move into closed session for the purpose of receiving confidential legal advice concerning litigation strategy in the case of JTS Construction v. Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. Upon vote, the motion carried, 5-0.*

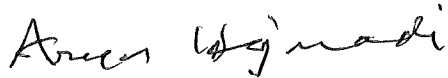
The Board of Managers went into closed session.

The Board of Managers returned to open session.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, President White declared the meeting of the Board of Managers adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Arun Hejmadi, Secretary