

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

May 14, 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 7:07 p.m. on May 14, 2026, at the MCWD offices, 15320 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, Minnesota.

ROLL CALL FOR ATTENDANCE

President White called the roll to note attendance:

William Olson:	Present
Eugene Maxwell:	Present
Ricardo Bonner:	Present
Arun Hejmadi:	Present, participating remotely
Stephen Sando:	Present
Sherry White:	Present

DISTRICT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT

James Wisker, Administrator; Abigail Couture, Permitting Technician; Gabe Sherman, Senior Planner – Project Manager; Kailey Cermak, Planner – Project Manager; and Louis Smith, District Counsel.

MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Manager Maxwell, seconded by Manager Bonner, to approve the agenda as distributed. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried, 6-0 as follows:

<i>Hejmadi:</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Olson:</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Bonner:</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Maxwell:</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Sando:</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>White:</i>	<i>Aye</i>

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Manager Sando, seconded by Manager Olson, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda consisting of approval of the April 23, 2026, Board meeting minutes, and the following resolution:

Resolution 26-048: Approve Issuance of Letter of Support for Hennepin County LSOHC Application

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the issuance of the Letter of Support to Hennepin County for inclusion in its upcoming Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund grant application.

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried, 6-0 as follows:

*Hejmadi: Aye
Olson: Aye
Bonner: Aye
Maxwell: Aye
Sando: Aye
White: Aye*

BOARD, COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS

President's Report: President White noted that along with Manager Olson, she attended the recent joint Policy Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee meeting for the 2027 Plan. It was a great meeting.

Operations and Programs Committee Report: Manager Olson reported that the Committee met earlier in the evening and received a presentation from Mr. Wisker on the preliminary 2027 budget.

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND PRESENTATIONS

None.

PERMITS REQUIRING A VARIANCE OR DISCUSSION

Permit 26-161: Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection

Ms. Abigail Couture and Mr. Gabe Sherman appeared before the Board of Managers to review the Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection Project. Mr. Sherman provided an overview of the project its 90% design. He noted that there were no major changes to the design since the Board's prior review. He reviewed the effort to minimize tree removal while assuring trail safety. He noted degradation of the streambank in this area, especially from the 2014 flood events. Mr. Sherman explained the plans for streambank restoration using soil lifts and a geo-cell bank.

Ms. Couture reviewed the MCWD's permit application and the applicable rules, the Waterbody Crossings and Structures Rule and the Shoreline and Streambank Stabilization Rule. She explained that based on review by District staff and the District Engineer, staff finds that the application meets all applicable MCWD rules and recommends the Board approve the permit application.

It was moved by Manager Maxwell, seconded by Manager Sando, to approve Permit 26-161 with conditions recommended by staff. Manager Olson asked if, given the extensive erosion, the streambank improvements would result in measurable improvements to water quality. Mr. Wisker noted that Total Suspended Solids and Total Phosphorus could be measured. In response to a further question from Manager Olson, Mr. Sherman noted that a minimum height of ten feet from the trail to the bridge deck has been required by Metro Transit. In response to questions from Manager Maxwell, Ms. Couture noted the toe boulders at water level and the plantings in the soil lifts which would allow roots to assist in stabilizing the streambank, and she noted the fencing that would protect children from accessing the LRT tracks. In response to a question from Manager Bonner, Mr. Sherman reviewed the City of St. Louis Park's maintenance responsibilities and the operations and maintenance plan to be prepared.

There being no further discussion, upon roll call vote, the motion carried, 6-0 as follows:

Hejmadi: Aye
Olson: Aye
Bonner: Aye
Maxwell: Aye
Sando: Aye
White: Aye

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution 26-049: Approval of 90% Design for Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection and Streambank Stabilization Project and Authorization to Solicit Bids

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Resolution 26-050: Approval of Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection and Streambank Stabilization Project Agreements

Mr. Sherman noted the other permits to be obtained for the project and reviewed the plans for offsite tree replacement which have been carefully coordinated with the City of St. Louis Park. He reviewed the updated estimated cost for the project and the cost sharing arrangement with the City and the funding contribution from Hennepin Community Works. Mr. Sherman reviewed the three project agreements, which included a property conveyance agreement with Creekwest LLC and the City of St. Louis Park; a cooperative agreement with the City of St. Louis Park; and a license agreement among the Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority, and the City of St. Louis Park.

It was moved by Manager Maxwell, seconded by Manager Bonner, to adopt Resolution 26-049: Approval of 90% Design for Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection and Streambank Stabilization Project and Authorization to Solicit Bids as follows:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers approves the 90% design for the Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection and Streambank Restoration Project and authorizes the District Administrator to direct Stantec to prepare conforming final plans and, on advice of counsel, to solicit bids.

In response to a question from Manager Olson, Mr. Sherman said that the trail section would likely be underwater if a storm event like the 2014 flood were to occur, but the ten foot clearance with the bridge deck prevented the trail from being raised any higher.

There being no further discussion, upon roll call vote, the motion carried, 6-0 as follows:

***Hejmadi: Aye
Olson: Aye
Bonner: Aye
Maxwell: Aye
Sando: Aye
White: Aye***

It was moved by Manager Maxwell, seconded by Manager Bonner, to adopt Resolution 26-050: Approval of Greenway to Cedar Trail Connection and Streambank Stabilization Project Agreements as follows:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers approves the (1) Project Agreement among Creekwest LLC, City of St. Louis Park & Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and up to \$6,000

in compensation and legal fee reimbursement for Creekwest LLC, (2) Cooperative Agreement between City of St. Louis Park & Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and its associated easements, and (3) Cooperative Construction Agreement between the Metropolitan Council and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and authorizes the Board President and the Administrator to execute the project agreements and associated easements, with any non-substantive changes and on advice of counsel.

Upon roll call vote, the motion carried, 6-0 as follows:

*Hejmadi: Aye
Olson: Aye
Bonner: Aye
Maxwell: Aye
Sando: Aye
White: Aye*

BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

None.

BOARD INQUIRIES, ISSUES, AND IDEAS

Manager Bonner reported that he attended the State of Hennepin County presentation earlier in the day and commissioners expressed to him their high esteem for MCWD.

STAFF UPDATES

Administrator's Report

Mr. Wisker reported on the following items:

1. Manager Bonner and Mr. Wisker had a productive meeting with representatives of the Nature Conservancy and identified broad philosophical alignment; Mr. Wisker will work with staff to explore possible concrete opportunities for collaboration;
2. Lake Minnetonka is currently at elevation 929.15; Grays Bay control structure is currently discharging at 12 cubic feet per second; Minnehaha Creek at Hiawatha is currently flowing at 14 cubic feet per second; year to date precipitation is 6.7 inches, 1.2 inches below normal;
3. Ms. Kailey Cermak shared video of the staged burning of the structures at 6300 Painter Road in cooperation with the Mound Fire Department.

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The managers thanked Mr. Wisker for this report.

Adjournment

There being no further business, President White declared the meeting of the Board of Managers adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Arun Hejmadi".

Arun Hejmadi, Secretary