

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

December 18, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers was called to order by President Sherry White at 7:05 p.m. on December 18, 2025, at the MCWD offices, 15320 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, Minnesota.

MANAGERS PRESENT

Sherry White, William Olson, Jessica Loftus, Eugene Maxwell, Richard Miller, Stephen Sando, and Arun Hejmedi.

MANAGERS ABSENT

None.

DISTRICT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT

James Wisker, Administrator; Deb Johnson, Office Manager; James O'Brien, Outreach Coordinator; James McDermond-Spies, Project Maintenance & Land Management Program Manager; Lauren Stretar, Office Assistant; Nick Wyers, District Consulting Engineer; and Louis Smith, District Counsel.

MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Manager Maxwell, seconded by Manager Miller, to approve the Agenda as distributed. Upon vote, the motion carried, 7-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Manager Olson requested that Item 7.2, Approving Repair of Hail Damage to District Vehicles and Insurance Claim Submittal, be pulled from the Consent Agenda. ***It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Hejjadi, to approve the remaining items on the Consent Agenda consisting of approval of the December 1, 2025, Board meeting minutes, approval of the General Check Register, including check numbers 42719 through 42727 in the amount of \$89,009.07, electronic funds withdrawals of \$242,042.66, credit card charges of \$3,859.51, managers per diems and reimbursements***

47 *of \$2,516.82, employee reimbursements of \$1,607.62, and payroll electronic funds*
48 *withdrawals and disbursements of \$181,127.63, for a total of \$520,163.31; the Surety*
49 *Check Register with payment of \$30.00 in fees to Bremer Bank and check numbers*
50 *2268 through 2270 for a total of 28,905.00; wire transfers of \$5,500.00 for payment to*
51 *MN Unclaimed Property Fund for payment of Sureties 04-140 / 04-615 / 13-531; and*
52 *the following resolutions:*

53
54 ***Resolution 25-073: Surety Return Project Update and Authorization to Send Cash***
55 ***Sureties to the State of Minnesota Unclaimed Property Fund***

56
57 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***
58 ***Watershed District Board of Managers authorize staff to initiate a wire transfer***
59 ***from the District's Old National Bank surety funds account in the amount of***
60 ***\$5,500 to the State of Minnesota Unclaimed Property Fund;***

61
62 ***Resolution 25-076: Selection and Authorization to Execute a Contract for Government***
63 ***Relations Services***

64
65 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***
66 ***Watershed District Board of Managers hereby selects Joel Carlson as the***
67 ***government relations consultant and authorizes the District Administrator to***
68 ***execute a new two-year contract with a termination date of December 31, 2027,***
69 ***for government relations services on retainer for an annual amount not to***
70 ***exceed \$28,000 or \$56,000 for the term of the contract;***

71
72 ***Resolution 25-077: Authorization to Select and Execute a Catering Contract for***
73 ***Watershed Management Plan Kickoff Event***

74
75 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***
76 ***Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the District Administrator to***
77 ***select a vendor and execute a contract in an amount not to exceed \$10,000, for***
78 ***catering services at the January 27, 2026, Kickoff Events;***

79
80 ***Resolution 25-078: Authorization to Extend Engineering Services Contract***

81
82 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***
83 ***Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the MCWD Administrator,***
84 ***on advice of counsel, to amend the current engineering services contract with***
85 ***Stantec and extend the contract until June 30, 2026, with Stantec to provide***
86 ***engineering services on retainer for a monthly rate through February 28, 2026***
87 ***and additional services provided based on an hourly fee structure, as authorized***
88 ***by the Administrator; and***

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90 ***Resolution 25-079: Authorization to Purchase Replacement Sensors for RESNET***

91

92 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***

93 ***Watershed District Board of Managers authorize the District Administrator to***

94 ***purchase reserve and replacement equipment from OTT-Hydromet in a total***

95 ***not to exceed \$11,000.***

96

97 ***Upon vote, the motion carried, 7-0.***

98

99 **Resolution 25-075: Approving Repair of Hail Damage to District Vehicles and Insurance**

100 **Claim Submittal**

101

102 Manager Olson noted the claim for hail damage to District vehicles and asked if a claim
103 for hail damage to the roof of the office building is being pursued as well. Ms. Deb
104 Johnson appeared before the Board of Managers and stated that an inspection of the roof
105 revealed damage also, and a claim is being pursued. Manager Olson thanked Ms.
106 Johnson for this information. ***It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager***
107 ***Miller to adopt Resolution 25-075: Approving Repair of Hail Damage to District***
108 ***Vehicles and Insurance Claim Submittal as follows:***

109

110 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***

111 ***Watershed District Board of Managers hereby approves the repair and salvage***

112 ***of the District vehicles as outlined in staff's recommendation and authorizes the***

113 ***District Administrator to obtain vehicle repairs from Caliber Collision for***

114 ***LMCIT reimbursement.***

115

116 ***Upon vote, the motion carried, 7-0.***

117

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

119

120 **President's Report: None.**

121

122 **Policy and Planning Committee Report:** Manager Miller reported that the Committee met earlier
123 in the evening and received a staff briefing on the diversity, equity and inclusion framework as
124 incorporated into the District's community engagement and staff onboarding work. He noted
125 that the briefing was exciting and comprehensive.

126

127 **MN Watersheds Annual Conference Report:** President White noted that she attended the annual
128 Minnesota Watersheds conference, along with Managers Olson and Maxwell.

129

130 Manager Olson reported that the Board of Water and Soil Resources has produced helpful
131 training videos on watershed management. He noted that some of the interesting presentations

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133 he attended included groundwater impacts of data centers and Ms. Sweet's presentation on
134 evaluating carp management. President White noted that along with this carp management
135 presentation, she attended presentations on calcareous fens, climate change and resilience,
136 chlorides policy initiatives, natural resource enhancements in flood mitigation, and a low-salt
137 design presentation from the City of Hopkins.

138
139 Manager Maxwell noted that the District received the Project of the Year Award for the Arden
140 Park Project. He thanked the staff, project partners including the City of Edina, and all of the
141 partners for making this project such as success.

142
143 Manager Olson noted that he also recently attended a conference on watershed democracy at the
144 University of Minnesota. One quotable comment was that flooding does not cause inequity, it
145 reveals it. The conference underscored the critical importance of wetlands in climate resilience.

146
147 President White noted the schedule of upcoming meetings presented in the agenda.

148
149 **PUBLIC HEARINGS AND PRESENTATIONS**

150
151 None.

152
153 **PERMITS REQUIRING A VARIANCE OR DISCUSSION**

154
155 None.

156
157 **ACTION ITEMS**

158
159 Resolution 25-080: Appointment of 2026 Citizens Advisory Committee Members

160
161 Mr. James O'Brien appeared before the Board of Managers to review the request for board
162 action. He explained the recruitment and application process and the basis for recommendations
163 on CAC membership.

164
165 *It was moved by Manager Sando, seconded by Manager Hejmadi to adopt Resolution 25-080:
166 Appointment of the 2026 Citizens Advisory Committee as follows:*

167
168 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed
169 District Board of Managers hereby appoints the following individuals to the 2026
170 Citizen Advisory Committee:***

171
172 *Serving 2026* *Serving 2026-2027*
173 *Ricardo Bonner* *Cait Caswell*
174 *Joshua Foschi* *Laurie Goldsmith*
175 *Robert Glisky* *John Iverson*

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176 *Steve Hage* *Drew McGovern*
177 *Suzanne Jiwani* *Will Mulhern*
178 *Rich Nyquist* *Janet Schaefer*
179 *Kevin Zahler* *Sheri Wallace*
180
181
182 In response to a question from Manager Maxwell, Mr. O'Brien affirmed that the MCWD
183 maintains contact with applicants not selected to keep them informed of District activities
184 and encourage their future reapplication to serve on the CAC. ***There being no further***
185 ***discussion, upon vote, the motion carried 7-0.***

186
187 Resolution 25-081: Authorization to Execute Contract for Blandings Turtle Survey and
188 Avoidance Plan

189
190 Mr. James McDermond-Spies appeared before the Board of Managers to review the
191 request for board action. He explained that in 2023 Twin Lakes Park Pond and Nokomis-
192 Amelia Pond were identified to be in need of maintenance in the coming winter. Work
193 was unable to be completed, and the contract ultimately was terminated due to a
194 combination of unseasonably warm weather, and permitting hurdles encountered with the
195 reported presence of Blanding's Turtles in the vicinity of the Nokomis-Amelia work area.
196

197 Mr. McDermond-Spies noted that staff requested that Stantec, as the project engineer for
198 dredging Amelia, provide a scope of work to develop an avoidance plan. The primary
199 objective of a plan is to identify measures that, in the DNR's assessment, will allow
200 MCWD to avoid impacts to Blanding's turtles that otherwise would require that MCWD
201 apply to the DNR for a "take" permit. Stantec provided a scope of work, and Staff find
202 this scope to meet the needs of the project and to be of reasonable cost.
203

204 *It was moved by Manager Hejjadi, seconded by Manager Maxwell, to adopt*
205 *Resolution 25-081: Authorization to Execute Contract for Blanding's Turtle Survey*
206 *and Avoidance Plan as follows:*

207
208 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***
209 ***Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the MCWD Administrator,***
210 ***on advice of legal counsel, to negotiate and execute a contract with Stantec***
211 ***Consulting, in an amount not to exceed \$15,086, and authorizes the***
212 ***Administrator to execute any amendments to the contract that he finds***
213 ***warranted, up to an additional 10 percent of the contract price, in aggregate.***
214
215

216 In response to a question from Manager Miller, Mr. McDermond-Spies provided further
217 background on the DNR's regulatory jurisdiction concerning Blanding's turtles, and their
218 endangered species status. In response to a question from Manager Olson, Mr. McDermond-

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219 Spies and Mr. Wisker reviewed the discussions with the DNR about the preference for an
220 avoidance plan over a “take” permit. Mr. Wisker also noted that the MCWD’s project is to
221 maintain a constructed stormwater facility, which would appear to be an exception, but the
222 preparation of an avoidance plan appears to be the only way to get the DNR to address this issue.
223

224 ***There being no further discussion, upon vote, the motion carried 7-0.***

225
226 Resolution 25-074: Authorizing Contract for Accounting Services
227

228 Ms. Lauren Stretar appeared before the Board of Managers to review the request for
229 board action. She reviewed the process of issuing a request for proposals for accounting
230 services and the review of eight proposals received. She noted that after careful review
231 of the proposals, which included the proposers’ understanding of the District’s scope of
232 services, the composition of the team for redundancy purposes, knowledge and/or
233 experience with Minnesota governmental clients, as well as Sage 50, the District’s
234 financial software, and finally pricing, two proposals stood out, those of Abdo Financial
235 Services and Eide Bailly.
236

237 Ms. Stretar noted that the Abdo proposal reflected a substantial fee increase. While Abdo
238 is very familiar with the District, she noted that Eide Bailly staff are very knowledgeable
239 and provided a clear transition plan at a reasonable cost. For these reasons, the staff
240 recommend accepting the Eide Bailly proposal. ***It was moved by Manager Miller,***
241 ***seconded by Manager Loftus, to adopt Resolution 25-074: Authorizing Contract for***
242 ***Accounting Services as follows:***
243

244 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***
245 ***Watershed District Board of Managers hereby selects Eide Bailly as the***
246 ***accounting firm for the District; and hereby authorizes the District***
247 ***Administrator, on advice of counsel, to execute a contract with Eide Bailly to***
248 ***provide accounting services for 2026 and 2027 at rates not to exceed those set***
249 ***forth in the firm’s proposal.***
250

251 Manager Hejmadi complemented staff for a very thorough review process. Manager
252 Loftus noted that the process revealed two strong frontrunners, and that change is always
253 hard. In this case, Manager Loftus said, the change will introduce more competition into
254 the marketplace and that could benefit other entities as well. Manager Maxwell stated
255 that he values the staff input and recommendation. In response to a question from
256 Manager Olson, Ms. Stretar noted the budget for accounting and audit preparation. In
257 response to a question from Manager Hejmadi, Ms. Stretar affirmed that the staff is
258 comfortable with the representatives from Eide Bailly. ***There being no further***
259 ***discussion, upon vote the motion carried 7-0.***
260
261

262 **BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS**

263
264 None.

265

266 **BOARD INQUIRIES, ISSUES, AND IDEAS**

267

268 Manager Miller inquired about the status of financing the land acquisition at 6300 Painter Road
269 in Minnetrista. Ms. Kaily Cermak and Mr. Wisker responded at the meeting that while there are
270 adequate cash reserves, the opportunity to pursue private placement of bonded debt could be
271 preserved by adopting a reimbursement resolution on or before the January 22, 2026, Board
272 meeting. They noted that staff will present options at the January 8 meeting.

273

274 In response to a question from Manager Olson, Ms. Cermak noted all the typical closing
275 concerns were addressed with counsel from Alex Sellke.

276

277

278 **STAFF UPDATES**

279

280 Administrator's Report

281

282 Mr. Wisker reported on the following items:

283

- 284 1. The brochure to announce the kickoff of the 2027 water resources management planning
285 process is complete and distributed to District partners. Manager Miller completed the
286 staff on the quality of the brochure.
- 287 2. HDR and MCWD staff held a daylong design charette earlier in the day for the
288 Downtown Long Lake Plan. The charette examined three distinct nodes in the downtown
289 corridor: the Holbrook Park area; the area including a MnDOT pond, the Pioneer
290 Museum and a channel to be redeveloped as the heart of downtown; and Nelson Lakeside
291 Parks.
- 292 3. Mr. Wisker and Ms. Hoppe had a recent meeting with representatives from the DNR to
293 discuss several functional points on engagement on aquatic plants, aquatic invasive
294 plants, and public waters permitting.

295

296 The managers thanked Mr. Wisker for this report.

297

298

299

300

301

302

303 **Adjournment**

304

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305 There being no further business, President White declared the meeting of the Board of Managers
306 adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

307
308 Respectfully submitted,

309
310
311

312 Eugene Maxwell, Secretary

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