

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

4
5 **March 12, 2026**

6
7 **CALL TO ORDER**

8
9 The regular meeting of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers was called
10 to order by President Sherry White at 7:09 p.m. on March 12, 2026, at the MCWD offices, 15320
11 Minnetonka Boulevard, Minnetonka, Minnesota.

12
13 **MANAGERS PRESENT**

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

15
16
17 **MANAGERS ABSENT**

18 Arun Hejmadi (monitored meeting remotely).

19
20
21 **DISTRICT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT**

22
23 James Wisker, Administrator; Gabe Sherman, Planner - Project Manager; Nick Ayers,
24 District Consulting Engineer; and Louis Smith, District Counsel.

25
26 **OATH OF OFFICE**

27
28 Mr. Smith administered the oath of office to Manager Bonner. The managers welcomed
29 Mr. Bonner to the Board.

30
31 **COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

32 President White recommended the following committee assignments:

33
34 Operations and Programs Committee: Olson, chair; Hejmadi; and Bonner.

35
36 Policy and Planning Committee: Maxwell, chair; Sando; and Schaefer.

37
38
39 *It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Maxwell to confirm these*
40 *committee assignments. Upon vote, the motion carried, 5-0.*

41
42 Election of Treasurer and Secretary

43
44 President White noted the vacancy in the office of Treasurer with the departure of
45 Manager Loftus. She recommended that Manager Maxwell be elected Treasurer, and
46 Manager Hejmadi be elected Secretary. *It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by*

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

49
50 **MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR**

51
52 None.

53
54 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

55
56 *It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Maxwell, to approve the*
57 *agenda as distributed. Upon vote, the motion carried, 5-0.*

58
59 **CONSENT AGENDA**

60
61 *It was moved by Manager Maxwell, seconded by Manager Bonner, to approve the*
62 *items on the Consent Agenda consisting of approval of the February 26, 2026, Board*
63 *meeting minutes, and the following resolutions:*

64
65 *Resolution 26-028: Authorization to Execute Agreement for BWSR Storage and Water*
66 *Quality Grant*

67
68 *NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek*
69 *Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the District Administrator to*
70 *execute a grant agreement with the Board of Water and Soil Resources to*
71 *support the 2027 Plan engagement and development;*

72
73 *Resolution 26-029: Authorization to Implement Human Resource Adjustments*

74
75 *NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek*
76 *Watershed District Board of Managers hereby authorizes and directs the*
77 *Administrator to reclassify one of the Policy Planning Coordinators, Kate*
78 *Moran, to a Senior Policy Planner;*

79
80 *Resolution 26-030: Honoring the Leadership and Service of Steffanie Musich*

81
82 *NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek*
83 *Watershed District Board of Managers hereby expresses its deep gratitude for*
84 *her years of public service and extends its sincere appreciation and best wishes*
85 *to Commissioner Musich for continued success, health and happiness in all her*
86 *future endeavors;*

87
88 *Resolution 26-031: Honoring the Leadership and Service of Richard Miller*

89

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

95
96 ***Resolution 26-032: Honoring the Leadership and Service of Jessica Loftus***

97
98 ***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek***
99 ***Watershed District Board of Managers hereby formally recognizes Manager***
100 ***Jessica Loftus for her leadership, strategic insight, and enduring contributions***
101 ***to advancing the vision of a Balanced Urban Ecology, building an***
102 ***organizational culture of excellence, and restoring and protecting the land and***
103 ***water resources of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed.***

104
105 ***Upon roll call vote, the motion carried, 5-0.***

106
107 **BOARD, COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS**

108
109 President’s Report: President White noted that she and Mr. Wisker recently met with Hennepin
110 County Commissioner Irene Fernando.

111
112 Operations and Programs Committee Report: Manager Olson reported that the Committee met
113 earlier in the evening and received a staff briefing on the Minneapolis Thriving Waters
114 Partnership, including progress to date and the current status of the Cedar Avenue Stormwater
115 Project. Staff also provided an overview of the long-range planning approach being implemented
116 in Minneapolis, beginning with the recently completed Cedar Lake Management Unit Plan draft.

117
118 President White noted the schedule of upcoming meetings presented in the agenda.

119
120 **PUBLIC HEARINGS AND PRESENTATIONS**

121
122 Public Hearing to Consider Minor Plan Amendment

123
124 President White opened the public hearing to obtain public input on the proposed minor plan
125 amendment to MCWD’s Watershed Management Plan. Ms. Rachel Baker appeared before the
126 Board of Managers and noted that MCWD staff have proposed a minor amendment to the
127 MCWD Watershed Management Plan (WMP) to incorporate internal lake nutrient load
128 management (e.g., alum or similar treatment) as a potential pollutant load reduction strategy
129 within the Minnehaha Creek Subwatershed. She noted that this amendment will support ongoing
130 joint planning efforts with the City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation
131 Board (MPRB), specifically the development of the Cedar Lake Management Unit (MU) Plan,

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

134
135 President White invited members of the public to comment. Mr. Gary Dukes, 5128 – 44th
136 Avenue South, Minneapolis, appeared before the Board of Managers to express his
137 support for the plan amendment to and stressed the need for an alum treatment to address
138 water quality in Lake Nokomis.

139
140 Ms. Rachel Crabb, Water Resources Manager for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation
141 Board, appeared before the Board of Managers. She expressed her appreciation for the
142 cooperative work with MCWD staff to address Cedar Lake and Lake Nokomis issues.
143 She stated that the proposed plan amendment would help to address critical internal
144 nutrient sources in conjunction with upstream work. In response to a question from
145 President White, Ms. Crabb stated that the MPRB has begun discussions to explore
146 alternative sources of funding in the event that the project does not receive state funding.

147
148 MPRB Commissioner Kedar Pashpande addressed the Board of Managers through
149 interactive technology. He expressed his appreciation for the cooperative work done by
150 the MCWD and the MPRB.

151
152 There being no further comments, President White declared the public hearing closed.

153

154

155 **PERMITS REQUIRING A VARIANCE OR DISCUSSION**

156

157 None.

158

159 **ACTION ITEMS**

160

161 None.

162

163 **BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS**

164

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

166

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

173

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

177
178 *It was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by Manager Bonner to confirm the staff*
179 *recommendations for Subwatershed Group liaison assignments. Upon vote, the motion*
180 *carried 5-0.*

181
182 In response to a request from Mr. Wisker, *it was moved by Manager Olson, seconded by*
183 *Manager Maxwell, that Cara Gehren, City of Victoria, and Leslie Yetka, City of*
184 *Minnetonka, be added as members of the Technical Advisory Committee. Upon vote,*
185 *the motion carried, 5-0.*

186
187 **BOARD INQUIRIES, ISSUES, AND IDEAS**

188
189 None.

190
191 **STAFF UPDATES**

192
193
194 Administrator's Report

195
196 Mr. Wisker reported on the following items:

- 197
- 198 1. Staff has learned that ProTree is unable to execute the tree removal work for the Cedar
199 Lake Regional Trail connection project. That contract has been cancelled by mutual
200 agreement and the work will be incorporated into the scope for the full project.
201
 - 202 2. MCWD has received a \$75,000 grant from the Board of Water and Soil Resources to
203 support modelling work, and a \$100,000 grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control
204 Agency to support planning for resilience. These grant agreements will be coming to a
205 future board meeting for approval.
206
 - 207 3. Mr. Wisker will be participating in a panel discussion about housing costs and watershed
208 regulation on March 19 at the St. Anthony Falls Laboratory. Mr. Smith will be the
209 keynote speaker.
210
 - 211 4. Plans are set for an event to recognize Managers Miller and Loftus for their service, to be
212 held on March 27.

213
214 The managers thanked Mr. Wisker for this report.

215
216

217 **CLOSED SESSION**

218

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

223

224 The Board of Managers went into closed session.

225

226 The Board of Managers returned to open session.

227

228

229 **Adjournment**

230

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

233

234 Respectfully submitted,

235

236

237

238 Arun Hejmadi, Secretary