



Title: Approve Strategic Discussion Process & Authorize Contract with Smith Partners PLLP

Resolution number: 21-013

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Recommended action: Approve the process for strategic discussions with the PPC
Authorize a contract with Smith Partners PLLP for Phase 1 work

Schedule: Start Date: 2/15/2021
Completion Date: 12/31/2021

Budget considerations: Fund name and code: 2-2002 Planning and Projects
Fund budget: \$1,178,645
Expenditures to date: 56,075.34
Requested amount of funding: \$50,350

Past Board action: October 2020 PPC Discuss purpose and merit
November 2020 PPC Discuss purpose and process
January 2021 PPC Review purpose, process and scope for Phase 1

Summary:

2022 represents the midpoint of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's 10-year plan, and is also the 5 year anniversary of the District's 2017 plan for strategic alignment. As the District approaches this midterm milestone the Board of Managers has expressed a desire to continue strategic preparations for the future.

As part of preparing for the future, the Board has decided to take stock of its current situation, by evaluating the status and needs of near term priorities. This work will be prepared by District staff for Board discussion mid-year between Q2 and Q3. The Board has also determined to analyze its history to derive and memorialize timeless lessons from the past that can inform, guide and support the District's future success as a leader in watershed management. This work, described above, has been broken into three phases of work as follows:

1. Phase 1 – Past – Where have we been and what have we learned?
 - a. A historical analysis to derive insights that underpin MCWD's identity today, and lessons for the future
2. Phase 2 – Present – Where are we now and what needs to be done?
 - a. A status report on current strategic priorities, and assessment of what will be required near term to execute
3. Phase 3 – Future – What challenges will we face in the future, and how can we prepare?
 - a. An inventory and education on emerging strategic issues the District wishes to begin preparing for

Discussions will begin early in 2021 with Phase 1, with a target for Phase 2 of June 2021, in preparation for subsequent discussions in Phase 3. *The three phases of this processes may not run entirely sequentially.

Phase 1 – Scope, Process and Budget:

Phase 1 Purpose:

The District is not looking to simply develop a corporate history to tell the “story” of MCWD. Instead, the purpose is to analyze MCWD’s history (formative events, key decisions points, influencing factors, and success and failure), and to extract fundamental truths that can guide future organizational behaviors and underpin MCWD’s success in watershed management.

Phase 1 Process and Approach:

The attached scope of services provides detail on the draft process designed to achieve this goal. The purpose of this work, its merits and process has been the subject of discussion at the October and November 2020 PPC meetings, culminating most recently with a review of the attached scope of services at the January 2020 PPC meeting. At a broad level the process will include working with the Board of Managers through facilitated discussion in the following stages:

Discovery and Framing – Developing the Timeline and Periods for Historical analysis

- Develop a timeline of formative events within MCWD’s history
- Divide the timeline into discrete periods (4-6) of MCWD’s history
- Identify particularly formative events to be researched in more detail
- Develop a working draft of hypotheses of types of lessons learned to be tested and refined through research
- Discuss with the Board

Analysis of Thematic Periods and Narrative Construction:

- Analyze the confluence of events leading to inflection points for MCWD between one period and the next
- Detail how such pivotal moments subsequently defined organizational structure, strategy and thematic context
- Define and refine the list of principles being drawn from this analysis
- Summarize these findings in (4-6) white papers for review and discussion by the Board

Synthesis of Historical Analysis and Principles:

- Synthesize principles of effective watershed management that will guide into the future
- Review and discuss with the Board
- Finalize deliverables

Phase 1 Budget:

The attached scope of services details the budget per task. The total budget for this Phase 1 work is \$50,350. This work will be 2-2002 Planning and Projects which has a total 2021 budget of \$1,178,645. This budget was amended by the Board of Managers in December 2020 by \$51,500 to accommodate this work.

Recommendation:

At the February 11, 2021 Meeting the Board of Managers will be asked to approve the three phased process for engaging in strategic discussions, and to authorize a contract with Smith Partners PLLP for Phase 1 – Where have we been and what have we learned, in an amount not to exceed \$50,350.

Supporting documents (list attachments):

- Scope of Services.



RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, 2022 represents the midpoint of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District’s 10-year plan, and is also the 5 year anniversary of the District’s 2017 plan for strategic alignment.

WHEREAS, as the District approaches this midterm milestone the Board of Managers has expressed a desire to continue strategic preparations for the future

WHEREAS, the PPC has engaged in a series of discussions (October 2020, November 2020, January 2021) to clarify the purpose and focus the process for these discussions.

WHEREAS, the process has been broadly mapped to step through the following phases of work:

1. Phase 1 – Past – Where have we been and what have we learned?
 - i. A historical analysis to derive insights that underpin MCWD’s identity today, and lessons for the future
2. Phase 2 – Present – Where are we now and what needs to be done?
 - i. A status report on current priorities, and assessment of what will be required near term to execute
3. Phase 3 – Future – What challenges will we face in the future, and how can we prepare?
 - i. An inventory and education on emerging issues the District wishes to begin preparing for

WHEREAS, at the January 2021 PPC meeting, the Board of Managers reviewed and discussed a proposed scope of work to complete Phase 1 with assistance from Smith Partners PLLP, which are uniquely qualified to complete this work given their decades of history strategically advising MCWD.

WHEREAS, the MCWD Board of Managers has reviewed the phased process for facilitating strategic organizational dialog, and the Phase 1 scope of work, and finds both to support the ongoing alignment and continuous improvement of the organization.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby approves the process for strategic organizational dialog and authorizes the District Administrator to execute a contract with Smith Partners PLLP to complete Phase 1 work in accordance with the attached scope of services in an amount not to exceed \$50,350.

Resolution Number 21-013 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: 2/11/2021

Secretary Date: _____



DRAFT Scope of Services

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Strategic Review

Objectives and Deliverables:

1. Create a written analytical narrative of MCWD's history using the structure – event – structure method. Delineate cornerstone formative events, characterize how these events marked turning points between one period and the next, and how these pivotal moments subsequently impacted and defined the organizational structure, strategy and thematic context for the next period.
2. Analyze the confluence of factors underpinning the pivotal turning points in MCWD's history, to derive timeless principles – fundamental truths that serve as the foundation for future organizational behaviors that underpin successful watershed management.

Approach:

Task 1. Develop the Timeline and Periods for Historical Analysis; Frame Initial Discovery.

A. Develop an overarching timeline of defining events, based on a cursory review of internal archival material. (Attachment A)

B. Divide the timeline into discrete thematic periods (4-6) of MCWD's history, and identify particularly formative events to be researched in more detail.

C. Develop a working draft of 'hypotheses' or types of lessons learned in these thematic periods, to be tested in research.

Task 2. Analysis of Thematic Periods and Narrative Construction.

A. Research primary source material within each thematic period.

1. Source material will include minutes, resolutions, policies, correspondence, news articles, project material, litigation records, watershed plans, strategic plans, and interviews. MCWD staff will provide a framing approach to these resources on laser fiche.

B. Refine the thematic characterization of each period, adding detail to formative events, analyzing the impact they had on the structure and strategic posture of the District.

1. Analysis will explore and evaluate strategic themes including, the character of work in different geographies, accomplishments, costs and sources, litigation and conflict, municipal relationships, public perception and resident engagement, legislative engagement, Board-staff structure composition and governance, consulting relationships, and program alignment and focus over time.

2. Draft a white paper for each thematic period presenting this research and analysis.



Task 3. Facilitate Board Discussion on the Historical Narrative and Emerging Principles

A. Plan for and lead a Board discussion on each period of history, focused on assimilating the historical narrative, and crystalizing principles.

1. Will require the development of pre-read material outlining the analytical historical narrative for each period.

B. Synthesize Board feedback and incorporate into the historical narrative and principles.

Task 4. Finalize the Historical Analysis and Principles

A. Produce a final deliverable and facilitate Board discussion, to finalize the process prior to presenting for Board adoption.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
1	Timeline, Periods and Framing Discovery <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Prepare overarching timeline b. Divide into discrete thematic periods c. Develop working ‘hypotheses’ d. Review with Leadership Team and PPC/Board 	\$2,750
2	Analysis of Thematic Periods and Narrative Construction. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Research b. Prepare Draft c. Review draft with staff d. Revise draft <p>\$6,600 average cost for each of six white papers</p>	39,600
3	Facilitate Board Discussion <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Prepare and lead board discussion on each of six white papers b. Synthesize Board feedback and incorporate into revised draft of each white paper 	7,500
4	Finalize the Historical Analysis and Principles <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Produce a final draft for Board discussion. b. Incorporate Board feedback into final document for Board adoption 	3,000
Total		50,350