



MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT
QUALITY OF WATER, QUALITY OF LIFE

Final Report

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

Human Resources Strategic Plan Study

July 6, 2017

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Mission Statement

Springsted provides high quality, independent financial and management advisory services to public and non-profit organizations, and works with them in the long-term process of building their communities on a fiscally sound and well-managed basis.



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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

July 6, 2017

Mr. Lars Erdahl
District Administrator
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
15320 Minnetonka Blvd.
Minnetonka, MN 55345

Re: Human Resources Strategic Plan

Dear Mr. Erdahl:

Springsted Incorporated is pleased to provide the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District with the completed Human Resources Strategic Plan Study. This study provides a comprehensive review of the human resources needs of the organization and our final report, including the methodology used to collect and analyze information and prepare recommendations for managing the human resources programs and staffing for the District in the short, mid and long-term.

Springsted expresses its thanks to the staff, consultants and Board Members who participated in interviews and meetings and to District staff for providing information and feedback throughout the phases of the Study. Springsted, Incorporated appreciates the privilege of serving the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and hope that we may be of assistance to you in the future.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Antonsen

Ann Antonsen
Consultant

1. Introduction

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) retained Springsted Incorporated to conduct a Human Resources Strategic Plan Study in the fall of 2016. The Study represents a comprehensive review of the components that affect an organization's human resources program. The overall goal of the study was to develop a human resources plan which complemented the organizational goals and priorities that have been established through the strategic planning process.

The following Study documents a comprehensive review and evaluation of the District's existing organizational structure, identified goals and priorities for the organization and individual departments and the methodology used to develop recommendations on the structure and staffing necessary to support the strategic plan. The Study was conducted with extensive participation and input from District employees, consultants, and Board Members. Springsted conducted thirty-one first-round interviews to obtain information related to the Study. Based on the information collected during these interviews a second series of eleven (11) interviews were conducted with key District staff to obtain additional information on themes, issues, concerns, and areas in which additional information was necessary to develop recommendations for the District.

This final report represents the culmination of the Human Resources Strategic Plan Study. It reflects significant District staff involvement, not only in the two sets of interviews conducted but also in meetings held in the fall of 2016 and additional meetings to review and prepare information throughout the course of the study.

2. Methodology

Springsted, Incorporated used the following methodology to develop recommendations for the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District:

- Springsted met with the Director and members of the management team to establish a working relationship and gain an understanding of the needs and expectations of the District. This also provided an opportunity to discuss the District's goals in reviewing the human resources needs of the organization.
- Springsted conducted thirty-one (31) interviews of MCWD staff, Board Members and consultants to obtain information. Participants were informed that the information provided was confidential and a summary of responses would be provided, not individual responses. Each participant was asked the same questions. The questions were aimed at collecting information regarding:
 - Strategic direction and organization/department/program priorities in the short, mid and long-term.
 - Are the current organizational and departmental structures aligned to meet the identified priorities?
 - Are additional resources required to accomplish the District's goals and priorities?
 - What positions and functions are vital to the success of the organization?
- Springsted met with the Board of Managers to discuss preliminary information based on the interviews and obtain feedback from the Board members.
- Based on the information collected in the first round of interviews and meetings conducted with District management and Board Members a second series of interviews were conducted. These interviews included Department Directors and other key District staff. Eleven (11) additional interviews were conducted. These interviews focused on collecting additional information on themes, needs, issues, and concerns identified during the initial interview process. The additional information requested included the following areas:
 - Baseline requirements to accomplish department mission and strategic priorities.
 - Do current staff have the necessary skills to accomplish identified goals? If not, how do you foresee filling any gaps, i.e. training/education, consultants, staffing or structural changes?
 - If structural changes are needed, what changes are recommended?
 - Organization wide structural changes including new or revised positions.

- Based on identified organization wide needs, specific information regarding the following areas:
 - IT/GIS needs
 - Financial management
 - Permitting
 - Planning
 - Education and communications
- A work session was then held with the District Administrator to discuss information which was gathered during the interview processes, next steps and finalizing recommendations for the District.

3. Findings and Recommendations

Conducting a comprehensive review and development of a human resources strategic plan involves the collection, review, and analysis of substantial quantities of information. We have evaluated the District's existing organizational structure, the strategic plan, identified District priorities, direction, programs and projects and have developed recommendations for the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

A. Identification of Needs

The goal of the project was to identify needs (if any) in providing the desired level and type services and meeting the established goals and priorities in the short, mid and long-term. The purpose of the extensive interviews was to obtain information to assist in understanding and identifying the skill sets which are necessary to meet the goals established as a part of the District's strategic plan and identifying gaps in any areas. The goal of this extensive review is to increase organizational effectiveness.

During the first round of interviews, the areas in which needs/concerns/issues were identified included the following:

- Building partnerships and collaboration internally and externally
- Need for an IT strategic plan, programs and centralized administration including:
 - GIS
 - Website development and maintenance
 - Data management
 - Global IT program
- Capital projects and planning
- Clearly defined responsibilities, including structure and reporting relationships
- Financial planning and management
- Project Management
- Water Quality

The second series of interviews were oriented towards specific information regarding the identified issues and detailed information on the both the global needs and the needs of each individual department to accomplish the goals and priorities established as a part of the District's Strategic Plan. The findings from these interviews are as follows:

Global

- GIS: includes the need to develop maps and provide special analysis as needed for information requests, presentations, demonstrations of outcomes, project locations and other project and communications related information. The need for these

services can be at a moment's notice and this cannot always be accomplished by an outside consultant.

- IT – Global and Department specific. The IT needs of the District are growing and changing and are these best accomplished by an outside consultant, an internal IT Manager or Coordinator, or a combination.
- Financial management and where function belongs: the annual budget is currently housed within the planning division, is this where the function belongs within the organization.
- Human Resources; how should these services be provided within the organization? Centralized, decentralized or a blend dependent on the needed services.
- Training and maintenance needed on District's existing database. The District currently has good software; however, the District is behind in updates (3 years) and more support and on-going training is needed across all departments and service areas.
- Services which can be provided by the Operations and Support Services staff: staff can provide support to permitting with paperwork; provide assistance on laser-fiche and its capabilities, filing, photo archives, etc.
- Updated Website and continuing maintenance: The District's website is out of date and needs to be developed, maintained and have the ability to update as needed and have the ability to track social media, i.e. Facebook, twitter, etc.
- Administration of grants; where does function belong?
- Management Team: purpose, role, members.

Operations and Support Services

- Staffing: the department has been functioning with two long-term temporary employees' which are filling existing positions. Both temporary employees are more than five months beyond the original time-line which expired in December of 2016 and the functions that these positions provide are vital to District operations.
- Defined services
 - Human Resources: Centralized or Decentralized
 - Financial Management: How and where are the financial services of the District provided, i.e. development and maintenance of the District budget and management of the District's finances?
 - Administrative Support Services: The level and type of support which is provided, not only within the Department but what assistance can be provided to other Departments and service areas. No other departments have administrative support staff to provide day to day functions, filing, databased management, etc.

- Information Technology: How are the IT needs of the organization best provided, internally and if so what level of support, external consultants or a combination of providers.

Planning and Projects

- Staffing: Struggling to deliver projects with the current structure and staffing levels. The Department had taken on the responsibility of for the District budget. Department will also be taking on the responsibility for the District's new cost-share grants program.
- Defined Services: Does responsibility for budget, HR planning, strategic planning and other special projects belong within the Planning and Projects Department?
- Structure: Need for a higher level of project management support to provide oversight of staff and project development and implementation. This change in structure would relieve the Director of the managing day-to-day questions, issues, and functions.
- GIS: Planning has the greatest need and use of GIS services, should the function be included in the organizational structure of the department and how should the position be designed?
- Database Management: Need for updates and training on current systems, capabilities, and use.

Permitting

- Staffing: Position of District Rep is currently designed as a two-year limited term position which leads to significant turn over as many employees begin looking for other positions, either within the District or outside the District long before the two-year term expires. Is there a better way to provide these services?

Research and Monitoring

- Structure: Does the Department need a Director? If so, what should be the required skill set?
- Staffing: The Department is in need of a Wetland Specialist.
- Reporting: If no Director, where and to whom do the staff report and what is the internal chain of command within the division?
- Training: The department and its services have moved from strictly monitoring water quality to conducting analytics and providing statistical analysis, which can assist in planning for current and future projects and services. The department has the software (WISKI), however, training is needed for assigned staff to conduct the analysis. There is 50 years of data but is currently not packaged in a format which is easily accessible or usable.

- E-Grade: Implementation of a new system for measuring water quality and brings a holistic approach to measuring and analyzing the biological and ecological qualities in water samples.

Communication and Education

- Website: The current website is outdated and needs to be redone to provide information and multi-faceted communications.
- Community Outreach: To ensure community (29 cities and 2 counties) and public support of the services provided and projects developed.
- Grants: Department is taking on two new grants, community education and master steward water capstone in place of the Cynthia Krieg educational grant. How and where should these grants be administered?

B. Recommendations

The Board of Managers adopted an organizational strategy for the District on February 9, 2017 as follows:

1. The MCWD has established the Balanced Urban Ecology as its fundamental philosophy and way of doing business
2. Balanced Urban Ecology emphasizes the social and economic value created when built and natural systems are planned to work in harmony and prioritizes partnerships with the land-use community as the principal strategy to achieve the District's mission
3. Pursuant to Balanced Urban Ecology the MCWD's overarching organizational strategy to accomplishing its mission is to:
 - Develop high impact capital projects integrated with non-water initiatives through multi-jurisdictional partnerships
 - Change the land-use and water policy environment to increase early value added partnership with private development, public infrastructure and public policy/planning
4. All MCWD programs will be developed to work in support of these highest organizational priorities

To support the organizational strategy, following are recommendations to assist the District in achieving a more efficient and effective level of service and accomplishing the established goals and priorities outlined in the strategic plan for the short, mid and long ranges success of the organization.

Global

- Leadership Team: clearly define mission, purpose, role, and members.

- Develop a Human Resources philosophy statement that aligns with the mission, core values, and strategic plan.
- Staff focus on own areas of responsibility and areas in which collaboration and communication are necessary and/or requested.
- Provide training and updates on the District's current database.
- Provide information and training on support services that can be provided by Administrative Services.

Operations and Support Services

This department exists to provide the direct support and resources which are necessary to achieve the organization's mission by providing the following administrative services functions:

- Finances: audit, bill pay, budget, debt service management, financial planning
- Human Resources: benefits, payroll, planning and philosophy
- Information Technology: planning and project management
- Office Building: facilities and vendor management

The priorities established by the Strategic Plan include:

- Determine the roles and responsibilities of Operations and Support Services and Planning in the administration versus strategic planning of finances, human resources, and information technology.
- Develop a financial strategy to support the mid-long range capital improvement goals of the organization.
- Develop a human resources plan and philosophy that identifies and meets the strategic needs of the organization.
- Develop a strategic plan for investment in information technology to meet program needs of spatially integrating (GIS) permit administration, asset management, water quality data and human resource networks.
- Develop a plan, outlining the timing and costs, for facilities maintenance for the MCWD office.

Based on this goal and the needs identified during this study it is recommended that the District:

- Rename the department Administrative Services which more clearly defines the areas of responsibility of the Department.
- Hire the two (currently temporary) employees as permanent staff (1 Full-Time, 1 Part-Time (.75)), both are Administrative Services Technicians; the Department needs continuity of service, the ability to provide organization wide support services

and with the current situation there is a high degree of uncertainty which affects the overall operations of the department. The full-time position is responsible for performing functions related to human resources, preparation of board agendas and packets and providing limited IT support (the human resources function can be expanded upon hiring the position on a permanent basis). The part-time position provides a variety of administrative support and assists with front desk coverage. This position has and should continue to provide support across departments, i.e. has been working on support tasks on the grant share program and can assist in other support functions.

- **Human Resources:** Create centralized HR function for consistency in the administration of policies and procedures. The Director of Administrative Services should lead this area with increasing support from the full-time Administrative Support Technician. This area includes coordination of hiring staff, maintenance of personnel files, data practices, benefits renewal and administration, payroll, providing information to employees and other human resources related functions.
- **Information Technology:** Responsibility for planning, implementation and on-going support. This is an area which needs further study to determine what the IT needs of the District are and then how best to provide the services, i.e. staff position, contract service or combination.
- Provide District-wide administrative support, i.e. database, laser-fiche, grant administration, centralized files and information.
- **Financial management:** Transition budget development and management from planning to administrative services. This Department will have responsibility for the centralized budget (with each department responsible for preparing their budget in collaboration with administration). Budget responsibilities should be a part of the Director of Administrative Services and District Administrator responsibility with the Director of Administrative Services responsible for day-to-day financial operations. It is recommended that this area receive additional review after the transition as the District may see the need to create a Finance Officer position which would provide additional resources towards the HR and IT functions by the Director of Administration. The Finance Technician is responsible for accounts payable and receivable as well as other support duties.
- **Structure/Staffing:**
 - District Administrator (1.0 FTE)
 - Director of Administrative Services (1.0 FTE)

Finance Technician (.75 FTE)

Administrative Services Technician (1.75 FTE)

Administrative Assistant (.75 FTE)

Planning and Projects

The purpose of this department is to provide:

- Planning and implementation of capital project and land conservation initiatives that protect and enhance the landscape.
- Influencing the plans and policies of others to protect and enhance the landscape.
- Manage and maintain the District's capital improvement and land conservation assets.
- Developing organizational plans to create a framework for the District to best achieve its mission.

To provide these services the following was identified as Department priorities in the development of the strategic plan:

- The MCWD's highest priority is to plan and implement capital projects through partnerships. The MCWD must accurately predict, prioritize and mobilize its financial and human resources needed to execute this work.
- To proactively maintain organizational alignment and focus, the MCWD's Planning Department priority will be to scan the external environment for opportunities and threats and to recommend policy, project, program and resource deployment to the Administrator and Board of Managers.

The recommendations for this department include:

- Transition budget development and management from Planning to Administrative Services; this will free up planning staff to concentrate on community relations, communications, and planning, development, implementation and maintenance of capital projects.
- Create GIS position which will support planning and other departments as needed. This position could provide additional IT support across the organization in coordination and cooperation with the Department of Administrative Services.
- Establish Senior Project Manager position which will provide project direction and support services to project management staff and alleviate the director from the day-to-day support and staff communications. This will allow the Director to work with the District Administrator on development and implementation of policies, programs and projects and building partnerships in both public and private sector organizations and groups.

- Establish Senior Planner position which guides policy development and administration.
- Create additional Land and Project Technician position to assist in development and maintenance of the District's projects.
- Project completion of Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Plan will create time availability for the administration of cost-share infrastructure grants for cities.
- Structure/Staffing

Director of Planning and Projects (1.0 FTE)

Senior Project Manager (1.0 FTE)

Project Manager (2.0 FTE)

Senior Planner (1.0 FTE)

Land and Project Manager (1.0 FTE)

Land & Project Technician (2.0 FTE – 1 New)

GIS Manager (1 FTE – New)

Permitting

The permitting function within the District is to protect natural resources from degradation associated with land use change and to partner with local land use authorities and the development community to generate greater natural resource outcomes that those achieved through regulation alone. This is accomplished through:

- Permit Administration
- Compliance
- Partnership
- Branding and Education

To provide these identified services the strategic goals and priorities include:

- Increase efficiency of Permitting Department's baseline work by refining departmental structure and human resources philosophy, investing in technology upgrades and making administrative, policy and rule changes.
- Reinforce, enhance and resource the Permitting Department's role in cultivating public-private partnerships that result in land-use change investments that exceed regulatory requirements.

To achieve these goals, it is recommended that the MCWD change the structure of the department to provide a more consistent level of service. The limited term positions in the department create an environment where there is a continuous cycle of filling vacant positions, training new employees and remaining staff diverting their focus from their position responsibilities as they attempt to meet deadlines, maintain

acceptable levels of service, recruiting new staff and providing training and support to newly hired employees. Following are the recommendations for structure and staffing levels:

- Change District Representative (limited term) positions to full-time Permitting Field Technician.
- Provide on-going training on the database and IT applications.
- Structure/Staffing

Permitting Manager (1.0 FTE)

Permitting Technician (2.0 FTE)

Permitting Field Technician (3.0 FTE – down from 4 limited-term positions)

Research and Monitoring

The Research and Monitoring program exists to collect data primarily to support planning and implementation and secondarily to inform and educate stakeholders, anchoring the District's brand value of science driven watershed management.

The priorities identified for this department include:

- Diagnostic monitoring – smaller scale, higher resolution monitoring to identify the cause of water resource impairment to inform planning and implementation.
- E-Grade – broadly characterizing ecosystem health at a sub watershed/system scale to support planning and public communication.
- Anchor and Performance Monitoring – maintaining long-term data sets across the watershed, at select representative sites, to monitor watershed scale trends over time and to monitor priority projects to demonstrate efficacy.

To support these priorities, recommendations include the following:

- Based on the Strategic Plan and the priorities identified by this department all staff should be active in the areas of collection, monitoring and/or analysis of data. As with other departments within the District, Department Directors play an active role in providing the necessary and desired services in accordance with the mission, strategic plan, goals and priorities of individual departments and the District. The current Director was hired as a contract position to oversee the development of the AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) Program and was later hired as the Director of the Department.
- Provide training to one staff member to provide Wetland Specialist expertise.

- Provide additional statistical analysis training to provide a higher level of data analysis (2 staff members). This will support the long-term information necessary for tracking water quality and provide pre- and post-project support.
- Add one Field Monitoring Technician (to assist with E-Grade implementation and support).
- Create stronger cooperation, communication, and coordination with Planning and Projects, this can be accomplished by scheduling a regular meeting (weekly) to discuss projects, support needs, etc.
- Structure/Staffing

Water Quality Supervisor (1.0 FTE)

Water Quality Field and Lab Manager (1.0 FTE)

Water Quality Field Monitoring Technician (2.0 FTE, 1 New)

Water Quality Project Biologist/Planning Manager (1.0 FTE)

Water Quality Field Biologist/Technician (1.0 FTE)

Seasonal Water Quality Technicians (as needed)

- Reporting Relationship

There are two options for where this area reports:

- Water Quality Supervisor reports directly to the District Administrator
- Water Quality Supervisor reports to the Director of Planning and Projects. If this is the option selected, the Board may want to review the structure of the Planning and Projects Department and rather than Leads create supervisors for each of the divisions within the department to ensure each division has a position of responsibility to alleviate the Director of the day-to-day supervision of each area.

Communication and Education

This department provides supportive services across the organization. The purposes identified include:

- Communications: Operates primarily in a supporting role to increase awareness and generate support for the District's value proposition and strategic priorities.
- Education: Operations primarily in a supporting role, engaging strategically selected stakeholder groups (policy makers, business community, land-use community, lake associations) to

support the planning, implementation and long-term goals of MCWD priority programs and projects; and secondarily to engage the broader community generating awareness of watershed issues and providing educational tools to move people to action at a grass roots level.

The priorities identified for this area as a part of the strategic planning process include:

- Move from a current program orientation prioritizing baseline programming towards prioritizing support of MCWD strategic project and program priorities.
- To support baseline programming efforts, the Education Program has recommended replacing the Cynthia Krieg Grant Program with the Community Engagement Grant Program and Master Water Stewards Grant awards currently located in the Cost-Share Grant Program.

Recommendations for this department include:

- Coordination, integration and support of programs, projects, and information to provide information to stakeholders of the District mission, programs and projects.
- Coordinate development and maintenance of new District Website. Development of the website can be outsourced and upon completion determine the level of staff involvement for on-going maintenance and can that be delegated to current staff or would the District need additional support (external or internal)
- Community outreach and communications
- Structure/Staffing

Communications and Education Director (1.0 FTE)

Education Program Manager (1.0 FTE)

Education Specialist (1.0 FTE)

Communications Coordinator (1.0 FTE)

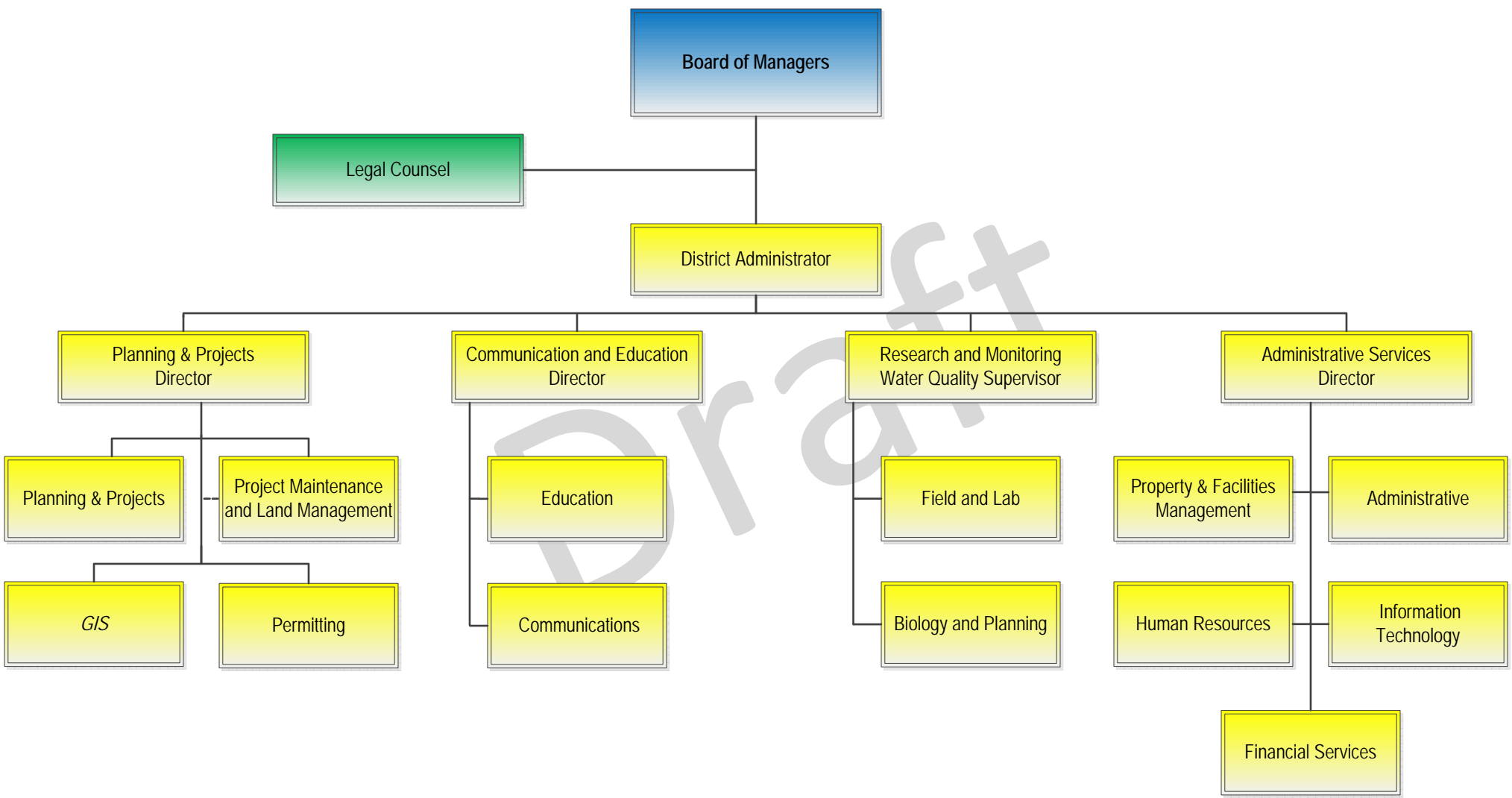
4. Summary

A review of information provided by the District, discussions with Board Managers, Directors, staff, and consultants indicate that the organization is functioning at a high level and for the most part is performing effectively and efficiently in delivering the services in accordance with the mission, strategic plan and established goals and priorities. To achieve the highest level of service desired by the District, there are areas in which changes in structure, staffing, training, coordination, and cooperation could achieve this goal. The core values of the organization and the collaborative approach of the District and its staff is critical to the success of the organization and is already a part of the culture of the District. However, not all decisions, services, goals and priorities should be decided on by committee, consensus, collaboration or unanimous agreement, some decisions are to be made by the Board, the Executive Director or by the Directors of each department within the District. The recommendations above should assist the District in increasing the organizational effectiveness of all services and in accomplishing the identified goals and priorities established in the development and implementation of the Strategic Plan.

MCWD Organizational Chart

Proposed 7-27-2017

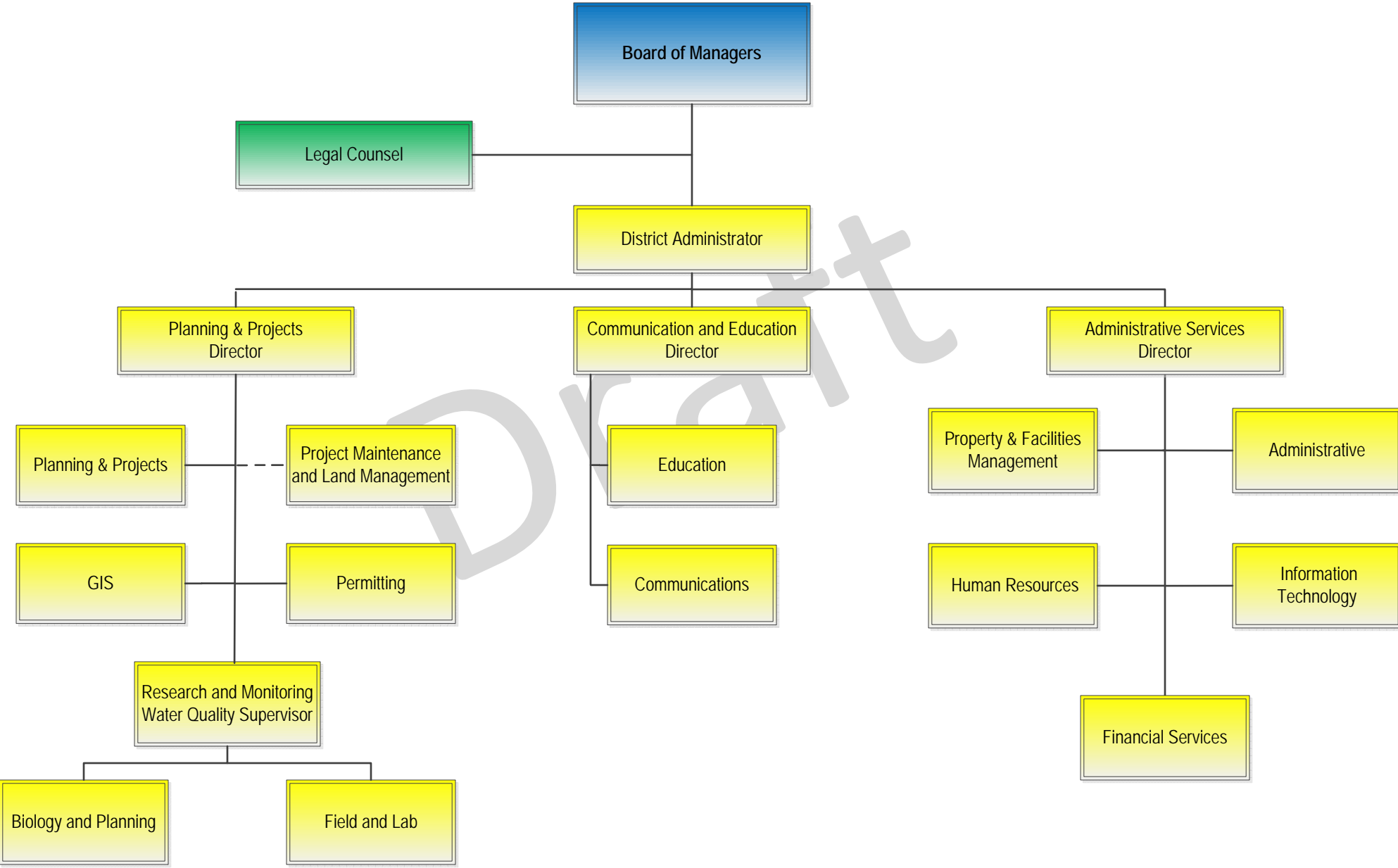
Option 1



MCWD Organizational Chart

Proposed 7-27-2017

Option 2





MEMORANDUM

To: MCWD Board of Managers

From: Lars Erdahl, District Administrator

Date: July 27, 2017

Re: **Human Resources Strategic Plan Study -- ACTION PLAN**

Background

For much of the past two years, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) staff and Board of Managers have worked closely together to define increased focus and clarity for MCWD's purpose, strategic direction and operational model to maximize its return on investment of public resources in order to create higher value for the communities it serves. Together, we developed a more relevant and meaningful mission, vision, guiding principles and goals statement (January 2016). Together, we undertook an in-depth internal strategic planning process to thoroughly evaluate MCWD programs, projects, operations and strategic priorities to better align resources and to increase the potential program and project impact (February 2017). Together, in a very inclusive and thorough process, we have assessed the MCWD organizational framework to better align its human resources with its strategic priorities (July 2017).

Human Resources Plan Goals

- **Align human resources (talent, organizational structure, jobs & processes) with MCWD strategic priorities.**
- **Integrate Work Functions and Units**
- **Improve Operational Efficiency and Effectiveness**

The Human Resources Strategic Plan Study report presented today represents Phase 1 of a three-phase process that was approved by the Board of Managers in November 2016 as follows:

- **Phase I:** Assess human resources capacity and organizational structure needed to support organizational priorities.
 - **Task 1** – Develop a needs assessment identifying knowledge/skills, positions, and staffing levels needed to support priorities
 - **Task 2** – Map existing staffing knowledge/skills, and capacities
 - **Task 3** – Recommend restructuring, retention, recruitment, training and outsourcing to meet MCWD priorities
- **Phase II:** Develop a human resources philosophy (compensation, performance evaluations, retention strategies, etc.) to operationalize Phase I.
- **Phase III:** Refine Phase I and Phase II into a Plan and ongoing operational strategy

To advance and implement the Human Resources Plan, this memo defines the path forward by defining the opportunities, needs, action plan and timeline to move MCWD toward improved alignment of its human resources and its strategic priorities. Many of the actions as defined will require additional information and work to finalize and define the scope, scale and timing of changes. As required, any restructured or new positions will be brought before the Board of Managers for further consideration and approval.

This memo considers the recommendations from the Springsted consultant provided in the Human Resources Strategic Plan Study report and in context of the MCWD mission, vision, guiding principles and goals and the MCWD strategic priorities, defines opportunities and action plans for the following MCWD functions...

1. **District Administrator and Management Team Structure**
2. **Planning and Projects**
3. **Permitting**
4. **Research and Monitoring**
5. **Communication and Education**
6. **Operations and Support Services**

1 District Administrator and Management Team Structure

As defined in the strategic direction approved by the Board of Managers, management and decision-making functions are provided by the District Administrator in consultation with the Management Team, consisting of the Directors of the four departments. Additionally, the Director of Planning has specifically been tasked with additional responsibility to work closely with the District Administrator to guide the implementation, measurement and assessment of strategic priorities.

The MCWD's core values and workplace culture greatly value transparent and inclusive processes to continue to increase clarity and focus for organizational efforts to advance its mission, vision and strategic priorities. More clearly defined channels of communication and influences to and from staff leaders at all levels will be important to achieve mission-focused outcomes and strategic priorities.

Opportunity:

Throughout the past years of program and project evaluation and strategic planning, questions have arisen regarding the decision-making process and the role of the Management Team. Concerns have also been expressed that in order to advance our shared MCWD strategic priorities, those priorities need to be integrated into work plans and measured according to an accountability framework.

ACTION PLAN:

- A. Establish clear purpose, roles, authority and membership for MCWD Leadership Team, including efforts to provide timely and regular communication among and between staff and Board of Managers. The District Administrator's decision-making process will be informed and advised by a council of department leads. The department leads will also provide advice and information to the District Administrator related to personnel issues and performance reviews to provide fair and consistent organizational human resources functions.
 - **Tactics/Timeline:** With input from key staff and Board of Managers, Administrator will draft statement of purpose and plan for an improved Leadership Team structure for implementation in Fall 2017.

- B. Define updates to the role, responsibility and delegated authority of the Director of Planning to continue to assist the District Administrator (1) to proactively maintain organizational strategic alignment and focus and (2) to recommend policy, project, program and resource deployment. This role will assist to translate strategic priorities into operational plans that incorporate strategic directives into goals for each program. Evaluating progress towards these goals and tasks will provide MCWD with an accountability framework.
 - **Tactics/Timeline:** Explore options to better define a broader organizational role for the Director of Planning with potential changes to title and position description. With input from key staff and Board of Managers, Administrator will direct continued responsibility with current work plan integration processes, define the scope, scale and authority for an update position description and advance for implementation in 2018.

2. Planning & Projects

The Planning and Projects Department has the following strategic priorities.

- To plan and implement capital projects through partnerships. The MCWD must accurately predict, prioritize, and mobilize its financial and human resources needed to execute this work.
- To proactively maintain organizational alignment and focus, the MCWD's Planning Department will be to scan the external environment for opportunities and threats and to recommend policy, project, program, and resource deployment to the Administrator and Board of Managers.

Opportunities

- To provide appropriate levels of delegation and maximize capacity and impact, adjust positional, departmental and organizational structure to define and refine operational roles, responsibilities, authorities of this workgroup, and the MCWD management system necessary to support the established goals in capital projects, policy-planning, partnerships, organizational planning, and the development and management of cross-departmental workgroups.
- Define and plan for staffing levels required to implement capital projects, policy-planning, and maintain strategic alignment of organization. Define criteria and conditions that would indicate additional staffing needs to implement capital projects and strategic priorities of the organization.
- Align existing talent & integrate new talent, to support capital project planning and implementation, policy and planning, integration of research and monitoring, and to work with the Administrator and Board to set direction, maintain alignment, and assemble cross departmental support teams.
- Utilize changes in positions and departmental structure to create a stronger functional bridge between Planning/Projects and Communication/Education functions, to assist Education and Communications in achieving their strategic goal of supporting projects and policy development.
- Transition staff responsibility away from annual operating budget development processes, while continuing responsibility to develop annual capital project budgets and a broader Capital Investment Program in close collaboration with MCWD communities and partners. Ongoing efforts will continue for the Planning & Projects staff to explore options for capital project funding, including various financing scenarios, grant sources, and the potential to leverage MCWD funds as cost-share opportunity grants for MCWD community partners.

Springsted Human Resources Strategic Plan Study Recommended Staffing:

Director, Planning & Projects **1.00 FTE**
Senior Project Manager **1.00 FTE**
Project Manager **2.00 FTE**
Land & Project Manager **1.00 FTE**
Land & Project Technician **2.00 FTE** (one new)
Senior Planner, Policy & Implementation **1.00 FTE**
GIS Manager **1.00 FTE** (new)

ACTION PLAN:

- A.** To allow for increased role for Director of Planning to influence strategic priorities across the organization and due to the increasing scope, scale and complexity of projects, explore option to transition and delegate leadership authority to key staff in a defined supervisory role for project management. Create job description, define leadership scope, scale, role and authorities, responsibilities and accountability for staff development/coaching, project management, etc.
 - **Tactics/Timeline:** Consider options and alternatives and define logistical impacts during Fall 2017, Implement as needs determined in 2018
- B.** Consider options to better align and maximize the impact of existing staff talent and explore reallocation of key staff to create a stronger connection between MCWD functions to achieve strategic goal priorities of supporting projects and policy development. Create job description, define roles & responsibilities, scope, scale and priorities for organization-wide collaboration, communication and community relations role. Prior to implementation, this would come before the Board of Managers for further consideration and approval.
 - **Tactics/Timeline:** Continue process with key staff to consider options and alternatives and define logistical impacts during Fall 2017, Implement as needs determine in 2018
- C.** If and as needed, consider adding staff either to replace the vacant Cost Share position for MCWD community opportunity and engagement grants or to assign this role to current staff and then consider the need to back-fill for their other functions. Since close collaboration with cities is a priority for planning and policy development, planning staff and education staff will collaborate to consider options to restructure, solicit and assess opportunity and engagement cost-share grants for community partners. Prior to implementation, this would come before the Board of Managers for further consideration and approval.
 - **Tactics/Timeline:** Initiate collaborative process to assess needs and opportunities in 2018, Implement as needed in 2019+

- D. As needs for geospatial data and use of external contracts for mapping and data applications increase, consider the costs & benefits of adding a GIS professional position rather than outsourcing for GIS needs. Determine criteria to consider need, timing, benefits and create job description, define roles & responsibilities, scope for organization-wide collaboration, etc.. Prior to implementation, this would come before the Board of Managers for further consideration and approval.
- **Tactics/Timeline:** Assess needs for role and explore position development in 2018, Implement as needed in 2019+

3. Permitting

The District's Permitting program has been strategically directed to:

- Improve the efficiency of its regulatory programs through administrative, policy and rule changes, while increasing partnership opportunities with the land-use community to achieve natural resource benefits that exceed regulatory requirements.

Opportunities:

- Due to regular turnover in this work group and recurring questions and concerns related to better-defining the optimal rates of turnover/retention for these organizational priorities, there is significant opportunity to consider options to restructure this work group to enhance productivity, complement strategic priority to serve as a pipeline for potential projects and make appropriate efforts to improve retention.
- Define options to modify some limited term positions to full time benefitted employees and alter the Departmental structure to promote stability.
- Changes to regulations/policy, and the Departmental structure should be used to provide staff an opportunity to spend 10-15% of their time creating value and innovating across workgroups to increase employee satisfaction and reduce burnout inherent in work associated with managing a regulatory program.
- Increase training for on-boarding and ongoing training to maximize database & IT capabilities.

Springsted Human Resources Strategic Plan Study Recommended Staffing:

Permitting Manager/Coordinator **1.00 FTE**
Permitting Technician **2.00 FTE**
Permitting Field Staff **3.00 FTE**

ACTION PLAN:

- A.** With upcoming opportunities for revisions for permit regulations and policies and a strategic priority for the permitting staff to be an ongoing source to discover opportunity for community collaboration that could exceed the benefits of regulation alone, options to restructure this work group, and enhance retention are timely. In order to provide better context, definition and outcomes, MCWD leadership will work with key staff to explore and define options and select a preferred direction for restructuring permitting staff. Create job description, define roles & responsibilities, scope and scale for organization-wide collaboration, communication and community relations role.
- **Tactics/Timeline:** Assess needs for role and explore position and department structure options in Fall 2017. Implement as needs demand and resources allow in 2018.
- B.** Provide for increased and ongoing training to maximize the impact of current and new information technology resources. Involve front-line staff and collaborate with Operations and Support Service staff in efforts to update and improve permit database, interface and documentation to improve organizational efficiency, effectiveness and customer service.
- **Tactics/Timeline:** Continue internal training to better utilize current information technology and define improvements going forward. Initiate immediately and ongoing.

4. Research & Monitoring

The District's Research and Monitoring Program primary goals are to:

- Diagnose drivers of water resource issues to inform planning and implementation
- Monitor the effectiveness of the District's implementation efforts
- Broadly characterize water quality and ecological health throughout the watershed.

Opportunities:

- At the June 22, 2017 meeting, the Board of Managers directed the Administrator to consider options to restructure the Research and Monitoring Department, to include an option to merge these functions into the Planning and Projects department. As this functional group has developed over time, the connections to other MCWD programs, projects and strategic priorities have been discussed to explore options to maximize the benefit of staff expertise and consider alternatives for restructuring to build efficiency and effectiveness. This discussion has also questioned the effectiveness of structuring

this department as a stand-alone work unit and the continued necessity of the Director role as this work group has evolved in recent years.

- Develop alternative options and a recommended plan and timeline for the potential absorption of Research and Monitoring into the Planning Department, including an analysis of workload, structure and staffing of both workgroups. Considerations include:
 - Need to identify the appropriate Research and Monitoring staffing levels and structure to implement departmental priorities of (1) increased focus on diagnostic monitoring (2) continued integration of AIS program in planning and implementation, and (3) optimize baseline anchor monitoring, E-Grade implementation and AIS early detection monitoring.
 - Need to evaluate the impact to the Planning Department workload and workflow, reporting roles and responsibilities.
- Throughout strategic and human resources planning processes, questions have arisen related to focus and clarity of the current structure of Research and Monitoring operations, noting that shared manager roles at times create confusion.

Springsted Human Resources Strategic Plan Study Recommended Staffing:

Water Quality Supervisor/Data Manager **1.00 FTE**

Water Quality Field & Lab Manager **1.00 FTE**

Water Quality Field Monitoring Technician **2.00 FTE** (one new)

Water Quality Project Biologist & Planning Manager **1.00 FTE**

Water Quality Field Biologist/Technician **1.00 FTE**

Seasonal Water Quality Technician (two – four positions)

ACTION PLAN:

- A. Consider a process to re-align the Research and Monitoring staff more directly with strategic priorities related to planning and capital projects. As directed by the MCWD Board of Managers and also outlined by the Springsted Human Resources Strategic Plan Study, alternatives for the department alignment include (1) merging this work group into the Planning and Projects department and (2) maintaining this work group as a stand-alone function that would work closely with the Planning and Project staff, but could perhaps report directly to the District Administrator. This process requires transition planning, thorough consideration and development of updated position descriptions to define roles & responsibilities, staff supervision, scope and scale for organization-wide collaboration. Prior to implementation, this would come before the Board of Managers for further consideration and approval.
 - **Tactics/Timeline:** Continue ongoing internal discussions and evaluation by the Research and Monitoring and the Planning and Projects staff to identify key consideration to maximize the Research and Monitoring benefits to outcomes for

MCWD strategic priorities. Identify and evaluate the pros and cons of alternatives for effective and efficient management. Determine preferred recommendation for department structure in Fall 2017. Initiate transition plan and implement as needs demand and resources allow in 2018.

- B.** Determine the most effective and efficient structure for internal Research and Monitoring work group leadership, authority and process to determine the implementation of strategic priorities. The direct needs of planning and capital projects and also the ongoing implementation of the E-Grade process to measure and characterize ecological health will require ongoing assessment to provide both the appropriate balance and increased clarity and focus. Evaluate roles and responsibilities throughout the transition and implementation process to better define potential efficiencies and operational logistics to best manage Research and Monitoring functions going forward.
- **Tactics/Timeline:** Develop a clear program structure that fully integrates Research & Monitoring and AIS program positions, providing shared priorities, cross-training of staff, and the mobilization of those staff to evolving needs across the program. Consider alternatives to simplify and streamline department management and clarify roles, responsibilities and authorities, and invest in additional technical, management and leadership training for staff to support the future department structure, while expanding capacities of existing staff and the overall output of the program. Determine preferred recommendation for department structure in Fall 2017 through June 2018. Initiate transition plan and implement in mid-2018, or as needs demand and resources allow.

5. Communication & Education

The strategic priorities of this workgroup include:

- Supporting the planning and delivery of capital projects through partnerships, promoting land-use and water policy integration.
- Explore how to reprioritize, restructure and resource historic baseline communications. Education and public engagement functions, including grant programs.

Opportunities:

- Develop clear roles and responsibilities for Education and Communications staff to support the organization's priorities. Evaluate workload and develop clear priorities to facilitate the shift in education and communication priorities.
- Continue integration of support role for Planning & Projects, Research & Monitoring and Permitting.

- Evaluate opportunity with positional and structural changes in the Planning Department, for personnel to be assigned specifically to strengthen the supporting role of Education and Communications for capital project development and the land-use and water policy integration by providing specific content knowledge in areas of MCWD's planning methodology, planning and project priorities, capital project development, land-use and water policy framework, and development planning, in order to leverage support with new target audiences, specifically to encourage early coordination in the following areas:
 - Planned Development
 - Infrastructure Improvements and Public CIPs
 - Area Wide and Long Range Planning

Springsted Human Resources Strategic Plan Study Recommended Staffing:

Communications & Education Director **1.00 FTE**
Education Program Manager **1.00 FTE**
Education Specialist **1.00 FTE**
Communications Coordinator **1.00 FTE**

ACTION PLAN:

- A.** Continue ongoing process to reallocate staff time and focus on strategic priorities with closer collaboration with Planning and Projects, Research and Monitoring and Permitting. As staff assume roles on interdisciplinary staff teams to focus on strategic priorities, a process to further consider and define the balance of baseline communication and education efforts with direct support for planning and capital projects needs to be advanced. Integration and balance of these direct and indirect influencing functions will be critical the MCWD mission and strategic goals for water quality, water quantity, ecological integrity and thriving communities.
 - **Tactics/Timeline:** Continue to integrate strategic priorities into work plans and staff priorities and establish framework during Fall 2017 to assess and define balance of baseline and strategic priority-focused activities.
- B.** As previously noted in the Planning and Projects Action Plan, Communication and Education should collaborate to consider options to maximize the impact of existing staff talent and explore reallocation of key staff to create a stronger connection between MCWD functions to achieve strategic goal priorities of supporting projects and policy development. Create job description, define roles & responsibilities, scope and for organization-wide collaboration, communication and community relations role. Prior to implementation, this would come before the Board of Managers for further consideration and approval.

- **Tactics/Timeline:** Continue process with key staff to consider options and alternatives and define logistical impacts during Fall 2017, Implement as needs determine in 2018

6. Operations & Support Services

These administrative service functions include:

1. Finances (bill pay, debt payments, audit, budget, financial planning support)
2. Human Resources (benefit renewal, payroll, human resources planning)
3. Information Technology (maintain stable IT, planning and implementation of new IT)
4. Maintaining Office Building

Opportunities:

- Continue transition to provide support to the District Administrator and assume organization leadership role for budget development, processes and reporting.
- Provide responsive administrative support to work groups as demands and needs shift to be adaptive to highest priority needs.
- Continue to develop opportunities to improve efficiency and provide customer service to internal and external audiences in an efficient, effective and professional manner.
- Consider alternatives to accomplish functional roles to optimize the productivity of staff as organizational priorities and operations require. Benchmark staffing, structure and levels of service against other public and private industry standards.
- Need to better define the positional roles, functions and responsibilities and departmental structure to focus on organizational priorities.

Springsted Human Resources Strategic Plan Study Recommended Staffing:

District Administrator **1.00 FTE**
Director, Operations & Support Services **1.00 FTE**
Finance Admin **0.75 FTE**
Support Services Clerk **1.75 FTE**
Administrative Assistant **0.75 FTE**

ACTION PLAN:

- A. With increasing demand for centralized human resources services, especially with increased demands related to strategic changes and implementation of this Action Plan, it will be critically important to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of support services staff. Hire two current Temporary Staff into one 1.0 FTE Support Services Clerk and one 0.75 FTE Support Services Clerk role.

- **Tactics/Timeline:** Initiate process to define roles, responsibilities and scope of work, update any position descriptions as needed and fill these two vacant positions that have been filled by temporary staff as soon as possible.

- B.** Continue transition to provide support to the District Administrator and assume organization leadership role for budget development, processes and reporting. Work closely with Planning and Projects staff to collaborate on budget impacts and processes for annual capital projects, the Capital Investment Program, debt service and both current and future financing. Continue to coordinate the development, facilitation and implementation of an updated Information Technology Plan with deadlines and defined outcomes to ensure tracking and accountability. Define function and training needs, work closely with work groups to ensure content experts determine database and information technology needs and priorities,
 - **Tactics/Timeline:** Immediate and ongoing.

Draft Language for Potential Board Motion

As Requested by the Human Resources Liaisons for the Board of Managers, the following is potential draft language for a motion to accept and advance this Action Plan to improve alignment of MCWD human resources and its strategic priorities.

Motion to accept the Human Resources Strategic Plan Study Report from Ann Antonsen, Springsted, Incorporated and the Strategic Plan Strategic Plan Study - Action Plan Memorandum from the MCWD Administrator. Further, the Board of Managers directs the Administrator to advance and implement the Human Resources Plan, according to the defined opportunities, needs, action plan and timeline to move MCWD toward improved alignment of its human resources and its strategic priorities.