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**DRAFT**

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**December 17, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Committee was called to order at 4:00 PM.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

James Calkins, Richard Miller, and Brian Shekleton.

**NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Sherry Davis White and Kurt Rogness.

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Larry Blackstad, District Consultant; Laurie Bauer, Himle Rapp & Company; Lars Erdahl, District Administrator; Telly Mamayek, Director of Communications & Education; James Wisker, Director of Planning & Projects; Becky Christopher, Lead Planner & Project Manager; Anna Brown, Planner & Project Manager; Katherine Sylvia, Permitting Program Lead; Tom Dietrich, Permitting Technician; Elizabeth Brown, Permitting Technician & Wetland Specialist; and Matthew Cook, Planning Assistant.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Wisker asked that the agenda be reordered to begin with items 5.3-5.6 as Managers Calkins and Shekleton had not yet arrived and these items were simply updates. Chair Miller agreed.

**COMMITTEE MEETING**

**DNR General Permit Briefing**

Ms. Sylvia provided the Committee with a brief update on the District's Permitting Department. She stated that the Department was in the midst of renewing the District's General Permit (GP) with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). Ms. Sylvia explained that renewing the GP was part of the program's strategy to better position itself as an ideal partner to cities and developers. She noted that the Department's unofficial mission includes the following charge:

“... [to] partner with local land-use authorities and the development community to generate natural resource outcomes greater than those achieved through regulation alone.”

47  
48 Ms. Sylvia stated that streamlining federal, state and local regulation created value that could  
49 increase partnership opportunities to protect and improve natural resources better than through  
50 merely regulating incoming projects. Ms. Sylvia added that the District anticipated that the DNR  
51 would provide a letter of support memorializing their interest and investment in the permitting  
52 department's direction in pursuing regulation alignment and a partnership approach.

53  
54 Manager Miller noted the importance of aligning regulatory agencies. He asked Mr. Smith if  
55 there were other watershed districts attempting similar feats. Mr. Smith responded that other  
56 watershed districts were, in fact, aligning regulation, but not to the same extent as MCWD.

57  
58 Ms. Sylvia reminded the Committee that in addition to the GP, the District was seeking  
59 involvement in the pending re-write of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) and was pursuing  
60 an agreement with the USACE. She turned to E. Brown for a breakdown of the WCA re-write.

61  
62 BWSR's Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) Revision Briefing

63  
64 E. Brown stated that WCA was being amended to keep up to date with the changes to MN Rules  
65 8410. Many of the changes, she continued, were meant to allow for implementation of the  
66 changes BWSR made to the rules. E. Brown noted the first comment period was ending on the  
67 18<sup>th</sup> of December, and that she hoped to contribute her input on behalf of the District. She added  
68 that Mr. Erdahl, Planning staff, and legal counsel had all reviewed the letter.

69  
70 [Manager Shekleton arrived]

71  
72 Six Mile Creek Planning Briefing

73  
74 A. Brown supplied the Committee with an update of the Six Mile subwatershed planning process  
75 and the District's potential partnership with the USACE. The USACE has available planning  
76 assistance dollars to aid the District in Six Mile with two objectives: to evaluate a Programmatic  
77 General Permit (PGP) for the subwatershed, and to determine project eligibility for Section 206  
78 Habitat Restoration funding. The partnership will constitute a cost-share arrangement with the  
79 Corps, with the District's contribution being in-kind and coordinated with the Six Mile planning  
80 process.

81  
82 The Study will complete preliminary watershed analysis that would support the issuance of a  
83 PGP. Mr. Wisker added that, should the USACE issue a PGP to the District, the USACE would  
84 retain the role of approving and issuing permits. He noted that the PGP would allow the District  
85 to conduct the preliminary review, and therefore could propose outcomes which are more  
86 immediately beneficial on a local scale, rather than the more regional focus of the USACE.

87  
88 The process for evaluating 206 eligibility would be integrated with the Six Mile planning  
89 process. Staff will work with Wenck to synthesize our understanding of the ecological  
90 framework in the subwatershed. This information will be synthesized, through committee

91 meetings, with plans of cities, agencies, and other actors in the subwatershed seeking  
92 opportunities for cooperative investment. Through the committee process and evaluation by the  
93 USACE, a list of capital projects and investments will be generated for the subwatershed, and the  
94 USACE will do a preliminary evaluation as to which may be suitable for 206 funding.

95  
96 A. Brown concluded by expressing her interest in beginning a series of stakeholder meetings  
97 with Managers White and Olson.  
98

99 Mr. Wisker detailed the three deliverables staff was hoping to bring to the Board for approval in  
100 January in addition to the draft USACE agreement. First, he stated, Wenck would develop a  
101 potential 3-5 year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which would detail the hydrology, road  
102 plans, park plans, and other important factors in the area. From this, Mr. Wisker continued, a list  
103 of mid-term initiatives would be developed. He noted that this list would call out specific partner  
104 projects, and demonstrate potential added value that District involvement could produce. The  
105 final deliverable, he concluded, would be a long-term framework for how the District and its  
106 partners would work together. He declared that a key feature of the long-term framework would  
107 be to ensure that the District's partners write involvement with MCWD into their own plans.  
108

109 A. Brown sought a recommendation from the Committee to advance discussion with landowners  
110 for a potential District project in the area north of Pierson Lake.  
111

112 ***Manager Miller motioned, seconded by Manager Shekleton, to recommend to the Board of***  
113 ***Managers that staff advance discussions with the landowners. Upon vote, the motion passed 2-***  
114 ***0.***

115  
116 Painter Creek Planning Briefing  
117

118 Ms. Clark provided a comprehensive review of past initiatives and current planning work within  
119 the Painter Creek Subwatershed. She reminded the Committee members of the District's  
120 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Johnson family and noted that plans concerning  
121 the repair of a cattle crossing and conservation easements would be presented to the Board in  
122 early 2016. Ms. Clark described the conservation planning with the Johnson's and how it is  
123 positioned to include the easement rights to facilitate future restoration initiatives with the Corps  
124 of Engineers and provide connectivity to adjacent District lands and a regional trail system.  
125

126 Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee Briefing  
127

128 Manager White recounted her experience at the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) earlier that  
129 week. She noted the interactive nature of the meeting, impressed by the unanimously positive  
130 feedback stakeholders provided.  
131

132 Mr. Wisker summarized the presentation he gave at both the PAC and Technical Advisory  
133 Committee (TAC) about the District's efforts to improve integration of land-use and water  
134 planning. He echoed Manager White's comment that the feedback from both committees was

135 overwhelmingly positive and in support of the District’s efforts. Mr. Wisker highlighted a  
136 number of comments from advisory committee members, noting that they show a recognition of  
137 the shift in the District’s approach towards being a partner rather than a regulator. Mr. Wisker  
138 added that the comments underscore the need to revise the District’s mission statement to reflect  
139 this change in approach.

140  
141 Strategic Framework – Mission, Vision, Goals, Values

142  
143 Ms. Christopher introduced Ms. Bauer of Himle Rapp & Company. Ms. Christopher prefaced the  
144 presentation Ms. Bauer would be giving on Vision, Mission, Goals, and Values by summarizing  
145 the input that was taken into account when preparing said presentation. She stated that the inputs  
146 considered included both the one-on-one interviews Himle Rapp conducted with Managers and  
147 internal staff-led discussion groups. Ms. Christopher stressed the need for Committee members  
148 to direct their feedback towards the themes and concepts of the draft statements, rather than  
149 focusing on wordsmithing the statements.

150  
151 [Manager Calkins arrived]

152  
153 Ms. Bauer began with Vision, reminding the Committee that Vision statements are meant to be  
154 aspirational and focused on where the organization is headed. She noted that there was consensus  
155 from the Managers on the need for a unifying Vision, and there were themes of partnership,  
156 healthy water, and leadership. She listed the example Vision statements:

- 157  
158       ▪ Healthy and resilient natural resources appreciated and forever protected by engaged  
159       communities.
- 160       ▪ Creating the healthiest watershed in the nation.
- 161       ▪ A respected leader in implementing effective, science-based watershed practices.

162  
163 Manager Shekleton stated that he would add the third example statement to either of the first  
164 two. Manager White responded that the use of the term “science-based” struck her as tactical and  
165 more appropriate for a Mission statement. Manager White questioned whether or not it was  
166 necessary to mention water or water resources explicitly. Manager Miller offered the term  
167 “landscape,” suggesting that it could encompass water and land, without resorting to the jargon  
168 of “natural resources.”

169  
170 Ms. Christopher raised the question of whether the Vision should focus on the future state of the  
171 resource or the organization, noting that staff generally preferred the first option which focused  
172 on the resource. Manager White stated that a Vision should be about an organization’s outcome,  
173 not about being a leader. Manager Calkins concurred, stating that a Vision statement ought to  
174 address an ideal future scenario of the watershed or resources, not the District or organization.  
175 The Committee generally agreed that the term “landscape” was fitting.

176

177 Ms. Bauer moved on to Mission, recapping the purpose of a Mission statement. She noted that  
178 there was disagreement from the Managers on whether the Mission should be re-written, yet no  
179 one could remember it. She presented the draft statements:

- 180
- 181       ▪ To protect and improve natural resources through collaboration with residents, and public  
182       and private partners to create vibrant communities.
- 183       ▪ We support healthy communities in collaboration with public and private entities, and  
184       residents to integrate land and water management.
- 185       ▪ Through land and water management, we protect and improve our watershed for all area  
186       residents using sound science, innovation and partnership.
- 187

188 Manager Miller voiced his preference for the third Mission statement shown, adding that  
189 “landscape” ought to be swapped for “watershed.” He noted that he appreciated the use of the  
190 term “sound science.” Manager Shekleton stated that he found the introduction of the same  
191 example statement compelling.

192

193 Manager Calkins expressed that he was content with the current Mission statement. He stressed  
194 that he did not believe the proposed statements provided sufficient information.

195

196 Manager White noted her disapproval of the sentence structure of the second Mission statement  
197 presented. Manager Shekleton added that he thought the term “healthy,” applied to the term  
198 “communities,” was not tenable. Manager White concurred.

199

200 Manager Shekleton referenced the Mission, Vision, and Goals of Hennepin County which were  
201 provided as a handout. Manager White asked Mr. Smith to provide the Mission statement of  
202 Smith Partners as an example. Mr. Louis read the statement as follows:

203

204       “Smith Partners is a law firm dedicated to vibrant, sustainable communities and the  
205       natural environment on which they depend.”

206

207 Manager White stated that she also favored the third statement. She noted that the first and  
208 second proposed statements identified which parties the District worked with, but not which  
209 parties the District worked for. She stated that she would like to see a Mission statement which  
210 addressed who the District does its work for. Mr. Erdahl noted that non-residents also use the  
211 resource and could be encompassed with a statement such as “current and future generations”.

212

213 Manager Calkins restated that while the current adopted Mission statement was not perfect, he  
214 felt it was still good. He noted that the proposed statements do not serve as an educational tool to  
215 the extent which the current statement does, largely due to shorter length and thus less  
216 information.

217

218 Manager Shekleton asked what would be lost by going to one of the proposed Mission  
219 statements. He noted that the current statement includes specifics about what we do and how we

220 do it, and that the goals and strategies can be constructed to capture what is lost from the  
221 Mission.  
222

223 Ms. Christopher noted that, in the staff input sessions, there was generally a preference for the  
224 first statement. Manager Shekleton expressed interest in District staff bringing both the  
225 Committee's selection and staff's selection of the Mission statements to the Board for discussion  
226 and consideration in January.  
227

228 Manager Miller stated that the proposed statements, in complement, help to create direction for  
229 the District that is readily communicable to stakeholders. He stressed the importance of  
230 formalizing statements which recognize the District's new direction and the approval of the  
231 direction by the District's partners.  
232

233 Manager Calkins stated that he believed the Mission statement should stand on its own,  
234 including the title of MCWD and educational information. He added that none of the proposed  
235 statements satisfied these criteria.  
236

237 Manager White stated that the District was not losing any key information in the current Mission  
238 statement; rather, the ideas were being broken out into separate, pithier statements of Vision,  
239 Mission, Goals, and Values.  
240

241 Manager Calkins stated that he did not believe that the Mission statement needed to be pithy or  
242 readily memorable, as that was the role of the District's Tagline.  
243

244 Manager Shekleton noted the power of concise and pointed statements. He offered that anything  
245 important can be said in 140 characters, referencing Twitter.  
246

247 Ms. Mamayek stated that staff needed a succinct yet complete "elevator speech" to recite. She  
248 added that staff have shown support for including partnership and sound science as key aspects  
249 of the statements being developed. Manager Shekleton concurred, noting that such an "elevator  
250 speech" cannot be lead with the District's tagline.  
251

252 Mr. Wisker stated that he would like to bring back statements, revised based on the Committee's  
253 input, for Board discussion at the January workshop. Manager White expressed her support of  
254 bringing back the statements to the Board as soon as possible.  
255

256 Moving on, Ms. Bauer stated that the District's 17 Goals were too many to create any sort of  
257 prioritization. She then presented a suite of 4 Goals, meant to encompass the current 17 Goals.  
258 Ms. Christopher added that the descriptive statements for each Goal were placeholders from the  
259 current Plan that would be refined be more brief and less technical. Ms. Bauer asked the  
260 Committee for their opinions on whether or not "Community Engagement" was a Goal or a  
261 strategy by which the District accomplished its other Goals.  
262

263 Manager Rogness asked what the District does its work for if not to engage communities. Ms.  
264 Mamayek concurred. Manager Miller stated that he thought the term “Community Engagement”  
265 needed a more apt description. Manager Shekleton offered that changing the term to “Engaging  
266 Communities” would be a good starting place. Manager White noted that if the District is truly  
267 becoming more than a regulatory agency, then it must engage its constituent communities.  
268 Manager Calkins stated that he believed “Community Engagement” was a tactic. He explained  
269 that the Goal in question is more about connecting people to natural resources.

270  
271 Ms. Bauer stated that she would work with District staff to incorporate the Committee’s input  
272 into the statements for Board consideration at the January workshop. Ms. Christopher noted that  
273 the statements would also be brought through the Citizen Advisory Committee.

274  
275 The Committee Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

276  
277 Respectfully submitted,

278  
279 Matthew Cook  
280 Planning Assistant

DRAFT