

# MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT

## GOVERNANCE MANUAL

November 20, 2014

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Bylaws .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Governance Policies.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4. Board Liaison Policy .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>5. Investment and Depository Policy .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>6. Debt Management Policy.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>7. Public Purposes Expenditures Policy .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>8. Per Diem Policy.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>9. Policies and Procedures for Public Access to Documents.....</b>	<b>46</b>
Security and Protection of Not-Public Data .....	48
Private and Confidential Data – Rights of Data Subjects.....	50
Form: Data Practices Advisory/Tennessee Warning form .....	52
Form: Consent to Release of Data to Individual .....	53
Form: Consent to Release of Data to Governmental Entity.....	54
Appendix A: Inventory of Not-Public Data on Individuals .....	55
<b>10. Records Retention Schedule.....</b>	<b>61</b>
Electronic Records Management Policy.....	71
<b>11. Media Relations Policy.....</b>	<b>72</b>

## **Minnehaha Creek Watershed District**

### Governance Manual – Introduction

November 20, 2014

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District is a special purpose unit of government established under Minnesota Statutes chapters 103B and 103D. The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District is governed by a seven-member Board of Managers appointed to staggered terms by the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners (six managers) and the Carver County Board of Commissioners (one manager). The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District staff is led by an administrator, who oversees and directs day-to-day activities and to carry out the MCWD's Comprehensive Water Management Plan.

Existing policies were updated and are incorporated herein to create the **Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Governance Manual**, which was adopted by the Board on November 20, 2014. The manual includes this overview and the general governance policies below, along with specific policy and protocol documents that were revised or drafted to fulfill specific statutory or internal management purposes.

The manual establishes clear written policies, procedures and instructions for the management of District activities and accounts, complete recordkeeping and records management, and responses to requests for data. The manual also should help to ensure that similar transactions are treated consistently, that accounting principles used are appropriate and proper, and that records and reports are produced in forms desired by the managers and state review entities, including the Legislature, the Office of the State Auditor and the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

The manual consists of this document, along with the following policies and protocols adopted by the District:

- **Bylaws** (most recently amended November 20, 2014), including a conflict of interest policy and fulfilling the requirement of Minnesota Statutes section 103D.315, subdivision 11.
- **Governance Policies** (most recently updated and adopted November 20, 2014) providing various policies for the day-to-day administration of the District's business operations.
- **Liaison Policy and Procedures** constitute a prudential policy established by the Board of Managers to foster productive relationships with fellow governmental bodies and other entities (first adopted in 2009 and updated November 2014).
- **Investment and Depository Policy** (most recently amended December 29, 2011) provides terms for investment and collateralization of District funds and the management and administration of District bank accounts.
- **Debt Management Policy** (most recently adopted January 24, 2013) guides District borrowing.
- **Public Purposes Expenditures Policy** (adopted December 29, 2011) includes protocols and requirements to ensure that the District complies with the requirement

in the state constitution (Article X, section 1) that expenditures by government bodies serve public purposes.

- **Per Diem Policy** has been established by the Board of Managers to supplement Minnesota Statutes section 103D.315 by making eligibility for per diem payments clear.
- **Policies and Procedures for Public Access to Documents** (amendments adopted November 20, 2014) fulfills requirements of the state Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes chapter 13) applicable to the District. The following auxiliary documents fulfill specific requirements of the Data Practices Act:
  - Security of Not-Public Data and procedures to ensure accuracy and security of data on individuals and to notify data subjects of their rights under the DPA, along with the accompanying Inventory of Not-Public Data on Individuals.
  - Tennessen notices and consent forms, created when needed and tailored for specific circumstances where private or confidential data is collected from individuals, such as new employees, or distributed (Minn. Stat. § 13.04, subd. 2). (The manual includes the District's basic templates.)
- **Records Retention Schedule** allows the District to efficiently manage and, when appropriate, archive its files, and fulfills the requirement of section 138.17, subdivision 7, as well as the Data Practices Act requirement that the District maintain a list of private and confidential data on individuals maintained by the District (section 13.05, subdivision 1). The schedule also includes indication of whether the District stores information electronically or in hard copy form, in compliance with the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act, Minnesota Statutes section 325L.17.
- **Media Relations Policy** provides managers, staff and members of the Citizens Advisory Committee and other committees with policy, protocols and guidance on working with the media.

The manual will be annually reviewed and updated as necessary. The manual will be submitted within 60 days of adoption to the Office of the State Auditor in compliance with Minnesota Statutes section 6.756, as will any revisions and additional policies when adopted.

District staff and contractors are expected to conduct District business in accordance with the manual and to alert the Board of Managers to improvements and additions needed.

**BYLAWS OF THE  
MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT  
BOARD OF MANAGERS**

*Adopted August 12, 2004; amended November 20, 2014*

These bylaws establish rules governing the conduct of business by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers.

**ARTICLE I: OFFICE**

The District will maintain its principal place of business in an office located within the watershed district. The District's official records will be maintained at that location. The Board may change the location of its principal place of business in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 103D.321, subdivision 2.

**ARTICLE II: BOARD OF MANAGERS**

Before assuming the duties of the Board, each Board member, at District expense, will obtain and file a bond in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 103D.315, subdivision 2. The Board, at District expense, will provide for insurance for its members to provide liability protection on such terms and in such amounts as the Board decides.

The Board may elect to compensate its members for attending meetings and performing other duties necessary to proper management of the District. Compensation will be in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 103D.315, subdivision 8, and policy established by the Board of Managers.

**ARTICLE III: OFFICERS**

The Board annually will elect from among its members the following officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. The term of office is one year, commencing on the date of election. Election of Officers will be conducted at a meeting of the Board of Managers in the month of January. No member may hold more than one office at a time.

If an officer cannot complete his or her term of office, the Board immediately will elect from among its members an individual to complete the unexpired portion of the term. The individual designated to complete the unexpired term of another officer may not already be serving as an officer of the District. An Officer's term as officer continues until a successor is elected or the officer resigns from the office. The Board, by action at an official meeting, may appoint a Board member as an officer *pro tem* in the event an officer is absent or disabled and action by that officer is required.

The President will:

- (a) Serve as Chair for all meetings, except as delegated under terms of these Bylaws;
- (b) Sign and deliver in the name of the District any contracts, deeds, correspondence or other instruments pertaining to the business of the District;
- (c) Be a signatory to the District's accounts.
- (d) Be a signatory to District documents if the Treasurer or Secretary is absent or disabled, to the same extent as the Treasurer or Secretary.
- (e) Fulfill the duties as described in the Governance Policies of the District, Governance Process Policy #3, President/Acting Chair's Role.

The Vice President will:

- (a) Discharge the President's duties if the President is absent or disabled;
- (b) Be a signatory to instruments and accounts of the District if the President is absent or disabled, to the same extent as the President, or where execution by the Vice President is explicitly required or authorized.

The Treasurer will:

- (a) Develop and maintain the District's financial accounts and records;
- (b) Be a signatory to the District's accounts and financial records;
- (c) Provide the Board with such records as are necessary to describe the financial condition of the District.

The Secretary will:

- (a) Maintain the records of the District;
- (b) Be a signatory to resolutions and other documents certifying and memorializing the proceedings of the District;
- (c) Ensure that minutes of all Board meetings are recorded and made available in a timely manner to the Board, and maintain a file of all approved minutes including corrections and changes;
- (d) Provide for proper public and Board member notice of all meetings.

#### **ARTICLE IV: COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY BODIES**

The Board may appoint committees, standing and special, and advisory bodies to assist the Board in performing its duties, which may include persons who are not Board members. Committees and advisory bodies shall operate in a manner consistent with the Board Committee Principles as described in the Governance Policies of the District, Governance Process Policy #5. No member of a committee other than a Board member may offer a motion or vote on a matter put before the Board.

It is the duty of a committee to act promptly and faithfully in all matters referred to it and to make reports at the next Board meeting. A complete and accurate copy of all committee reports shall be made a part of the Board meeting and filed and maintained at the District office.

The Board annually shall appoint a citizens advisory committee in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 103D.331. The Board shall convene a technical advisory committee in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 103D.337.

## **ARTICLE V: MEETINGS**

All actions of the Board will be taken in a public meeting noticed and held in accordance with Minnesota Statutes sections 13D.01 *et seq.*

The Board will meet at least annually and periodically may meet to conduct the general business of the District. The frequency, dates, times and locations of regular meetings will be set and published by the Board annually and may be changed at any time by action of the Board, in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 13D.01 *et seq.*

A special or emergency meeting may be held at any time at the request of the Chair or any two members, and in conformance with Minnesota Statutes section 13D.01 *et seq.* The request will be made in writing to the Secretary, and must include a statement of the purpose of the meeting. Immediately on receipt of a proper request, the Secretary will cause all members of the Board to be notified and cause public notice to be made in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 13D.01 *et seq.* The Secretary will make all reasonable efforts to provide actual notice of the special or emergency meeting to each Board member.

*Attendance.* Managers are expected to attend meetings of the Board of Managers. A manager's failure to attend three consecutive meetings may be reported, at the Board's discretion, to the county commission that appointed the manager.

*Quorum.* At Board meetings, the majority of the members will constitute a quorum to do business. Any action taken by the Board shall be by a majority vote of all members present. No member may appoint a proxy for any vote.

*Agenda.* Except in the case of emergency meetings, an agenda stating matters to be considered will be made available to Board members and the public at least three business days before the meeting. In its discretion, the Board may consider and act on matters not appearing on the agenda if otherwise in accordance with law. The order of business may be varied by the Chair, but no public hearing shall be closed before the time specified for the hearing in the notice of hearing.

*Conduct of meetings.* The President will preside at all meetings as Chair, except that the President may delegate that authority to the Vice President for workshop meetings. If the President is absent or disabled, the Vice President will preside. The Chair shall have the same privileges as other members.

At the hour appointed for a meeting, the members will be called to order by the Chair. On the presence of a quorum, the Board will proceed to do business.

The Chair will preserve order and decide questions of order, subject to appeal to the Board. Any manager may appeal to the Board from a ruling of the chair. If the appeal is seconded, the manager may speak once solely on the question involved and the chair may explain his or her ruling, but no other manager will participate in the discussion. The appeal will be sustained if it is approved by a majority of the managers present, exclusive of the chair.

The Chair may make motions, second motions and speak on any question. The Chair may vote in the same manner as other Board members.

Each member, before speaking, will address the Chair and will not proceed until recognized by the Chair. A member called to order immediately will suspend his or her remarks until the point of order is decided by the Chair.

*Rules.* Board meetings will be governed by the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, except that *Robert's Rules* may be temporarily suspended by consent of a majority of the managers.

Every motion, except to adjourn, postpone, reconsider, commit, lay on the table or for the previous question, will be put into writing if the Chair or any member requires it; when made and seconded, it will be stated by the Chair or, if written, be read by the Chair. It may be withdrawn before amendment or any disposition of the question has been made.

*Voting.* When a question is put by the Chair, every member present shall vote, unless for special reasons the Board member elects to abstain. The "yeas" and "nays" shall be called on the request of the Chair or by any member, in which case the names of the members voting will be recorded in the minutes.

*Conflict of interest.* The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District seeks to assure public confidence in the integrity of its proceedings because such confidence is essential for effective governance. The citizens affected by Board of Managers proceedings deserve and expect high ethical standards, and the Board of Managers seeks to make its high standards known to citizens in the watershed district. Ensuring that conflicts of interest do not affect Board of Managers proceedings is an essential element of maintaining high ethical standards. To avoid conflict of interest and the appearance thereof, the Board of Managers conducts itself according to the following conflict of interest policy:

- A. Disclosure of potential conflicts: Where the official duties of a manager, including chairing any meeting, participating in any vote, or offering any motion or discussion on any matter, substantially affect the manager's financial or personal interests, unless the effect on the manager is no more than on any other member of the manager's profession, occupation, or business classification, the manager will take the following actions:
  1. Prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action and the nature of the potential conflict of interest; and



2. Deliver a copy of the statement to the President of the Board of Managers for filing with the Board of Managers within one week of taking the action.

B. Abstention: Managers will abstain from chairing any meeting, participating in any vote, or offering any motion or discussion on any matter that substantially affects the manager's financial or personal interests.

"Personal interest," as used in this policy, means a material financial interest of the member, a family member or a close associate. The member's action will be noted in the minutes.

*Resolutions.* A resolution will be presented in writing or the preparation of a resolution reflecting Board action may be delegated to staff, provided the material terms of the resolution are stated in the motion adopting it. A resolution presented in writing will be read in full before a vote on the question, but reading in full may be dispensed with by unanimous consent. All written communications addressed to the Board, other materials included in the meeting packet, and all documents submitted to the record in the course of the meeting will be filed with the minutes in the District office.

Each resolution and rule passed by the Board will be signed by the Secretary and filed in the official actions of the District maintained at the District office. Proof of publication of a rule will be attached to and filed with the rule.

*Minutes.* The minutes of each meeting shall be reduced to writing. At the next regular Board meeting following preparation of the draft minutes, the Board will consider approval of the minutes. The minutes need not be read aloud, but the Chair will call for additions and corrections. If there is no objection to a proposed addition or objection, it is deemed made without a Board vote. If there is an objection, the Board shall vote on the addition or correction. If there are no additions or corrections, the minutes will stand approved. On approval, the Secretary will sign the minutes and file them in the official records of the District at the District office.

*Recording.* An audio recording will be made of each Board business meeting. The Board will maintain or arrange for adequate recording equipment for this purpose. A failure to make an audio recording will not invalidate any action taken at the meeting. The reason for a failure to make an audio recording shall be noted in the minutes, if known. But no closed session of a meeting of the Board of Managers will be conducted unless it is recorded, in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 13D.05, except that a meeting closed to preserve the attorney-client privilege will not be recorded.

## **ARTICLE VI: FISCAL PROCEDURES**

The fiscal year of the District will be from January 1 to December 31.

Annually, the Board will provide for a financial audit, approve a budget for the following year, and approve and certify a property tax levy in accordance with applicable statutes and rules.

Checks issued by the District for payments for any purpose will bear two authorized signatures for an amount greater than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), but may bear one authorized signature for any amount less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

All District expenditures will be made in a manner consistent with the Governance Policies of the District, Executive Limitations Policies #5 and #6.

All purchases of goods and services by the District will have the prior approval of the Board, except that the Board by resolution may delegate to the Administrator the authority, with countersignature, to bind the District to a purchase of goods or services, or to enter into a contract for same, when the cost thereof does not exceed \$5,000, or under other specified conditions.

The Treasurer will issue serial numbered receipts for all monies received, with duplicates retained. If the District has more than one account, the receipt will indicate the account credited. A receipt form erroneously completed will be retained. The original and duplicate will be marked "Void" and this fact recorded in the general ledger or register of receipts. The District will make all payments by check, with records kept thereof.

Board members will prepare and submit claim forms for *per diem* and expenses in accordance with the Manager Per Diem and Expense Policy, approved as may be amended.

The Treasurer will keep a record of receipts and disbursements, and will report on all financial transactions at meetings of the Board.

## **ARTICLE VII: MISCELLANY**

At the first regular Board meeting in January of each year, the Board will: (1) designate the depository or depositories of Board funds; (2) designate the depository for financial assurance instruments submitted to the District; and (3) designate the official newspapers of the District.

All references in these bylaws to statutes, rules and policies are to the section or sections as they may be amended.

## **ARTICLE IX: BYLAWS**

Any provision of these Bylaws may be suspended temporarily by a majority vote of the Board, except a provision adopted in order to preserve the right of an absent member. The Board may amend or repeal these Bylaws at any meeting, provided that 30 days' written notice of the proposed change has been given to each Board member. An amendment to these Bylaws must be approved by a three-quarters majority of the Board.

These Bylaws are intended to be consistent with applicable provisions of Minnesota Statutes Chapters 103B and 103D and other governing law. In the event of a conflict, that governing law will control.

The purpose of these Bylaws is to establish rules to govern the performance of District business by the Board. They should not be permitted to divert or hinder the express intent and desire of the Board. Informal compliance and substantial performance will be sufficient under the foregoing rules in the absence of an objection seasonably taken. Objections are not seasonably taken as to any procedural matters provided for herein if a manager present at the meeting in question fails to object during the meeting and request compliance with these rules. Objections to be seasonably taken by an absent manager must be taken at the next regular meeting of the Board.

These Bylaws are for internal use only and neither create nor elucidate the rights of any Board member in a personal capacity or the rights of any third party.

Adopted by the Board of Managers of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District on the 20th day of November, 2014.

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Casale, Secretary

MINNEHAHA CREEK  
WATERSHED DISTRICT  
**GOVERNANCE POLICIES**

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers developed these policies, with the help of the Wilder Center for Communities, to give more specific parameters to the operations of the organization and the roles and responsibilities of the Board and Executive Director.

**At all times, the District's bylaws and relevant statutes will supersede these policies.**

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF MANAGERS  
APRIL 24, 2003

*Amended:      October 9, 2003  
                     October 23, 2003  
                     March 1, 2007  
                     October 18, 2007  
                     January 28, 2010  
                     March 22, 2012  
                     January 24, 2013  
                     November 20, 2014*

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

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## Mission Statement Adopted 10/31/02

*The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District is committed to a leadership role in protecting, improving, and managing the surface waters and affiliated groundwater resources within the District, including their relationships to the ecosystems of which they are an integral part, through regulation, capital projects, education, cooperative endeavors, and other programs based on sound science, innovative thinking, an informed and engaged constituency, and cost effective use of public funds.*

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

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## **POLICY #1: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS**

### GENERAL EXECUTIVE CONSTRAINT

The District Administrator shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance which is either imprudent or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

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## POLICY #2: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS

### STAFF TREATMENT

With respect to treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the District Administrator may not cause or allow conditions, which are illegal, inhumane, unfair, or undignified.

Accordingly, s/he may not:

1. Violate the guidelines contained within the board-approved *Employee Handbook*.
2. Prevent staff from appealing to the MCWD board when internal grievance procedures have been exhausted, if the employee alleges that he/she has been harmed because:
  - a. board policy has not been followed or
  - b. board policy does not adequately protect his/her human rights.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

## **POLICY #3: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS**

### COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

With respect to employment, compensation and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers and volunteers, the District Administrator may not jeopardize MCWD's fiscal integrity or public image.

Accordingly, s/he may not:

1. Change his/her own compensation and benefits as established by the MCWD board.
2. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.
3. Establish current compensation and benefits which:
  - a. Deviate materially from comparable positions in the geographic or professional market.
  - b. Obligate MCWD beyond the annual budget.
4. Establish deferred or long-term compensation and benefits which:
  - a. Commit MCWD to unfunded liabilities or unpredictable future costs.
  - b. Provide less than a competitive level of benefits to all employees in accordance with the board approved budget.
  - c. Allow any employee to lose benefits already accrued.



# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

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## POLICY #4: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS

### FINANCIAL PLANNING

With respect to financial planning (budgeting for all or any remaining part of a fiscal period), the District Administrator may not jeopardize MCWD's programmatic or fiscal integrity.

Accordingly, s/he may not cause or allow budgeting which:

1. Is not detailed enough to provide:
  - a. projections of revenues and expenses,
  - b. separation of capital and long-term planning projects, district programs and operational items, and
  - c. cash flow statements and projections.
2. Expend more funds than provided for in board-approved budget.
3. Deviates materially from board-stated priorities (see *Strategic Plan and annual goals*).

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

## **POLICY #5: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS**

### FINANCIAL CONDITION

With respect to the actual, ongoing condition of MCWD's financial health, the District Administrator may not expend funds outside of Board approved budgets or otherwise jeopardize MCWD's fiscal integrity.

Accordingly, s/he may not:

1. Reallocate monies of an amount more than ten (10) percent of the total project/program fund or \$25,000, whichever is less, from one fund to another.
2. Deviate from the MCWD Investment and Depository Policy or Debt Management Policy without prior approval from the Board of Managers.
3. Transfer budgeted funds that cannot be repaid within 90 days or violate any contracts or grants.
4. Allow cash and liquid assets to drop below the amount needed to settle payroll and incurred expenses.
5. Allow reserve fund level to fall below six (6) months' operating expenses.
6. Allow petty cash expenditures to exceed \$1,000 per month.
7. Reimburse surety prior to completion of project for which surety is being held or without proper documentation.
8. Release any checks, other than petty cash and surety, without board resolution.
9. Allow actual expenditures to deviate materially from board approved annual budget.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

## POLICY #6: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS

### ASSET PROTECTION

With respect to proper stewardship of MCWD's assets, the District Administrator may not risk losses beyond those necessary in the normal course of business. Accordingly, s/he may not:

1. Fail to insure against theft and casualty losses to at least 80 percent replacement value.
2. Fail to insure against liability losses to MCWD, its board members, or its paid or volunteer staff beyond commonly accepted practice.
3. Fail to maintain a current written inventory of assets, at least quarterly, verified by an annual physical inventory.
4. Subject property and equipment to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.
5. Fail to properly protect valuable data in accordance with board-approved plan.
6. Dispose of any assets valued over \$1,000 unless authorized by the MCWD Board of Managers.
7. Buy or sell any goods or services (other than employment) from or to employees.
8. Unnecessarily expose MCWD, its board or staff to claims of liability.
9. Purchase any real estate or easements on real estate unless authorized by the MCWD Board of Managers.
10. Make any purchase greater than \$5,000.
11. Fail to establish and maintain controls that meet the board-appointed auditor's standards for receiving, processing or disbursing funds.
12. Exceed designated limits for per diems and other expenses as defined in the *Employee Handbook*, *Manager Per Diem and Expense Policy* and *Public Purposes Expenditures Policy*.
13. Fail to invest operating capital in compliance with applicable state law and the MCWD Investment and Depository Policy.
14. Award purchases or other contracts to family members or significant others, business associates, or board members (or organizations associated with family members or significant others, business associates, or board members), without notice and prior approval of the MCWD board.
15. Make any capital purchase over \$25,000 without obtaining written quotes or competitive bids or purchase any professional service in excess of \$25,000 without obtaining written quotes or bids or without utilizing a Qualification Based Selection process.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

## POLICY #7: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS

### COMMUNICATION AND ADVICE TO AND FROM THE BOARD

With respect to providing information and advice to the MCWD board, the District Administrator may not knowingly cause or allow the MCWD board to be uninformed or misinformed.

Accordingly s/he may not:

1. Let the board be unaware of relevant changes to Strategic Plan, annual goals and budget, public events of MCWD, emergencies related to District resources or any significant changes affecting board policy.
2. Fail to submit the monitoring data required by the board policy *Monitoring District Administrator Performance* in a timely, accurate and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of the board policies.
3. Fail to investigate and present as many staff and external points of view, issues, and options as requested by the MCWD board, including the views and recommendations of Department Heads.
4. Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form.
5. Fail to include correspondence determined to be “public” under the Data Practice Act and associated MCWD policy that is addressed to the board or to an individual board member as Information Items/Correspondence on the next meeting or workshop agenda after receipt.
6. Fail to communicate board decisions and actions to staff in an accurate, complete, and timely manner, and take all necessary further steps to ensure the effective delegation of policies, strategies and tasks to staff.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

## POLICY #1: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

### GOVERNING STYLE

The MCWD board will approach its task with a style which emphasizes strategic leadership more than administrative detail, clear distinction of board and staff roles, future rather than past or present perspective, and proactively rather than reactively.

In this spirit, the board will:

1. Focus chiefly on MCWD's intended long-term impacts (*Strategic Plan and annual goals*), not on the administrative activities (management of staff, volunteers, consultants, money, facilities and equipment of MCWD) or the implementation of programs/projects.
2. Direct, control and inspire MCWD through the careful establishment of the broadest organizational values and perspectives (policies). Policies will address a) *Strategic Plan, annual goals and budget*: what benefits for which needs at what cost, b) *Executive Limitations*: boundaries of prudence and ethics to be observed by staff, c) *Governance Process*: board role and responsibilities and d) *Board-District Administrator Relationship*: linkage between board and staff.
3. Enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to attendance, only speaking when recognized at board meetings or workshops, policymaking principles, respect of clarified roles, speaking with one voice and self-policing of any tendency to stray from governance adopted in board policies.
4. Be accountable to the watershed's residents, communities and taxpayers for competent, conscientious and effective accomplishment of the mission. It will allow no officer, individual or committee of the board to usurp this role or hinder this discipline.
5. Monitor and regularly discuss the board's own process and performance. In order to accomplish this, maintain necessary plans, policies, and monitoring records.
6. Board actions will only be taken at board meetings where adequate public notice has been provided.
7. Be an initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The MCWD board, not the staff, will be responsible for board performance.
8. Endeavor to come prepared to Board meetings. If a Board member would like clarification on an item on the Consent Agenda, that Board member will contact staff prior to the Board meeting to have his/her question(s) answered.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

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## POLICY #2: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

### BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The job of the board is to lead MCWD toward the desired goals and assure that they occur. The board's specific responsibilities are *unique* to its stewardship role and *necessary* for proper governance and management.

Consequently, the job of the MCWD board shall be:

1. To provide the link between MCWD and those to whom it is accountable.
2. To create written governing policies which, at the broadest levels, address:
  - a. *Strategic Plan, annual goals and budget*: Establishes vision (what is different in the world because MCWD exists) and organizational outcomes (what good, for which needs, for whom, at what cost).
  - b. *District Administrator Limitations*: Defines constraints on District Administrator authority that establish prudent and ethical boundaries within which the Administrator will make decisions and provide direction.
  - c. *Governance Process*: Specifies how the board conceives, carries out and monitors its own tasks.
  - d. *District Administrator-Board Relationship*: Clarifies how the board delegates power and monitors its proper use.
3. To evaluate the executive's performance against policies 2A and 2B (above).

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

## POLICY #3: GOVERNANCE PROCESS

### PRESIDENT/ACTING CHAIR'S ROLE

The job of the President/Acting Chair is to ensure the integrity of the MCWD board's process and the efficient and professional conduct of Board of Managers meetings. The President (and not the Acting Chair) is the only person authorized to speak for MCWD except for the District Administrator, other than in rare and specifically authorized instances.

1. The job of the President/Acting Chair is to ensure that the board behaves consistent with its own rules and those imposed on it by state law.
  - a. Meeting discussion content will only be those issues that, according to board policy, clearly belong to the board to decide, not the District Administrator.
  - b. Deliberation will be timely, fair, orderly and thorough, but also efficient, limited to time and kept to the point.
  - c. Assure compliance with all applicable statutes and rules requiring Board of Managers' action.
  - d. Foster an environment in which members of the public feel welcome at meetings, and encourage and direct comments from the public at appropriate and productive times.
  
2. The President has the authority to take actions consistent with board policies on *Governance Process* and on the *Board-District Administrator Relationship*.
  - a. The President is empowered to chair board meetings with all the commonly accepted power of that position, e.g., setting agenda, ruling, recognizing.
  - b. The President will ensure board representation at District sponsored events and other events requiring a manager to be present.
  - c. The President has the power to nominate managers as delegates to task forces and as committee members, subject to approval of the board.
  - d. The President is empowered to represent the board to the legislature and media.
  - e. Presidential authority does not extend to making decisions regarding implementation of *Strategic Plan, annual goals and budget* and *District Administrator Limitations* policy areas, each of which is within the purview of the District Administrator.
  - f. Presidential authority does not extend to supervising or otherwise directing the District Administrator. Only the full board can interpret the meaning of its policies.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

## **POLICY #4: GOVERNANCE PROCESS**

### BOARD MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

The MCWD board expects of itself and its members ethical and businesslike conduct. This commitment includes proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as board members.

1. Board members must be loyal to the interests of the District's constituents. This accountability supersedes:
  - a. Any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups and membership on other boards or staffs
  - b. The personal interests of any Manager
2. At meetings of the Board of Managers, board members will:
  - a. Conduct the business of the MCWD with order, courtesy, professionalism, fairness and respect for fellow members, staff, presenters and members of the public;
  - b. Speak only when recognized by the chair and neither delay nor interrupt the proceedings nor another member by extraneous conversation or otherwise;
  - c. Refrain from using telephones or other personal electronic devices for unrelated purposes;
  - d. Adhere to the directions and rulings of the chair;
  - e. Confine remarks to the matter under consideration;
3. Board members must not use their positions to obtain for themselves, family members, significant others, business associates, or other board members employment within MCWD. Any conduct of private business between any manager and MCWD requires proper disclosure and unanimous approval by the board.
4. Should a Manager be considered for employment by MCWD, s/he must first resign from the board.
5. Board members may not exercise individual authority over MCWD except as explicitly set forth in board policies.
  - a. Board members' interaction with the District Administrator or with staff must recognize that only the board acting as a whole can govern and give direction to the District Administrator.
  - b. Board members' interaction with the public, press or other entities must recognize the role of the board-designated spokesperson.



# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

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- c. Board members will monitor and evaluate the District Administrator or staff performance consistent with explicit board policies.
- 6. All board members have equal rights, privileges and obligations to the MCWD, and the rights of the minority on a particular matter will be respected.
- 7. All board members have the right to timely access to complete and accurate MCWD information, and the right to adequate explanation of information related to matters before the board.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

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## **POLICY #5: GOVERNANCE PROCESS**

### BOARD COMMITTEE PRINCIPLES

The board may establish committees to help carry out its responsibilities. Committees will be used to support the board in carrying out its job and must not interfere with delegation from the board to the District Administrator.

1. Committees may not act for the board except when formally given such authority.
2. Committees are not to be created by the board to supervise or direct staff.
3. Committee members will be approved by the board.
4. Committees will consist of at least three (3) members but are open to all Managers with equivalent status to committee members.
5. Committees are subject to requirements of the Open Meeting Law, Minnesota Statutes chapter 13D.
6. The board will establish committees as required by the board policy on *Monitoring District Administrator Performance*.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

## POLICY #1: BOARD-DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONSHIP

### DELEGATION TO THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

The MCWD board's job is generally confined to establishing broad policies, leaving implementation and internal management policy development to the District Administrator. *Strategic Plan, annual goals and budget* policies direct the District Administrator to achieve certain results; *Executive Limitations* policies constrain the District Administrator to act within acceptable boundaries. All board authority delegated to staff is delegated through the District Administrator.

1. The District Administrator is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions and develop all activities that are true to the board's policies. The board may, by extending its policies, "undelegate" areas of the District Administrator's authority, but will respect the District Administrator's decisions in all other cases. This does not prevent the board from obtaining information about activities in the delegated areas.
2. All consultants to the District work under the direction of the District Administrator or his/her designee, except for auditors and legal counsel. Auditors and legal counsel's primary responsibility is to the board except when providing administrative or project/program support.
3. No individual board member, officer, or committee has authority over the District Administrator. Information may be requested by individuals but if such request, in the District Administrator's judgment, requires a material amount of staff effort or cannot be met within the time requested, it may be refused and referred to the board. Only the full board can require reports from the District Administrator.
4. The District Administrator may not perform, allow or cause to be performed any act that is contrary to explicit board constraints (see *District Administrator Limitations* policies).
5. Should the District Administrator deem it necessary to violate board policy, s/he shall inform an officer of the board. Informing is simply to guarantee no violation may be intentionally kept from the board, not to request approval. Officer response, either approving or disapproving, does not exempt the District Administrator from subsequent board judgment of the action nor does it impede any Administrator decision.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

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## **POLICY #2: BOARD-DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONSHIP**

### JOB OF THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

As the board's link to MCWD's operations, the District Administrator is accountable for all organizational performance and exercises all authority delegated by the board. District Administrator performance will be considered to be synonymous with organizational performance.

Consequently, the board will evaluate the District Administrator's job performance in two areas:

1. Organizational accomplishment of the *Strategic Plan, annual goals and budget*.
2. Organization operation within the boundaries established in board policies on *Executive Limitations*.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

## **POLICY #3: BOARD-DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONSHIP**

### MONITORING DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR PERFORMANCE

Monitoring District Administrator performance is synonymous with monitoring organizational performance against board policies on *Strategic Plan and annual goals* and on *Executive Limitations*. Monitoring will be as automatic as possible, using a minimum of board meeting time so that meetings can be used to create the future rather than review the past.

1. The purpose of monitoring is to determine the degree to which board policies are being fulfilled.
2. A given policy may be monitored in one or more of three ways:
  - a. **DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:** Disclosure by the District Administrator to the board.
  - b. **MANAGER(S) INSPECTION:** Any individual board member at any meeting may request discovery by the MCWD board or a board-designated Manager or committee, including inspection of printed and electronic documents, activities, or circumstances.
  - c. **EXTERNAL AUDIT/REPORT:** Discovery by a disinterested, external auditor, inspector or judge who is selected by and reports directly to the MCWD board. Such reports must assess District Administrator performance only against board policies, unless the board identifies other standards.
3. The board can decide to monitor any policy by any method at any time. However, the board designates the following monitoring schedule for *Strategic Plan, annual goals and budget* and *District Administrator Limitations* policies.
  - a. Monthly reports: Financial condition, District Administrator's report, project status reports.
  - b. Quarterly: Communication and advice, implementation calendar.
  - c. Annual reports: Annual goals and budget, all governance policies, compensation and benefits, asset protection, financial condition, staff treatment, financial planning.
  - d. Biannual: Compensation and benefits, Strategic Plan.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

## **POLICY #4: BOARD-DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONSHIP**

### HIRING OF DEPARTMENT HEADS

The following procedures shall be used to hire Department Heads (MCWD grade level 6 or greater or as defined in the most current Salary Structure).

1. The Board of Managers Executive Committee shall be notified of Department Head vacancies.
2. The Executive Committee will advise the administrator on whether a position should be filled through promotion or transfer of current staff or posted. The administrator will consider and respond to the Executive Committee's comments prior to filling a position by promotion or transfer of current staff.
3. When a position is posted, the following procedure will be followed:
  - The position will be posted on web sites and/or in publications with wide distribution.
  - The District Administrator and/or personnel consultant shall review all applications and conduct preliminary interviews of qualified candidates.
  - The Executive Committee will interview the top three or four candidates recommended by the District Administrator and/or consultant and will make a recommendation to the Board of Managers on appropriate steps and the appropriate forum for further consideration of candidates.
  - The District Administrator will consider the recommendation of the Executive Committee and board interviews, application materials, etc. and forward an offer to the candidate that he or she determines best qualified and suited to the position.
  - The successful candidate will be introduced to the Board at the first possible Board meeting.

# Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

<b>POLICY</b>	<b>METHOD</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>WHO</b>
<b>All Governance Policies</b>	Manager(s) Inspection	Annually		Full board (led by President)
<b>Staff Treatment</b> ( <i>Executive Limitations Policy #2</i> )	Manager(s) Inspection	Annually		Executive Committee
<b>Compensation &amp; Benefits</b> ( <i>Executive Limitations Policy #3</i> )	External Audit/Report Manager(s) Inspection	Biannually Annually		Personnel Consultant Executive Committee
<b>Financial Planning – Budget</b> ( <i>Executive Limitations Policy #4</i> )	Manager(s) Inspection	Annually		Executive Committee
<b>Financial Condition</b> ( <i>Executive Limitations Policy #5</i> )	Manager(s) Inspection External Audit	Monthly Quarterly		Treasurer or Treasurer-designated Manager Executive Committee
<b>Asset Protection</b> ( <i>Executive Limitations Policy #6</i> )	External Audit Manager(s) Inspection	Annually Annually		Auditor, Counsel and Risk Manager  Executive Committee
<b>Communication &amp; Advice</b> ( <i>Executive Limitations Policy #7</i> )	Manager(s) Inspection	Quarterly		President
<b>Program Outcomes – Goals</b> <i>Strategic Plan</i> <i>Implementation Calendar</i>	Manager(s) Inspection Manager(s) Inspection	Biannually Quarterly		Vice President Vice President

Any other policy shall be monitored by internal report each calendar quarter.





**MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT  
BOARD OF MANAGERS**

**Liaison Policy and Procedures**

*Adopted November, 2009; amended November 20, 2014*

The Board of Managers establishes the following policy and procedures to establish relationships and provide Board representation as needed with outside entities to foster improved communications and relationships to help further the District's efforts to protect and improve the water resources under its jurisdiction. Examples of where liaisons might be appointed include liaisons to other governmental units or special groups, such as neighborhood associations, critical resource groups, elected officials or nonprofits in geographical areas where the MCWD has defined projects or programs as established by approved annual work plans or by direction of the Board of Managers.

**Goals:**

To improve communications with outside entities that have the potential to impact the mission and water resource goals of the MCWD.

To develop or improve relationships with elected officials and facilitate communication about District activities and programs and their implications, help ensure the success of specific projects and programs, and generally garner support for the District's efforts.

To monitor the progress of mutually beneficial programs and partnerships, and provide input and active support as needed.

To enable the early identification of problems or concerns raised by liaison entities and foster proactive and effective discussions and actions to resolve such issues and avoid more serious implications that might otherwise result.

To foster the early identification of developments or opportunities where timely action by the MCWD could benefit the goals of the MCWD.

To represent the District in other situations determined the Board of Managers to warrant dedication of a board liaison.

**Procedures and Restrictions:**

1. Requests to establish a liaison relationship with an outside entity must be submitted to the Board President and may originate as a request from an outside entity, a member of the Board of Managers, a standing Board committee or MCWD staff. Requests must demonstrate need and at minimum should include the following:

What/Who is the other entity, what does it do, and what is the nature of the relationship suggested?

What are the potential benefits of the proposed relationship to the MCWD and the accomplishment of its goals?

What MCWD activities might be affected by the relationship and to what end?

- Is there a risk of negative impacts to the MCWD and its programs?
- What are the expectations and timeframe of the liaison relationship?
- What costs and obligations would be incurred by the MCWD?

2. In general, liaison appointments will be made at the same time appointments are made by the Board President to committees, but may be made at other times of the year. Any Manager may propose a liaison assignment at any time by presenting to the entire Board the reasons for the liaison and the goals for the assignment. District staff should consider the need for a Board liaisons when developing work plans and make recommendations for programs and projects where Board representation may enhance the development and outcomes of a project relative to District's mission and goals.

- a. Ultimately, the Board of Managers will determine if a Manager, or more than one Manager, should be assigned, whether an alternate is desirable, and what the goals and restrictions of the assignment should be.
- b. On a decision to appoint by the Board of Managers, The President will appoint a liaison or liaisons.

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3. All liaisons will be responsible for reporting their activities and all pertinent information and outcomes to the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting following their participation in liaison activities.

4. Liaisons will not represent positions of the Board, unless they have been formally acted upon in the form of a resolution approved by a majority of the Board at a regularly scheduled meeting.

**MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT**

**INVESTMENT AND DEPOSITORY POLICY**

**Adopted by Resolution 09-108, October 22, 2009;  
adopted as amended December 29, 2011**

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's investment objectives, establish specific guidelines that the District will use in the investment of funds, and establish District depository policy. It will be the responsibility of the District administrator to invest District funds in order to attain a market rate of return while preserving and protecting the capital of the overall portfolio and to ensure compliance with District policy and with statutory requirements applicable to the District's designation a depository financial institution. Investments will be made in compliance with statutory constraints and in safe, low-risk instruments that are approved by the MCWD Board of Managers.

**2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all financial assets of the District, including but not limited to:

General Fund  
Management Planning Fund – Operating  
Management Planning Fund – Projects  
Capital Project Funds

**3. SPECIFIC REVENUE SOURCES AND POOLING OF FUNDS**

The District will report proceeds of specific revenue sources as restricted, committed or assigned for specific purposes, as applicable, and maintain its budget and accounts in a manner consistent with these designations. Except for cash in these certain restricted, committed and assigned funds, the District will consolidate cash and reserve balances from all funds to maximize investment earnings and increase efficiencies with regard to investment pricing, safekeeping and administration. Investment income will be allocated to the various funds based on their respective participation and in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

**4. DESIGNATION OF DEPOSITORY AND COLLATERALIZATION**

The District Board of Managers annually will designate a financial institution or institutions in the State of Minnesota as the depository of District funds. In the event the Board of Managers does not designate a depository in any particular year, the last-designated depository will continue in that capacity. Each depository will furnish

collateral, as necessary, in the manner and to the extent required by Minnesota Statutes Section 118A.03, as it may be amended, and other applicable law. Collateral will be held in safekeeping in compliance with Section 118A.03, as it may be amended.

## 5. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Minnesota Statutes Section 118A.02 provides that the governing body may authorize the treasurer or chief financial officer to make investments of funds under Sections 118A.01 to 118A.06 or other applicable law. Pursuant to Article VI of the District Bylaws and Governance Policies: Executive Limitations Policy 6, Asset Protection, the Board of Managers authorizes the District administrator to invest District funds pursuant to this policy and state law for the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

The District administrator shall assure compliance with this policy and further develop and maintain adequate controls, procedures, and methods assuring security and accurate accounting on a day-to-day basis.

## 6. OBJECTIVES

At all times investments of the District shall be made and maintained in accordance with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 118A as it may be amended. The primary objectives of the District investment activities shall be in the following order of priority:

### A. SECURITY

Security of principal is the foremost objective of the investment portfolio. Preserving capital and protecting investment principal shall be the primary objective of each investment transaction. Specific risks will be managed as follows:

*Credit Risk.* Credit risk is the risk of loss due to failure of the security issuer or backer. Designated depositories will have insurance through the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the Securities Investor Protection Corporation. To ensure security when considering an investment, the District will cross-check all depositories under consideration against existing investments to make certain that funds in excess of insurance limits are not deposited with the same institution unless collateralized as outlined herein. Furthermore, the Board of Managers will approve all financial institutions, brokers and advisers with which the District will do business.

*Concentration of Credit Risk.* The District will diversify its investments according to type and maturity. The District portfolio, to the greatest extent feasible, will contain a mixture of short-term (shorter than one year) and long-term (more than one year) investments. The District will attempt to match its investments with anticipated cash-flow requirements. Extended maturities may be utilized to take advantage of higher yields.

*Interest Rate Risk.* Interest rate risk is the risk that the market value of securities in the portfolio will fall due to changes in general interest rates. The District will minimize interest rate risk by structuring its investment portfolio to ensure that securities mature to meet cash requirements for ongoing operations, thereby avoiding the need to sell securities on the open market prior to maturity.

*Custodial Risk.* The District will minimize deposit custodial risk, which is the risk of loss due to failure of the depository bank (or credit union), by obtaining collateral for all uninsured amounts on deposit, and by obtaining necessary documentation to show compliance. (See section III.)

#### B. LIQUIDITY

The investment portfolio shall remain sufficiently liquid to meet projected disbursement requirements. This is accomplished by structuring the portfolio so that securities mature concurrent with cash needs to meet anticipated demands. Generally, investments will have short terms and/or “laddered” maturities so that funds become available on a regular schedule. Liquid funds will allow the District to meet possible cash emergencies without being significantly penalized on investments.

#### C. RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The investment portfolio shall be designed to manage the funds to maximize returns consistent with items A and B above and within the requirements set forth in this policy. Subject to the requirements of the investment objectives herein, it is the policy of the District to offer financial institutions and companies within the District the opportunity to bid on investments; the District will seek the best investment yields.

### 7. PRUDENCE

The “prudent person” standard shall be applied in managing District investments. All investment transactions shall be made in good faith with the degree of judgment and care, under the circumstances, that a person of prudence, discretion, and intelligence would exercise in the management of their own affairs, in accordance with this policy.

### 8. ELIGIBLE INVESTMENTS

All investments shall be in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 118A.04.

### 9. INVESTMENT RESTRICTIONS

In addition to statutory prohibitions, investments specifically prohibited are derivative products, structured notes, inverse index bonds, repurchase agreements not authorized by

statute, and other exotic products.

#### **10. SAFEKEEPING**

District investments, contracts and agreements will be held in safekeeping in compliance with Minnesota Statutes Section 118A.06. In addition, before accepting any investment of District funds and annually thereafter, the supervising officer of the financial institution serving as a broker for the District shall submit a certification stating that the officer has reviewed the District Investment and Depository Policy and incorporated statement of investment restrictions, as well as applicable state law, and agrees to act in a manner consistent with the policy and law. The District will annually will provide the policy, as it may be amended. The certification shall also require the supervising officer to disclose potential conflicts of interest or risk to public funds that might arise out of business transactions between the firm and the District. All financial institutions shall agree to undertake reasonable efforts to preclude imprudent transactions involving the District funds.

#### **11. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Any District manager or staff member involved in the investment process shall refrain from personal business activity that could conflict with proper execution of the investment program or which could impair his/her ability to make impartial investment decisions.

#### **12. INTERNAL CONTROLS AND REPORTING**

Internal controls are designed to prevent loss of public funds due to fraud, error, misrepresentation, unanticipated market changes, or imprudent actions. Before the District invests any surplus funds, competitive quotations shall be obtained. If a specific maturity date is required, either for cash flow purposes or for conformance to maturity guidelines, quotations will be requested for instruments which meet the maturity requirement. The District will accept the quotation which provides the highest rate of return within the maturity required and within the limits of this policy.

The District administrator shall be limited to investing funds for up to a maximum term of seven years. The District administrator shall request approval from the District Board to authorize investment of funds for terms exceeding seven years.

Monthly, the District administrator shall provide an investments report to the District Board. Investments shall be audited and reported with financial statement annually. It shall be the practice of the District Board to review and amend the investment policy from time to time as needed.

**MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT**  
**DEBT-MANAGEMENT POLICY**

*Adopted January 24, 2013*

*Introduction*

The policies that follow are designed to maintain standard and rational practices for the issuance and management of debt by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD). Their primary objective is to establish conditions for the use of debt and to create procedures that comply with state law, minimize MCWD's debt-issuance and -service costs, retain the highest possible credit rating, and facilitate full and complete financial disclosure and reporting. The policies apply to all debt incurred by MCWD, including financing, notes in anticipation of bond participation, direct placement bank loans, debt guaranteed by MCWD, and any other forms of obligation or indebtedness.

MCWD has entered into a Master Loan Agreement with Hennepin County (attached for reference). Consistent with the agreement, Hennepin County issues long-term debt bonds to facilitate purchases and refinancing of short-term paper for the MCWD's land conservation program. Hennepin County allocates a portion of its general obligation debt issues for MCWD upon request of MCWD. Hennepin County has agreed to issue up to \$20 million of total debt for MCWD as of December 31, 2012.

Clear, concise, and up-to-date debt policies are an important tool for ensuring that MCWD's resources are responsibly managed. These policies have been adopted by MCWD Board of Managers by resolution. Only the Board of Managers may authorize, by majority vote, deviation from a provision or provisions of the Debt-Management Policy. The policy will be reviewed every two years and updated as needed.

**Creditworthiness Objectives**

**Policy 1. Credit Ratings:** MCWD does not have a credit rating from a nationally recognized credit rating agency. If MCWD seeks and obtains a credit rating, its objective will be to obtain the highest possible credit ratings for all categories of short- and long-term debt. MCWD would only secure a credit rating without compromising delivery of basic MCWD services or the achievement of its statutorily stated objectives.

MCWD recognizes that external economic, natural, or other events may from time to time affect its creditworthiness. MCWD is committed to ensuring that actions within its control are prudent and consistent with the highest standards of public financial management, and supportive of the creditworthiness objectives stated herein.

**Policy 2. Financial Disclosure:** As of December 2012, MCWD is under no obligation to comply with any continuing debt disclosure obligations. Should MCWD incur an obligation to comply with financial disclosure, MCWD is committed to full and complete financial disclosure, and to cooperating fully with rating agencies, institutional and individual investors, other levels of

government, their departments and agencies, and the general public to share clear, comprehensible, and accurate financial information. MCWD is committed to meeting disclosure requirements on a timely and comprehensive basis.

Official statements accompanying debt issues, Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports, and continuing disclosure statements will meet (at a minimum) the standards articulated by the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board, the Government Accounting Standards Board, the National Federation of Municipal Analysts, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. MCWD shall be responsible for ongoing disclosure as required to the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board's Electronic Municipal Market Access platform and for maintaining compliance with disclosure standards promulgated by state and national regulatory bodies. MCWD may engage outside qualified parties to perform or assist MCWD with its continuing disclosure obligations.

**Policy 3. Capital Planning:** To enhance creditworthiness and prudent financial management, MCWD is committed to systematic capital planning as driven by the Comprehensive Plan, intergovernmental cooperation and coordination, and long-term financial planning.

**Policy 4. Debt Capacity and Reserve:** MCWD will keep outstanding debt within the limits and levels consistent with its creditworthiness objectives.

**Policy 5. Net Debt Service:** MCWD will monitor and limit the net debt service. "Net debt service" is defined as the total annual debt service minus any revenues generated by the debt-financed projects to pay this debt service.

**Land Conservation Net Debt Service:** Will not exceed \$2.5 million dollars per annum which may be adjusted from time to time. Except for interim notes to Hennepin County under the Master Loan Agreement and other balloon indebtedness expected to be paid from land sale proceeds or other revenues.

**MCWD Building Net Debt Service:** Structured as an ongoing occupancy debt until the financing for the building is fully repaid, refunded or otherwise restructured. MCWD will seek to keep net debt service at an overall level that results in a debt service coverage ratio of not less than **1.50:1**. Debt service coverage is calculated as follows: Net revenues plus interest expense plus depreciation less realized and unrealized gains and losses divided by maximum annual debt service.

**Policy 6. Annual Debt Report:** The MCWD District Manager shall prepare an annual report on MCWD debt and present it to the Board of Managers not less than annually. This report will describe any debt issues planned for the coming year and will describe debt incurred during the current year. The report shall also provide historical and projected information on debt, including debt capacity and debt service analyses. The report will cover all forms of MCWD debt.



## **Purposes and Uses of Debt**

Policy 7. **Capital Financing:** MCWD will normally rely on existing funds, levy revenues, project revenues, and grants from other governmental bodies to finance capital projects and major maintenance, equipment acquisition, and small development projects. Debt may not be used for non-capital purposes.

Policy 8. **Asset Life:** MCWD will consider the use of debt for the acquisition, development, replacement, maintenance, or expansion of an asset only if the asset has a useful life of at least five years. Debt will not be issued for periods exceeding the useful life or average useful lives of the project or projects to be financed.

Policy 9. **Use of Debt:** Before issuing general obligation debt, MCWD will consider all other financing alternatives or funding sources, including non-debt financing.

## **Debt Standards and Structure**

Policy 10. **Length of Debt:** Debt will be structured for the shortest period consistent with a fair allocation of costs to current and future beneficiaries or users.

Policy 11. **Debt Structure:** Debt will be structured to achieve the lowest possible net cost to MCWD given market conditions, the urgency of the capital project to be financed, net revenues expected from the project (if any), and the nature and type of security provided. Moreover, to the extent possible, MCWD will design the repayment of its debt so as to recapture rapidly its credit capacity for future use.

Policy 12. **Backloading:** MCWD will seek to structure debt with level principal and interest costs over the life of the debt. "Backloading" of costs will be considered only when the benefits derived from the debt issuance can clearly be demonstrated to be greater in the future than in the present, when such structuring is beneficial to MCWD's overall amortization schedule, or when such structuring will allow debt service to more closely match project revenues during the early years of the project's operation.

Policy 13. **Variable Rate Debt:** MCWD may choose to issue securities that pay a rate of interest that varies according to pre-determined formula or results from a periodic remarketing of the securities, consistent with state law and covenants of pre-existing bonds, and depending on market conditions. MCWD will have no more than 15% of its outstanding debt in variable rate form. Excepted from the amount of variable debt MCWD may issue are promissory notes issued in favor of Hennepin County in anticipation of permanent Hennepin County bond financing, which notes bear interest at the federal funds target rate as it changes from time to time.

Policy 14. **Refundings:** Periodic reviews of all outstanding debt will be undertaken to determine refunding opportunities. Refunding will be considered (within federal tax law constraints) if and when there is a net economic benefit of the refunding or the refunding is essential in order to modernize covenants to thereby improve operations and management. In general, advance refundings for economic savings may be undertaken when a net present value savings of at least

five percent (5%) of the refunded debt can be achieved. Current refundings which produce a net present value savings of less than 5 percent of the refunded debt will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Refundings with negative savings may be considered if there is a compelling public policy objective. When refunding an entire bond series or a large portion of a bond series, relatively small negative savings for individual maturities may be acceptable if these individual maturities are refunded together with the larger bond series or portion of a bond series, for the purpose of administrative convenience, as long as the overall refunding of the bond series or large share of the bond series meets the refunding targets. Any refunding is subject to the willingness of Hennepin County to participate in refunding outstanding Hennepin County Bonds for which MCWD has payment responsibility.

**Policy 15. Bond Anticipation Notes:** Use of short-term borrowing, such as bond anticipation notes and tax-exempt commercial paper, will be undertaken only if the transaction costs plus interest of the debt are less than the cost of internal financing, or available cash is insufficient to meet working capital requirements. MCWD's preferred method of anticipatory financing is to issue promissory notes in favor of Hennepin County with rates set at the federal funds target rate.

**Policy 16. Credit Enhancements:** Credit enhancement (letters of credit, bond insurance, etc.) may be used, but only when net debt service on the bonds is reduced by more than the costs of the enhancement.

### **Debt Administration and Process**

**Policy 17. Bond Counsel:** MCWD will retain external counsel for all debt issues. No debt will be issued by MCWD without a written opinion by bond counsel affirming that MCWD is authorized to issue the debt, stating that MCWD has met all state constitutional and statutory requirements necessary for issuance, and determining the debt's federal income tax status.

**Policy 18. Financial Advisor:** MCWD will retain an external independent financial advisor. For each MCWD debt issuance the financial advisor will provide MCWD, as appropriate, with information on pricing and underwriting fees for comparable sales by other issuers.

**Policy 19. Other Service Providers:** The MCWD administrator shall have the authority to periodically select other service providers (e.g., escrow agents, verification agents, trustees, arbitrage consultants, etc.) as necessary to meet legal requirements and minimize net MCWD debt costs. These services can include debt restructuring services and security or escrow purchases. The MCWD administrator will select firm(s) to provide such financial services related to debt, consistent with legal requirements and established MCWD policy.

**Policy 20. Tax Compliance:** The MCWD shall maintain a system of recordkeeping and reporting. The MCWD shall employ a specialist person or firm for the purpose of performing arbitrage rebate calculations or otherwise ensuring compliance with arbitrage regulations, and complying with the attached procedures for maintaining tax exemption.

MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT  
PROCEDURES FOR MAINTAINING TAX EXEMPTION OF DEBT OBLIGATIONS

The following policies and procedures apply to ensure that MCWD is able to maintain the tax-exempt status of its outstanding bonds and notes and to fulfill its obligations to Hennepin County in connection with obligations issued by the County on its behalf (the “bonds”) and demonstrate compliance with applicable rules.

1. Responsibility. The Administrator, with assistance as needed from the Chief Financial Officer, is responsible for carrying out these procedures.
2. At or Before Closing. Review and understand (and discuss with bond counsel as necessary) the tax related representations and undertakings in the bond documents and tax certificates.
3. After Closing. After issuing the bonds the Administrator shall do the following:
  - Transcript. Obtain a transcript of relevant documents from bond counsel or financial advisor and maintain the transcript at an accessible location.
  - Accounting. Establish accounting mechanisms that allow MCWD to separately identify the funds which are bond proceeds and track the investment of bond proceeds, the expenditure of bond proceeds on the project to be financed and the collection of taxes or other revenues expected to pay debt service.
  - Investments. Determine whether and when any bond proceeds or funds to be used to pay bonds may be subject to yield restriction and monitor compliance.
  - At Project Completion. When the project is completed and costs are paid, review records to determine that (a) bond proceeds were spent only on the authorized project and (b) all of the bond proceeds have been spent. If either cannot be documented, consult with bond counsel to determine whether it is appropriate to make a special allocation of proceeds and other funds devoted to the project or for advice on what must be done with excess proceeds (and earnings on the proceeds).
  - Rebate. No later than five years after the bonds were issued (and each five-year period thereafter) and at final maturity, determine in consultation with bond counsel or financial advisor whether a calculation of “arbitrage rebate” must be performed or whether an exemption applies. Then arrange for the timely payment of any rebate due.
  - Monitor Use. Except for arrangements specifically allowed by the bond documents, consult with bond counsel before the completion of any sale, lease, management agreement or similar arrangement which results in use by a private party of any portion of the financed project.
  - Record Retention. Retain all records relating to the investment of bond proceeds and funds pledged or expected to be used for the payment of the bonds, expenditures of bond proceeds and the uses of the financed property for the life of the bonds and three years thereafter.

- Other. Follow any other procedures for post-issuance compliance that are contained in the bond documents or tax certificates.

## MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT

### Public Purposes Expenditures Policy

Adopted December 29, 2011

Minnesota law mandates that governmental entities make expenditures only for public purposes and only as authorized to accomplish the purposes for which the entity was created. The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (District) establishes the following policy and protocols to ensure that District expenditures serve clear, documented watershed district purposes. The District administrator will be responsible for the implementation of this policy and associated protocols.

1. **Travel.** The District may pay reasonable and necessary expenses for travel, lodging, meals and appropriate incidental expenses related to the performance of official District functions. Expenditures must be approved in advance by the administrator or his designee (for employees) or by the Board of Managers (for managers and the administrator), and must be directly related to the performance of District functions.
  - a. An employee or manager will be reimbursed for mileage expenses incurred when using the employee's or manager's personal vehicle to conduct District business. Mileage will be reimbursed at the tax-deductible mileage rate set by the federal Internal Revenue Service. Mileage expenses need not be approved in advance, but mileage expenses will be reimbursed only for travel for District purposes when accompanied by documentation of the date, statement of the purpose of the travel, number of miles traveled, purpose and destination(s).
  - b. Mileage for employee commuting to and from the District offices will not be reimbursed.
2. **Employee and manager training.** The District may pay reasonable registration, tuition, travel and incidental expenses (including lodging and meals) for education, development and training when expenditures are directly related to the performance of duties. Expenditures must be approved by the administrator (for employees) or Board (for managers and the administrator).
3. **Safety and health programs.** The District may pay for safety and health programs that promote healthier and more productive employees and reduce costs to watershed taxpayers, including costs associated with workers' compensation and disability benefits claims, insurance premiums and lost time resulting from employee absences.
4. **Manager and employee recognition and appreciation.** The District may pay for programs that recognize managers and employees for significant contributions to the District's performance and demonstrated commitment to the District's effective and efficient fulfillment of its purposes in accordance with an annual plan and budget for such events, approved by the Board. The District may pay for occasional manager and employee appreciation events or activities conducted in accordance with an annual plan and budget for such events, approved by the Board. No expenditures for manager or employee recognition will be made except as in accordance with District policy.

- a. The District will not pay employees direct non-salary payments (i.e., bonuses) except as conditioned on achievement of performance goals specified in a written employment agreement.
5. **Food and beverages.** District meetings, workshops and training sessions will be scheduled to avoid the need to provide food whenever possible. But the District may pay for food and beverages when necessary to ensure meaningful, efficient and effective participation of employees, managers and/or the public in activities, events and functions directly related to District purposes.
- a. Circumstances under which District expenditures for food and beverages will be allowed include:
    - i. A conference, workshop, work session, outreach meeting or seminar with a structure agenda, when the topic or subject relates to the official business of the District and the majority of the participants are not District employees or managers;
    - ii. A workshop or formal meeting primarily for District employees or managers where food and/or beverages are necessary to facilitate the conduct of the meeting, to ensure continuity and support the participation of employees, managers and other participants. Examples of potential qualifying events include:
      - 1. An extended planning or operational analysis meeting;
      - 2. An extended meeting to develop long-term strategic plans;
      - 3. A structured training session for employees generally; or
      - 4. Official meetings of the District Board or a committee, task force or advisory group.
    - iii. Occasional employee and manager recognition and appreciation events and activities, when approved by the Board in accordance with a District recognition and appreciation plan and budget;
    - iv. a meeting or event attended by employees and/or managers, the primary purpose of which is to discuss, negotiate or evaluate a plan, program, project or other endeavor directly related to District purposes.
  - b. The District will not pay for alcoholic beverages under any circumstances.
6. **Outreach and stakeholder involvement.** The District may pay for community and stakeholder outreach and involvement programs to ensure that efficient and effective District programs, projects and meetings are conducted to gather public and intergovernmental input and participation in District planning, research, rulemaking and program or project design.
7. **Membership, donations.** The District may pay for membership in the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts in accordance with Minnesota Statutes section 103D.335, subdivision 20. District funds may be expended for membership in other professional organizations if the organization is an association of a civic, educational or governmental nature and its activities are directly related to District purposes or the improvement of District operations. District funds may not be donated to any

professional, technical or charitable organization, person or private institution. The District may contract for services rendered by such organizations.

8. **Use of District property**

- a. District property, including but not limited to computers, phones, fax machines and other office equipment, will be used exclusively for District business, except for incidental personal use by District staff that does not interfere with or impede the conduct of District business to any substantial degree.
- b. District property must be used for only its intended purposes.
- c. The administrator may not dispose of any District property with a value of more than \$1,000 without prior authorization of the Board of Managers.

9. **Miscellaneous.**

- a. The District administrator will secure an approval described above for expenses he or she will incur from the president of the Board of Managers, except that the administrator may approve or pay expenses for District-conducted programs, events and activities.

10. **Protocols.** The District administrator's approval of expenditures will be consistent with this policy and the limitations and guidelines of Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Governance Policy #6: Executive Limitations – Asset Protection. The following protocols are established to ensure compliance with the policies above:

- a. For employees other than the administrator, the written approval of the administrator or his designee must be secured prior to an event or activity to qualify as a District expenditure.
- b. All reimbursement and payment requests must be approved by the administrator and must include itemized original receipts or invoices or other appropriate documentation of expenses incurred. Documentation also must include the date the expense(s) were incurred, location, purpose, participating or attending individuals, and any other relevant information.
- c. Copies of all documentation specified herein will be recorded and maintained in accordance with the District records retention policy.
- d. Documentation must be submitted and the expenditures approved at a regular meeting of the board of managers within 60 days of the date the expense was invoiced.

**Minnehaha Creek Watershed District  
Manager Per Diem and Expense Policy**

*Adopted July 17, 2008; amended November 20, 2014*

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 103D.315, subdivision 8, managers are eligible to receive compensation of up to \$75 per day. The District encourages managers to be actively involved in District committees, projects, public education efforts and communication events to the fullest extent possible in order to enhance and facilitate the mission of the District. However, such involvement shall not duplicate the efforts of the staff and/or consultants hired by the District. Managers should follow the current Assignment Grid to determine the pertinent and germane meetings they should attend.

Authorized meetings are defined as those which include official District business and last longer than one hour in length and meet one of the following criteria:

- a. Publicly noticed District meetings.
- b. Official committee or project meetings which include more than one manager.
- c. Other meetings which are included on the official District calendar.
- d. Other meetings, to which a manager is invited by District staff.

Conference calls, video conferences, and similar “electronic meetings” that meet the above criteria will be eligible for per diem.

**Documentation Procedures:**

The following guidelines apply for receiving the allowed reimbursement:

1. Individual managers will be responsible for maintaining their own records and documenting meeting dates, locations, purpose and proper coding for the fund designated to be charged to.
2. Individual managers will be responsible for submitting the Per Diem and Expense Sheets to the District Administrator in a timely manner for review by the District Treasurer and approval by the MCWD Board of Managers. Timely manner is defined as no later than the first Friday of each month and no longer than four months after the dates requested for reimbursement.
3. Managers will be reimbursed for documented meals, travel, parking, lodging and telephone expenses incurred while conducting District business.



**Minnehaha Creek Watershed District  
Policies and Procedures for Public Access to Documents**

Adopted April 14, 2010; effective as amended November 20, 2014

Access to the data of public bodies is governed by the Data Practices Act (DPA), Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13. The DPA states that data of public bodies are to be available to the public unless specifically protected by law where individual privacy would be violated or where other valid concerns outweigh the interest in public availability. The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (District) recognizes the public interest in open access to its data at the same time that it recognizes that the public interest requires certain types of data not to be publicly available. It is the intent of the District to comply fully with the DPA and, where the DPA allows for the exercise of judgment, to exercise that judgment consistent with the public interests underlying the law.

This policy is adopted pursuant to sections 13.025, subdivision 2, and 13.03, subdivision 2, of the DPA, which state that every public body shall establish procedures to implement the DPA. In addition, the District has adopted and maintains a Records Retention Schedule, which is an index of the records and data maintained by the District and includes private or confidential data on individuals in compliance with section 13.025, subdivision 1. This policy is accompanied by a set of procedures to ensure that data on individuals are accurate and complete and to safeguard the data's security under section 13.05, subdivision 5 and an Inventory of Not-Public Data on Individuals to ensure that access to private and confidential data on individuals is limited to District personnel whose work or management assignments require access. The District also maintains a document setting forth the rights of data subjects under the DPA and procedures to guarantee the rights of data subjects in compliance with section 13.025, subdivision 3, and a document setting forth the rights of data subjects under the DPA.

**Procedure for Review of District Documents**

All requests to inspect or receive copies of District data, and all other inquiries regarding the DPA, must be in writing and delivered to the Data Practices Compliance Official, at the following address:

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District  
15320 Minnetonka Blvd  
Deephaven, MN 55345

The District administrator is designated as the Data Practices Responsible Authority. The District operations manager is designated as the Data Practices Compliance Official.

Requests to inspect or obtain copies of District data must be in writing to ensure that the District's response is timely and complete. The District will be able to most efficiently and completely respond to requests that are specific and detailed. The Data Practices Compliance Official will help to ensure that documents of interest have been gathered, that documents not subject to inspection have been segregated, and assistance is available to the requesting individual. The District will provide requested data for inspection at the District office, or other location to be specified by the Data Practices Compliance Official. District files may not be

removed from the District office.

The DPA requires that individuals be permitted to inspect or copy data within a reasonable time after a request. The District will attempt to respond to requests as quickly as possible. The response time will vary depending on the breadth of the request, the completeness and accuracy of the request and the need to separate public data from protected data, if any.

If the District determines that certain data cannot be made available for inspection or copying, it will inform the individual of the classification of the data in question under the DPA and of the legal basis for denial of access. On the request of the individual, the District will certify in writing that the request has been denied and state the specific legal basis for denial.

The District may provide requested copies of data immediately or may advise that the copies will be provided as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. The ability to provide copies immediately depends on the number of copies requested, staff workload and the need to deliver the data elsewhere for copies to be made (e.g., oversize documents, tapes, electronic data).

### **Costs**

There is no cost to inspect documents. If document copies are requested, the requesting individual will be charged 25 cents per page for up to 100 letter- or legal-sized black-and-white printed copies, except that there is no charge for delivery by email of less than 100 pages or the equivalent (as determined by the District) of data. Standard charges will apply for re-delivery of data in the event of failure of email delivery resulting from incapacity of the recipient's email system. Copies of District documents will not be certified as true and correct copies unless that is specifically requested. The fee for certification is \$1 per document or part thereof.

With respect to oversize copies, tapes, electronic data, photographs, slides and other formats, the requesting individual will be responsible for the actual cost incurred by the District to make copies, except that there is no charge for electronic delivery of less than 100 pages of data or the equivalent (as determined by the District).

An individual requesting copies or the electronic transmittal of more than 100 pages of data is responsible to pay the District the actual cost, including the cost of staff time to search for and retrieve data and to make, certify, compile and transmit copies. Staff-time cost will be assessed based on established hourly rates. The District will not charge for staff time needed to separate public from protected data.

If an individual so asks, before copies are made the District will advise of the approximate number of pages of documents responsive to a request or the likely cost of responding to the request. Payment may not be made in cash (checks are accepted). The District may, at its discretion, require payment in advance.

When an individual asks for a copy of data that have commercial value and were developed with a significant expenditure of public funds by the District, the District may charge a reasonable fee that relates to the actual cost of developing the data. As a condition of making certain commercially valuable data available, the District may require execution of a license agreement defining allowable use or further distribution.

**Minnehaha Creek Watershed District**  
Security and Protection of Not-Public Data

Pursuant to and in satisfaction of the requirement in Minnesota Statutes section 13.05, subdivision 5, that the District establish procedures ensuring appropriate access to not-public data. By incorporating employee access to not-public data in the District's Inventory of Data or Individuals, in the individual employee's position description, or both, this policy limits access to not-public data to employees whose work assignment reasonably requires access.

**Implementing Procedures**

*Data inventory*

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 13.025, subdivision 1, the District has prepared a data inventory that identifies and describes all not-public data on individuals it maintains. To comply with the requirement in section 13.05, subdivision 5, the District has includes indication of the managers and employees who have access to not-public data. (*See Appendix A: Inventory of Not-Public Data on Individuals.*)

In the event of a temporary duty as assigned by the administrator or a department director, an employee may access certain not-public data for as long as the work is assigned to the employee.

In addition to the employees listed in the data inventory, managers, the Responsible Authority, the Data Practices Compliance Official and counsel may have access to *all* not-public data maintained by the District if necessary for specified duties. Any access to not-public data will be strictly limited to the data necessary to complete the work assignment.

*Employee position descriptions*

Position descriptions may contain provisions identifying any not-public data accessible to the employee when a work assignment reasonably requires access.

*Data sharing with authorized entities or individuals*

State or federal law may authorize the sharing of not-public data in specific circumstances. Not-public data may be shared with another entity if a federal or state law allows or mandates it. Individuals will have notice of any sharing in an applicable Tennessee warnings or the District will obtain the individual's informed consent. Any sharing of not-public data will be strictly limited to the data necessary or required to comply with the applicable law.

To ensure appropriate access, the District will:

- Assign appropriate security roles, limit access to appropriate shared network drives and implement password protections for not-public electronic data;
- Password protect employee computers and lock computers before leaving workstations;
- Secure not-public data within locked work spaces and in locked file cabinets

- Shred not-public documents before disposing of them

#### *Penalties for unlawfully accessing not-public data*

The District may utilize the penalties for unlawful access to not-public data as provided for in Minnesota Statutes, section 13.09. Possible penalties include suspension, dismissal or referring the matter to the appropriate prosecutorial authority who may pursue a criminal misdemeanor charge.

### **Protection of Private and Confidential Data on Individuals**

#### *Accuracy and Currency of Data*

Employees of the District are requested, and given appropriate forms, to annually provide updated personal information for the District as necessary for District recordkeeping, tax, insurance, emergency notification and other personnel purposes. Other individuals who provide private or confidential information (e.g., members of the Board of Managers) are also encouraged to provide updated information when appropriate.

#### *Data Safeguards*

Private and confidential information is stored in secure files and databases that are not accessible to individuals who do not have authorized access. Private and confidential data on individuals is accessed only by individuals who are both authorized and have a need to access such information for District purposes. (An individual who is the subject of data classified as private may access such data for any reason.)

The District administrator, as Responsible Authority, reviews forms used by the District to collect data on individuals and ensures that the District collects private or confidential data only as necessary for authorized District purposes.

Only members of the Board of Managers and employees of the District whose work for the District requires that they have access to private or confidential data may access files and records containing such information. Employees' and board members' access is further governed by the following requirements:

- Private or confidential data may be released only to persons authorized by law to access such data;
- Private or confidential data must be secured at all times and not left in a location where they may be accessed by unauthorized persons;
- Private or confidential data must be shredded before it is disposed of.

When a contract with an outside entity requires access to private or confidential information retained by the District, the contracting entity is required by the terms of its agreement with the District to use and disseminate such information in a manner consistent with the DPA and the District's Policies and Procedures for Public Access to Documents.

**Minnehaha Creek Watershed District**  
Private and Confidential Data – Rights of Data Subjects

In accordance with the Minnesota Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes chapter 13 (DPA), the following protocols and information are established by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD). This information is provided to you, as the subject of private or confidential data collected by the MCWD to explain how (1) the MCWD assures that all data on individuals collected by the MCWD are accurate, complete and current for the purposes for which they were collected, and (2) to explain the security safeguards in place for MCWD records containing data on individuals.

**Rights to Access Government Data**

Minnesota law gives you, as the subject of private or confidential data collected by the MCWD, and all members of the public the right to see data collected and maintained by the MCWD, unless state or federal law classifies the data as not public. In addition, the DPA gives you and all members of the public the right to have access to or, if you wish, to copy any public data for any reason, as long as the data are not classified as not-public or copyrighted.

You have the right to:

- be informed, upon request, as to whether you are a subject of MCWD data and how that data is classified;
- know what the MCWD's procedures are for requesting government data;
- inspect any public data that the MCWD collects and maintains at no charge;
- see public data that the MCWD collects and maintains without telling the MCWD who you are or why you want the data;
- have public data that the MCWD collects and maintains explained to you;
- obtain copies of any public MCWD data at a reasonable cost to you;
- be informed by the MCWD in writing as to why you cannot see or have copies of not-public MCWD data, including reference to the specific law that makes the data not-public;
- receive a response from the MCWD to a data request in a reasonable time.
- contest the accuracy and completeness of public or private data the MCWD has on you and appeal a determination by the MCWD as to whether the data are accurate and complete;
- to ask the MCWD, if you are under 18 years old, to withhold information about you from your parents or guardian;
- consent or revoke consent to the release of information the MCWD has on you;
- release all, part or none of the private data the MCWD has on you.

## Security of Private and Confidential Data

State law protects your privacy rights with regard to the information the MCWD collects, uses and disseminates about you. The data the MCWD collects about you may be classified as:

- Public – anyone can see the information;
- Private – only you and authorized MCWD staff can see the information;
- Confidential – only authorized MCWD staff can see the information.

When the MCWD asks to you provide data about yourself that are private, the MCWD will give you a notice called a Tennessen warning notice. This notice determines what the MCWD can do with the data collected from you and the circumstances under which the MCWD can release the data. The MCWD will ask for your written permission before using private data about you in a way that is different from what is stated in the Tennessen notice you receive. The MCWD also will ask for your written permission before releasing private data about you to someone other than those identified in the notice.

State law requires that the MCWD protect private and confidential data about you. The MCWD has established appropriate safeguards to ensure that your data are not inadvertently released or wrongfully accessed. *The MCWD disposes of private, confidential and other not-public data in accordance with its Records Retention Schedule, adopted October 27, 2011.* Printed data are disposed of by shredding or other method sufficient to prevent the data from being ascertainable.

Electronic data are destroyed or erased from media in a manner that prevents the data from accessed or read. Data-storage systems in MCWD computers are erased in the process of recycling.

**Minnehaha Creek Watershed District**  
Data Practices Advisory / Tennesen Warning

Some or all of the information you are being asked to provide on the attached form is classified by state law as either private or confidential data. Private data is information that generally cannot be given to the public, but can be given to the subject of the data. Confidential data is information that generally cannot be given to either the public or the subject of the data.

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's purpose and intended use of the information is:

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You  are /  are not legally required to provide the information.

Your failure or refusal to supply the information will have the following consequences:

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Other persons or entities who are authorized to receive the information include:

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**Minnehaha Creek Watershed District**  
Consent to Release – Request from an Individual

**Explanation of Your Rights**

If you have a question about anything on this form, or would like more explanation, please talk to the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District administrator before you sign it.

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I, [*name of individual data subject*], give my permission for the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to release data about me to [*name of other entity or person*] as described on this form.

1. The specific data I want the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to release are [*explanation of data*].

2. I have asked Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to release the data.

3. I understand that although the data are classified as private while in the possession of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, the classification/treatment of the data at [*name of other entity or person*] depends on laws or policies that apply to [*name of other entity or person*].

This authorization to release expires [*date/time of expiration*].

Individual data subject's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian's signature [*if needed*] \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



**Minnehaha Creek Watershed District**  
Consent to Release – Request from a Government Entity

**Explanation of Your Rights**

You have the right to choose what data we release. This means you can let us release all of the data, some of the data, or none of the data listed on this form. Before you give us permission to release the data, we encourage you to review the data listed and described here.

You have the right to let us release the data to all, some, or none of the persons or entities listed on this form. This means you can choose which entities or persons may receive the data and what data they may receive.

You have the right to ask us to explain the consequences for giving your permission to release the data.

You may withdraw your permission at any time. Withdrawing your permission will not affect the data that we have already released because we had your permission to release the data.

If you have a question about anything on this form, or would like more explanation, please talk to the District administrator before you sign it.

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I, *[name of individual data subject]*; give my permission for the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District to release data about me to *[name of other entity or person]* as described on this form. I understand that my decision to allow release of the data to *[name of other entity or person]* is voluntary.

1. The specific data that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District may release to *[name of other entity or person]* are: *[description, explanation of data]*.
2. I understand the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District would release the data *[explanation of reason for the release]*.
3. I understand that although the data are classified as private at the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, the classification/treatment of the data at *[name of other entity or person]* depends on laws or policies that apply to *[name of other entity or person]*. *[Include other known consequences.]*

This authorization to release the data expires *[date/time of expiration]*.

Individual data subject's signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian's signature *(if data subject is a minor)* \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A

**Minnehaha Creek Watershed District**  
**Inventory of Not-Public Data on Individuals**  
November 2014

This document describes private or confidential data on individuals maintained by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District  
(see Minn. Stat. 13.05 and Minn. Rules 1205.1200).

This document is also part of the District's procedures for ensuring that not-public data are only accessible to individuals whose work assignment reasonably requires access (see Minn. Stat. 13.05, subd. 5). In addition to the employees listed, the District managers, Responsible Authority, Data Practices Compliance Official and counsel also will have access to all not-public data as needed as part of specific work assignments or under certain circumstances.

Please direct all questions about this inventory to the District Data Practices Compliance Official:

**David Mandt**  
[DMandt@minnehahacreek.org](mailto:DMandt@minnehahacreek.org)  
952-641-4503

Name of Record, File, Process, Form or Data Type	Description	Data Classification	Citation for Classification	Employee Work Access
Appeal data	Data maintained as a result of processing appeals of determinations about the accuracy and/or completeness of public and private data on individuals	Public Private	MS 13.03, subd. 4	Department heads, staff as needed.
Applicant records	Completed assessments and results, related documentation, and application forms.	Public Private	MS 13.43	Administrative department staff and department heads as needed.
Attorney Data	Data related to attorney work product or data protected attorney-client privilege	Private	MS 13.393	Staff on as needed basis as part of specific work assignments.
Citizen Advisory Council member data	Data pertaining to advisory council applicants and appointees.	Public Private Confidential	MS 13.601	Administrative department staff; other staff as needed.
Civil investigative data	Data that are collected in order to start or defend a pending civil legal action, or because a civil legal action is expected	Confidential Public	MS 13.39	Regulatory department director, manager.

Continuity of Operations	Personal home contact information used to ensure that an employee can be reached in the event of an emergency or other disruption affecting continuity of operation of a government entity.	Private	MS 13.43, subd. 17	Administrative staff, department heads as needed to fill department positions.
Employee expense reports	Expense reimbursement requests	Public Private	MS 13.43	Administrative department staff and department heads.
Employee personnel records	Record of prior and current employment history. Data relating to hiring, assessments, payroll, pension and retirement, promotion, medical, family leave, grievances and discipline and related administrative personnel actions; drug-and-alcohol-testing and background-check results.	Public Private	MS 13.43	Administrative department staff and department heads.
Motor vehicle data	Information on license plate numbers, owners, and registration status of vehicles.	Private	MS 168.346	Administrative department staff.
Personal contact and online account information	Telephone number, email address and usernames and passwords collected, maintained, or received by the District for notification purposes or as part of a subscription list for an entity's electronic periodic publications as requested by the individual.	Private	MS 13.356	Education, outreach and communications staff, certain other departments staff as needed as part of specific work assignments

Personnel data	Data about employees, applicants, volunteers and independent contractors; data disclosed for the purpose of administration of the workers' compensation program as provided in chapter labor relations information	Public/Private/ Confidential	MS 13.43 179A.03, subd. 4	Administrative department staff, department heads.
Response to data requests	Data collected by the District Data Practices Compliance Official in responding to requests for data maintained by the District.	Public Private	Various	Responsible Authority; Data Practices Compliance Official; staff as necessary.
Security information	Data that would substantially jeopardize the security of information, possessions, individuals or property against theft, tampering, improper use, attempted escape, illegal disclosure, trespass, or physical injury, if the data were released to the public	Private	MS 13.37	Administrative department staff.
Social Security numbers	Social Security numbers assigned to individuals	Private	MS 13.355	Administrative department staff, department heads.
Unemployment compensation billings	Records of billings for employee unemployment compensation	Private	MS 13.43	Administrative department staff, department heads.

Workers compensation billings	Records of billings for employees who receive workers compensation benefits	Private	MS 13.43	Administrative department staff, department heads.
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**MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT  
RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE**

Amendments adopted October 27, 2011

All District records are created and retained in electronic forms, except that record series shaded below may be created and/or retained in hard copy form.

**Administration**

Records series description

1. Advisory and technical committees agenda, minutes, reports, related documents (retain at least 10 yrs. And then transfer to state archives; public)
2. Agenda, board meetings and workshops (retain at least 10 yrs. And then transfer to state archives; public)
3. Manuals (retain until removed or superseded; public)
4. Minutes, Board meetings and workshops
  - Written (permanent; public) (ADM 04300)
  - Audio – open meetings (tapes and other recordings may be reused or discarded 1 yr. after formal approval of written minutes by board. Tapes or electronic recordings cannot be the permanent record).
  - Audio – closed meetings (3 yrs for labor negotiations, 4 yrs for security information; 8 yrs for purchase or sale of real property; non-public/public; MS 13D.05, 13.37) (ADM 05960)
5. Annual reports (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)
6. Attorneys' opinions –
  - Opinions of District attorney and correspondence relating thereto (retain permanently or transfer to state archives when no longer needed; public). (ADM 01300) Official interpretation regarding questions of legal rights or liabilities affecting District (retain at least 10 yrs., then transfer to state archives; public/private/non-public; MS 13.393, MS 13.39 (ATT 00200)
7. Authority to dispose of records (permanent; public)
8. Budget, record copy (retain permanently or transfer to state archives; public) (ADM 01800)
9. Correspondence
  - Constituents (retain at least 6 yrs and archived if the documents are historical; public/private; MS 13.37. 13.44)
  - Municipalities/agencies (retain 6 yrs and archived if historical; public)
  - Engineer (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; Public)
  - Financial (retain at least 5 yrs. and transfer to state archives; Public)
  - Transitory, such as electronic mail that does not fit into one of the above categories (retained until read; not archived; public)
10. Historical data and photographs (retain permanently or transfer to state archives; public)



11. Inventories (retain at least 10 yrs.; public) equipment supplies, etc.
12. Lawsuits (retain at least 10 yrs. After settlement or resolution by court, administrative order and then transfer to state archives; public/private; MS 13.30, 13.39)
  - Civil lawsuits (retained at least 20 years after last activity)
  - Criminal lawsuits (retained at least two years after last activity)
  - Attorneys' opinions, attorneys' briefs, testimony, depositions, correspondence, etc (retain at least 10 yrs, then archive; public/private/and non-public; MS 13.393, 13.39) (ATT 00200)
13. Leases (retain at least 10 yrs. After expiration of lease; public)
14. Levy (tax) files (retain at least 5 yrs. And then transfer to state archives; public) Tax levies, related correspondence
15. Membership association documents (MAWD, Metro MAWD, etc.) (retain at least 3 yrs.; public)
16. Newsletters, press releases, District generated (retain at least 10 years; public)
17. Notice of official public meetings, District generated (retain at least 6 years; public)
18. Public hearings records (retain at least 6 yrs or until recorded in minutes; do not archive; public) (ADM 05800)
19. Technical Information
  - Printed material regarding the District (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)
  - Printed material not regarding the District (discard when no longer needed; public)
20. Consultant Contracts (retain at least 10 years; public) (CON 00050)
21. Governance Policies (retained only until the policies are superseded and are not to be archived; public)
22. Bylaws (retained permanently and are not to be archived; public) (ADM 02000)
23. Affidavits of publication – general notices (including project public hearings) (retain at least 6 years; public) (ADM 00300)
24. Affidavits of publication – rules (retain permanently; public) (ADM 00400)
25. Bids and Quotations – accepted, noncapital projects (retain 10 years after completion of projects; public/nonpublic; MS 13.37) (ADM 01400)
26. Bids and Quotations – rejected, noncapital projects (retain 6 yrs; public/protection nonpublic until all bids opened) (ADM 01500)
27. Drafts, duplicates, notes and other documents that are not and have not become part of an official transaction, not otherwise scheduled herein (retain at least 2 yrs; public)
28. Agreements and contracts not otherwise scheduled herein (retain at least 10 yrs after paid and audited; public)

## **Real Estate**

### Records series description

1. Easements, originals (retained permanently and are not to be archived; public)
2. Temporary Easements (discard after project completion or when no longer needed, whichever is later; public) (PLZ 00600)
3. Deeds (retained until property is sold then transferred to new owner, copy maintained permanently; public)
4. Transaction records (retain at least 10 years after sale of property; Public/Confidential/Protected Non-public; MS 13.44, 13.585) (HRA 01200)
5. Property records e.g. well records, building inspections, etc. (retain at least 20 years after sale of property; public) (PLZ 01600)
6. Hazardous material reports, e.g. Phase I and II reports, leaking underground storage tank reports, (retain permanently)
7. Ditch records (retain permanently)
8. Property surveys (retain permanently; public) (PLZ 02200)

## **Bonds**

### Records series description

1. Appearance bonds (retain at least 6 yrs. after completion of contract; public)
2. Contractor license bonds, certificates of insurance, applications, etc (retain at least 6 yrs. After completion of contract, public)
3. Fidelity bonds (retain 6 yrs. after completion of service by manager; public)
4. Performance and payment bonds (retain 6 yrs. After completion of contract; public)
5. Permit bonds (retain 6 yrs. After completion of contract; public)

## **Financial/Accounting**

### Records series description

1. Assessment rolls (retained at least 6 yrs after final payment; public)  
Copies of assessment rolls received from county auditors
2. Audit reports (retain permanently need not be archived; public)
3. Billing statements (retain at least 6 yrs.; public)
4. Bank statements (retain 6 yrs.; public) slips, bonds and reconciliation's
5. Budget expenditure reports (retain permanently; public)
6. Checks – paid and returned
  - Accounts payable (retain at least 6 yrs; public) (FIN 02020)
  - Payroll (retain at least 6 yrs; public/private; MS. 13.43) (FIN 02030)
7. Cash receipts analysis (retain at least 6 yrs; public)  
Original receipt registers (retained permanently; not archived; public)
8. Deposit slips (retain 6 yrs; public)
9. Disbursement coding corrections (retain at least 6 yrs; public)
10. General ledger (retain permanently; not archived; public)  
General, month ending
11. Investment documents (retain at least 4 yrs. after maturity; public)  
Amounts invested and interest earned
12. Payroll (retain permanently; public/private; MS 13.43)
13. Pension and retirement plan (retain permanently; public or private)
14. Petty cash records (retain 2 yrs; public)
15. Purged accounts (retain 6 yrs. irrespective of audit; public)
16. Receipts and receipt books (retain 6 yrs., not to be archived; public)
17. Staffing lists (retain at least 6 yrs; public)
18. Time sheets (retain at least 6 yrs; public/private; MS 13.43)
19. W-2 statements (retain at least 6 yrs; public/private; MS 13.43)  
W-4 statements (retained until replaced)
20. Workers' compensation reports (retain at least 20 yrs; public/private; MS 176.231)
21. 1099 statements (retain at least 6 yrs; public/private; MS 13.43) (PAY 02000)

## **Insurance**

### Records series description

1. Automobile insurance (retain at least 6 yrs. after expiration except those involving a minor, save until minor is 21; public)
2. Fire insurance or other insured perils (retain at least 6 yrs. after expiration; public)
3. General liability insurance (retain at least 6 yrs. after expiration; public)
4. Property insurance (retain at least 6 yrs. after expiration; public)
5. Public officials liability (retain at least 6 yrs. after expiration; public)
6. Umbrella liability (retain at least 6 yrs. after expiration; public)
7. Workers' compensation - claim register (retain permanently; public; MS 176.231 (8))
8. Workers' compensation - policies (retain at least 6 yrs. after expiration except those involving a minor, save until minor is 21; public)

## **Permits**

### Records series description

1. Correspondence relating to permits (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)
2. Engineers' reports (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)
3. Inspectors' reports relating to permits (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public). Includes reports, inspectors' documents relating to permit inspection
4. Permit applications (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)
5. Permits (retain permanently and are not to be archived; public)
6. Plans (retain permanently and are not to be archived; public)
7. Permit surety documents – bonds, letters of credit (retain 6 yrs after permit closure; public) (BON 01100)

## Personnel

### Records series description

1. Affidavit of publication for job opening (retain at least 2 yrs.; public; MS 13.43) (HRS 00100)
2. Affirmative action files (retain permanently; public/private; MS13.39 & MS13.43)
3. Applications for employment, not hired (retain 1 year; public) (HRS 00500)
4. District personnel policies and procedures/administrative policies (retained permanently and are not to be archived; public) (HRS 03400)
5. Employment contracts (retain at least 5 yrs. after expiration; public)
6. Employment suggestion form (retain at least 2 yrs.; public/private; MS 13.43)
7. Equal employment opportunity reports/summary data (retain 3 yrs.; public)
8. Examination file – completed examinations (retain at least 2 yrs.; private; MS 13.43) (HRS 01800)
9. Employee medical records (retain 5 years after separation; public/private; MS 13.43) (HRS 04200)
10. Family Medical Leave Documents (retain at least 3 yrs in medical file, not employee personnel file; private; MS 13.43)
11. Grievance file (retain 5 years after termination; not to be retained in employee personnel file; public/private MS 13.43) (HRS 01900)
12. Job descriptions (retained only until the descriptions are superseded and are not to be archived; public)
13. Personnel files (retain at least 5 yrs. after termination or separation; destruction approval contingent upon permanent retention of master copy of payroll record; public/private; MS 13.43)  
Containing applications, accident reports, background check results, citations, personal history, employee references, attendance, disciplinary actions, performance evaluations, letters of appointments/promotion, termination/resignation (HRS 02200; HRS 00600)
14. Unemployment claims/compensation (retain at least 6 yrs; public/private; MS 13.43)
15. Drug and alcohol testing results (retain at least 1 year for negative and canceled drug tests, and alcohol tests with a result below .02 blood alcohol content; 5 years for results greater than .02 blood alcohol content, documentation of refusal to test, calibration documentation, driver evaluations and referrals; public/private; MS 13.43) (HRS 1650)
16. Background check results – not hired (retain 30 days; nonpublic; MS 13.87) (POL 00240)

## **Projects**

### Records series description

#### Petitioned projects

1. Board documents relating to petitioned projects (retain 10 yrs. And then transfer to state archives; public) - Resolutions, findings, conclusions
2. Contracts (retained permanently and are not to be archived; public)
3. Correspondence relating to petitioned projects (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)
4. Engineers' reports, plans, slides, photographs (retained permanently and are not to be archived; public)
5. Petitions (retain at least 10 yrs. And then transfer to state archives; public)
6. Property surveys (retain permanently; public) (PLZ 02200)
7. Public hearing documents/Notices/Testimony Written/Audio (retained at least 6 yrs or until recorded in the minutes; public; and are not to be archived)
8. Related public hearing documents (retain at least 10 yrs. are not to be archived; public)

#### Non-petitioned projects

1. Board documents relating to non-petitioned projects (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)
2. Contracts (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)
3. Correspondence relating to non-petitioned projects (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)
4. Engineers' reports, related documents (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)
5. Property surveys (retain permanently; public) (PLZ 02200)
6. Related public hearing documents (retain at least 10 yrs. and then transfer to state archives; public)



## **Programs**

### Records series description

1. Water quality, lake elevation, stream flow data (Field notes and raw data retained until final report is completed. Final reports retained permanently, or transferred to state archives; public) (RMG 00200)
2. Public opinion surveys (retain permanently or transfer to state archives; public) (LIB 02100)
3. Plans
  - Watershed Management Plans (retain permanently or transfer to state archives; public) (PLZ 00300)
  - Local Water Management Plans for member LGUs (retain until updated; public)
  - Board approved program plans and workplans, (retain at least 6 yrs. and are not to be archived)
4. District Rules (Retain permanently, public)

**Minnehaha Creek Watershed District  
Records Management and Retention Policy**

Adopted as amended August 22, 2013

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (District) Board of Managers adopts the following policy as part of its effort to ensure the sound administration of District business and continued focus of District resources on protection and improvement of the water resources in the Minnehaha Creek watershed.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes sections 15.17, subdivision 1, and 138.17, the District makes and preserves all records necessary to ensure a full and accurate accounting of the District's official activities. To facilitate effective management of its records, the District has adopted the attached updated records retention schedule, governing the retention and disposal of records created by the District.

In keeping with the direction of the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act, Minnesota Statutes chapter 325L, the District has determined that it will create, retain and store its records – current and historic – in electronic form to the greatest extent possible. Records may be transferred to the state archives in accordance with the approved Records Retention Schedule in hard-copy form. The District's records retention schedule includes indication of whether records will be retained in hard copy or electronic form. Conversion of historic documents will be conducted in compliance with the District's Records Retention Schedule, and will be completed in a manner that ensures that the District's data remain accessible for purposes of compliance with the Data Practices Act. Original documents providing the District with legal rights and obligations will continue to be retained in hard-copy form.

**MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT**  
**MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY**

*Adopted November 20, 2014*

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District values transparency and is committed to a culture of openness with the media, our partners and the public. The District is dedicated to working with all of these partners in a manner that is timely, responsive and accurate. To honor this commitment, District representatives abide by the following set of core communication principles:

- Be honest and accurate in all communication
- Respond promptly and appropriately to media requests
- Act promptly to correct the record or erroneous information, when appropriate
- Promote the free flow of information
- Promote plain writing of media documents and releases
- Create greatest transparency possible through distributing information on time and to a wide audience through electronic and media based communication methods
- Protect confidential, classified and non-public information

To ensure media relations are conducted in keeping with these principles, the District delineates the following responsibilities and guidance.

**Responsibilities**

*MCWD Director of Communications and Education*

The Director of Communications and Education is responsible for:

- Serving as the main point of contact for the media
- Advising the Board president in the president's role as spokesperson for the Board of Managers, and serving as the District spokesperson on all other matters.
- Conducting and coordinating media relations activities with staff, departments and teams
- Reviewing the effectiveness of all news media relations activities
- Ensuring timely release and efficient dissemination of materials and information to news media
- Editing to ensure that public information products are written in plain language, consistent with Associated Press style, and in line with news media principles, practices and expectations while maintaining the integrity of the underlying scientific or technical data and the meaning of programmatic content.

### *District Management*

District management has ultimate responsibility for the technical, scientific and programmatic accuracy of all information that is related to District programs and released by the District.

District management includes:

- District Administrator
- Director of Communications and Education
- Director of Operations and Support Services
- Director of Planning and Projects
- Director of Research and Monitoring

In the Director of Communications and Education's absence, the District Administrator will assume the duties of the Director of Communications and Education.

### *Employees*

All employees are required to coordinate, in a timely manner, with the Director of Communications and Education prior to releasing information that has the potential to generate media or public interest.

### *Board of Managers/Citizens Advisory Committee*

Managers and CAC members should coordinate, in a timely manner, with the Director of Communications and Education prior to communicating publicly in a manner that has the potential to generate media or public interest.

## **News Media Procedures**

The District seeks to provide the widest practical and appropriate dissemination of information concerning its activities and programs. News media requests for public information concerning District activities and the results of District activities should be addressed promptly, factually and as completely as possible.

In general, major news media-related activities will be coordinated by the Director of Communications and Education in concert with partner organizations and/or local units of government to ensure scientific, technical and programmatic accuracy.

The following news media procedures apply to all staff:

- When approached by a member of the press with a request for an interview or information, employees must notify their immediate supervisor and coordinate with the Director of Communications and Education, who will determine the appropriate course of action.
- Before providing any information about the District, its activities and programs to a member of the press, even if it is on background, deep background, or off the record, District employees must notify their immediate supervisor and coordinate with the Director of Communications and Education, who will determine the appropriate course of action.

- In general, reporters should have access to the District employees they seek to interview. While speaking to the media is not a requirement, employees are encouraged to speak to reporters about their work whenever possible and appropriate, and provided they have notified their immediate supervisor and coordinated with the Director of Communications and Education.
- In response to media interview requests, the Director of Communications and Education will identify the most knowledgeable spokesperson(s) that can provide the requested information. Interviews or media questions that are beyond the employee's expertise should be referred to his or her supervisor or the Director of Communications and Education.
- Meetings that are open to the public are, by definition, open to the media. District employees who are presenters at public events, such as conferences or meetings, are encouraged to coordinate with the Director of Communications and Education to accommodate requests from media present regarding their presentation while on site.
- As a matter of routine, media interviews should be on the record and attributable to the person speaking to the media representative, unless an alternate attribution arrangement is mutually agreed upon in advance. The District recognizes the following types of attribution:
  - **On the record:** All statements are directly quotable and attributable, by name and title, to the person making the statement.
  - **On background:** All statements are directly quotable, but cannot be attributed by name or specific title to the person commenting.
  - **On deep background:** Anything that is said in the interview is usable but not in direct quotation and not for attribution. The reporter writes it on his or her own.
  - **Off the record:** Information is for the reporter's use only and is not to be printed or made public in any way. The information also is not to be taken to another source in hopes of getting confirmation.
- The District will release information consistent with the Minnesota Data Practices Act (DPA) and all request to inspect or receive copies of District data must be addressed in accordance with the District Policies and Procedures for Public Access to Documents
- In certain circumstances, the District must decline to comment in cases of pending legal matters or issues not within District jurisdiction.
- Letters to the editor and opinion-editorial (op-ed) columns, if designed to represent an official District response or view, or if the author is writing as part of his/her official responsibilities, must be approved by the Director of Communications and Education or District Administrator, who will coordinate with the president of the Board of Managers.
- All District-sponsored, organized media events or editorial board visits require coordination through the Director of Communications and Education. Participation by District representatives in organized media events sponsored by local units of government, private sector, or nonprofit organizations must be coordinated with the Director of Communications and Education.

- Scientific, technical and policy articles or commentaries written by District employees for publication in peer-reviewed journals or other scientific, technical or policy publications are not subject to review by the Director of Communications and Education (unless the writer seeks assistance). However, any press materials that are developed in conjunction with the publication of a journal article fall under the same provision guidelines as outlined above. In addition, staff should notify the Director of Communications and Education of any newsworthy journal articles that are planned for publication regardless of whether press materials are planned.

### **Procedures regarding release of information to news media by an employee in a personal capacity**

Relations with media on matters and topics related to a employee's duties at the District must be conducted in accordance with this policy. Employees who present personal or individual views on matters unrelated to their District duties must make clear that they are presenting their personal and/or individual views—not the views of the District—and should not be sourced as a District representative or make reference to their official title or position in the piece. This provision includes authorship of letters to the editor and opinion-editorial columns. Personal letters to the editor or opinion-editorial columns should not be provided on District letterhead.