

elm creek

Watershed Management Commission

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MINUTES

Regular Meeting | October 11, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER. A meeting of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, October 11, 2023, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Chair Doug Baines.

Present: Bill Walraven, Champlin; Ken Guenthner, Corcoran; Doug Baines, Dayton; Joe Trainor, Maple Grove; and Terry Sharp, Medina. Not represented: Plymouth and Rogers.

Also present: Kevin Mattson, Corcoran; John Accola, Dayton; Derek Asche, Maple Grove; Rebecca Haug, WSB, Medina; Ben Scharenbroich, Plymouth; Andrew Simmons, Rogers; Erik Megow and Diane Spector, Stantec; Rebecca Carlson, Resilience Resources; Kris Guentzel and Kevin Ellis, Hennepin County Environment and Energy (HCEE); Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District; and Judie Anderson, JASS.

II. AGENDA. Motion by Walraven, second by Guenthner to approve the Agenda. *Motion carried unanimously.*

A. Motion by Guenthner, second by Sharp to approve the **Minutes* of the September 13, 2023, meeting and public hearing.** *Motion carried unanimously.*

B. Motion by Sharp, second by Guenthner to approve the **October Treasurer's Report and Claims*** totaling \$47,271.42. *Motion carried unanimously.*

III. OPEN FORUM.

IV. PROJECT REVIEWS.

A. 2023-018 Brayburn Trails II, Dayton.* The developer is proposing 145 single-family home lots and public roads on a 58.53-acre site. The project adds 15.52 acres of new impervious (a total of 16.25 acres of impervious including the 0.73 acres of existing impervious) and disturbs 55 acres. The site is located south of 117th Avenue North, on the west side of Fernbrook Lane, north of Rush Creek and southeast of French Lake. The project triggers Rules D and E and meets those requirements through NURP ponds with filtration benches and erosion control. Due to receipt of a significant revision of the project, action on this project was tabled at the September meeting and the review period extended sixty days to December 3, 2023. In their revised findings dated October 4, 2023, Staff recommends approval with five conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) receipt of a Stormwater Management Agreement acceptable to the City and the Commission within 90 days of plat recordation; and the applicant meeting (3) LFE standards and (4) volume standards; and (5) receipt of proof of the latter two conditions by October 6, 2023. Staff reported that conditions 3, 4 and 5 have been met. Motion by Trainor, second by Walraven to approve Staff's recommendation. *Motion carried unanimously.*

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B. 2023-022 Shores of Sylvan Lake, Rogers.* This project consists of the redevelopment of an existing farmstead into five large lots on Sylvan Lake and will disturb 2.32 acres of a 9.27-acre single-family parcel located west of the intersection between Territorial Road and Sylvan Lake Road. The project triggers Commission rules D, E and I. This item has been reviewed by Staff and a finding of fact memo dated October 3, 2023, is included in the meeting packet. Staff recommends approval of the project conditioned on (1) escrow reconciliation and (2) provision of a Stormwater Maintenance Agreement acceptable to the City and the Commission. Motion by Guenther, second by Trainor to approve Staff's recommendation. *Motion carried unanimously.*

V. OLD BUSINESS.

VI. NEW BUSINESS.

VII. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH.

A. Potential Education and Outreach Options. Staff have begun brainstorming options for education and outreach initiatives for focus in 2024 and beyond, both within the Elm Creek watershed and joint efforts with WMWA and Hennepin County. Planning for the next round of Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) grants will start after the first of the year, and that is a possible source of funding for these initiatives.

Staff will have more to discuss after the October 10 WMWA meeting and some additional discussion, but here are some ideas they are considering. They are seeking Commission review and discussion and ideas for other topics that are not on this list, with the intention not to make a decision about which to pursue or not pursue, but more to brainstorm and establish priorities for further development.

1. Working with as many of the Hennepin County WMOs as possible, continue the work of the Hennepin County Chloride Initiative (HCCI), with a focus on more broadly raising awareness of the Low Salt No Salt campaign, such as a coordinated media campaign.

2. Hosting property manager workshops to educate them about developing and implementing chloride management plans on their properties. Grace Barcelow, the Hennepin County outreach coordinator, is also reaching out to faith-based communities regarding this topic .

3. Making more small grants available to property owners for small nutrient/sediment BMPs.

4. Outreach to small business owners (for example, storefront owners/tenants at small strip malls) to focus on proper chloride use. Participants would get an ice scraper and environmentally friendly ice melt/bucket/scoop.

The discussion at this meeting is intended to provide some guidance to Staff and the TAC so they can bring back tangible programs.

B. WMWA Educator Special Project Follow-up. At last month's meeting Staff introduced some ideas for an initial discussion regarding development of potential outreach ideas

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with the joint WMWA coordinator. The Watershed-Based Implementation Funding grant workplan supporting the shared coordinator calls for implementing at least four “special projects” across the five participating WMOs. Examples cited in the work plan were workshops for residents/property owners/business owners, perhaps with follow-up small grants and/or onsite consultation; or multi-family housing equitable engagement projects, likely in partnership with Metro Blooms, similar to projects undertaken in the Shingle Creek watershed at multi-family housing sites that include updated stormwater management as well as other site improvements.

Barcelow has asked each WMO to express a preference for what type of special project might be a good fit for their watershed. Staff are not aware of potential multi-family projects currently, so they are focused on workshop ideas. Regardless of which option the Commission prefers, it is likely that implementation would not occur until spring 2024. Some ideas from Staff include:

1. Customizing the existing Blue Thumb Resilient Yards workshop ([Workshops & Events – Blue Thumb](#)), offering free on-site consultation and planting stipends to participants.
2. As suggested by the City of Corcoran, developing a new workshop and online resource targeted at HOA members regarding strategies for maintaining their green spaces and understanding how to manage and maintain their on-site BMPs.
3. Develop a new workshop based on other ideas the Commissioners might have. This may require an additional financial commitment from the Commission depending on how much customization or workshop development would be required.

Based on discussions with Barcelow, Staff are inclined to recommend idea #2, for the following reasons.

a. The Elm Creek Watershed TMDL identified land use change as an important component of the TMDL implementation plan. In the upper watershed, 50-70% of the land was expected to experience land use change over the life of the TMDL. Adopting more stringent development rules, which the Commission did with the Third Generation Plan, is a key factor in meeting the required load reductions as land converts from untreated uses to uses with infiltration and treatment BMPs. Proper and timely maintenance is required to maintain those load reductions, and many HOAs that are now responsible for that work are not prepared for that burden. *Educating and assisting the HOAs with this work prevents the cities from having to construct additional BMPs to make up for that loss of effectiveness.*

b. Nearly all the available online education and training resources are targeted toward MS4s and their permit obligations. There are a few guides nationally targeted toward HOAs ([City of Boulder](#), [Hampton Roads, VA](#), and [San Diego County](#) are some examples), but they are still more technical and intimidating with detail than the average layperson is used to working with. [WMWA developed a booklet](#) years ago, and while it is more user-friendly, it is still a bit overwhelming. This would be an opportunity to fill an information gap and reach out to a growing population.

c. Technology makes it easier to present information than the traditional booklet or flier. Putting together an interactive website with a variety of tools, graphics, videos, and in-person training provides plenty of opportunities for users to learn at their own pace and in their own time and go back and refer to information to refresh their memories. This makes it much more likely that the tools and resources will be used. Staff are especially interested in hearing more from cities about the types of conversations they have with HOAs and staff perceptions of education and outreach needs. Should you wish to go forward with this option, part of the planning process prior to developing the tools and workshops would be additional extended meetings with city staffs to better define the needs, objectives, and desired outcomes.

Should members wish to pursue a different type of workshop or outreach topic, Staff will work with Barcelow to develop, needs, objectives, and desired outcomes before formally developing work products.

C. The **West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA)** will meet via Zoom at 8:30 a.m., November 14, 2023.

VIII. GRANT OPPORTUNITIES.

Applications are being accepted through November 14, 2023, for Hennepin County **Good Steward Grants**.* Good Steward Grants are primarily for smaller projects that improve water quality, enhance natural areas and promote environmental stewardship to the community. A typical grant amount is \$10,000 to \$20,000, with a maximum amount of \$25,000. All landowners are eligible to apply, including individuals, nonprofit and non-governmental organizations, local government agencies, and businesses.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS. The following communications have been received:

A. **Staff Report**.* Staff reports provide updates on the development projects currently under review by Staff. The projects listed in the table beginning on page 6 of these minutes are discussed in the October 4, 2023, report.

B. Hennepin County Staff Report.*

1. **Bottema Wetland Restoration Update, Corcoran**. Wetland restoration activities were completed in September. Upland prairie work is moving to the management phase with continued mowings this fall and next year and another seeding possible this fall or in 2024. Drone video captured in September, and following significant rains in late September, found an estimated 250-500 ducks utilizing the newly hydrated wetlands. County staff are working on reimbursing the landowner for grant-eligible costs in October.

2. **Mattila Manure Bunker, Corcoran**. Manure bunker was inspected by staff with no issues observed. Currently working to reimburse landowner for completed work.

3. **Christian Settling Basin, Dayton**. Sediment basin designs were developed by Mike Candler of Wright County SWCD, Hennepin County staff met with the potential contractor to walk through the design, test soils, and answer questions. Contractor and landowner both approved the plans to move forward with minimal edits. Hennepin County staff

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will delineate the wetland to ensure that work will not cause any disturbance. A TEP will also be formed to review the workplan.

4. Welcome Ranch, Dayton. County staff met with the manager on site to discuss plans for BMP projects with NRCS staff. It was determined that the first BMPs to be designed and implemented will be the manure bunker and the barn gutters and drainage system. The manure bunker is currently in development.

5. Other County Programming.

a. Hennepin County was recently awarded a \$10 million [Urban and Community Forestry grant](#) from the U.S. Forest Service to remove diseased trees, plant trees, educate residents, and support businesses and workforce development. The project will improve resilience to climate change, pests, storms, and extreme heat events. This grant is part of more than \$1 billion awarded to 385 projects nationwide, including \$33 million in Minnesota. This historic funding from the Inflation Reduction Act will support projects that increase tree cover in disadvantaged communities, as identified in the [White House Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#).

With the grant funding, Hennepin County forestry will help low-income homeowners remove and replace diseased trees and educate residents about tree care and the benefits of trees. This funding addresses a significant need identified by community members as the [emerald ash borer](#) has swept through the County. County foresters have heard from residents about the overwhelming financial burden of removing a diseased tree. Without help, some residents could be at risk of losing their home to tax forfeiture if the property is assessed for the removal of a tree. Many other residents are not likely to be able to afford to replace the removed tree, which furthers the disparities in the urban tree canopy. The County will prioritize contracting with small, women-and-minority-owned tree removal businesses and community-based organizations to conduct education and expand county and community-based workforce development programs to employ teens and young adults to plant and maintain trees.

Cities and other entities within the County that also received Urban and Community Forestry grants include the cities of Minneapolis and Richfield, Great River Greening, and the University of Minnesota. Together, these grants represent a transformative opportunity to increase equity in the urban tree canopy, reduce the heat island effect, and sequester carbon. For more information, contact Dustin Ellis at dustin.ellis@hennepin.us.

b. Funding is available for businesses, cities, multifamily properties, nonprofit organizations, and institutions in Hennepin County to establish organics recycling drop-off sites. Up to \$15,000 is available for each drop-off site. Funding can be used for hauling and disposal costs, construction, dumpsters or carts, and promotions. Priority will be given to drop-off sites that increase access to organics recycling for residents in multifamily properties without access to city service and in cities with limited organics recycling options. Applications are due October 10. To earn more: [organics recycling drop-off funding guidelines \(PDF\)](#); to access the application materials: [Hennepin County supplier portal](#). For more information, contact Amy Maas,

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amy.maas@hennepin.us.

X. Other Business.

XI. Adjournment. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Judie A. Anderson
Recording Secretary

JAA:tim

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Project No.	Project Name
W=wetland	
2014-015	Rogers Drive Extension, Rogers.
2015-030	Kiddiegarten Child Care Center, Maple Grove.
2016-005W	Ravinia Wetland Bank Plan, Corcoran.
2017-014	Laurel Creek, Rogers.
2017-050W	Ernie Mayers Wetland/floodplain violation, Corcoran.
2018-046	Graco, Rogers.
2020-009	Stetler Barn, Medina.
2020-017	Meadow View Townhomes, Medina.
2020-032	Enclave Rogers - Commerce Boulevard, Rogers.
2020-033	Weston Woods, Medina.
2021-020	Crew Carwash, Maple Grove.
2021-025	Hackamore Road Reconstruction, Medina/Corcoran.
2021-029	Tri-Care Grocery / Retail, Maple Grove
2021-034	BAPS Hindu Temple, Medina.
2021-035	Mister Car Wash, Rogers.
2021-036	D & D Service, Corcoran.
2021-044	Balsam II Apartments, Dayton.
2021-050	Evanswood, Maple Grove.
2021-052	Norbella Senior Living, Rogers.
2022-002	Summerwell, Maple Grove.
2022-003	Fox Briar Ridge East, Maple Grove.
2022-006	Hamel Townhomes, Medina.
2022-008	Bechtold Farm, Corcoran.
2022-009	Dunkirk Lane Development, Plymouth.
2022-011	Arrowhead Drive Turn Lane Expansion, Medina.
2022-012	Graco Building 2, Dayton.
2022-013	Dayton 94 Industrial Site, Dayton.
2022-016	Rogers Activity Center, Rogers.
2022-017	City Center Drive, Corcoran.
2022-018	Big Woods, Rogers.
2022-019	Grass Lake Preserve, Dayton.

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2022-020	Skye Meadows Extension, Rogers.
2022-022	Cook Lake Highlands, Corcoran.
2022-026	Archway Building, Rogers
2022-028	Elsie Stephens Park, Dayton.
2022-029	Hayden Hills Park, Dayton.
2022-033	Pet Suites, Maple Grove.
2022-035	Rush Hollow, Maple Grove.
2022-038	Tavera North Side, Corcoran.
2022-040	Karinieimi Meadows, Corcoran.
2022-042	Walcott Glen, Corcoran.
2022-043	Meander Park and Boardwalk, Medina.
2022-045	Corcoran Water Treatment Plant.
2022-047	Suite Living of Maple Grove.
2022-049	Connexus Energy South Dayton Substation.
2023-001	Chankahda Trail Reconstruction Phase 2, Plymouth.
2023-002	Lynde Greenhouse Fire Damage Repair, Maple Grove.
2023-004	Medina Industrial Site, Medina.
2023-006	Sota Shine, Maple Grove.
2023-008	Rush Creek Boulevard Interchange, Maple Grove.
2023-009	Magnifi Financial, Maple Grove.
2023-010	Rogers New Fire Station.
2023-011	Sundance Greens 9th, Dayton.
2023-012	Hope Community Mixed Use, Corcoran.
2023-013	River Valley Church, Maple Grove.
2023-014	Bottema Wetland, Corcoran.
2023-015	So Fork Rush Creek Restoration, Maple Grove.
2023-016	Rogers South Community Park.
2023-017	Veit Pit, Rogers.

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