

elm creek Watershed Management Commission

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
3235 Fernbrook Lane
Plymouth, MN 55447

PH: 763.553.1144
email: judie@jass.biz
www.elmcreekwatershed.org

MINUTES

Regular Meeting | February 14, 2024 **CORRECTED** (see items II.A. and II.B.)

I. CALL TO ORDER. A meeting of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 11:35 a.m., Wednesday, February 14, 2024, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Vice Chair Catherine Cesnik.

Present: Bill Walraven, Champlin; Ken Guenther, Corcoran; Dan Riggs, Maple Grove; Terry Sharp, Medina; Catherine Cesnik, Plymouth; and David Katzner, Rogers.

Not represented: Dayton.

Also present: Derek Asche, Maple Grove; Diane Spector, Stantec; Rebecca Carlson, Resilience Resources; Kris Guentzel, Kevin Ellis, and Matt Stasica, Hennepin County Environment and Energy (HCEE); Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); Judie Anderson, JASS; and Angie Bottema and Jon Bottema, Corcoran.

II. AGENDA. Motion by Walraven, second by Guenther to approve the Agenda as presented. *Motion carried unanimously.*

A. Motion by Walraven, second by ~~Trainer~~ Riggs to approve the **Minutes* of the January 10, 2024**, meeting with the following correction:

Present: Bill Walraven, Champlin; Ken Guenther, Corcoran; Doug Baines, Dayton; ~~Dan Riggs~~, Joe Trainor, Maple Grove; Terry Sharp, Medina; Catherine Cesnik, Plymouth; and David Katzner, Rogers.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Motion by Guenther, second by ~~Trainer~~ Riggs to approve the **February Treasurer's Report and Claims*** totaling \$47,194.36. *Motion carried unanimously.*

III. OPEN FORUM.

Jon and Angie Bottema and Matt Stasica were in attendance to present an overview of the Bottema habitat restoration project. The project is located north of County Road 30 and west of Cain Road in Corcoran. The Bottemas are restoring ten previously drained wetlands through a combination of tile breaks, shallow scrapes, and impoundments on their 120-acre agricultural site. Ten wetlands are being restored during this project and the upland areas seeded into prairie. Existing flow is to the north and east to the North Fork of Rush Creek. The proposed flow will remain the same, routed through restored wetlands, and likely lower than existing conditions. Restoration of the site to prairie and restored wetland should also result in nutrient and sediment load reductions and an overall improvement of water quality and habitat.

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It was suggested that the Bottemas have soil borings conducted in order to show how the soils are changing as a result of this project. Members also queried how the public can be made aware of this project and its benefits. (Also see item IX.B. on page 4 of these minutes.)

IV. ACTION ITEMS.

A. 2023-028 Rush Creek Hollow, Maple Grove.* The project proposes a 3.8-acre development of residential single-family properties with seven new lots and approximately 500 linear feet of new street with bituminous pavement and curb and gutter. The project is located at 18001 101st Avenue North. The project triggers Rules D, E and I. A finding of facts memo dated February 7, 2024, includes Staff's recommendation for approval conditioned on escrow reconciliation. Motion by Walraven, second by Guenther to approve Staff's recommendation. *Motion carried unanimously.*

B. 2024 Work Plan. Staff's February 8, 2024, memo* highlights special projects or studies that are components of the 2024 Work Plan. They include:

1. Initiating development of the Fourth Generation Watershed Management Plan. The current Plan expires in Fall 2025. Typically, it takes about 18 months to go through the planning and review process. The Commission and cities should expect to begin this process this Spring.

2. Completing the Watershed-wide TMDL Ten Year Review previously authorized by the Commission. It will wrap into the Fourth Generation Plan in the same manner as the original TMDL and WRAPS.

3. Undertaking BWSR Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) for FY2024/25. The Commission is eligible to receive \$373,590. The Convene process should be completed this Spring so the funds can be contracted by July 1. This funding can be used on projects, studies, or management activities that result in a load reduction.

4. Continuing to partner with WMWA and Hennepin County on enhanced education and outreach, with leadership and assistance from the shared outreach coordinator. Chloride management is a priority topic, and the work plan includes development of a chloride education and outreach plan that includes identifying the different stakeholders and messages and options for implementation. The Commission will also sponsor one or more shoreline restoration/resilient yards workshops with the shared coordinator and Metro Blooms as part of the WBIF funding.

The remaining actions in the proposed Work Plan* include monitoring lakes and streams in partnership with Three Rivers Park District, Metropolitan Council, USGS, and Hennepin County; agricultural outreach in collaboration with Hennepin County and the University of Minnesota's agriculture specialists; as well as other routine and administrative activities.

Motion by Guenther, second by Sharp to approve the 2024 Work Plan as presented. *Motion carried unanimously.*

C. 2024 Cooperative Agreement with Hennepin County.* The 2024 agreement is comprised of three tasks. Tasks 1 and 2 are comprised of general technical assistance activities and

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total an amount not to exceed \$22,000. Task 3 is comprised of Rush Creek and Diamond Creek subwatershed project implementation and is in an amount not-to-exceed \$170,359, or 80% of the documented project costs, whichever is lower.

Motion by Walraven, second by Guenther to approve the 2024 Agreement with Hennepin County. *Motion carried unanimously.*

D. 2024 CAMP Monitoring. Members discussed opportunities to select and monitor a lake through the Metropolitan Council Citizens Assisted Monitoring Program. The Commission has budgeted to monitor one lake in 2024. Teal and Jubert lakes were considered. Staff will coordinate a selection with CAMP coordinator, Brian Johnson, with guidance from Vlach as to which lakes are needful of monitoring data.

V. OLD BUSINESS.

VI. NEW BUSINESS.

VII. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH.

A. Topics discussed at the February WMWA meeting:

1. Hennepin County Joint Education and Outreach Coordinator Grace Barcelow is asking the partners to help populate the **event calendar**.

2. Members conducted **chloride consultations** with faith-based organizations in Plymouth and Robbinsdale. The meetings were held with property managers who expressed enthusiasm about the environmentally friendly practices.

3. Barcelow reached out to City TAC members about existing **pet waste education** activities. She will compile the information and identify any gaps that should be filled or augmented.

4. The **Steering Committee** met and reviewed WMWA progress. They recommended adding some additional focus areas so cities are getting regular communication from Education and Outreach that says “WMWA.”

5. WMWA educator Jessica Sahu Teli provided a recap of **Watershed Prep** classroom lessons scheduled through May. She will be out of the country in March.

6. Barcelow will “man” the WMWA booth at **Discover Plymouth** in late March, displaying educational materials, handouts, and native plant roots. Contact Barcelow if you are interested in volunteering at the event for any amount of time at grace.barcelow@hennepin.us.

7. 2024-2025 **WBIF Convene meetings** are being scheduled. Members discussed how to integrate E&O activities into the funding.

B. West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA) will meet via Zoom at 8:30 a.m., March 12, 2024.

VIII. GRANT OPPORTUNITIES.

The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) biennially appropriates funding for a program called **Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF)**. WBIF funding is allocated to targeted watersheds to be distributed according to guidelines agreed upon by the eligible entities in the allocation area (“the Partnership”). The Elm Creek allocation for fiscal year 2024-2025 is **\$373,590**, which will become available July 1, 2024. A minimum 10% match is required.

A. The BWSR Funding Policy specifies that each Partnership will include one decision-making representative from each watershed district and/or watershed management organization, soil and water conservation district, county with a current groundwater plan, and up to two decision-making representatives from municipalities within the allocation area. For Elm Creek, that would include the Commission, Hennepin County in its capacity as the county SWCD, and up to two cities. Other parties may participate in discussions regarding the use of the funding, but only the decision-making representatives may make the final recommendation to BWSR. The city and watershed representatives may be TAC members or Commissioners.

Staff recommends the Commission and the Technical Advisory Committee discuss *which two persons the cities would like to represent them at the first official convene meeting and who should represent the Commission*. The County will also be asked to designate a representative, and BWSR will be formally represented as well. The secondary purpose of this discussion is to provide some broad guidance and direction to the designees to consider during the Convene meeting. It is anticipated that 2-3 virtual meetings will be needed to discuss options for the use of the funds and decide on a recommendation.

Cesnik volunteered to represent the Commission.

B. Staff recommends that the TAC and Commissioners start thinking about their priorities and objectives for the funding. Activities eligible for funding span a very wide range of options, but all must be focused on prioritized and targeted cost-effective actions with *measurable water quality results*. Funding is not limited to capital projects; anything in the Watershed Management Plan’s Implementation Plan may be eligible as long as its end goal is the protection and improvement of water quality. The Implementation Plan includes several broad areas that would be eligible, including:

1. Implementing TMDL management actions
2. Implementing an education and outreach program
3. Completing subwatershed assessments and feasibility studies
4. SWA and study follow-up implementation
5. Cost share grants
6. Capital improvement projects
7. Improvements on agricultural lands

Other projects to consider for WBIF funding:

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- 8. Continuation of funding the shared education and outreach coordinator
- 9. Continuation of Hennepin County Chloride Initiative

The Partnership may choose to award the funds to one high-priority project or make numerous awards for varying objectives – for example, dividing up the funds into an allocation for BMP cost share, a lake internal load or stream restoration feasibility study, a priority subwatershed assessment, targeted resident outreach, and one or more projects. Or you may decide to focus on one or two priority lakes and undertake a suite of activities focused on making a measurable improvement in water quality. The Commission may also add one or more projects to the CIP by Minor Plan Amendment for eligibility for the WBIF funding if that is approved prior to submitting a work plan.

At the first Convene meeting the Partnership will complete some procedural details and then discuss the desired objectives and outcomes from the use of the funding before diving into determining how fundable activities will be solicited and selected. Recommended activities approved by BWSR may then be detailed in a work plan starting approximately in June. Funding would be available July 1, 2024, following submittal and approval of the work plan.

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 7 of these minutes are discussed in the February 7, 2024, report.

B. Hennepin County Staff Report.*

1. South Fork Rush Creek BMP Ground Truthing and Management Survey. Hennepin County staff are currently evaluating ACPF BMP outputs provided by Stantec in the South Fork Rush Creek subwatershed. BMPs are being assessed based on feasibility and development potential. Staff have also finished surveying field conditions including 2023 crop grown, tillage used, residue and if cover crops were used. Data is being returned to Stantec for the completion of the South Fork Rush Creek Subwatershed Assessment.

2. Bottema Wetland Restoration. Project work was substantially completed early last fall to restore 7 wetlands and re-establish 42 acres of farmland to prairie. This project is paired with another on the same property by the US Fish & Wildlife Service, restoring an additional 8 wetlands and 38 acres of prairie. Seeding occurred in October to address areas disturbed by construction activities. Corcoran, and many communities in western Hennepin County, received significant rainfall last fall. Corcoran saw a 100-year rainfall event followed by a 10-year rainfall event just days apart. Unfortunately, it occurred just after construction activities and before vegetation could establish. Hennepin County is working with the landowner and engineering team to address the erosion. Additional construction, seeding, and erosion control activities are expected when conditions allow this summer. (See also Item III. Open Forum.)

3. County staff have completed preparing the 2024 Watershed Services Agreement. In the past this has included items related to commission meeting attendance, resi-

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dent engagement and technical assistance related to erosion and runoff issues, and the implementation of conservation measures, especially in priority watersheds. While this agreement has been standardized from year to year in the past, in 2024 Staff are seeking to expand outreach to residents and directly work with cities to implement soil and water conservation related policies and programs.

4. Rush Creek/Diamond Creek Ongoing Project Design Updates.

Engineering has returned plans for the **Stotts 1B WASC OB, waterway and wetland restoration** and the **Van Asten Manure bunker**. Staff have reviewed the plans and have forwarded them for comment from landowners. Once comments and potential edits are gathered, they will be returned to engineering for final designs.

5. The **Project Funding Table** has been updated to reflect activity that occurred last month.

6. Applications for grants of up to \$15,000 to **reduce waste and improve recycling in schools** are being accepted until February 29, 2024. Grants are also available until November 11, 2024, to multifamily properties to start or improve recycling or organics recycling, reduce contamination, prevent waste, and educate residents on recycling and waste prevention.

C. Metropolitan Council Draft 2050 Water Policy Plan.

Met Council is in the initial stages of developing its 2050 Policy Plan to guide housing and development; parks; transportation; and water and wastewater planning in the seven county Metropolitan Area. The 2050 Plan will set forth the core vision, values, and goals for the region and guide both Met Council operations and the Comprehensive Plans of cities, which must be consistent with and implement actions toward achieving those goals. Staff's February 8, 2024, memo* provides a high-level overview of the issues that the Met Council is considering and taking input on for the draft 2050 Water Policy Plan. The Council's goal is to complete the Plan by March 2025.

While Met Council is an advisory body to watershed management organizations (WMOs) in the Metro Area and does not approve watershed plans, there is an expectation by the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), which does govern WMOs, that watershed plans be consistent with the Met Council Water Policy Plan. City Local Stormwater Management Plans, which are a required component of their Comprehensive Plans, must be consistent with both the relevant watershed plans and the Met Council Water Policy Plan.

The Commission is about to embark on its Fourth Generation Watershed Management Plan. It is helpful to have in mind the likely regional policies and goals that will be considered in the 2050 Policy Plan. Many of the issues emerging for the 2050 Plan are those we have been considering in the Work Plans or Plan scoping discussions. As part of the planning process the Met Council water staff will advise the Commission on those issues they would like to see addressed in the Plan.

Five of the six draft policy papers are relevant to the Commission: (1) Protecting Our Region's Water Quality; (2) Exploring Water Reuse; (3) Protecting Source Water Areas; (4) Protecting

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Rural Waters; and (5) Water and Climate Change. The sixth, Wastewater Planning, is not part of the Commission’s planning authority.

More information and the full draft policy papers, executive summaries, and feed-back forms can be found at: [2050 Water Policy Plan Update - Metropolitan Council \(metrocity.org\)](https://metrocity.org/2050-Water-Policy-Plan-Update) and [Water Policy Plan Research - Metropolitan Council \(metrocity.org\)](https://metrocity.org/Water-Policy-Plan-Research).

D. The Board of Water and Soil Resources has announced that **Fish Lake** in Maple Grove is slated to be removed from the Impaired Waters List in 2024. <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/bwsr-snapshots>

E. The Commission has received **Wellhead Protection Plan, Part 1,*** for the City of Medina.

X. OTHER BUSINESS.

Election of Officers and Annual Appointments will occur in March. If you are interested in serving as an officer in 2024, please advise Administrator Judie Anderson.

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	Project No.	Project Name
2014-015	Rogers Drive Extension.	2023-011	Sundance Greens 9th, Dayton.
2015-030	Kiddiegarten Child Care Center, Maple Grove.	2023-013	River Valley Church, Maple Grove.
2016-005W	Ravinia Wetland Bank Plan, Corcoran.	2023-014	Bottema Wetland, Corcoran.
2017-014	Laurel Creek, Rogers.	2023-015	South Fork Rush Creek Evanswood, Maple Grove.
2017-050W	Ernie Mayers Wetland/floodplain violation, Corcoran.	2023-016	Rogers South Community Park.
2018-046	Graco, Rogers.	2023-017	Veit Pit, Rogers.
2020-009	Stetler Barn, Medina.	2023-018	Brayburn Trails II, Dayton.
2020-017	Meadow View Townhomes, Medina.	2023-019	23240 County Road 30, Corcoran.
2020-032	Enclave Rogers - Commerce Boulevard, Rogers.	2023-020	Dunkirk Square, Maple Grove.
2020-033	Weston Woods, Medina.	2023-022	Shores of Sylvan Lake, Rogers.
2021-020	Crew Carwash, Maple Grove.	2023-023	NORSQ, Maple Grove.
2021-029	Tri-Care Grocery / Retail, Maple Grove	2023-024	Elm Creek Rest Area Sidewalk Reconstruction, MG.
2021-034	BAPS Hindu Temple, Medina.	2023-025	Rogers Mixed Use Improvement.
2021-036	D & D Service, Corcoran.	2023-026	Rogers Elementary School Site Improvements.
2021-044	Balsam II Apartments, Dayton.	2023-027	Hamel Apartments, Medina.
2021-052	Norbella Senior Living, Rogers.	2023-028	Rush Creek Hollow, Maple Grove.
2022-006	Hamel Townhomes, Medina.	2023-029	Dayton Field 4th Addition.

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2022-011	Arrowhead Drive Turn Lane Expansion, Medina.	2023-030	Woodland Hill of Corcoran.
2022-013	Dayton 94 Industrial Site.		
2022-016	Rogers Activity Center.	2024-001	Saddle Ridge, Rogers.
2022-017	City Center Drive, Corcoran.	2024-002	The Meadow Park, Plymouth.
2022-018	Big Woods, Rogers.		
2022-020	Skye Meadows Extension, Rogers.		
2022-022	Cook Lake Highlands, Corcoran.		
2022-026	Archway Building, Rogers		
2022-028	Elsie Stephens Park, Dayton.		
2022-038	Tavera North Side, Corcoran.		
2022-040	Karinieimi Meadows, Corcoran.		
2022-043	Meander Park and Boardwalk, Medina.		
2022-049	Connexus Energy South Dayton Substation.		
2023-001	Chankahda Trail Reconstruction Phase 2, Plymouth.		
2023-004	Medina Industrial Site.		
2023-008	Rush Creek Boulevard Interchange, Maple Grove.		
2023-009	Magnifi Financial, Maple Grove.		
2023-010	Rogers New Fire Station.		

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