

# elm creek

## Watershed Management Commission

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### Regular Meeting Minutes May 14, 2025

**I. CALL TO ORDER.** A meeting of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 11:40 a.m., Wednesday, May 14, 2025, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Chairman Doug Baines.

Present: Bill Walraven, Champlin; Tom Anderson, Corcoran; Doug Baines, Dayton; Terry Sharp, Medina; Catherine Cesnik, Plymouth; and David Katzner, Rogers.

Not represented: Maple Grove.

Also present: Steven Touney, Champlin; Lauren Letsche, Corcoran; Derek Asche, Maple Grove; Ben Scharenbroich and Fintan Lenahan, Plymouth; Mike Albers, Rogers; Erik Megow and Diane Spector, Stantec; Rebecca Carlson, Resilience Resources; Kevin Ellis, Hennepin County Environment and Energy (HCEE); Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District; Jen Dullum, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); and Judie Anderson, JASS.

**II. AGENDA.** Motion by Cesnik, second by Walraven to approve the agenda.\* *Motion carried unanimously.*

Motion by Walraven second by Sharp to approve the Consent Agenda:

**Minutes of the April 9, 2025, meeting.\***

**May Treasurer's Report\* and claims** totaling \$49,206.23.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**III. OPEN FORUM.**

**IV. PUBLIC MEETING.**

*[The regular meeting was suspended and the public meeting was opened at 11:41 a.m.]*

**A.** On April 9, 2025, the Commission initiated a Minor Plan Amendment to the Third Generation Watershed Management Plan, adding two projects to the CIP and revising the cost of one existing project. This proposed revision is set forth in the *Notice of Minor Plan Amendment* included in Staff's May 7, 2025, memo.\*

**1.** The City of Dayton has proposed a revision to a project added to the CIP for 2025: a Diamond Lake drawdown/alum treatment. The revision eliminates the option for a whole lake drawdown and focuses only on alum treatment and associated SAV management and monitoring. Commission's cost in 2026 is \$330,000, levied in 2025.

**2.** The City of Maple Grove requests consideration of a project to restore a

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RULE D - STORMWATER MANAGEMENT  
RULE E - EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL  
RULE F - FLOODPLAIN ALTERATION

RULE G - WETLAND ALTERATION  
RULE H - BRIDGE AND CULVERT CROSSINGS  
RULE I - BUFFERS

\*indicates enclosure

**CHAMPLIN - CORCORAN - DAYTON - MAPLE GROVE - MEDINA - PLYMOUTH - ROGERS**

reach of Rush Creek from Rush Creek Hollow to Fernbrook Lane. This is adjacent to the Rush Creek at Rush Creek Hollow project ordered in 2024. Commission's cost in 2026 is \$200,000, levied in 2025.

3. The City of Corcoran has requested adding to the 2025 CIP cost share to purchase a new street sweeper. The Commission's Cost Share Policy allows this if the equipment provides enhanced street sweeping as a BMP. Commission's cost in 2026 is \$100,000, levied in 2025.

B. The purpose of this public meeting is to discuss the proposed Minor Plan Amendment and any comments received prior to or at this meeting. (Note, this is not a formal public hearing.) After that discussion, the Commission may consider Resolution 2025-01 Adopting a Minor Plan Amendment\* contingent on the County Board approving the CIP portion of the Minor Plan Amendment, which will be heard at a Board hearing in June-July 2025. As of today, two comments have been received -- from the Metropolitan Council commending the Commission for keeping its CIP up to date, and from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, which had no comment. No additional comments were received at this meeting.

C. **Recommendation and Future Actions.**

1. Adopt Resolution 2025-01.
2. June: adopt a maximum levy and report that to Hennepin County
3. August: call for a public hearing on proposed 2025 projects
4. September: hold a public hearing to adopt the projects and certify a levy to Hennepin County.

At their meeting preceding this one, members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended approval of the Minor Plan Amendment as written.

Motion by Sharp, second by Cesnik to adopt **Resolution 2025-01 Adopting a Minor Plan Amendment to the Third Generation Plan.\*** *Motion carried unanimously.*

*[The Public Meeting was closed and the regular meeting resumed at 11:45 a.m.]*

V. **PROJECT REVIEWS.**

A. **2024-033 Fletcher Bypass, Rogers.\*** The City is proposing a new roadway alignment to formally connect Fletcher Lane between CR 116/CR 159 (Territorial Road) to CSAH 81. The proposed project will realign Fletcher Bypass, extending approximately 0.9 miles from about 1,200 feet south of the Fletcher Lane and Territorial Road intersection to CSAH 81. The project will disturb 16.66 acres and result in an increase of 6.12 acres of new impervious surface. The project triggers Commission rules D and E. In their findings dated May 5, 2025, Staff recommended the project be approved with three conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) an O&M Plan for the stormwater ponds approved by the City of Rogers; and (3) updated filtration basin drain tile details and HydroCAD model consistent with depicted/modeled elevations. Motion by T. Anderson, second by Cesnik to approve Staff's recommendation. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**B. 2025-009 Creative Lawn, Rogers\*** This project is located on the west side of Northdale Boulevard, south of Hennepin County Road 144 (141st Avenue). The proposed project is a 3.0-acre site with approximately 2.4 acres of disturbed area and 1.07 acres of new and reconstructed impervious surfaces. The project is redevelopment of a vacant industrial property and includes additional parking areas and greenhouse. Staff's findings dated May 6, 2025, recommends approval with three conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) an O&M Plan for the stormwater ponds approved by the City of Rogers; and (3) geotechnical analysis or soil boring showing three feet of separation between the bottom of the infiltration basin and seasonally high groundwater and suitable soils for infiltration. If infiltration is deemed unfeasible, the applicant has shown that stormwater rate volume and water quality requirements are met utilizing biofiltration. Motion by Walraven, second by Sharp to approve Staff's recommendation. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**C. 2025-012 Territorial Grove, Dayton.\*** This is an 18.55-acre site located on the northwest corner of Territorial Road and French Lake Road East. The site is 430 feet north of Rush Creek. The proposed development is comprised of three parcels which are mostly cultivated agricultural land, with approximately 1.3 acres of forested area and three houses with residential areas. The site is located in the Rush Creek subwatershed. The applicant proposes construction of residential housing, three new roads, and associated pond, pond expansions, roadways and other infrastructure. Construction is set to begin spring or summer 2025, with road restrictions and weather permitting. The proposal will disturb 16.9 acres of the 18.5-acre site, resulting in 5.4 acres of new and reconstructed impervious. In their findings dated May 6, 2025, Staff recommend approval with four conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) documentation of modeling and site plan revisions to the pond grading and outlets to show that the project meets the Commission requirements for landlocked basins; (3) documentation that the revised NWLs for ponds 1 and 4, which are located on an existing development and are to be expanded, will meet the Low Floor requirements for the adjacent development with the proposed changes; and (4) an O&M Plan for the stormwater ponds if required by the City. Motion by T. Anderson, second by Walraven to approve Staff's recommendation, with the additional condition requiring documentation of approval from adjacent landowners for planned pond expansion; *Motion carried unanimously.*

**D. 2025-016 Elsie Stephens Park Phase III, Dayton.\*** This is a 21.14-acre site located on Dayton River Road adjacent to the Mississippi River. The site is comprised of four existing parcels. Land cover is forests, woodlands, cultivated vegetation, herbaceous, and artificial surfaces. The site is located in the Mississippi River subwatershed. The applicant proposes improvements to the park including new pavement, stormwater culverts, modifying stormwater management basins, and other associated site improvements. Construction is set to begin June 1, 2025. The proposal will disturb 1.30 acres of the 21.14-acre site, resulting in 0.64 acres of new impervious surface. In their findings dated May 6, 2025, Staff recommend approval conditioned on escrow reconciliation. Motion by Cesnik, second by T. Anderson to approve Staff's recommendation. In addition, the following condition has been added: (2) Denote limits of construction on the planset to limit compaction and, if there is a staging area for stripped soils or materials, provide additional erosion control and denote those locations on the planset. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**E. 2025-017 Sunset Bluff, Plymouth.\*** This project proposes to construct a residential subdivision and related infrastructure at the three existing properties located at the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Chankahda Trail and Vicksburg Lane. The proposed project will disturb approximately 11.08 acres with approximately 4.225 acres of impervious surface being created. The development will construct 38 residential lots with associated utilities and a stormwater filtration basin to provide rate control and water quality for the site. The project triggers Rules D, E, G, and I. Staff findings dated May 5, 2025, recommend approval pending escrow reconciliation. (The second condition regarding the O&M Plan has been met.) Motion by Katzner, second by Walraven to approve Staff’s recommendation. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**F. 2025-018 Elsie Stephens Canoe/Kayak Launch, Dayton.\*** This proposed project is located within Elsie Stephens Park. It is a 4.59-acre parcel on Dayton River Road adjacent to the Mississippi River. The parcel is a mixture of mostly grass cover, with some artificial surfaces and woodlands. The parcel is located in the Mississippi River subwatershed. The applicant proposes improvements which include a canoe and kayak launch and a park shelter. Construction was set to begin May 13, 2025. The proposal will disturb 0.20 acres of the 4.59-acre site, resulting in 0.05 acres of new impervious surface above the floodplain, some floodplain fill, and wetland impacts. In their findings dated May 6, 2025, Staff recommend approval with two conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation and (2) documentation of limits of construction on the plan set to limit compaction, and, if there is a staging area for stripped soils or materials, provision of additional erosion control and denotation of those locations on the plan set. Motion by T. Anderson, second by Cesnik to approve Staff’s recommendation. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**G. 2025-020 Corcoran City Park Improvements, Corcoran.\*** This is a 79.25-acre city park located at the northwest corner of the County Road 50 and County Road 10 intersection. The site is comprised of two existing parcels which are a mixture of forests, shrubland, planted and grass, and artificial surfaces and associated areas (multiple baseball fields, a tennis court, and a playground). The site is located within an “Unknown DNR Minor Watershed Name” subwatershed within the Elm Creek Watershed between two South Fork Rush Creek subwatersheds and an Elm Creek subwatershed. The applicant proposes construction of a pavilion building, parking lot, and park infrastructure including pickleball courts, playground equipment, and a walking trail. The project will disturb 13.5 acres of the 79.25-acre site, resulting in 2.2 acres of new impervious on the site. In their findings dated May 6, 2025, Staff recommend approval conditioned on escrow reconciliation. Motion by Walraven, second by T. Anderson to approve Staff’s recommendation. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**VI. 2026 OPERATING BUDGET.\***

**A.** According to the Joint Powers Agreement, the Commission must, on or before June 15 of each year, adopt a budget for the coming year. The budget must be transmitted along with notice of the apportionment of costs to each city by July 1.

**B.** The 2026 budget as proposed is a continuation of the programs and activities undertaken in 2025, with some slight modifications. The overall proposed 2026 operating budget

totals \$506,210, a \$10,300 increase over the 2025 budget, mainly due to adjustments in project review costs.

1. The budget includes a proposed increase in the administrative budget, which has only been modestly increased in the past several years. In the meantime, there has been an increase in the number of TAC, WBIF, and other meetings and project and grant accounting has become more complex. This is partly offset by eliminating the separate line item for grant writing which, in the past, has been funded through the General Technical Services budget.

2. The costs and revenues shown for project reviews in 2026 are based on the revised fee structure and past years' experiences. Staff assumes 40 project reviews in 2026.

3. Some adjustments have been made to individual line items based on past experience and based on the increasing cost of doing business.

C. No increase is proposed for 2026 member assessments, which total \$257,000. There was no increase in 2024 and a 3% increase in 2025. Four of the seven member cities experienced a small to moderate increase in taxable market value, resulting in increases in assessment of between \$127 and \$2,744. The 2026 budget assumes a \$21,910 contribution from cash reserves to limit any increase in assessments.

D. The Commission's Comprehensive Fund Balance Policy requires that the Commission maintain a cash reserve equal to either 50% of annual operating revenues or five months of operating expenses. While the 2024 year-end balance is still under audit, it appears likely that the Commission currently maintains more than adequate cash reserves, especially since it appears at year-end the budget ended with a \$79,000+ surplus due to interest earnings.

E. The draft budget\* was presented for the TAC's review and discussion earlier today where they recommended adoption of the budget with the following revisions:

1. Addition of a line item in the amount of \$25,000 in support of the Stormwater Research Council. Monies to fund this line item would be taken from the unrestricted fund balance.

2. Amounts in the monitoring section of the budget will be reviewed to be sure they only include routine monitoring and not the TMDL monitoring expenses.

With these adjustments, motion by Cesnik, second by Walraven to approve the 2026 operating budget as proposed. *Motion carried unanimously.*

## VII. WEBSITE PLATFORM.\*

The Commission's website host, Weebly, is focusing on its e-commerce operations and its e-commerce platform and will, in the future, provide limited support for its "traditional" website builder. The websites for Elm Creek, Shingle Creek/West Mississippi, Pioneer-Sarah Creek and WMWA are over ten years old. They are functional and have served their purpose but are missing some elements that users expect of modern websites, such as searchable document libraries and calendars. They are also not ADA-compliant or user-friendly. It is Staff's recommendation that the

Commissions use this opportunity to not only move the sites over to a new platform but also to revitalize and modernize them.

Staff have received preliminary quotes ranging from \$10,000 to \$25,000+ each, depending on how much site redesign is involved and how many files are stored in each library that need to be brought over. These quotes do not include any cost for staff time to assist on the project or other costs such as branding or logo development. Staff suggest the Commissions consider the following process:

1. There is some benefit for the watershed sites to be completed in tandem, by the same vendor and using the same platform. **Decision #1: Do you want to work in tandem with the other two watersheds in this process?**

2. If the decision is made to proceed as a group, each WMO should designate one to two Commissioners and one to two TAC members to serve as a **Steering Committee** that will be coordinated by Staff. The primary function of the Steering Committee is to develop the website requirements and review the resulting RFP that Staff will develop. **Decision #2: Do you wish to participate in a joint Steering Committee, and who are your designees?**

3. Staff envision a stepwise process where the Steering Committee would prepare and send out an RFP by the end of summer, contracting with a single vendor, with an estimate completion date of 3-6 months. **Decision #3: Any comments on the proposed process?**

4. The attorney would also draw up a Memorandum of Understanding between the Commissions, outlining the various components of the process and the individuals responsible for them, etc.

Earlier today, members of the TAC recommended that the Commission move forward as outlined above.

The Commissioners were also of a consensus to move forward. Scharenbroich volunteered to serve on the Steering Committee from the TAC, Cesnik from the Commission.

#### VIII. FOURTH GENERATION WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN.\*

A. At the April TAC meeting the members discussed some outstanding issues for consideration in the Fourth Gen Plan Rules and Standards update. Based on this discussion, Staff incorporated the following into the review draft, which can be found on the website ([Minutes & Meeting Packets - Elm Creek Watershed](#)):

1. The thresholds for triggering Rule D Stormwater Management have been revised to:

a. Eliminate the requirement that projects of any size that are adjacent to or contain lakes, streams, or wetlands, or that impact floodplains must meet all the volume management, rate control, and water quality requirements of Rule D.

b. Explicitly exempt stand-alone single-family houses from Rule D. Other rules would still apply, for example if there was a wetland or floodplain impact proposed.

2. Members also discussed pulling some more technical, design detail-like language out of the rules and into a separate guidance document. Concern was expressed that doing so might imply that those standards were voluntary guidance rather than expectations or requirements. This discussion will be moved to a future date in order to gather input and feedback from other WMOs who have similar guidance documents, and learning from their experience.

**B. CAC Meetings.** Staff have met with every city. There were a few questions about the upcoming chloride management plan, the proposed resiliency study, future land use, poor soils, and lack of infiltration. The CACs were encouraged to use the comment form on the website to convey questions and provide input.

**C. Public Survey.** The first online survey is now available. Staff will be sending out a press release and requests to the cities to post the link. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JZZG92V>. Five responses have been received, three from Dayton. TAC members also recommended creating city social media posts.

**D. Informal Review Draft.** A second draft of the plan and the appendices have been uploaded to the website at [elmcreekwatershed.org/watershed-management-plan.html](http://elmcreekwatershed.org/watershed-management-plan.html) and are now ready to be sent out to the cities for INFORMAL review. This is an opportunity for cities to submit comments for consideration before the formal 60-Day Review period begins in June. A copy of the **press release\*** that is proposed for this announcement is included in the meeting packet.

Motion by Baines, second by Walraven to send out the Plan for Informal Review. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**IX. WATER QUALITY.**

**X. GRANT OPPORTUNITIES.**

**XI. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH.**

**A. West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA).**

1. WMWA's **April media kit** highlights Earth Month and includes directions for residents to clean up streets, improve water quality, and sign up for the Adopt-a-Drain program. It contains a sample newsletter article about Earth Month and Adopt-A-Drain to spread awareness about stormwater pollution from spring storms.

2. **Adopt-a-Drain K12 Campaign.** WMWA has concluded outreach efforts for the campaign, reaching their goal of enrolling two classrooms per watershed for each region except for Elm Creek, where schools have not responded to outreach attempts.

3. **Eagle Lake and Fish Lake Shoreline/Yard Restoration Projects.** Metro Blooms/Blue Thumb staff are in the process of finalizing project designs and have started sharing completed designs with residents. All designs are expected to be completed by this spring, with the goal of having projects installed during the spring and summer. Internally, WMWA is working to finalize a contract to facilitate stipend distribution to workshop participants who are imple-

menting these practices. Later this spring, WMWA staff will collaborate with partners to schedule kick-off meetings for the next series of workshops, which are planned for this summer and fall.

**4. Southgate Apartment Project** (stormwater improvements, pollinator enhancements, and community engagement) in the Bloomington-Richfield WMO. WMWA has successfully completed engagement activities with Southgate apartment residents and are now finalizing a contract with Metro Blooms for the next phase of this project. This phase will involve completing designs to 100% and collaborating with residents and contractors to implement stormwater BMPs, rain gardens, pollinator plantings, and a nature play area, all scheduled for installation in the summer of 2025.

Grace Barcelow, the Hennepin County Conservation Specialist who sends the media kits each month, asks you to reach out to her if you have any new employees working at your city or organization or know of new employees at neighboring cities that may want to be added to the list. Contact her at [grace.barcelow@hennepin.us](mailto:grace.barcelow@hennepin.us).

**B. West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA)** will meet via Zoom at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, June 10, 2025. Follow this link to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/922390839?pwd=TkIBQW1ZNXVXdzdtTDBTSDZkZmZuQT09>

## XII. COMMUNICATIONS.

**A. Staff Report.\*** The Staff Report provides updates on the development projects currently under review by Staff.

### **B. Hennepin County Staff Report.\***

**1. Lake Henry Horse Ranch, Rogers.** Staff performed a preliminary site visit to a horse ranch in the Rush Creek subwatershed near Lake Henry. This contact came from the Farm and County Coffee Hour series where the operator attended and discussed potential conservation projects with Hennepin County Staff. During the site visit, staff noticed potential opportunities for cost-share for conservation projects including manure storage, barn gutters, exclusionary fencing around wetlands, pasture reseeding and heavy use area protections. Staff are currently evaluating these potential projects and the potential impacts they could have on water quality in Lake Henry and the larger subwatershed.

**2. City of Corcoran.** Staff have met with City of Corcoran Public Works staff to discuss the seeding plan for the spring season. The native seed mix will be planted in mid-May after field preparation has been completed. If wet field conditions persist through the seeding window, a cover crop of oats will be planted for the growing season, followed by dormant seeding of the native seed mix.

**3. Bottema Wetland Restoration, Corcoran.** Seeding will be done in May or early June on areas that were not well established in 2023-2024. Final construction on this project is still projected to occur later this spring or early summer.

**4. Christian Sediment Basin, Dayton.** Staff and the Technical Service Provider did a preliminary inspection of rip-rap and earthwork and found the work to be done as specified

by the plan with no issues. The 24" culvert still needs to be installed, and seeding will need to be done before the project can be fully closed out. This work is likely to occur sometime in May.

5. **2025 Watershed Services Agreement.** The approved version of the services agreement has been routed for signature to the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission and appropriate Hennepin County Staff. Once fully executed, the agreement will be in place.

6. **Elm Creek Watershed Management Plan Amendment.** County Staff support the amendment to the Watershed Management Plan pending any public comment at the May meeting. An extension may be required given the County Board meeting schedule. Staff are streamlining the internal Watershed Plan Amendment review process to avoid extensions due to scheduling in the future.

7. The **Project Funding Table** and other **County programming** complete the report.

**XIII. OTHER BUSINESS.**

The Commissioners were reminded of **appointments**. Unless otherwise noted in their Cities' resolutions, these appointments are for one year and must be renewed annually. Appointments have been received from Maple Grove, Medina, and Plymouth.

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Judie A. Anderson  
Recording Secretary  
JAA:tim

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