elm creek
Watershed Management Commission

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Regular Meeting Minutes | August 12, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER. A meeting of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 11:32 a.m., Wednesday, August 12, 2026, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Vice Chair Joe Trainor.

Present: Andrew Kessler, Champlin; Loren Evenrud, Corcoran; Sara VanAsten, Dayton; Joe Trainor, Maple Grove; Chris Dahl, Medina; Ken Dutton, Plymouth; and Dave Katzner, Rogers.

Also present: Steven Touney, Champlin; Derek Asche, Maple Grove; Lilly Bowman, Plymouth; Mike Albers, Rogers; Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); Kris Guentzel, Hennepin County; Eric Osterdyk, Lisa Tilman, and Diane Spector, Stantec; Rebecca Carlson, Resilience Resources; and Judie Anderson, JASS.

Also present: Eric Seppelt, Dayton, and John Bernens for project 2026-023.

II. AGENDA. Motion by Kessler, second by Dahl to approve the **August 12, 2026 agenda** with the following additions:

3. Open Forum. Add **Election of Officers.**

11. Other Business. Add **Salt Symposium.***

Motion carried unanimously.

III. Motion by Trainor, second by Kessler to approve **minutes of the July 8, 2026 meeting.*** *Motion carried unanimously.*

Motion by Trainor, second by VanAsten to approve the August **Treasurer's Report and Claims totaling $120,368.91.*** *Motion carried unanimously.* Staff noted that the BWK invoice exceeded the Audit line item due to new audit and accounting quality control standards which went into effect in 2025.

IV. OPEN FORUM.

The Commission has been advised that the City of Dayton will be appointing a new Representative and Alternate to the Commission at their City Council meeting on August 13. For this reason, new officers must be elected. This election will take place at the Commission's September 9, 2026 meeting. Current officers include: Doug Baines, Dayton, Chair; Joe Trainor, Maple Grove, Vice Chair; Christina Frazier, Plymouth, Secretary; and Chris Dahl, Medina, Treasurer. Those individuals willing to serve are asked to contact Staff by August 31, 2026.

V. PROJECT REVIEWS.

[Kessler arrived 11:54 a.m.]

A. 2025-037 Thicket Hills, Dayton.* This is a 68.49-acre site located on the southwest corner of Lawndale Lane and Dayton River Road. At the closest point, the site is about 400 feet south of the Mississippi River and is comprised of one parcel which is a mixture of primarily cultivated vegetation along with grassland and approximately 2.70 acres of residential vegetation. There are 1.854 acres of impervious surface onsite. The applicant proposes construction of a two-story building, an event center, gravel parking lot, well, septic system, and stormwater treatment basin. The project will disturb 8.067 acres and result in 2.511 acres of new impervious surface after development, for a total of 4.365 acres of impervious surface. An extension of one year from the application date, (to August 28, 2026,) was granted to the applicant at the December 10, 2025, Commission meeting.

The applicant provided updated materials on June 25 and July 30, 2026. The latter submittal appears to address many of the outstanding issues, but Staff needs more time for review. The findings included in the August meeting packet list outstanding issues as they stand prior to a complete review of the July 30 material. Staff have talked through these with the applicant and presented applicant's updates and updated Staff findings at the August meeting for consideration. The applicant requested another extension of 90 days via email on August 3, 2026 bringing the deadline to November 26, 2026.

Motion by Katzner, second by Dahl to table action on Staff's findings dated August 3, 2026. *Motion carried unanimously.*

B. 2026-008 Tricare 9th Addition, Maple Grove.* The site is located west of Garland Lane between Lawndale Lane and 95th Avenue North (CR 30). The project proposes to disturb approximately two acres to construct a self-storage building. The project triggers Rules D, E, and I. A complete project review application was received on March 17, 2026, and initial comments were sent to the applicant on that date. Additional comments were sent to the applicant on July 20 and July 28, 2026. In their findings dated August 3, 2026, Staff recommend approval with four conditions: (1) reconciliation of the escrow fee; (2) receipt of an O&M plan approved by the City, (3) wetland buffer easement, and (4) wetland buffer maintenance and vegetation establishment plan approved by the City.

Motion by Katzner, second by Trainor to approve Staff recommendations. *Motion carried unanimously.*

C. 2026-010 Willis Trucking Multi-Family Development, aka 30402 Millhouse Flats, Rogers.* The site is approximately 4.62 acres, located at 21601 John Deere Lane. The project proposes to disturb approximately 4.7 acres to construct a multifamily apartment building and associated parking, triggering Rules D and E. A complete project review application was received April 29, 2026, and initial comments were sent to the applicant on May 6, 2026. An updated submittal was received June 24, 2026. A second round of comments were sent to the applicant on July 10, 2026.

An updated submittal was received July 29, 2026. In their findings dated August 3, 2026, Staff recommend approval with three conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation, (2) documentation clarification consistency between H/H model and site plans, and (3) stormwater facility O&M plan approved by the City.

Motion by Dahl, second by Van Asten to approve Staff recommendations. *Motion carried unanimously.*

D. 2026-023 Sundance Greens 12th.* The site is located within the broader Sundance Greens development north of Rush Creek Parkway and west of Fernbrook Lane North and west/ south of east/west portion of where 113th Avenue North tees into 110th Avenue North. The applicant proposes construction of three stormwater ponds, 48 single-family homes, a maintenance building and associated roadways. Stormwater requirements were permitted previously, so only erosion control and consistency with prior development plans were considered for this review. A complete application was received June 29, 2026. The initial 60-day decision period per MN Statute 15.99 expires August 28, 2026. In findings dated August 3, 2026, Staff recommend approval with six conditions.

Following discussion, motion by VanAsten, second by Trainor to table action on Staff's August 3, 2026, findings. *Motion carried unanimously.*

VI. OLD BUSINESS.

VII. NEW BUSINESS.

2026 Maximum CIP Levy. The Commission established the maximum proposed levy for the 2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) at its June 2026 meeting. The next step in the process is to call for a public hearing to consider ordering and certifying a levy for proposed projects and programs. The table below shows the projects under consideration and their funding.

The final step in the CIP process will be to hold a public hearing on the proposed projects at the Commission's regular September 9, 2026 meeting. At that time, the Commission will formally order the projects, certify levies to Hennepin County, and authorize the execution of any necessary cooperative agreements with the cities acting as the lead city to contract the ordered projects.

Project	Total Cost	City/Private	Commission Share	Commission Levy
Reconstruct Bridge at Cartway	$2,160,000	1,910,000	$250,000	$255,000
Maple Grove Sweeper	400,000	300,000	100,000	105,000
Elm Ck Valley Stream Restoration	600,000	450,000	150,000	155,000
Subtotal	$3,160,000	$2,660,000	$500,000	$515,000
TOTAL LEVY (101% for uncollectable)				$520,150

Reconstruct Bridge at Cartway, Champlin. Reconstruction of the Cartway Drive bridge over Elm Creek. The proposed crossing will reduce velocities in and around the crossing, reducing erosion and sediment load transport downstream. The proposed crossing decreases the floodplain elevation and width upstream, reducing flood risk and increasing conveyance capacity. The proposed crossing is conducive to aquatic organism passage. The widened culvert opening more closely mimics bankfull conditions to align with the creek restoration that has been completed upstream and down and restores aquatic connectivity.

Elm Creek Valley Stream Restoration, Maple Grove. Stream restoration and erosion repair of 1,600 linear feet of Elm Creek upstream (south) of Elm Road. Estimated phosphorus reduction of 100 lbs./year, improved riparian environment, enhanced habitat, and improved recreation and access to the creek.

Maple Grove Sweeper. Cost participation in the purchase of a street sweeper to expand the systematic municipal street sweeping program.

Motion by Kessler, second by Dahl to call for a public hearing at the Commission's September 9, 2026, meeting for the purpose of considering the proposed projects and associated levies. *Motion carried unanimously.*

VIII. GRANT OPPORTUNITIES.

2026-2027 WBIF. 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"). BWSR approved allocations for fiscal year 2026-2027 of **$373,590** for Elm Creek, the same amount as in 2024-2025. A minimum 10% match is required.

These funds are **not** allocated to the Commission, they are allocated to the Elm Creek Allocation Area, and any eligible entity can apply for them. Eligible entities include the cities, Commission, and Hennepin County. The Convene process is the way BWSR requires the Partnership to decide how to solicit and evaluate projects and activities, and which to recommend for funding.

The Partnership must include one decision-making representative from each eligible entity (cities up to two). 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 Commission representatives may be TAC members or Commissioners.

History of Elm Creek WBIF funding

Biennium	Project/Activity	Amount
2018-2019	Elm Creek Phase IV Restoration (Champlin)	$134,486
2020-2021	Elm Creek Phase V Restoration (Champlin)	$200,000
	S Fork Rush Creek Restoration (Maple Grove)	$314,153
2022-2023	Priority Assessments	$92,774
	Ag BMPs *	175,000
	WMWA Conservation Specialist **	30,000
2024-2025	AG BMPs *	$175,000
	Diamond Lk Neighborhood BMPs (Dayton)	108,000
	Fish & Rice Lake Carp Mgmt (Maple Grove)	44,590
	WMWA Conservation Specialist **	46,000
2026-2027	TBD	$373,590

*Awarded to Commission but implemented by Hennepin County

**Contracted directly to Hennepin County

Staff recommends that at this meeting the Commission and TAC take volunteers for this Convene process, two to represent cities and one to represent the Commission. The County will also designate a representative, and BWSR will be formally represented as well. It is anticipated that 2-3 virtual meetings will be needed to discuss options for the use of the funds and make a recommendation.

Activities eligible for funding 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 or Local Plans may be eligible as long as the end goal is the protection and improvement of water quality. The Partnership may choose to award the funds to one high-priority project or make numerous awards for varying objectives. The table on the preceding page shows the range of past-funded projects and activities.

Volunteers: Kris Guentzel, Hennepin County; Jen Dullum, BWSR; Lisa Tilman, Commission Staff; Drew Kessler, Champlin; Derek Asche, Maple Grove; Steven Touney, Champlin; and Lilly Bowman, Plymouth.

IX. EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.

A. **West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA**) will meet via Zoom at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 8, 2026. The link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/922390839?pwd=TklBQW1ZNXVXdzdtTDBTSDZkZmZuQT09.

B. The **WMWA Classroom Educator,** Joanna Sorenson, has resigned.

C. Included in the meeting packet were **staff updates*** from Kris Guentzel discussing the Sacred Water Share Future initiative; reminding partners about the fall media kits; the shoreline restorations on Fish, Eagle, Rice, Weaver, Cedar Island, and the Twin Lakes; the BCWMC Multifamily Housing project; and the Parkers Lake chloride reduction project.

D. Also included was a copy of the latest issue of ***Green Notes**** "Celebrating 100 Years of Protecting the Mississippi River."

E. **Updated Services Agreement.*** WMWA was established as an informal partnership to jointly provide common education and outreach programming, funded by contributions from four Watershed Management Organizations (WMOs) and guided by an Education and Outreach Plan. There is no formal structure to WMWA, a "committee of who shows up."

In 2010, the four WMOs (Shingle Creek, West Mississippi, Elm, and Bassett) that are members executed an agreement to work jointly on education and outreach in the area and designated the Shingle Creek WMO to provide administrative and technical services. The four WMOs agreed to share equally in the cost of those services. The Agreement has not been updated since 2015.

During the strategic planning regarding the future of WMWA, the Steering Committee reviewed this agreement and recommended that it be brought up to date. In the meeting packet is a **clean copy*** of the proposed updated agreement, and a **redlined version*** showing the edits. While it looks like a lot of edits, most are clarifications and codifications of

current practices. Staff recommend approval of the agreement, pending review by all the WMO attorneys.

Motion by Trainor, second by Katzner to approve the agreement pending review by the Commission's attorney. *Motion carried unanimously.*

F. Future Actions.

1. The WMWA Education and Outreach Plan will be updated over the next few months to guide the Steering Committee's first Annul Work Plan in January 2027.

2. Consider renewing the WBIF grant funds for the next period at a lower amount as the organization becomes more self-sustaining, eventually phasing them out entirely.

3. Continue to re-evaluate options to convert the part-time limited-duration coordinator position to a full-time, permanent position.

[Katzner departed 1:08 p.m.]

X. COMMUNICATIONS.

A. Staff Report. The August 3, 2026, Staff Report* provides updates on the development projects currently under review by Staff.

B. August 3, 2026 Hennepin County Staff Report.*

1. Cain Wetland Fencing, Corcoran. Newly constructed wetland fencing passed inspection. Hennepin County is now circulating vouchers for reimbursement. Final cost of the fence was $9,600 of which 90% will be funded using WBIF (55%), CIP (25%) and Hennepin County (10%) balances. Voucher will be circulated for signature, and the project will be closed out. Regular inspections of the fence will take place according to the schedule specified in the cost-share agreement.

2. Trousdale Wetland Restoration, Corcoran. Staff are currently engaged in WCA permitting for this project. Information gathered from site visits will be presented to the TAC later this year.

3. Van Asten Manure Bunker and Gutters, Dayton. Hennepin County received a draft proposal from the contractor that includes plans for the manure bunker and barn gutters. The manure bunker included in the plans is property-sized based on the proposed timelines for utilizing, selling, and hauling excess compost. County staff are currently working through the contracting process for this project.

4. Sovereign Stables, Dayton. Landowner indicated that they would not have funds on hand to pay for a manure bunker installation and then receive reimbursement, which is the typical process. Hennepin County staff are working with BWSR to develop a contracting process that would send cost-share funds to contractor directly instead. Final documents will be submitted to BWSR for approval before advancing the project.

5. Ghostley Road Horse Farm, Rogers. Staff at the horse farm are interested in constructing a manure bunker, exclusionary fencing, pasture reseeding and any other practices that will protect water quality. This horse farm is not within a priority subwatershed, meaning that it is not eligible for cost-share funding. The farm is within the Crow River watershed. However, the farm may be eligible for soil-health funding for pasture reseeding. Hennepin County staff will conduct soil testing and work with the landowner to determine eligibility for reseeding.

6. Crow River 1 Watershed 1 Plan. The North Fork Crow River 1 Watershed 1 Plan group is starting the next phase of planning efforts for the watershed. The updated area encompasses parts of the Elm Creek Watershed (Rogers). Amy Riegel will be the Hennepin County representative for the planning process on the technical advisory committee and can share updates with the Commission if desired. Hennepin County is sending an initial letter with natural resource priorities and concerns to the planning group by September 14, 2026. Any additional comments from the Elm Creek Commission may be submitted before that deadline.

7. Project funding and other **County programming** completes the report.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS.

2026 Salt Symposium.* The symposium will be held October 27-28 and is hosted by the University of Minnesota Cold Climate Stormwater Center of Excellence (CCSCoE). The Commission received an invitation to participate as a sponsor of this year's event, which is expected to attract between 100-500 salt professionals from the USA, Canada, and elsewhere.

Moton by Trainor, second by Dutton for the Commission to participate as a bronze sponsor at the $500 level. *Motion carried unanimously.*

XII. ADJOURNMENT. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judie A. Anderson
Recording Secretary
JAA:tim

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