

elm creek

Watershed Management Commission

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
3235 Fernbrook Lane
Plymouth, MN 55447

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

Regular Meeting Minutes August 13, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER. A meeting of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 11:41 a.m., Wednesday, August 13, 2025, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Vice Chairman Joe Trainor.

Present: Gerry Butcher, Champlin; Loren Evenrud, Corcoran; Joe Trainor, Maple Grove; Catherine Cesnik, Plymouth; and Dave Kaztner, Rogers.

Not represented: Dayton and Medina.

Also present: Steven Touney, Champlin; Lauren Letsche, Corcoran; Josh Accola, Stantec/Dayton; Derek Asche, Maple Grove; Dusty Finke, Medina; Ben Scharenbroich, Plymouth; Mike Albers, Rogers; Erik Megow and Diane Spector, Stantec; Rebecca Carlson, Resilience Resources; Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District; Kevin Ellis, Hennepin County; and Judie Anderson, JASS.

Also present: Connie Fortin, Bolton & Menk.

II. AGENDA. Motion by Cesnik, second by Trainor to approve the agenda* as presented. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Cesnik requested that the July Minutes be pulled from the **Consent Agenda**.

Motion by Cesnik, second by Butcher to approve the **August Treasurer's Report* and claims** totaling \$53,852.76. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Motion by Cesnik, second by Butcher to approve the **Minutes of the July 9, 2025, meeting*** with the inclusion of Cesnik's request to convene a subcommittee meeting to discuss financial matters. *Motion carried unanimously.*

III. OPEN FORUM.

Connie Fortin, Bolton & Menk, was present to describe a process to improve the understanding of Low Salt Design by plan review experts and to integrate winter into the concept stage so as to create the best opportunity to improve safety and reduce salt use. Fortin presented a draft Scope of Services totaling \$25,000 which included 1) creating a team of plan review and Low Salt Design (LSD) experts; 2) exploring LSD plan review struggles and improvements; 3) developing a checklist/process flow chart; 4) developing a resource list; and (5) overseeing project progress.

Motion by Trainor, second by Cesnik to approve an expenditure of \$10,000 toward this process, to be taken from the Projects and Studies Fund. *Motion carried unanimously.*

IV. PROJECT REVIEWS.

A. 2025-014 Cowley Lake Preserve, Rogers.* This project is a single-family shoreland

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PUD development. The project is located along the south shore of Cowley Lake, situated between the intersection of Territorial Road/Willandale Road and the westerly terminus of 133rd Avenue North. The preliminary plat consists of three parcels and totals approximately 89.0 acres. The development will result in 169 lots along Cowley Lake. The project triggers Rules D, E, G and I. A findings of fact memo dated July 31, 2025 is included in the meeting packet wherein Staff recommend approval with four conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Plan approved by the City; (3) an approved wetland replacement plan for the wetland impacts; and (4) an updated wetland buffer plan showing the seed mix that will be used to restore/create the proposed wetland buffers. Motion by Trainor, second by Cesnik to approve these conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

B. 2025-027 Legacy Woods, Dayton.* This project is a single 104.9-acre parcel located on the north side of Diamond Lake Road North between Brockton and Lawndale Lanes. Laura Lake is at the southeast corner of the proposed development. The site is located in the Crow River subwatershed of the Elm Creek Watershed and is a mixture of woodland, wetlands and some cultivated land in the high area with no impervious area. The applicant proposes construction of 10 houses with driveways and septic systems, and a new road. The proposal will disturb 18.7 acres of the site and result in 2.7 acres of new impervious surface after development. Initial comments were provided to the applicant on June 3. The applicant resubmitted a revised plan set and stormwater report on July 9, 2025, in response to Commission comments. In their findings revised July 30, 2025, Staff recommend approval with six conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) an O&M Plan approved by the City; (3) the Low Floor Elevation (LFE) and exact impervious for the 10 proposed homes to be constructed at a later date. The table provided by the applicant documents these two pieces of information. Each home must be submitted for review for consistency with these data at the time of construction to ensure alignment with Commission requirements, including the review fee; (4) provide the existing condition model for the 1-year event to document the proposed condition mimics the existing 1 and 2-year events; (5) provide necessary easement documentation for the proposed tree preservation areas; and (6) provide extent and nature of wetland impacts proposed as well as the TEP executed approval of mitigation or de minimis determination. Motion by Trainor, second by Katzner to approve these conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

C. 2025-029 Meadows of Medina.* The project proposes development for 31 single-family residential housing units along with parking and utility improvements on approximately 22 acres. The site is north of Medina Road and west of Brockton Lane. The project triggers Rules D, E, F, G, and I. A findings of fact memo dated July 31, 2025 is included in the meeting packet wherein Staff recommends approval with four conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) an O&M Plan approved by the City; (3) an approved wetland replacement plan for the wetland impacts; and (4) an irrigation pumping and pipe network plan, along with calculations for the pump, showing that the irrigation of the proposed volume will occur within 48 hours. Motion by Trainor, second by Butcher to approve these conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

D. 2025-030 Villas at Hunter Hill, Medina.* The project spans approximately 3.2 acres on a site located west of Hunter Drive and south of Hamel Road. The project proposes to build

residential housing units along with associated parking and driveways. The project triggers Rules D, E, G, and I. A findings of fact memo dated July 28, 2025, is included in the meeting packet wherein Staff recommends conditional approval with three conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) an O&M Plan approved by the City; and (3) an updated grading and erosion control plan with a filtration basin design that allows for a minimum filtration media depth of 12 inches. Motion by Trainor, second by Katzner to approve these conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

E. 2025-031 Hindu Society of MN Education & Cultural Center, Maple Grove.* The project disturbs approximately three acres of a 75-acre site located north of the Hindu Society of MN Temple located at 10530 Temple Drive. The project proposes development of an Educational Center along with associated driveways and pedestrian pathways and triggers Rules D and E. A findings of fact memo dated July 23, 2025, is included in the meeting packet wherein Staff recommends approval with two conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation and (2) an O&M Plan approved by the City. Motion by Trainor, second by Katzner to approve these conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

V. OLD BUSINESS.

VI. NEW BUSINESS.

A. 2025 CIP.* The Commission established the maximum proposed levy for the 2025 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) at its June 2025 meeting. The next step in the CIP process is to call for a public hearing to consider ordering and certifying a levy for proposed projects and programs.

The final step will be to hold a public hearing on the proposed projects and programs at the Commission’s September 10, 2025, 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.

Elm Creek 2025 CIP Projects (2026 levy).

Project	Total Est. Cost	City/Other	Commission Share	Total Levy
Diamond Lake Alum Treatment	\$330,000	\$0	\$330,000	\$349,965
Rush Creek – Rush Hollow to Fernbrook	800,000	600,000	200,000	212,100
Corcoran Sweeper	400,000	300,000	100,000	106,050
Subtotal	\$1,530,000	\$900,000	\$630,000	\$668,115
5% for legal/admin costs			31,500	
Subtotal			661,500	
TOTAL LEVY (101% for Uncollectable)			\$668,115	\$668,115

Diamond Lake Alum Treatment. Alum treatment and aquatic vegetation management in Diamond Lake to consolidate sediments, reduce nutrient release from sediments,

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and control invasive curly-leaf pondweed. This is phase 1 of the proposed levy; an additional levy for this project will be certified in 2026 for completion in 2026-2028.

Rush Creek – Rush Hollow to Fernbrook. Stream restoration and erosion repair of 1,600 linear feet of Rush Creek downstream of Rush Hollow to Fernbrook Lane. Estimated phosphorus reduction of 100 lbs/year, improved riparian environment, floodplain connectivity, and recreation and access to the creek.

Corcoran Sweeper. Cost participation in the purchase of a street sweeper to begin a systematic municipal street sweeping program.

Motion by Trainor, second by Butcher to call for a public hearing at the Commission’s September 10, 2025, meeting to consider ordering and certifying a levy for the projects identified above. *Motion carried unanimously.*

B. Website RFP.* A small group of representatives from Elm Creek, Shingle Creek, West Mississippi, and Pioneer-Sarah Creek have met to review a draft RFP prepared by staff for migrating and refreshing their websites. Attached is a draft* that reflects that group’s comments. The group plans to meet one last time for a final review; although no substantive revisions are anticipated. Staff hope to finalize the RFP for distribution by the last week of August.

The recommended actions are 1) discuss and provide feedback; 2) approve the RFP subject to any additional modifications by the working group; and 3) authorize Shingle Creek, acting as the Fiscal and Contracting Agent, to proceed with distributing the RFP. In the interim, Staff will request input from the member cities about potential vendors that they would recommend. Earlier today, the TAC recommended approval of the RFP and the estimated \$10,000 - \$15,000 individualized cost.

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

C. Project Review Process.* There has been ongoing discussion regarding how to speed up the process of closing out development project reviews. Typically, the project review has been approved contingent on one or more conditions and the applicant is able to meet most or all the conditions within 60-90 days. However, some project reviews remain open longer. There may be multiple rounds of post-approval review as plans are modified, and the engineer and admin staff must spend time checking in with the applicant and the City to check status, incurring additional costs that are difficult to recoup and track.

Under the current structure, the final review fee reconciliation cannot occur until all the conditions are met and the engineer has reviewed and signed off on them. It is to the Commission’s benefit and obligation to close-out these projects as soon as possible.

At the July meeting members discussed some procedural changes that would hand over some of the responsibility for post-approval follow-up to the cities. The project review is not a permit, it is a recommendation to the city to be considered as part of the city’s own approval process. Cities have their own lists of conditions for individual developments, so adding any

pending watershed conditions should not be onerous, and some cities already include these conditions with their permits. Based on that discussion, Staff suggest modifying the project review administrative process as follows:

1. The reviewing engineer will continue to work with applicants during the project review process to resolve issues with their plans to limit the scope, complexity, and number of conditions of approval. Once a project is approved by the Commission, JASS will continue to send out a Notice of Conditional Approval to the City, cc'ing the applicant and their engineer/representative. This Notice lists pending conditions and will ask for their resolution within 30 days, noting that once all conditions are satisfied the escrow will be reconciled within 60-90 days. Stantec and Resilience Resources will ensure that they bill monthly to provide for that timely reconciliation.

2. After 30 days, the engineer will review conditional items with the City to discuss their resolution and any outstanding items. Unless the City requests the Commission's help with any outstanding conditions, JASS will send the City a Notice of Commission Project Review Closure, cc'ing the applicant and their engineer/representative. That notice will list any pending conditions and notify them that the Commission is handing over their resolution to the City and its development review process.

3. Following confirmation that the engineer has billed all the project review and follow-up time, JASS will begin the escrow reconciliation process.

4. Once the Commission has handed over the project review to the City and the project's escrow has been reconciled, re-submittals after 90 days of approval by the Commission will require an additional non-refundable \$1,000 fee.

5. Approved projects that have not commenced within one year will continue to require full re-submittal (including all fees) and re-approval. This is a current requirement that is not always enforced depending on the individual circumstances of the development review.

Motion by Trainor, second by Katzner to approve the modifications to the project review process. *Motion carried unanimously.*

VII. FOURTH GENERATION WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN. The Plan is undergoing its 60-day formal review. Comments are due by August 16, 2025. Following any revisions in response to those comments, the Commission must then send the revised Plan, a compilation of all the comments received, the responses, and a summary of how the Plan was revised in response to the commentors. The Commission must hold a public hearing and then submit the final draft plan to BWSR staff, who will make a recommendation to BWSR's Central Region Planning Committee. That group will review the Plan and make a recommendation to the full BWSR Board to either approve the Plan or require revisions. After approval by the BWSR Board, the Plan will come back to the Commission for final adoption.

VIII. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH.

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A. West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA).

1. Chloride Reduction Campaign. Grace Barcelow, Hennepin County Environment and Energy Conservation Specialist, is currently analyzing and redesigning the chloride reduction campaign for the upcoming winter season. While last season’s efforts successfully engaged faith-based facilities, the campaign proved to be highly time-intensive with limited impact on chloride pollution reduction. She has developed a new campaign proposal for the 2025–2026 season, which she presented to WMWA partners at their August meeting.

2. Youth Stormwater Education Work. Mary Karius, Hennepin County Environmental Education and Outreach, shared with the WMWA partners an overview of the Watershed Connections program and its evolution. The members will explore potential opportunities for collaboration between WMWA and Hennepin County on this initiative.

3. The [August media kit](#) “*Tips for Times of Drought: Conserving Water and Protecting Lakes, Rivers, and Streams*” has been distributed. It includes timely messaging to help residents reduce water use, plant drought-tolerant landscapes, and protect local water resources during dry conditions. A supplemental set of social media posts focused on rainwater capture is also available for use when rain is in the forecast or to expand your outreach.

4. Barcelow has drafted an article exploring **how water quality influences property values in Minnesota**. It is currently undergoing final review by county leadership and should be published in local newspapers within the next couple of weeks.

5. Parkers Lake Chloride Reduction Project. WMWA is continuing to work with Bolton & Menk to take the next steps in implementing recommended practices at the property where a consultation was completed earlier this spring. These efforts are focused on reducing chloride use and improving site management.

Barcelow and Bolton & Menk staff met with another target property where they hope to make future upgrades. A formal site visit is planned for the fall or winter to further assess opportunities and guide next steps.

6. Eagle Lake and Fish Lake Shoreline/Yard Restoration Projects. Metro Blooms and Blue Thumb staff have completed and distributed all restoration designs to participating residents. Barcelow has shared the letter of intent with homeowners and continues to encourage them to implement these practices on their properties. For residents who participated in last year's workshops, contracts to deliver stipends are being sent out.

Fall workshops have been finalized and will be held on September 4 and September 16 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Mailers have been sent out to lakeshore residents. Barcelow is also collaborating with local lake associations to help promote the events and increase community engagement.

7. Southgate Apartment Project. After recent conversations with property management, the owners have decided to fully withdraw from the project and it will no longer be moving forward. This is a disappointing development, especially given the significant time and

energy invested by partners including Metro Blooms, City of Bloomington staff, and others. Participants are still discussing the broader implications and will keep this experience in mind when we consider future work with multi-family housing sites and explore ways to strengthen project viability and partner engagement.

B. West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA) will meet via Zoom at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 9, 2025. Follow this link to join:

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

IX. COMMUNICATIONS.

A. Staff Report. The August 5, 2025, Staff Report* provides updates on the development projects currently under review by Staff. A revised first page* of the report provided an update on the 2016-005W Ravinia Wetland Replacement Plan in Corcoran.

B. Hennepin County Staff Report.*

1. Christian Sediment Basin, Dayton. The contractor has replaced the culvert as specified by the plan set. The only outstanding item is to seed disturbed areas with a prescribed mix and perform an as-built survey and inspection. The late fall seeding window opened on August 1st, so seeding should occur within the next few weeks. Staff expect to fully close out this project by the end of August and reimburse the landowner.

2. Welcome Ranch, Dayton. Initial inspection of the barn gutters was made and recommendations for improvements were submitted to the contractor who will finalize the project. Staff will then circulate the voucher to reimburse the landowner. Hennepin County staff are working with a new engineering services firm to develop plans for the manure bunker and heavy use area protections. These plans should be ready for landowner review in the fall.

3. Van Asten Manure Bunker and Barn Gutters, Dayton. Hennepin County staff met on site with the engineer and landowner to understand how the newly developed farm plan would interact with proposed cost-share projects. Staff surveyed the property and asked questions about the siting of projects near the barn. Significant erosion around the barn was observed leading to renewed interest in installing barn gutters and a potential cistern. The landowner has also requested the installation of a windbreak to reduce erosion due to heavy winds observed on the farm. Hennepin County staff are working to understand the potential pollution reductions associated with this practice on this and neighboring farms. Finally, a soil test was conducted on the western half of the property which hadn't been tested previously.

4. City of Corcoran. Hennepin County staff are working on an amendment to the plans for the native seeding that should be done in late summer. Once approved internally by the technical services provider, staff will coordinate with Corcoran Public Works staff to prep the fields and develop a plan for seeding the area with the prescribed mix.

5. Cain Wetland Fencing, Corcoran. Landowner has agreed to the cost-share rate for the project and the contracting phase has been started. Conditions are too wet to begin

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this project immediately which could delay implementation into the fall.

6. Lake Henry Hollow Horse Ranch, Rogers. Hennepin County staff are working to assess the wetland impacts of a potential cost-share project before entering into the contract phase. Once a final approval is given, staff will work to get the projects under contract and begin the design phase.

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

X. OTHER BUSINESS.

XI. ADJOURNMENT. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Judie A. Anderson

Recording Secretary

JAA:tim

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