elm creek
Watershed Management Commission

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Public Hearing
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER. A meeting of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 11:45 a.m., Wednesday, September 9, 2026, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Vice Chair Joe Trainor.

Present: Andrew Kessler, Champlin; Loren Evenrud, Corcoran; Cathy Kennedy, Dayton; Joe Trainor, Maple Grove; Chris Dahl, Medina; and Christina Frazier, Plymouth.

Not represented: Rogers.

Also present: Steven Touney, Champlin; Lauren Letsche, Corcoran; Ben Otto, Stantec, Dayton; Derek Asche, Maple Grove; Dusty Finke, Medina; Lilly Bowman, Plymouth; Mike Albers, Rogers; Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); Kevin Ellis, Hennepin County; Eric Osterdyk, Lisa Tilman, and Diane Spector, Stantec; Rebecca Carlson, Resilience Resources; Judie Anderson, JASS; and John Bernens for project 2026-023.

Kennedy was introduced as the new Commissioner for Dayton.

II. AGENDA. Motion by Trainor, second by Frazier to approve the September 9, 2026 agenda with the following addition:

9.b. Grant Opportunities. Add **Letter of Support*** for Hennepin County application for MnDNR Conservation Partners Legacy Grant.

Motion carried unanimously.

III. Motion by Dahl, second by Kessler to approve **minutes of the August 12, 2026 meeting.*** *Motion carried unanimously.*

Motion by Dahl, second by Trainor to approve the September **Treasurer's Report and Claims totaling $42,647.33.*** *Motion carried unanimously.*

[The regular meeting was suspended at 11:58 a.m.]

IV. PUBLIC HEARING – 2026 CIP.*

The Commission has previously approved a Minor Plan Amendment, reported a 2026 maximum levy, and called for a public hearing for today to consider three projects and a levy to fund them all or in part and to take comment from the member cities and the public. The cities and the County have been notified and notice has been duly published. The projects are:

A. Reconstruct Bridge at Cartway. 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.

B. Elm Creek Valley Stream Restoration. 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.

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

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 Creek 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**

[The pubic hearing was opened at 12:00 noon.]

No comments were received from the member cities. No one was present to speak regarding the proposed projects.

[The public hearing was closed at 12:01 p.m.]

Motion by Trainor, second by Kessler to adopt **Resolution 2026-03 Ordering 2026 *Improvements ….**** *Motion carried unanimously.*

Motion by Trainor and second by Kennedy to approve **Cooperative Agreements with the cities of Champlin and Maple Grove** as the parties responsible for the construction of the projects. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Staff will inform Hennepin County of the Commission's levy request for 2026 (payable 2027) of $520,150.

[The regular meeting resumed at 12:02 p.m.]

V. OPEN FORUM.

Spector announced that she will be retiring from Stantec at the end of this month.

VI. PROJECT REVIEWS.

A. 2025-037 Thicket Hills, Dayton.* Thicket Hill Vineyard Event Center is a 35-acre proposed redevelopment project located at 17501 Dayton River Road, located within the Mississippi River subwatershed. The applicant previously constructed a gravel road which was un-permitted and is included in the overall new impervious. The applicant proposes construction of a parking lot and a building with a septic system. The plans also include a potential future building and subsequent proof of parking. Construction requires substantial grading as well as a stormwater BMP with filtration. The project will disturb 5.75 acres of existing farmland and will result in approximately 3.214 acres of additional impervious surface. Original submittals were received August 28, 2025. Subsequent extensions have brought the review deadline to November 26, 2026. Action on this project was tabled at the August 2, 2026 Commission meeting. In their findings revised August 31, 2026, Staff recommend approval of this project with four conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) provide pretreatment for the filtration basin to meet Commission requirements; (3) this Commission review and approval is contingent on City approval - all city comments must be addressed prior to Commission approval; and (4) the applicant must provide a Stormwater Maintenance Agreement acceptable to the City and the Commission within 90 days of plat recordation. Motion by Trainor, second by Kennedy to approve Staff's recommendations. *Motion carried unanimously.*

B. 2026-025 Rogers Drive Retail Center.* The site is approximately 1.5 acres in size and is located at Commerce Boulevard and George Weber Drive. The project proposes to disturb approximately 1.6 acres to construct a retail center and associated parking, triggering rules D and E. A complete project review application was received on July 23, 2026. Following exchanges of comments, in their findings signed September 9, 2026, Staff recommend approval with the following conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation and (2) an operations and maintenance plan approved by the City. Motion by Dahl, second by Frazier to approve this project with those two conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

C. 2026-026 Hindu Society of MN Parking Expansion, Maple Grove.* This site is approximately 3.8 acres in size and is located at 10530 Temple Drive. The project proposes an additional parking lot north of the building approved under review 2025-031 and will add 0.67 acres of impervious surface to be treated by a biofiltration basin, triggering Rules D, E, and I. A complete project review application was received July 29, 2026. In their findings signed September 9, 2026, Staff recommend approval with the following conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) stormwater operations and maintenance plan approved by the City; (3) drainage and utility easement recorded with the City for protection of the approved wetland buffers; and (4) execution of a buffer maintenance plan or an alternate agreement for the first two growing seasons and an escrow or alternate surety to assure successful vegetation establishment, approved by the City. Motion by Trainor, second by Kessler to approve this project with those conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

D. 2026-027 DCM Farms II, Dayton.* This is a 95.55-acre site located on the west side of Fernbrook Lane and south of 117th Avenue North. The site is comprised of two parcels). The parcels are cultivated, with a farmstead on each parcel. The proposed project is located mostly in the Elm

Creek subwatershed, with the western-most 19 acres in the Rush Creek subwatershed. The project was previously reviewed and approved (#2025-011), it included residential housing and commercial buildings along with new roads and six ponds. The applicant proposes installation of approximately 9,208 linear feet of 2-inch and 4-inch-diameter plastic natural gas main pipeline within the already approved project. The proposed installation will be completed via the open trench method. Excavated material will be temporarily stored alongside the excavation and backfilled to pre-construction contours upon project completion. The project will consist of approximately 1.06 acres of temporary ground disturbance and does not add any impervious. Construction is currently scheduled to begin this month. A complete application was received August 24, 2026. The initial 60-day decision period per MN Statute 15.99 expires October 23, 2026. Staff recommend approval conditioned on escrow reconciliation in their findings dated August 31, 2026. Motion by Kessler, second by Dahl to approve project 2026-027 with this condition. *Motion carried unanimously.*

VII. OLD BUSINESS.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS.

Election of Officers. The following individuals have volunteered to serve as officers for the current term: Trainor, Chair and David Katzner, Rogers, Vice Chair, replacing Doug Baines and Joe Trainor, respectively. Hearing no further nominations, motion by Trainor, second by Kessler to elect the aforementioned individuals to serve as Chair and Vice Chair for the remainder of the current term ending March 31, 2027. *Motion carried unanimously.* Frazier and Dahl will remain as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, for the same term.

IX. GRANT OPPORTUNITIES.

A. 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. A minimum 10% match is required.

These funds are allocated to the Elm Creek Allocation Area and any eligible entity can apply for them, including member cities, the 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.

At the August meeting 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 volunteered to serve on the Convene panel.

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.

Osterdyk reported that the first meeting of the Convene panel has been scheduled for September 18, 2026.

B. MnDNR Conservation Partners Legacy Grant.* The Commission has been asked to provide a letter of support for Hennepin County's grant application for proposed habitat restoration work in partnership with the cities of Maple Grove and Minnetonka. The work proposed in Maple Grove is one part of a broader corridor that follows Elm Creek and includes both public conservation areas and privately held conservation easements. The proposed work would address urgent threats to ecosystems within that area while also stabilizing soils, slowing runoff, and reducing nutrient loading to nearby waters.

Motion by Trainor, second by Frazier to authorize the Chair to sign the letter on behalf of the Commission. *Motion carried unanimously.*

X. EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.

A. West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA) will meet via Zoom at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, October 13 and on Tuesday, November 10, 2026. The link is:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/922390839?pwd=TklBQW1ZNXVXdzdtTDBTSDZkZmZuQT09.

B. Included in the meeting packet were **staff updates*** from Kris Guentzel discussing shoreline restoration and yard resiliency workshops and projects; the shoreline restorations on Fish and Eagle Lakes; the BCWMC Multifamily Housing project; the Parkers Lake chloride reduction project; and the Watershed Connections program.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS.

A. Staff Report. The September 1, 2026, Staff Report* provides updates on the development projects currently under review by Staff.

B. September 2, 2026 Hennepin County Staff Report.*

1. Cain Wetland Fencing, Corcoran. Project required a new invoice from the contractor which highlighted the dates the work was performed and the unit costs of work involved. Once staff have received an updated invoice, the voucher will circulate for final signatures, and the project will be paid for and closed out.

2. Van Asten Manure Bunker and Gutters, Dayton. Hennepin County staff have requested a plan set and CAD drawing of the bunker to be produced by on-call engineering staff. Once approved by the contractor and landowner, installation of the bunker will begin. Project has entered into the contracting process.

3. Sovereign Stables, Dayton. Landowner indicated that they would like to delay the installation of this project for a few more months while they build up the funds. Staff will be present for a site meeting in September with MPCA and the landowner to discuss permitting on-site waste storage for the coming year. According to the landowner, improvements to the storage area have been implemented, including a vegetated berm surrounding the dry stack. Hennepin County staff will work with on-call engineering staff to develop plan sets and

CAD drawings for the bunker over the winter. Staff worked to develop a reimbursement system that would pay the contractor rather than reimburse the landowner to cover the gap in funding. The project is approved for an AgBMP loan that will finance the landowner's share of the project.

4. Crow River 1 Watershed 1 Plan. Hennepin County staff are currently working on a 1 Watershed 1 Plan response letter that will be circulated in early September. The letter will include references to Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission plans, but if any further involvement is desired by the Commission, formal notice should be given to NFC planners.

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

XII. OTHER BUSINESS.

Proposed Policy Manual.* The Commission and TAC (and Staff) have on various occasions expressed that it would be convenient and desirable to have a single document that summarizes all the various policies and operational guidance. This would serve as a good introduction to the Commission to new Commissioners and TAC as well as a handy reference.

The Bassett Creek WMO has a Policy Manual that Staff have reviewed as a potential model for Elm Creek. Using that document as a starting point, Staff have pulled together a rough draft for review and comment. It the intent to go through one or two rounds of comments so that a final version can be adopted by the end of the year.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Judie A. Anderson
Recording Secretary
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