

elm creek

Watershed Management Commission

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Regular Meeting Minutes | November 12, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER. A meeting of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, November 12, 2025, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Chairman Doug Baines.

Present: Bill Walraven, Champlin; Doug Baines, Dayton; Joe Trainor, Maple Grove; Terry Sharp, Medina; Catherine Cesnik, Plymouth; and Dave Katzner, Rogers.

Not represented: Corcoran.

Also present: Derek Asche and Shane Awalt, Maple Grove; Ben Scharenbroich, Plymouth; Mike Albers, Rogers; Kevin Ellis, Hennepin County; Diane Spector, Stantec; Rebecca Carlson, Resilience Resources; and Judie Anderson, JASS.

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

III. Motion by Walraven, second by Sharp to approve the **Minutes of the October 8, 2025, meeting.*** *Motion carried unanimously.*

[Trainor arrived 11:32 a.m.]

IV. Motion by Cesnik, second by Walraven to approve the **November Treasurer's Report and Claims totaling \$280,775.22.*** *Motion carried unanimously.*

V. OPEN FORUM.

VI. PROJECT REVIEW.

2025-038 Telcom Construction New Office, Dayton. The applicant proposes building a new office on an 8.423-acre parcel located at the southwest corner of 121st Ave N and French Lake Road West in the Diamond Creek subwatershed. The site is approximately 250 feet southwest of French Lake and is comprised of one parcel which is a mixture of cultivated vegetation, grassland, forest, and wetlands. Wetlands border the site on the south and west. There are no floodplains or existing impervious surface on the site. The proposed construction includes a 26,096 SF office warehouse building with parking and driving areas and will disturb 6 acres of the 8.42-acre site, resulting in 3.33 acres of new impervious surface after development. A complete application was submitted on September 9, 2025. The project review period was extended to January 7, 2026. In their findings signed September 30, 2025, Staff recommend approval with four conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation; (2) update the proposed erosion control with a formal SWPPP, add silt fence around the wetland 3P outlet channel and the 2P ditch inlet; and shade all the slopes where the Cat 20 ECB is proposed; (3) address City comments on the filtration basin design; and (4) provide maintenance

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

plan and agreement if required by the City. Motion by Cesnik, second by Walraven to approve project 2025-038 with those conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

[Katzner arrived 11:36 a.m.]

VII. OLD BUSINESS.

A. COMMISSION AND WMWA WEBSITES.* Two RFPs were sent out to qualified website development vendors for the migration and update of three WMO websites, including the Elm Creek website; and the West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA) website. Proposals were due October 15. Three proposals for the WMO work and two proposals for the WMWA work were received.

1. Commission Websites. A small group of representatives from the four Commissions met on October 31 to review and score the proposals. There were some clear front-runners for the work, and all were within the estimated budget. The group elected not to interview any of the vendors but did have follow-up questions to clarify aspects of some of the proposals. With answers to those questions, the group chose Skol Marketing as their final recommendation. As the fiscal agent, the Shingle Creek WMO will consider awarding a contract to Skol at its November 13, 2025 meeting.

2. WMWA Website. Similar to the Commission website process, a small group of representatives of WMWA met on November 5 to review and score the proposals. This group recommended Avallo Web Development and the Fiscal Agent, the Shingle Creek WMO, will be in contact with Avallo to initiate the contracting process upon their approval on November 13, 2025.

B. JOINT CHLORIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN.* The Commission partnered with the Shingle Creek and West Mississippi WMOs to submit an Accelerated Implementation Grant (AIG) proposal to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) for a Joint Chloride Management Plan. Work on the plan began in Spring 2025.

Stantec has been working on geospatial analysis for the management plan to identify key land covers like parking lots, sidewalks, driveways, dirt roads, and cropland within the watersheds. The first stakeholder meeting was held on October 22 via Microsoft Teams. Stantec reached out to private applicators, school districts, Crystal MAC Airport, cities, MPCA, Hennepin County, MnDOT, and others to attend and discuss current chloride management practices on public property. The meeting was well attended by city and county staff. The group also discussed challenges to implementing BMPs and how the WMOs can best support their work. Some key takeaways from the meeting were:

- 1.** Smart Salting training is widespread, but it's not clear if it translates to salt applications.
- 2.** Public expectations and perceptions of chloride applications are still an issue. Cities and applicators try to meet expectations while balancing responsible application.

3. Enforcement of overapplication is challenging due to limited staff availability and the sheer number of applicators.

4. The WMOs can help by providing uniform messaging and resources for cities to use with staff and residents, providing funding opportunities, and expanding outreach efforts.

As next steps, Stantec will attend the December TAC meeting to identify targeted, specific priority areas with the TAC and Commission. Priority areas may be a particular land-use type (parking lots, residential properties, etc.), a shopping center, a business complex, etc. Stantec is also developing a survey for road authorities to understand their current chloride practices, challenges, and opportunities.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS.

A. 2025 COUNTY LEVY ERROR.* Hennepin County has informed us that it had made an error setting the Elm Creek maximum levy for 2025. The Commission had certified \$630,000 for project costs plus an additional \$38,115 for administrative and legal costs and a factor to account for uncollected taxes. Rather than the total of \$668,115, the levy was set just for \$630,000. Unfortunately, the error was discovered after information about approved maximum levies was already being used to generate truth in taxation statements and inform public hearings and it cannot be corrected.

While this is unfortunate, the Commission's Closed Projects account has a current estimated balance of about \$275,000, so it can absorb the additional administrative and legal costs and any uncollectable levy. These are typically less than \$5,000, although projects with more complicated accounting needs might have higher administrative costs.

This leads to a topic that Staff have been discussing as they have been working to streamline project accounting. The Commission routinely includes a 5% surcharge on each project levy. On smaller projects that is sufficient, but on larger projects it is likely that that rate will exceed the actual legal and administrative costs.

Staff have been discussing recommending a change in policy that would instead levy a flat amount per project. However, Staff haven't been specifically tracking the administrative time, which is mainly accounting and grant reporting, so they don't yet have a good feel for what that flat amount should be. If this is a direction the Commission wants to pursue, Staff can spend more time researching this and propose a new policy in time for the 2026 CIP and levy process next Spring.

The members were in agreement with this course of action.

B. POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP COST SHARE PROJECT.* As discussed last month, as part of the WBIF-funded shoreline workshops over the last two years, the Commission has been on the lookout for any larger projects that could have a significant improvement to Fish Lake. One such project in Maple Grove was presented last month. The homeowners attended a workshop last year and requested a restoration plan for their highly sloped back yard. The design

developed by Metro Blooms includes stabilizing the upper areas of the slope with native shrubs, and planting zones along the shoreline with native shoreline vegetation. In addition, the plan would add new aquatic plantings in the near-shore areas to provide in-lake habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms. The overall project would reduce erosion and sedimentation, add pollinator (upland) and aquatic habitat, and would be a significant benefit to the lake. Metro Blooms has received a cost estimate for this restoration from a contractor they have worked with on other projects of \$43,625.

Staff and the City of Maple Grove support using Commission Partnership Cost Share Program funds to help fund the project. The Program prioritizes projects that implement actions in TMDLs. The Elm Creek Watershed TMDL identified Shoreline Restoration as a general load reduction strategy.

Last month the Commission was generally supportive but there was no consensus about the percentage of cost-share to contribute. Commission and Maple Grove staff support up to a 90% contribution, with a 10% homeowner match. The agricultural TMDL implementation BMPs that Hennepin County is leading in the Rush and Diamond Creek sub-watersheds require a 10% property owner match. Commissioners also inquired about other cost share programs. In their November 5, 2025, memo* Staff provided information from some of the other WMOs in the Metro area and their funding guidelines, with the 90-10 ratio being common among them.

The purpose of today's discussion is to reach a consensus on the required match so the homeowners can proceed with project planning and submit an application when they are ready. The current Partnership Cost Share fund balance is about \$140,000 with no applications pending.

Ellis reported that Hennepin County is reviewing other funds to supplement the Partnership Cost Share Contribution. After discussion it was the consensus that the owner's share should be 10% of the total cost, with the 90% balance funded by a combination of Commission and County funds, with the actual mix to be determined as County funds are available.

Motion by Trainor, second by Cesnik to approve a 90% Commission/County contribution, with a 10% homeowner match, along with dedication of a public easement or equivalent sufficient to install and maintain the BMP. *Motion carried unanimously.*

IX. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH.

A. West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA). Included in the meeting packet were updates from Grace Barcelow,* Hennepin County Environment and Energy Conservation Specialist, grace.barcelow@hennepin.us, and Joanna Sorenson,* joanna@jass.biz, WMWA Educator.

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

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

X. COMMUNICATIONS.

A. Staff Report. The November 4, 2025, Staff Report* provides updates on the development projects currently under review by Staff.

B. Hennepin County Staff Report.*

1. Lake Henry Hollow Horse Ranch, Rogers. Hennepin County staff have provided a finding of fact and level 1 wetland delineation report to the LGU. Staff are currently working to schedule a TEP meeting to discuss the area and note wetland impacts that are due to previous owners. Staff are also working with the MPCA to site a potential manure storage structure on the property that will meet feedlot regulations.

2. City of Corcoran. County staff are scheduling a meeting onsite with City staff to discuss next steps for the seeding project including maintenance and management for 2026 and beyond. There is potential to add signage to explain the project and add native flowering forbs for roadway beautification.

3. Welcome Ranch, Dayton. County staff have obtained quotes for the manure bunker and heavy use area protections of the project. A board action request has been submitted for this project since total cost-share funds will likely exceed \$100,000. This will go to the County board for action in November. Once approved, the contracting phase will continue.

4. Trousdale Wetland Restoration, Corcoran. County staff are working with three landowners on a wetland restoration project that will impact parts of all three properties. Staff are currently in the contracting phase of the project, which requires signatures from all three landowners. Staff are working with BWSR to ensure that the project is properly contracted.

5. Information on **project funding** and other **County programming** completes the report.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS.

XII. ADJOURNMENT. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Judie A. Anderson
Recording Secretary

JAA:tim

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