

elm creek

Watershed Management Commission

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Regular Meeting Minutes December 10, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER. A meeting of the Elm Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order at 11:40 a.m., Wednesday, December 10, 2025, in the Plymouth Community Center, 14800 34th Avenue North, Plymouth, MN, by Chairman Doug Baines.

Present: Gerry Butcher, Champlin; Loren Evenrud, Corcoran; Doug Baines, Dayton; Joe Trainor, Maple Grove; Terry Sharp, Medina; Catherine Cesnik, Plymouth; and Dave Katzner, Rogers.

Also present: Jon Bottema and Ryan Bottema, Corcoran; Derek Asche, Shane Awalt, and R. J. Kakach, Maple Grove; Ben Scharenbroich, Plymouth; Mike Albers, Rogers; Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District; Kevin Ellis, Hennepin County; Eric Osterdyk and Diane Spector, Stantec; Rebecca Carlson, Resilience Resources; and Judie Anderson, JASS.

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

III. Motion by Cesnik, second by Trainor to approve the **Minutes of the November 12, 2025, meeting.*** *Motion carried unanimously.*

IV. Motion by Cesnik, second by Sharp to approve the **December Treasurer's Report and Claims totaling \$67,894.85.*** *Motion carried unanimously.*

V. OPEN FORUM.

A. Chairman Baines noted the death of **Bill Walraven**, Commissioner from Champlin.

B. Evenrud described various **waterfowl and wildlife sightings** at his home on South Fork Rush Creek, including great blue heron, sandhill cranes, mergansers, and wood ducks. He noted that the presence of wood ducks is an indicator of good water quality.

C. Evenrud introduced **Jon and Ryan Bottema** who will be the Alternate Commissioners representing Corcoran. Jon Bottema described the wetland restoration project that he just completed on his property.

D. Cesnik announced that this is her last meeting as the Elm Creek **Commissioner from Plymouth.**

VI. PROJECT REVIEWS.

A. 2025-032 Lake Camelot Park Improvements, Plymouth.* The project disturbs approximately one acre within the existing Lake Camelot Park. The site is located southeast of the intersection of Chankahda Trail and Fernbrook Lane at the north edge of Lake Camelot. The project will consist of redevelopment to the existing park and will include the construction of

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sidewalk, bituminous pavement, improved play areas and equipment, as well as underground utilities and stormwater management. The project triggers Rules D, E, and I. In their findings dated November 10, 2025 Staff recommended approval with two conditions: (1) reconciliation of the escrow fee, and (2) revision of the wetland buffer monuments. Motion by Cesnik, second by Trainor to approve project 2025-032 with those conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

B. 2025-035 Gardner School, Maple Grove.* This project proposes the development of a childcare facility with associated parking and utility improvements on a 1.4-acre site located south of the Garland Lane and 96th Avenue intersection. Development will result in approximately 0.8 acres of impervious surface and trigger Rules D and E. In their findings dated December 8, 2025, Staff recommended approval with four conditions: (1) reconciliation of the escrow fee; (2) expand IESF material footprint to increase replacement period; (3) revise Detail 2 on Sheet C5.2 to match example provided; and (4) approval of an O&M Plan by the City. Motion by Trainor, second by Cesnik to approve project 2025-035 with those conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

C. 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. The site 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 on the site which is located in the Mississippi River subwatershed. The applicant proposes construction of a two-story building, an event center, gravel parking lot, well, septic system, and stormwater treatment basin. The proposal will disturb 8.067 acres of the site and result in 2.511 acres of new impervious surface. The project review application was received August 28, 2025. Staff provided initial comments on September 18. The applicant has indicated they will request a 60-day extension to February 24, 2025. The applicant has also indicated that the wetland delineation is delayed and it will not be resolved by that date. Motion by Katzner, second by Trainor to grant the applicant an extension of one year from the application date. *Motion carried unanimously.*

D. 2025-042 113th Avenue Trunk Sewer Extension, Dayton.* This project is proposed on a 4.3-acre site located in the right-of-way of 113th Avenue north and comprised of seven parcels. Existing groundcover on site is mixture of short grasses, deciduous forest, and intermittently flooded grasslands. There are six small wetlands on site, two within the project area, and one floodplain on site. The site is in the Rush Creek subwatershed. The applicant proposes construction of an extension of the existing trunk sewer system. The proposal will disturb 4.3 acres and result in 0 acres of new impervious surface after development. A complete application was received November 3, 2025. The initial 60-day decision period per MN Statute 15.99 expires January 2, 2026. In their findings signed December 2, 2025, Staff recommends approval with two conditions: (1) escrow reconciliation and (2) an approved DNR permit for the temporary wetland impacts. Motion by Katzner, second by Cesnik to approve project 2025-042 with those conditions. *Motion carried unanimously.*

VII. OLD BUSINESS.

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A. Fourth Generation Plan. Spector reported that the Commission’s draft Fourth Generation Watershed Management Plan was presented to the BWSR Central Region Committee on December 8, 2025, where it received few comments. The Plan will be presented for final approval at the December 18, 2025, full BWSR Board meeting. If approved, the Plan can be approved by the Commission at its January 14, 2026, meeting.

B. WMWA Strategic Planning Meeting. Members of the Committee met following the December 9 WMWA meeting where they discussed a new management structure as well as potential timelines for implementation and funding options. The Committee will meet again prior to the January WMWA meeting to refine these options.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS.

A. Motion by Trainor, second by Cesnik to recreate the January 2025 **Winter Salt Week Proclamation**, and to encourage the Governor to proclaim January 26-30, 2026, as Winter Salt Week. *Motion carried unanimously.* The purpose of Winter Salt Week is to educate the public and professionals about the negative impacts of excessive road salt on freshwater ecosystems, drinking water, and infrastructure, and to promote responsible salt use and alternative winter maintenance practices.

B. 2025 Work Plan Year-End Report.* Last January the Commission set forth its work plan for 2025, identifying activities proposed to help make progress toward Third Generation Plan goals. The attached 2025 Work Plan in Review* highlights actions taken during 2025 in fulfillment of that work plan. This information will be incorporated into the Commission’s required Annual Report to the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). Some highlights include:

1. The Commission completed its Fourth Generation Watershed Management Plan and held a public hearing on September 10, 2025. The Plan was forwarded to BWSR for final review and approval with the Central Region Committee scheduled for its review on December 8 and the full BWSR Board on December 18. If approved, it can be adopted by the Commission at its January 14, 2026 meeting.

2. Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) awarded by BWSR funded several activities in 2025. FY23 funds are currently supporting agricultural BMPs in targeted subwatersheds, and the South Fork Rush Creek subwatershed assessment (SWA) and feasibility study for re-meandering a portion of North Fork Rush Creek were completed. The Commission also allocated a portion of FY23 funds to the outreach and conservation specialist shared with WMWA and Hennepin County. The FY25 funds are currently supporting additional agricultural BMPs, a Carp Management Plan for Fish and Rice Lakes, and several BMPs and feasibility studies in the City of Dayton for improvements to French and Diamond Lakes.

3. Several education and outreach initiatives are underway, including targeted lakeshore restoration workshops and projects. Work began on the joint Chloride Management Plan with Shingle Creek and West Mississippi WMOs.

4. The Commission entered into an agreement with Shingle Creek/West Mississippi and Pioneer-Sarah Creek WMOs to jointly migrate and update their websites, with completion expected by July 1, 2026.

C. Motion by Butcher, second by Katzner to approve the **Non-Waiver of Monetary Limits of Tort Liability Insurance**. *Motion carried unanimously.*

IX. EDUCATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH.

A. Included in the meeting packet were updates from Grace Barcelow,* Hennepin County Environment and Energy Conservation Specialist, grace.barcelow@hennepin.us regarding:

1. Chloride Reduction Campaign
2. Youth Stormwater Education Work
3. December media kit
4. Parkers Lake Chloride Reduction Project
5. Eagle Lake and Fish Lake Shoreline/Yard Restoration Projects
6. RBWMO and BCWMO Multi-Family Housing Project Planning
7. Strategic Planning Session

B. **West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA)** will meet via Zoom at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, January 13, 2026. The link to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/922390839?pwd=TKlBQW1ZNXVXdzdtTDBTSDZkZmZuQT09>

X. COMMUNICATIONS.

A. **Staff Report.** The December 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 worked with the MPCA to determine potential sites for the manure bunker to be constructed. Staff are currently awaiting a signed letter of interest from the landowner and the finding of fact to be filed with the LGU.

2. **City of Corcoran.** Hennepin County staff met with City staff on site to discuss the seeding and next steps. There was noticeable growth of the winter oats cover crops, but several patches of thistle were noted. Thistle has been a persistent problem on this site and will be managed moving forward. Staff will record areas with thistle so they can be spot sprayed and future growth can be observed. The Hennepin County board approved the cost-share funding for this project. An updated contract will be implemented to reflect this change.

3. **Welcome Ranch, Dayton.** The County Board approved the new proposed budget for the project. County staff are working with the landowner to get a contract in place. The landowner has obtained quotes for the manure bunker and heavy use area protections

(HUAPs). However, the HUAPs were quoted much higher than anticipated. Staff will continue to work with the landowner on the manure bunker with future planning for the HUAPs.

4. Trousdale Wetland Restoration, Corcoran. Hennepin County staff are working with three landowners on a wetland restoration project that will impact parts of all three properties. Applications for the project have been completed by each landowner.

5. Sovereign Stables, Dayton. County staff responded to an inquiry into a cost-share project by Sovereign Stables, a horse boarding facility in Dayton. The facility is adjacent to French lake and is currently exploring options for manure storage. Staff completed a field visit to look at existing conditions and ask questions. Staff concluded that the project would be a viable candidate for cost-share funding, depending on the landowner's ability to finance the project. Staff are working with the landowner to explore several options to store manure in a manner that will ensure that runoff does not end up in French Lake or the Diamond Creek subwatershed.

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

7. Also included in the packet was Hennepin County's "Stewardship: Define your goal and take action," including the **Stewardship opportunity journey map**.

XI. GRANT OPPORTUNITIES AND UPDATES.

Staff's December 4, 2025, memo* provided an update on the Shingle Creek/West Mississippi/Elm Creek AIG Grant for a **Joint Chloride Management Plan**.

A. 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. The meeting was well attended by city and other staff. The group also discussed challenges to implementing BMPs and how the watersheds 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 Commissions can help by providing uniform messaging and resources for cities to use with staff and residents, providing funding opportunities, and expanding outreach efforts.

B. A next step is identifying priority areas within each watershed to target chloride management actions. Stantec is also working on developing a survey for road authorities to understand their current chloride practices, challenges, and opportunities.

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C. At the November meeting Staff previewed an interactive webmap of relevant geospatial data. They will be sending this out to the cities to identify areas of known or potential concern for chloride use, which will be used to target implementation actions in the Plan.

XII. OTHER BUSINESS.

A. A reminder of appointments due by those members that appoint Commissioners annually.

B. Election of officers will take place at the March meeting.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Judie A. Anderson
Recording Secretary

JAA:tim

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