

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT  
BOARD OF MANAGERS**

**March 10, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District was called to order by President Sherry White at 7:00 p.m. on March 10, 2022. President White noted that this meeting was convened electronically through Zoom, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 13D.021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and her determination that it is not prudent for the Board of Managers, or any committee thereof, to meet in person, and it is not feasible to provide for any member of the Board, or of the public, to meet at the regular meeting location. For this reason, until this determination is withdrawn by the District's presiding officer, chief legal counsel or chief administrative officer, the meetings of the Board and its committees will be convened by telephone or other electronic means as the presiding officer determines appropriate. All such meetings will be noticed and conducted in accordance with §13D.021 and all other applicable terms of the Open Meeting Law. President White noted that, pursuant to §13D.021, all votes will be by roll call.

President White called the roll to note attendance:

Hejmadi:	Present
Loftus:	Present
Sando:	Present
Miller:	Present
Olson:	Present; arrived at 7:01 p.m.
Maxwell:	Present
White:	Present.

**DISTRICT STAFF AND CONSULTANTS PRESENT**

James Wisker, Administrator; Alex Steele, GIS Coordinator; Chris Meehan, District Consulting Engineer; and Louis Smith, District Counsel.

**OATH OF OFFICE**

Mr. Smith administered the oath of office to Managers Eugene Maxwell and Arun Hejmadi, who were recently reappointed by the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners to new three-year terms.

**MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR**

None.



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**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*It was moved by Manager Miller, seconded by Manager Hejmadi to approve the Agenda as distributed. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried 7-0 as follows:*

Hejmadi: Aye  
Loftus: Aye  
Sando: Aye  
Miller: Aye  
Olson: Aye  
Maxwell: Aye  
White: Aye

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*It was moved by Manager Hejmadi, seconded by Manager Maxwell, to approve the items on the Consent Agenda consisting of approval of the February 24, 2022 Board meeting minutes; approval of the General Checking Account consisting of check 41842 in the amount of \$17,176.42; and adoption of the following resolution:*

*Resolution 22-011: Authorization to Submit 325 Blake Road Stormwater Project for Public Facilities Authority Point Source Implementation Grant Certification:*

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes District staff to submit plans and specifications for the 325 Blake Road Stormwater Improvement Project to the MPCA for certification;*

***BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the MCWD Board of Managers authorizes District staff to submit the regional stormwater components of the 325 Blake Road Alatus development on behalf of developer Alatus, LLC for consideration by the MPCA and PFA for funding as part of a comprehensive regional stormwater system;*

***BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that MCWD has the legal authority to apply for the grant, and the financial, technical, and managerial capacity to ensure proper construction, operation and maintenance of the project for its design life;*

***BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that upon approval of its application by the PFA, the MCWD may enter into agreement with the PFA for the 325 Blake Road Stormwater Management Project, and that MCWD certifies that it will*



*comply with all applicable laws and regulations as stated in all contract agreements described in the Compliance listing of the application;*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board President and Vice President are hereby authorized to execute such agreements, and amendments thereto, as are necessary to implement the above project on behalf of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.*

***Resolution 22-012: 2022 National American Planning Association Conference Attendance:***

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers authorize up to five (5) staff to attend the 2022 National American Planning Association conference for a cost not to exceed \$12,500 for registration, travel and accommodations.*

***Resolution 22-013: Extending the Administrator's Authority to Enter into Contracts for Operations:***

*THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers delegates to the District Administrator, without countersignature, the authority to bind the District to purchases of goods and services, and to enter into contracts for same, when: (a) the District payment will be drawn from any of the following funds, as they may be renamed or renumbered; and (b) the commitment will not cause spending under the fund to exceed the approved fiscal-year budget:*

- *Unemployment Reimbursement*
- *Employee Benefits*
- *Staff Training*
- *Dues & Subscriptions*
- *Rentals and Leases*
- *Property/Casualty and Workers' Compensation Insurance*
- *Equipment & Supplies*
- *Repairs and Maintenance*
- *Utilities*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the District Administrator will report to the Board annually as to activity under this delegation, and at such other times as, in the Administrator's judgment, a commitment of funds may raise a question of substantial policy or otherwise be appropriate for Board consideration.*

***Resolution 22-014: Approval of the District's Updated COVID-19 Preparedness Plan***



***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby confirms its review and adoption of the MCWD Revised COVID-19 Preparedness Plan and directs the Administrator to regularly advise the Board on its implementation and adjustment as a living document.***

***Upon roll call vote, the motion carried 7-0 as follows:***

Hejmadi: Aye  
Loftus: Aye  
Sando: Aye  
Miller: Aye  
Olson: Aye  
Maxwell: Aye  
White: Aye

### **BOARD, COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS**

President's Report: President White reported on recent meetings to onboard new members of the Citizens Advisory Committee; legislative outreach meetings; and meeting with Managers Miller and Hejmadi as liaisons to the City of Minneapolis.

Summary of the Administrator's Performance Evaluation: President White noted that at the February 24 Board meeting, the Board of Managers held a closed session for the evaluation of the performance of the administrator. President White provided the following summary:

On February 24, 2022, the Board of Managers conducted a performance review of District Administrator James Wisker. The Board evaluated his performance to be excellent and elected to give Mr. Wisker a salary increase of 8.3%, effective January 1, 2022.

From this discussion the Board also agreed that it is important in the coming year to review all staff compensation to assure that the District salary grid is competitive with the current market.

President White noted that with Mr. Wisker's consent, several additional comments from the evaluation were noteworthy:

1. Reviewing the past year, the Board noted success and challenges, such as:
  - a. The recruitment and retention of top quality staff;
  - b. Maintaining high standards and accountability;



- c. Relationships with communities, counties, legislature;
  - d. Recognize that not all work moved on the pace promised, but generally pleased with pace of output, and continuing to align internally, during the pandemic;
  - e. Understand the challenges pandemic has placed on staff, proud of staff working hard to remain focused and continue finding ways to support each other across the team;
2. Looking forward, the Board noted:
    - a. The need to continue efforts to align programs internally around Balanced Urban Ecology;
    - b. The Board is excited about setting 5-year direction with the multi-year CIP and climate action;
    - c. The Board recognizes we are at a point where we are ready to begin scaling up, seeing the need both to:
      - i. Develop a staffing plan for the future; and
      - ii. Continue to invest in staff, including in compensation to ensure that we remain competitive with the market, understanding we are poised in the coming year to re-evaluate and benchmark against the marketplace; and
  3. The Board is excited about what lies ahead for us as a team.

Operations and Programs Committee: Manager Loftus reported that the committee had a briefing on the City of Edina's Morningside Flood Risk Reduction Project, which ultimately discharges stormwater to the stormwater ponds adjacent to Bde Mka Ska in Minneapolis. Based on the most recently submitted design information the project is expected to comply with all applicable MCWD regulations, but a consequence of the project's proposed pumping is a decrease in efficiency in the ponds adjacent to Bde Mka Ska, due to their receiving a larger annual volume under the proposed project conditions. At the committee meeting, the City of Edina expressed interest in working collaboratively with the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and the City of Minneapolis to explore solutions to offset this impact, and perhaps provide even greater net improvement in water quality by reducing phosphorus discharge to Bde Mka Ska. The permit application for the project should be coming to the Board of Managers at the April 14 meeting.

Upcoming Meeting and Event Schedule: President White directed the managers to the meetings listed on the agenda.

## **STAFF UPDATES**

Permitting Platform and Strategic Outputs Demonstration



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Mr. Alex Steele appeared before the Board of Managers to present a demonstration of the District's new permitting platform, ElementsXS. The demonstration focused on new abilities for summarizing, analyzing and visualizing data that used to slip through cracks due to limitations with the former permitting system, which was originally developed by a former permitting intern. Mr. Steele explained how these data outputs will not only give District leadership a clearer picture of how the landscape is changing over time, but the insights will help shape, inform and guide the District's future work and strategy. The managers thanked Mr. Steele for the presentation, and expressed enthusiasm for this new capability.

#### Administrator's Report

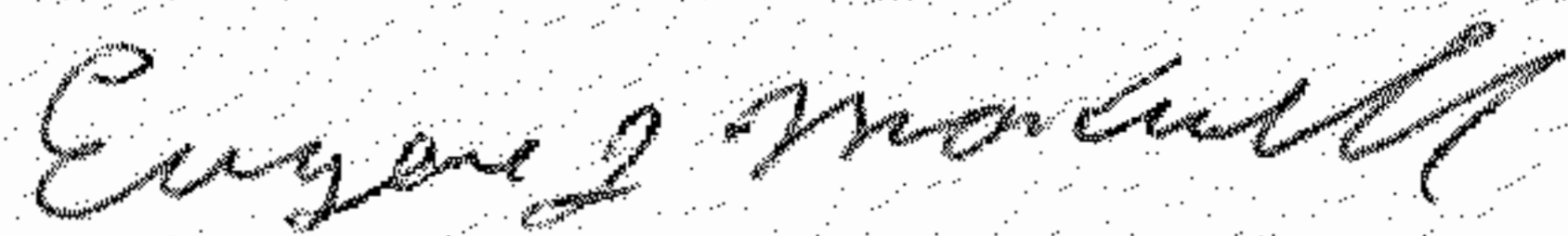
Mr. Wisker reported on the following items:

1. The Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts is working on changed plans for the upcoming Summer Tour, which will now be a joint effort of the Red River Watershed Management Board and the Board of Water and Soil Resources, instead of at the MCWD. Mr. Wisker thanked Ms. Emily Javens for her work and flexibility with this change of plans;
2. The April 14 Board meeting will include a presentation on the MCWD's climate action framework, and a survey will gather some information prior to the meeting.

#### Adjournment

There being no further business, President White declared the meeting of the Board of Managers adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Eugene Maxwell, Secretary