

MEETING DATE: January 26, 2017

TITLE: Authorization to Renew the Contract with Freshwater Society for the Watershed Association Initiative

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 17-006

PREPARED BY: Darren Lochner

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REVIEWED BY: Administrator Counsel Program Mgr. (Name):__Telly Mamayek__
 Board Committee Engineer Other

WORKSHOP ACTION:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advance to Board mtg. Consent Agenda.	<input type="checkbox"/> Advance to Board meeting for discussion prior to action.
<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to a future workshop (date):_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to taskforce or committee (date):_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Return to staff for additional work.	<input type="checkbox"/> No further action requested.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): Approval of contract at January 26, 2017 Board Meeting	

PURPOSE or ACTION REQUESTED: Authorization to renew the contract with Freshwater Society for the Watershed Association Initiative (WAI).

PROJECT/PROGRAM LOCATION: Minnehaha Creek Watershed

PROJECT TIMELINE: January 1, 2017 – December 31, 2017

PROJECT/PROGRAM COST:

Fund name and number: 2302 - Education
Current budget: \$25,000
Expenditures to date: \$0
Requested amount of funding: 25,000
Is a budget amendment requested? No
Is additional staff requested? No

PAST BOARD ACTIONS: None

SUMMARY: The Initiative started in September of 2006 and has continued through December 2016. The contract under consideration covers January 2017 through December 2017. See Exhibit A: Watershed Association Initiative: Scope of Services with detailed Work Plan and Budget.

This contract with Freshwater Society will authorize the eleventh year of the Watershed Association Initiative (WAI) for 2017. The WAI program budget includes the contract amount of \$25,000 for Freshwater Society to complete the items outlines in the Scope of Services.

Please see attached Year 10 Year End Report for 2016 with details on recent WAI activities.

In year ten, MCWD will once again hire Freshwater Society to provide a 0.5 FTE Watershed Organizer to engage and empower citizens in the District, and assist MCWD staff in evaluating the WAI program, focusing on a civic organizing framework. These citizen groups will gain an increased understanding of the District's water quality goals and will improve their capacity to interface with local governments and the District. These activities will ultimately aid the District in meeting its established water quality goals. See Exhibit A, attached, for more detail on specific program areas.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval to authorize the renewal of the Freshwater Society contract for the eleventh year of the Watershed Association Initiative. The contract with Freshwater Society is for \$25,000.

PAST BOARD ACTIONS:

- April 6, 2006 The MCWD Board of Managers approved resolution 019-06, Authorization to Hire Minnesota Waters to Execute a Lake Association Initiative.
- July 12, 2007 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2008 Communications and Education Work Plan, which contained the following item for 2008:
- Lake Association Initiative: This is an extension of the initiative started in summer 2006. Lake associations provide increased community involvement on a subwatershed level, and interest in high profile lakes in the District, resulting in better stewardship of those lakes and subsequent improvement in water quality. The District has provided a grant to Minnesota Waters, who is hiring a person that will carry out the initiative with District support and oversight.*
- July, 2008 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2009 Communications and Education Work Plan, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.
- July, 2009 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2010 Communications and Education Work Plan, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.
- August, 2010 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2011 Communications and Education Work Plan, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.
- August, 2011 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2012 Education Work Plan, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.
- August, 2012 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2013 Education Work Plan, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.
- June, 2012 MN Waters Organization dissolved and the 2012 MN Waters contract was transferred per approval of the MCWD Administrator to Freshwater Society, to continue the WAI contracted work.

- June 2013 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2014 Education Workplan and Budget, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative as well as funds to cover community capacity assessments throughout the District.
- November 2014 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2015 Education Workplan and Budget, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.
- December 2015 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2016 Education Workplan and Budget, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.
- December 2016 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2017 Education Workplan and Budget, which included funding for the continuation of the Watershed Association Initiative.

RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, the MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2017 Education Work Plan and Budget, which includes \$25,000 for the Watershed Association Initiative; and

WHEREAS, the District's strategic education and communications plan identifies a need to work on a localized, subwatershed basis to develop strong partnerships with lake associations, thereby enhancing community capacity to reach the District water quality goals; and

WHEREAS, the MCWD recognizes the importance of an informed and involved citizenry in managing aquatic resources; and

WHEREAS, active lake associations provide the District with a mechanism to work directly with informed and involved citizens in lake management projects; and

WHEREAS, Freshwater Society has expertise in building community capacity and assisting citizens with the formation and growth of effective lake associations; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the District Administrator to enter into a contract not to exceed \$25,000 with Freshwater Society to continue the Watershed Association Initiative;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the District Administrator is authorized to sign necessary documents to carry out the Watershed Association Initiative, pending approval of form and execution by the District counsel.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers

Resolution Number 17-006 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____.
Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: _____.

Secretary Date: _____

Watershed Association Initiative 2017 Scope of Services

Minnesota's lakes and rivers belong to all of us, and so does the work of protecting them. Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, among other work it leads, assists those within its borders with this crucial work. One way it does this is through the Watershed Association Initiative (WAI), a program which educates and empowers lake associations, community groups, and individuals interested in water resource protection to self-organize and effectively use their time and energy to meet their and MCWD's goals.

Over the last ten years, the WAI has worked with more than 30 lake associations and community groups, and the focus of the program has shifted over time. In 2016, the Organizer and MCWD staff met several times to discuss the scope and content of the program, seeking to ensure that the program offerings met the needs of the community and watershed district. This evaluative approach has brought additional clarity to the program and will continue in 2017, resulting in an iterative approach that will be used to continue to adapt the program so it aligns with MCWD's new strategic plan and remains responsive to needs that exist in the community. While this will result in some fluctuations and/or modifications, the scope of the work is detailed in the following pages.

Program Summary:

The WAI is a program designed to support community members in MCWD who care about protecting their freshwater resources. From providing assistance to active Lake Associations to helping new groups form, WAI increases the capacity of community groups so they may be successful in their efforts to care for their lake, stream, or wetland while aligning this work with the goals and resources of MCWD. The program also fosters increased communication between community groups and MCWD to leverage opportunities for actions that groups take to be in sync with Watershed District efforts and priorities. The WAI is carried out through a contract with Freshwater Society.

Description of Services:

Existing Services

In 2017, Freshwater Society will build on successful proactive features of the WAI to enhance its ability to offer member organizations and individuals professional development, networking, and engagement opportunities. Through the WAI, we will continue to offer the following services:

- **Outreach** to lake associations through in-person meetings as well as newsletters highlighting funding opportunities, events, and other relevant announcements.
- **Education and Training** opportunities such as the Urban Waters Forum and Metro Waters Summit
- **Develop Partnerships** between Master Water Stewards with Lake Associations to help leverage the passion, energy, and expertise Stewards bring to community-based water resource work in MCWD

Alongside these proactive features, Freshwater Society will continue to offer assistance to existing and newly forming lake groups through the WAI. This is largely a responsive component of the program, as each group has a unique structure, set of participants, and lakeshed context. By nature of group development, there are ebbs and flows in activity, with some groups needing more attention than others at different times. Services in this responsive category are conducted with an eye towards the future, recognizing the importance of relationships both internal and external to the groups. These services can be:

- **Relationship coaching**, to help groups build and maintain positive and productive working relationships with key players and decision makers in their community
- **Development of Action and/or Lake Management Plans** to help provide direction for new groups or those groups struggling to build and maintain momentum
- **Connecting groups to resources** to help them continue their own development and increase their independence

New Services

Additionally, in response to the 2016 evaluative process as well as requests and identified needs of member groups, Freshwater Society will roll out the following new services for the WAI in 2017:

- **Develop a New Association Education Series** for new groups to make sure all members are on the same page about how water is governed, how watersheds function, what MCWD does, and what makes for successful community groups focused on water resources
- **Develop an Online Resource Library**, which will share many of the resources the WAI uses in engaging lake and neighborhood associations with current and potential WAI members
- **Host semi-regular networking opportunities** that will combine professional development and networking into non-formal, semi-regular opportunities for WAI members from across the watershed to connect with and learn from each other
- **Facilitate subwatershed collaboration**, similar to the larger Coalition of Lake Association concept, to help lake groups communicate and collaborate with those both up and downstream of their location (especially in geographic priority areas)
- **Hold quarterly meetings with relevant MCWD staff** to discuss issues, strategies, and opportunities to engage and empower citizens in the watershed to assist MCWD in meeting its established water quality and lake/stream management goals.
- **Office hours** in geographic priority areas for the Organizer to be available for drop-in conversation or questions (the logistics of which will be worked out in early 2017 through a phone survey of active groups)

Working Relationships:

The Organizer is an employee of Freshwater Society. The Organizer will provide regular reports as requested to the MCWD Education Program Manager on overall initiative progress. Written materials and major initiative decisions must be reviewed and approved by the MCWD Education Program Manager. The MCWD Education Program Manager will evaluate contract progress and will approve invoices according to the payment schedule as outlined in the contract.

Timeline: This Scope of Services proposal is for calendar year 2017.

Payment Agreement

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District will pay \$25,000 to Freshwater Society for the services described above. Payments will be made in three installments, as identified in the schedule below:

\$12,500	(50%)	February 1, 2017
\$10,000	(40%)	July 1, 2017 (upon receipt and approval of written progress reports)
\$2,500	(10%)	Dec 1, 2017 (upon receipt and approval of written progress reports)