

MEETING DATE: November 20, 2014

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

RESOLUTION NUMBER: 14-090

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 type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): _____	

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: November 1, 2014 – October 31, 2015

PROJECT/PROGRAM COST:

Fund name and number: 2302 - Education

Current budget: \$45,000

Expenditures to date: \$0

Requested amount of funding: \$36,500

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 October 2014. The contract under consideration covers November 2014 to October 2015. See Exhibit A: Watershed Association Initiative: Scope of Services with detailed Work Plan and Budget.

This contract with Freshwater Society will authorize the ninth year of the Watershed Association Initiative (WAI) for 2015. The WAI program was evaluated in 2014 through a Community Capacity Assessment, completed in consultation with MCWD staff. The assessment focused on evaluating the WAI program and exploring opportunities to build capacity and examine ways to further build a base of active and engaged citizens. Based on the results of the assessment it was recommended that the WAI focus efforts on supporting and

empowering existing associations rather than seeking to form new associations in the watershed. This refined focus will capitalize on existing associations and assisting them with improving their effectiveness and capacity to further engage in water quality programming.

As a result of this refined focus, the proposed WAI budget is being reduced by \$8,500 for the upcoming year. The entire WAI program budget of \$36,500 includes the contract amount of \$31,500 for Freshwater Society as well as \$5,000 for the MCWD Mini Grant Program, which provides matching funds to existing lake associations within the District. The mini grant program is administered by the Freshwater Society on behalf of the District.

Please see attached Year 8 Year End Report for 2014-2014 with details on recent WAI activities.

In year nine, 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 ninth year of the Watershed Association Initiative. Please note: The overall program budget is \$36,500, which is a reduction from the \$45,000 in the 2015 Education Work Plan. The contract with Freshwater Society is for \$31,500, with \$5,000 that is set aside for the association Mini Grant Program.

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:

<i>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.</i> |
| 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.
- July 2014 The MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2015 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.

RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, the MCWD Board of Managers approved the 2015 Education Work Plan and Budget, which includes \$45,000 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

WHEREAS, Based on the results of the 2014 Community Capacity Assessment, MCWD and Freshwater Society staff have identified a need for further empowering and supporting existing associations; and

WHEREAS, The assessment also recommended the District refocus its effort from expanding the number of associations to providing more assistance and support to existing associations.

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 \$31,500 with Freshwater Society to continue the Watershed Association Initiative;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers authorizes the District Administrator to reimburse funds, not to exceed a total of \$5,000 to citizen groups according to the parameters set in the Watershed Association Initiative Mini Grant Program;

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 14- 090 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____.
Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: _____.

Secretary Date: _____