



Sunrise River WMO

2241 – 221st Ave
Cedar, MN 55011

Approved Minutes

Sunrise River Water Management Organization Meeting

Thursday May 5, 2022

Meeting was held in person at the East Bethel City Hall

1. Call to Order
Ms. Kantor called the meeting to order at 6:36 pm.

2. Roll Call
Present: Janet Hegland, Tim Harrington, Candice Kantor, Tim Peterson, Troy Wolens, Jeff Entsminger, Leon Mager

Audience: Jared Wagner, Anoka Conservation District (ACD)
Barbara Heitcamp, East Metro Water Resource Education Program (EMWREP)
Cameron Blake, Recording Secretary (attending remotely via Zoom)

3. Approval of Agenda
Ms. Hegland moved to approve the agenda as presented and Mr. Harrington seconded this motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

4. Approval of Minutes for February 2, 2022
There were edits received from Ms. Kantor and Ms. Hegland that will be incorporated into the minutes.
Ms. Hegland moved to approve the minutes with those edits and Mr. Harrington seconded this motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

5. Financial Reports
 - A. Treasurer's report
Mr. Harrington reported a beginning balance of \$36,289.42 with one upcoming debit. This will result in a balance of \$34,289.42.
Mr. Mager moved to accept the treasurer's report and Ms. Hegland seconded this motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

 - B. Current grants financial report from Anoka Conservation District (ACD)

Mr. Wagener presented the current grants financial report. Due to a Quickbooks error there is more funding than realized for cost share projects. The report was also updated with expenses related to carp management. A new contract item (cost share funds through Lake Associations) was added which will be discussed later in the agenda.

Ms. Hegland asked about the remaining funds for carp management which need to be used this calendar year. The board discussed this topic from previous meetings. Mr. Schurbon may ask BWSR for an extension, otherwise the funds will be returned. SRWMO will not be penalized for underspending the grant because the target goals of the grant were met. Ms. Hegland asked for clarification on how this would affect remaining SRWMO match dollars. Other sources of match were used as well; approximately \$17,500 from the county at this point so there may be \$7,500 SRWMO match funds remaining. This question will be brought back to Mr. Schurbon.

6. Unfinished Business

A. Review of communities' ordinances for compliance with SRWMO minimums

Mr. Schurbon will forward a request for help for East Bethel to Mr. Harrington. The status of this recurring agenda item is otherwise very similar to the last update. Linwood is challenged by a lack of staffing capacity and may not be able to finish this ordinance update. They were including this process in a larger internal update. Ms. Hegland asked what the next step for the SRWMO is based on this information. The board asked if there was a timeline for completion or if there was an alternative way for the community to be in compliance with SRWMO minimums than the current ordinance update. This question will be brought back to Mr. Schurbon.

B. JPA amendment recommendations update

Mr. Schurbon's memo updated the board on the progress made with Ham Lake. After their meeting Ham Lake approved the 2023 budget and approved their contribution of \$2,000 for the JPA amendment process.

Ms. Hegland updated the board that the SRWMO identified a facilitator for this process. The individual works for the state and has a background working as a mediator for different government agencies like the MPCA. She did not receive his resume in time to distribute to the SRWMO board. He understands the budget for the process and will work within it.

Ms. Hegland explained that the SRWMO JPA needs to handle the contract for this process. The ACD often handles contracting for work for the SRWMO but this is a different scenario. The individual cities also wouldn't have the authority to enter into a contract for the JPA. Mr. Schurbon recommended the board authorize the SRWMO to enter into this agreement but the JPA is between the cities. Ms. Hegland will have more information from her inquiry with the legal staff at the City of Columbus. The board agreed that the SRWMO has done its role for this JPA amendment, and that it is now up to the cities to decide on the changes the SRWMO has recommended. The SRWMO will continue to work on setting up the meeting. Ms. Hegland explained that although this is a self-imposed timeline she wants the progress to continue to avoid potential issues, such as the current ability for a single community to hold

up the SRWMO budget from passing. It will not be an issue this year but could in the future as it has in the past.

C. 2023 budget approval

The 2023 SRWMO budget has been ratified by each community.

Ms. Hegland moved to approve the SRWMO 2023 budget and Mr. Wolens seconded this motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

7. New Business

A. Lower St Croix Partnership riverboat workshop – Minimum Impact Development Standards (Barbara Heitkamp)

Barbara Heitkamp introduced herself as the new educator for the SRWMO along with other communities in the LSCWD. As part of the 1W1P process, the participating organizations structured the workplan to include outreach to member communities regarding their current ordinances. The goal is for the entire LSC watershed to adopt the MIDS stormwater standard in their local ordinances to address water resource issues caused by development. Part of this outreach includes a planned riverboat workshop for public officials. This is an interactive event in which feedback is sought from the communities. The event will likely occur in late August with the boat located in Taylor's Falls. It has capacity for 140 people, and invitees include county commissioners, city council members, planners, zoning administrators, etc.

B. Lakeshore stewardship outreach (Barbara Heitkamp)

The SRWMO's 2022 contract with ACD has two expenditures related to promoting lakeshore stewardship. Mr. Schurbon is seeking board direction on what activities to pursue.

The SRWMO 2022 contract and budget includes \$2,250 for Lakeshore Restoration Guidance Materials which would include preparing or consolidating existing materials and promoting them to lakeshore homeowners. The SRWMO 2022 budget includes \$7,570 for Cost Share Grants through Lake Associations with the idea that residents may feel more comfortable working with neighbors than a government agency. These funds are in addition to the SRWMO "for anyone" cost share fund that currently has a \$4,524 balance.

Options for lake stewardship outreach include: the Lake Steward Program, ACD staff outreach (including a new outreach resource, the Decks, Docks, and Flip Flop's flier), and other options through Barbara Heitkamp. There are also options for how to use the cost share funding. One option is for Mr. Schurbon to pursue grant funding and use the current funds as match so there is a much larger fund available for cost share. This could involve a Clean Water Fund application in August. The other options are to make funds available to landowners through the ACD a usual or make funds available to the lake associations to manage. Mr. Schurbon's memo noted there are three site visits waiting that could turn into potential shoreline projects.

Ms. Heitkamp explained the goal of outreach is to change landowner perceptions to promote healthy shorelines with native vegetation buffers, which will benefit the lake quality for everyone. She researched existing programs that promote this kind of community engagement. The Lake Steward Program (through the MN Lakes and Rivers Advocates organization) involves identifying one volunteer landowner to take the lead in communicating with shoreline residents. The volunteer would receive training. Landowner's can join the

organization and take a quiz to receive a score for their current shoreline and actions that can improve it. The challenge with this is identifying someone to be the lead volunteer.

Other resources Ms. Heitcamp identified included native planting resources through the Blue Thumb organization. They are also creating a webinar for shoreline residents. Another resource is a lakeshore workshop through EMWREP for realtors. The Adopt-A-Drain program encourages storm drain cleaning which reduces pollutant loading to water resources. Anoka County is already a member of this program. Mr. Wagner discussed some of the current and previous strategies for outreach such as targeted mailings after lakeshore surveying.

The board discussed the different options for outreach and cost share funding. The managers agreed they felt it would be difficult to identify a volunteer for the Lake Steward program, and that they didn't think Lake Associations wanted to manage the cost share funds. They did feel the Lake Associations would help promote the cost share funds and shoreline projects. The managers requested the materials funds be used to print the Flip Flop flier customized with the ACD logo and distribute them to landowners at upcoming LA meetings and city halls in the SRWMO.

Mr. Wagner discussed the different strategies of distributing funds. Analyses can identify locations in which projects will have greater impact, but the landowner is not always willing to engage at these locations. Implementing projects with willing landowners has the benefit of exposure and normalizing native shorelines which can bring in more interested landowners for projects. The managers discussed the topic of state property taxes, reimbursement, and cost share funds.

There was additional discussion on permits required for lakeshore activities. Mr. Wagner explained the ACD as a general permit with a streamlined process they use to go through the DNR rather than individual landowners applying directly with the DNR.

The managers asked the SRWMO to promote the Adopt a Drain program in Anoka County. Mr. Mager said Lake Associations may be useful in promoting this program especially when members know the drain adoption helps their lake specifically. There was discussion on sources of excess nutrients, the impact on lakes, and the benefit of native vegetation on lakeshores for water quality.

The board discussed and agreed that they felt it was a better use of the cost share funds to distribute to willing landowners now rather than keep them for a potential grant application, especially if there are not identified projects for that larger grant funding if received. There was discussion on the larger cost of any lakeshore project that involves grading versus native plantings. Ms. Kantor asked how much notice Mr. Schurbon would need to apply for a Clean Water Fund grant, in case no funds were distributed prior to the CWF application deadline, and Mr. Wagner estimated to weeks. They discussed making funds available for one or two projects and retaining some funds for a CWF application.

The managers discussed the possibility of the cost share funds being out towards highly visible demonstration projects such as a park. They discussed potential locations including a road and boat launch by the Carlos Avery WMA.

Mr. Wager said he felt he had received sufficient direction from the board on this topic to bring back to Mr. Schurbon.

C. Lower St. Croix Partnership governance structure and liability

Ms. Hegland updated the SRWMO board about recent discussion and a need for a decision in the LSC partnership. The current organizational structure is a Joint Powers Collaboration. There is discussion about whether the group wishes to become a Joint Power's Entity. Discussion in the LSC Policy Committee has included topics such as liability and efficiency of decision making. Ms. Hegland explained that previously the group seemed to favor switching to a JPE after their start as a JPC. However the opinion of the group seems to have shifted. Ms. Hegland has specific questions about liability she wants Mr. Schurbon to investigate. As a JPE the LSC would have their defense and damages covered if a lawsuit was ever raised due to issues around funding allocation or zoning and projects, etc. As a JPC, each partner is liable instead and would need to find a way to pay for any potential legal costs. Ms. Hegland feels that the question of liability is crucial and may be enough for her to recommend leaving the LSC partnership if it is not addressed sufficiently.

D. Lower St. Croix Partnership annual work plan approval

The board briefly discussed the workplan and what activities are involved initially with some contribution from Ms. Heitcamp on some of the planned activities.

Ms. Hegland moved to approve the LSC annual workplan and Mr. Wolens seconded this motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

E. Invitation to join MN Association of Watershed Districts

Mr. Wagner explained the context of this request. MAWD opened their organization up to include Watershed Management Organizations a couple year ago. At the time the SRWMO declined this invitation. MAWD is asking again and Mr. Schurbon's recommendation is to decline mostly due to the fee structure and unlikelihood that the SRWMO would benefit enough from membership to justify the cost. The board noted some benefits to membership included lobbying to the state which would occur with or without the SRWMO's membership. Another benefit could be access to a facilitator such as the SRWMO sought out for their JPA amendment process.

Ms. Hegland moved for the SRWMO to decline MAWD's membership invitation and Mr. Wolens seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

8. Mail

There was no mail.

9. Other

There was no discussion.

11. Invoice(s) approval

A. Recording Secretary services for Feb 2022 meeting (\$200)

Ms. Hegland moved to and Mr. Mager seconded to pay the invoice #20322, payment for \$200. The motion carried with all in favor.

B. Anoka Conservation District 2022 services invoice 1 of 3 (\$17,975.27)

Mr. Harrington moved to and Ms. Hegland seconded to pay the invoice #2022038, payment for \$17,975.27. The motion carried with all in favor.

12. Adjourn

Mr. Harrington moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Mager seconded this. The motion carried and Ms. Kantor adjourned the meeting at 8:14PM.

Ms. Kantor noted that if the need arises the board may meet before September to approve any time sensitive decisions.

Upcoming Meeting Dates: September 1, November 3

Submitted by:
Cameron Blake