



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

**Minutes of Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 15, 2020
8:30 a.m.**

Via video conference due to the COVID-19 global pandemic

1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

On Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 8:31 a.m. via video conference, Chair Prom called the meeting of the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission (BCWMC) to order.

Commissioners and city staff present:

City	Commissioner	Alternate Commissioner	Technical Advisory Committee Members (City Staff)
Crystal	<i>Absent</i>	<i>Vacant Position</i>	Mark Ray
Golden Valley	Stacy Harwell	Jane McDonald Black	Eric Eckman
Medicine Lake	Clint Carlson	Gary Holter	<i>Absent</i>
Minneapolis	Michael Welch	<i>Vacant Position</i>	Liz Stout
Minnetonka	Mike Fruen	<i>Vacant Position</i>	<i>Absent</i>
New Hope	<i>Absent</i>	Patrick Crough	Megan Hedstrom
Plymouth	James Prom (Chair)	Catherine Cesnik	Ben Scharenbroich
Robbinsdale	<i>Vacant Position</i>	<i>Absent</i>	Richard McCoy, Marta Roser
St. Louis Park	<i>Absent</i>	Patrick Noon	<i>Absent</i>
Administrator	Laura Jester, Keystone Waters		
Engineer	Karen Chandler, Barr Engineering Greg Wilson, Barr Engineering Jim Herbert, Barr Engineering Josh Phillips, Barr Engineering		
Recorder	Dawn Pape, Lawn Chair Gardener		
Legal Counsel	Dave Anderson, Kennedy & Graven		
Presenters/ Guests/Public	Joel Spoonheim and Jim Lauer, AMLAC; McKenzie Erickson, Minneapolis resident		

2. PUBLIC FORUM ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Joel Spoonheim, a resident of Plymouth and president of the Association of Medicine Lake Citizens (AMLAC) expressed great concern about the aquatic invasive species (AIS) and water quality in Medicine Lake during the past summer. He explained that this summer the curly-leaf pondweed grew to levels not seen in years and even posed a safety threat because the water was unnavigable for some watercraft. Starry stonewort and curly-leaf pondweed expanded significantly. He would like to see a more comprehensive plan to address the issues. He reported that the initial agency and watershed response to the starry stonewort discovery was amazing. He asked the Commission to put together a more aggressive plan to address AIS. He hopes to see AIS on the agenda in the near future. He also mentioned chloride as a big threat to the health of the lakes.

Administrator Jester gave an overview of starry stonewort and curly-leaf pondweed conditions and the discussions with the DNR and Three Rivers Park District about control measures. Commissioner Carlson asked how AMLAC is involved and how we can partner in the future.

Mr. Spoonheim responded that addressing water concerns is a complicated mix of agencies and organizations and it is difficult for residents to know their role. He also explained that the lake residents are passionate and dedicated. They have door knocked with neighbors and the lake association meets regularly. He doesn't want to see this downward trend continue or for AIS to spread from Medicine Lake into other lakes.

Commissioner Welch thanked Mr. Spoonheim for his input, assured him that AIS is an important issue to BCWMC, and it will be a future agenda item.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Welch moved to approve the agenda. Alternate Commissioner Crough seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 7-0 with the Cities of Crystal and Robbinsdale absent from the vote.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were approved as part of the consent agenda: minutes of the September 17, 2020 Commission meeting with the correction of statutory number, October financial report, and payment of invoices.

The general and construction account balances reported in the October 2020 Financial Report are as follows:
 Checking Account Balance \$ 599,423.52

TOTAL GENERAL FUND BALANCE	\$ 650,049.57
TOTAL CASH & INVESTMENTS ON-HAND (10/7/20)	\$ 3,991,305.79
CIP Projects Levied – Budget Remaining	\$ (4,488,149.40)
Closed Projects Remaining Balance	\$ 1,571,998.09
2015-2018 Anticipated Tax Levy Revenue	\$2,288.14
2019 Anticipated Tax Levy Revenue	\$4,953.76
Anticipated Closed Project Balance	\$ 1,579,239.99

MOTION: Commissioner Welch moved to approve the consent agenda. Alternate Commissioner Crough seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 7-0 with the Cities of Crystal and Robbinsdale absent from the vote.

5. BUSINESS

A. Consider Awarding Contract for Sweeney Lake Alum Treatment

Bids from contractors to perform the alum treatment on Sweeney Lake were due October 9th. The Commission received three bids with the lowest bid from Solitude Lake Management at \$215,000. Commission Engineer Greg Wilson followed up to make sure the company has the equipment needed and that the scheduling works. He noted the goal is to get the treatment done by the end of October with an October 26th start date. The treatment would take about 5 days. Commission Engineer Wilson indicated that although he hasn't worked with Solitude in the past and the company has not performed alum treatments in the Midwest, he is familiar with this company through the North American Lake Management Society and reported that they have good experience having completed large alum treatment projects on the East Coast. The alum treatment is part of the Sweeney Lake Water Quality Improvement CIP Project, which is partially funded through a federal grant.

Commissioner Welch asked whether there was a contingency plan if water temperatures get too low to perform the treatment. Commission Engineer Wilson replied that the treatment would be moved to the spring, which may require a change order in the contract.

MOTION: Commissioner Welch moved to direct the Administrator to make decisions to implement the work and to award the alum treatment contract to Solitude Lake Management. Commissioner Carlson seconded. Upon a rollcall vote, the motion carried 7-0 with the Cities of Crystal and Robbinsdale absent from the vote.

After the vote, there was further discussion of how treatment will proceed. Barr staff will be taking pH and temperature measurements in the lake to ensure proper conditions are in place for treatment.

Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black noted that water quality has been good this year in that lake. Engineer Wilson said it may be partially attributed to the aerators being turned off. He noted there will be post treatment plant surveys.

B. Review Additional Data and Cost Estimate for Further Analysis of Linear Projects

At the September meeting, the Commission reviewed and discussed analyses comparing the revised linear project standards with the previous linear project standards. At that meeting, the Commission directed the Commission Engineer to spend up to \$2,000 to provide more detail on the feasibility of water quality improvements based on a desktop analysis of site constraints and to bring a cost estimate for further analysis to a future meeting. Commission Engineer Chandler reminded the Commission of last month's questions:

1. What water quality improvements were included at the projects?
2. What were the site constraints?
3. What is the cost of further analysis?

Commission Engineer Josh Phillips, walked through the additional information provided for linear projects. Overall, he noted that there is a slight increase in impervious surfaces when all projects were added together, resulting in up to 6.18 additional pounds of total phosphorus (TP) loading from the project sites. However, he noted the Wirth Cart Paths Project added impervious surfaces that are disconnected from water resources and stormwater infrastructure. Additionally, the 494-Rockford Rd. interchange project used existing BMPs to treat runoff from the additional impervious surfaces. Therefore, of the 6.18 pounds of TP added, up to 94% is likely not reaching water resources. He also noted that many linear projects do incorporate water quality treatment measures that may not be reported to the Commission.

Commission Engineer Phillips then reviewed data and maps showing possible site constraints including depth to bedrock, depth to groundwater, drinking water supply management areas, surface karst, soil infiltration potential, and "what's in my neighborhood" locations. He noted that the data are broad and more detailed

information would be needed from city staff for each project if further analyses were ordered. He reviewed the cost estimates for gathering and analyzing more data indicating a range of \$4,000 - \$15,000 for additional water quality treatment data (analysis of “opportunities lost”) and \$2,500 - \$10,000 to further identify and analyze specific site constraints. He recommended not to proceed with further analyses due to expenses and the possible lack of a clear picture even after completion of more analyses.

Commissioner Harwell noted the extra information adds more context. She wondered about the sanitary sewer constraint (with respect to inflow and infiltration/I&I) and about the soils and infiltration (i.e., B/D soils and high infiltrating soils/> 8 in/hr). She also asked about historic reviews and exemptions.

To address Commissioner Harwell’s questions, Engineer Phillips reviewed Table 1 and noted that he didn’t map the sanitary sewer/I & I constraint data as he would have had to look into the I & I requirements of each city, which didn’t fit in the timeframe of this analysis. He then described the infiltration maps. As for historic exemptions for infiltration, he noted that a person could examine this by determining where infiltration has been successful. It is very common to see infiltration constraints with other projects. He noted that as constraints increase, so does the complexity.

Commissioner Harwell said this additional data drives home the point of what reality looks like on the ground with linear projects and why standards were changed. She agreed that no further analysis would be needed, but she thought this analysis was helpful.

There was a brief discussion about public water supplies in the area.

Commissioner Welch agreed that further analysis is not warranted, but wondered how to move forward. He brought up that private developers might be putting in considerable effort in trying infiltrate or incorporate volume control. He stated that it sounded like we shouldn’t have volume control anywhere. He said, “If I’m a private developer, this makes me mad.” He noted that other watersheds have lower thresholds for triggering requirements and that MIDS accounts for site constraints. He believed the Commission should change the standard and that the Commission Engineers could help determine what those standards should be. He suggested that this should be a future agenda item and that the Commission should get recommendations from the Engineer on linear project impervious surface thresholds for stormwater management requirements.

[Alternate Commission Noon leaves the meeting.]

Commissioner Harwell said linear projects are different than a typical development or redevelopment project and indicated her support of current requirements. Administrator Jester noted that the cost of best management practices constructed in areas other than linear projects would likely offer a better cost benefit and use of public money.

Commissioner Welch asked Engineers Herbert and Chandler whether they recommended a change to the linear standards. Engineer Herbert answered that the adopted standards are generally working and that water quality best management practices are being implemented. Engineer Chandler agreed with Engineer Herbert and said that future assessments would be useful and would warrant a discussion with the Technical Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Welch asked that the record to show that the thresholds that came out of our process of developing our regulatory framework and incorporating MIDS in 2015 produced a threshold for linear projects that was later changed without data or analysis. Further, he reiterated that MIDS does already account for the difference between linear projects and non-linear projects.

C. Bassett Creek Flood Control Project (FCP)

i. Receive Report on Bassett Creek Deep Tunnel Inspection

Before the report from Commission Engineers, Administrator Jester noted a local news story about the Mississippi River draw down and the inspection and a short video she recorded of Engineer Herbert describing the tunnel entrance. She reported that both will be available online.

Commission Engineer Herbert described the preliminary findings from the deep tunnel inspections, which were finally completed after three years of coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers. There were representatives from many agencies in attendance, including a standby rescue team. He described the cathedral arch shape of the tunnel that makes it more stable since the tunnel is in sandstone.

The inspection found various issues in the tunnel including minor cracks, infiltration stains, weeps, drips, and runs (continuous streams). There were also infiltration gushers, where the water was coming into the tunnel like a fountain. Engineer Herbert also showed deposits on tunnel walls and noted some voids behind the tunnel liner that should be addressed. He also stated that sediment accumulated in three of the four outlet bays that was also there 12 years ago. He noted that a full inspection report will be available in the coming months and that no urgent repairs are needed immediately.

[Commissioner Harwell leaves meeting. Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black takes over as voting member.]

There was discussion about the sediment blocking three of the bays at the outlet. It was noted that most of it is likely from the Mississippi River and not from the creek. There was a brief discussion about how to measure the voids behind the liners.

ii. Review BCWMC Responsibilities for FCP Repairs

Commission Attorney Anderson reviewed a memo regarding the Commission's responsibilities and liabilities for tunnel repairs. He stated that he reached the same conclusion that was reached in 2014. Although nothing contractually obligates the Commission to make these repairs, the Commission has established policies and funds for inspections and repairs. He recommended that the Commission follows its own policy.

Commission Engineer Chandler restated there needs to be records of repairs should there be a catastrophic situation. There was discussion about the cost of repairs and maintenance and possible cost sharing opportunities. Administrator Jester noted that seeking funding partners is a possibility.

Commissioner Welch said this is an obvious and important role for the Commission because this is a huge piece of infrastructure. He thought Engineer Chandler's comment was a good one to add to the analysis. He asked what the next steps were. Administrator Jester explained that we need to start planning for tunnel repairs, which starts with approving the recommendation in the next agenda item.

Engineer Chandler added that cities also need to perform and record maintenance on FCP components in their cities. Administrator Jester confirmed that the TAC has been reminded of this responsibility.

Commissioner Welch requested an update in January or February to check to see if the reports had been received by the cities. Administrator Jester clarified that the deep tunnel repairs are separate from the double box culvert repairs to be discussed next.

iii. Review Estimated Costs for FCP Repairs

Commission Engineer Herbert reviewed the cost estimate for repairs for the double box culvert which was inspected in October 2019, with a final report presented in June. The report detailed the observations made by the Commission Engineer and recommended repairs to the shear key joint material, crack sealing, deposit removal, and repairs to exposed reinforcement. The Commission approved that inspection report in June and directed the Commission Engineer to prepare an opinion

of cost for the repairs. He noted that it is expensive work because of the challenging access and that there are few bidders that can perform the work.

Commissioner Welch asked if cities would want to add their required Flood Control Project maintenance and repair to the box culvert repair work, so the work could be handled within one contract to perhaps lower costs. Engineer Herbert responded that he wasn't sure this would be a good idea because the double box culvert repairs are much different than other repairs further up in the watershed.

MOTION: Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black moved to approve the Commission Engineer's recommendations to plan for Bassett Creek Double Box Culvert repairs before 2025 and to add the repair project to the CIP. Commissioner Welch seconded the motion. Upon a rollcall vote, the motion carried 5-0 with the Cities of Crystal, Minnetonka, Robbinsdale, and St. Louis Park absent from the vote.

Chair Prom requested that the remaining agenda items be moved to the next meeting's agenda since few commissioners remained in the meeting and there were issues with audio. Commissioner Welch asked that commissioners be reminded on the importance of attending meetings.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Administrator's Report - Administrator Jester gave a quick reminder that next month's meeting is on a Wednesday (November 18th) and that there is an upcoming Metro MAWD meeting that she encouraged commissioners to attend.

7. INFORMATION ONLY (Information online only)

- A. CIP Project Updates <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects>
- B. CIP Project Updates
- C. 2020 BCWMC Administrative Calendar
- D. Hennepin County Climate Plan Presentation
- E. WCA Notice of Application, Golden Valley

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Prom adjourned the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Metro MAWD Meeting: Tuesday October 20th, 7:00 p.m. (online, watch for more information)
- Bassett Creek Watershed Mgmt. Commission Meeting: WEDNESDAY November 18th, 8:30 a.m. online
- Minnesota Water Resources Conference: October 20 – 21; Online <https://ccaps.umn.edu/minnesotawater-resources-conference>

Signature/Title Date

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