



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

**Minutes of Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 21, 2021
8:30 a.m.**

Via video conference due to the COVID-19 global pandemic

A. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

On Thursday, October 21, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. via video conference, Chair Cesnik brought the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission (BCWMC) to order.

Commissioners, city staff, and others present

City	Commissioner	Alternate Commissioner	Technical Advisory Committee Members (City Staff)
Crystal	Dave Anderson	<i>Vacant Position</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Golden Valley	Stacy Harwell	Jane McDonald Black	RJ Kakach, Drew Chirpich
Medicine Lake	<i>Absent</i>	Gary Holter	<i>Absent</i>
Minneapolis	Michael Welch	Jodi Polzin	Liz Stout, Katie Kowalczyk
Minnetonka	<i>Absent</i>	<i>Vacant Position</i>	<i>Absent</i>
New Hope	<i>Absent</i>	Patrick Crough	David Lemke
Plymouth	Catherine Cesnik	<i>Absent</i>	Ben Scharenbroich
Robbinsdale	<i>Absent</i>	<i>Vacant Position</i>	Marta Roser, Richard McCoy
St. Louis Park	Jim de Lambert	Angela Lawrence	<i>Absent</i>
Administrator	Laura Jester, Keystone Waters		
Engineers	Karen Chandler, Jim Herbert, and Greg Wilson, Barr Engineering		
Recorder	<i>Absent</i>		
Legal Counsel	Dave Anderson, Kennedy & Graven		
Presenters/ Guests/Public	None present		

B. PUBLIC FORUM ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No members of the public were present for the public forum.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black moved to approve the agenda. Alternate Commissioner Holter seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 7-0, with the cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale absent from the vote.

[Commissioner Harwell joins the meeting.]

D. CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were approved as part of the consent agenda.

- A. Approval of Minutes from September 16, 2021 BCWMC Meeting
- B. Acceptance of October 2021 Financial Report
- C. Approval of Payment of Invoices
 - i. Keystone Waters, LLC – September 2021 Administrative Services
 - ii. Keystone Waters, LLC – September 2021 Printing Expenses
 - iii. Barr Engineering – September 2021 Engineering Services
 - iv. Kennedy & Graven – August 2021 Legal Services
 - v. Redpath – September Accounting Services
 - vi. We All Need Food and Water – September 2021 Administrative and Education Services
 - vii. Stantec (Wenck) – Aug/Sept WOMP
 - viii. Finance & Commerce – Public Hearing Notice
 - ix. ECM Publishers – Public Hearing Notice
 - x. Metro Blooms – Lawns to Legumes Grant Project
 - xi. Metro Blooms – Local Contribution to Pollinator Project
- D. Approval to Direct Commission Engineer to Submit Flood Control Inspection Report to Cities, Minnesota DNR, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- E. Approval to Submit the Draft Environmental Assessment Worksheet for the Main Stem Lagoon Dredging Project to the City of Golden Valley (Responsible Government Unit, RGU) for Review and Approval

The general and construction account balances reported in the October 2021 Financial Report are as follows:

Current Assets	Capital Improvement Projects	General Fund	TOTAL
Checking	327,362.49	44,041.84	403,676.33
4MP Fund Investment	3,501,105.22	262.12	3,501,367.34
4M Fund Investment	1,483,511.82	37.42	1,483,549.24
Total Checking/Savings October 2021	5,311,979.53	44,341.38	5,388,592.91

MOTION: Commissioner de Lambert moved to approve the consent agenda. Alternate Commissioner Holter seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 7-0, with the cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale absent from the vote.

5. BUSINESS

A. Receive Information on Proposed North Green Loop Development, Minneapolis

Commission Engineer Herbert reported that a developer in Minneapolis is proposing to build a structure over a key access shaft into the Bassett Creek Tunnel. He explained that although there is no action to be taken at this point, the project is located within the jurisdiction of the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization and would be constructed over both the double box culvert and the deep tunnel, including above a key tunnel access shaft.

Engineer Herbert gave an overview of the tunnels and the drop shaft. He described the access shaft that is used to get large equipment into the tunnel and its current location in a surface parking lot near downtown. He noted that City of

Minneapolis staff are reviewing questions and concerns submitted by the Commission Engineers and may provide additional information at a future meeting. The developer proposes to offer reasonable access to the shaft from within the building. The city has contacted the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) regarding this project. Engineer Herbert reviewed a timeline, with groundbreaking starting in November and completed access plans provided by mid-November. He noted the considerable amount of time he and other Commission Engineers have spent reviewing plans and discussing options and concerns with city staff and the developer. Commission Attorney Anderson has also been involved in some discussions regarding existing policies and agreements.

Following the presentation, Commissioner Harwell asked whether this project could affect the integrity of the tunnel and how or if impacts would be reviewed by the Commission. Engineer Herbert agreed with Commissioner Harwell's concerns and stated that the building will straddle the tunnel. He explained that when the Twins stadium was built, there was a pre- and post- structural integrity inspection of the tunnel. He noted that the major concern is with the box culvert because it is built in very poor soils.

Commissioner Harwell asked who pays for the time spent reviewing the plans and what are the logistics? Engineer Herbert answered that the Commission Engineers are an extension of the city's review. There is no review fee collected because the project is located outside of the BCWMC's jurisdiction. Administrator Jester clarified that there is no reimbursement agreement in place.

Commissioner Welch added that regardless of reimbursement or payment, Commission staff should continue working on this issue. He noted that he can help secure the Commission's interest as best as he can with the city. He added that the timeline is alarming and that they may need to coordinate with other units of city government.

Commissioner de Lambert recalled a discussion about easements when the Twins stadium was built.

Attorney Anderson didn't know the easement history with the Twins stadium, but he reported that the City of Minneapolis has an easement over this access shaft and that the Commission isn't party to that easement. Attorney Anderson further explained that Commission staff are continuing to work with the city and the developer to make sure the Commission concerns are addressed.

Commission Engineer Chandler noted that the engineers are tracking this work as a separate expense. Alternate Commissioner Polzin asked if MnDOT still has a role in this issue since they were involved in the 1990s. Engineer Herbert answered that the city would contact MnDOT if needed. Alternate Commissioner Polzin requested more information on the entities involved in this issue.

Minneapolis TAC member Liz Stout explained that Minneapolis staff are working with the city attorney to develop the easement language. MnDOT and the ACOE are being contacted. The ACOE is also requiring documentation on potential changes to the tunnel and access. She noted that the developer's timeline is optimistic since an ACOE 408 permit is needed. She further explained that the city considers the tunnels and access shaft to be critical infrastructure and also noted that the private property owners have rights to develop the property within a legal easement framework.

Commissioner Welch added that to the degree ACOE permitting is involved, it might be appropriate to have an arrangement with ACOE if the Commission Engineers' expertise is needed during 408 permit review.

B. Receive Information on Chloride Reduction Projects

Administrator Jester gave an overview of three projects. First, the Hennepin County Chloride Initiative (HCCI) began when all eleven watersheds in Hennepin County agreed to use 10% (or \$101,800) of their 2019 Watershed Based Implementation Funding to collectively address chloride pollution from winter deicers through a county-wide effort. She briefly reviewed the project outcomes to date including the Technical Barriers Study, Smart Salting for Property Management Manual, and Winter Maintenance Plan Templates.

The Technical Barriers Study revealed that knowledge of, and education about chloride water contamination issues were not necessarily a barrier for salt applicators. Instead, liability and client demand were most associated with salt application choices, along with financial costs and liability concerns. The Smart Salting for Property Management Manual

was developed by Fortin Consulting in 2019 using some HCCI funding. Winter Maintenance Plan Templates (or chloride reduction plans) to be used by cities or watersheds are for those who request or require them for certain developments. For example, BCWMC required the previous Four Seasons Mall developer to implement a chloride management plan, but when asked for an example or template for such a plan, none existed at the time. Fortin Consulting was hired by HCCI to develop the templates. Three different levels of templates (basic, intermediate, and detailed) were developed along with a calculator to help determine the best template for a particular site or development. Find the calculator and templates at: <https://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/developer/winter-maintenance>.

Next, as an initial phase of a BCWMC Capital Improvement Program project aimed at reducing chloride loading to Parkers Lake, the City of Plymouth contracted with Young Environmental Consulting Group to facilitate the Parkers Lake Chloride Project Work Group (a group of water quality experts). The results of this phase will be used to: 1). Compile available land use data and chloride concentrations, 2). Find consensus on the chloride sources to Parkers Lake and potential projects to address these sources, 3). Develop a recommendation for a future pilot project to reduce chloride concentrations in Parkers Lake and one that could be replicated in other areas of Hennepin County and 4). Help target education and training needs by land use. The first work group meeting was held in July. Experts are currently gathering and analyzing their own chloride data to present to the group at a meeting later this month. Additional meetings are scheduled for November, December, and January. A final report should be available early next year.

Finally, through their own initiatives and MS4 Permits, cities continue to use a variety of new and existing methods to help reduce chloride use, such as proper salt storage and handling, Smart Salt certified crews, education and outreach to the community, development and use of a written snow and ice management policy, etc. Smart Salting Certification Trainings are ongoing. In addition, Golden Valley is adding a requirement for a winter maintenance or chloride management plan to all of its stormwater maintenance agreements and developing a chloride dosing calculator for property managers. Plymouth is using its new high efficiency street sweeper to pick-up left-over salt in some areas.

Commissioner Harwell commented that she learned at the last salt symposium that water softeners are the next big thing that needs to be addressed. Administrator Jester mentioned that the West Metro Water Alliance is working on a water softener education flyer and that the Commission may wish to lobby representatives for limited liability legislation. Chair Cesnik asked if there is a one-page factsheet for winter maintenance plans that could be included in review letters. Alternate Commissioner Lawrence offered an idea to educate students on salt use through the Minnesota Department of Education.

C. Review Data on Sweeney Lake Chloride Sources

In response to learning about high chloride levels in Sweeney Lake and noting the request for more information from Commissioners, Administrator Jester asked Commission Engineers to review chloride and land use data from the Sweeney Lake watershed to help determine possible sources of chloride and areas of high loading rates. Commission Engineer Greg Wilson walked through the available data, trends, and results from Sweeney Lake, Sweeney Lake Branch of Bassett Creek and chloride hot spot mapping performed in 2017. In short, results confirm that the Sweeney Lake Branch portion of the lake's watershed contributes a significant portion of the chloride loading to the lake. This loading is due to the higher density of impervious surfaces. Approximately 17,000 acres drain into the lake from the south through Schaper Pond. He noted that due to constant flow through the lake, reductions in chloride loading from the Sweeney Lake Branch of the watershed will quickly lead to reductions in the chloride concentrations in the lake. He reported that overall, the Bassett Creek watershed has about 4.7 times more high density land use areas than average in the Twin Cities area. He noted that previous studies indicate that commercial applicators likely comprise about 40% of the total salt used in the watershed.

Engineer Wilson reviewed recommendations including reducing salt use by private applicators, providing brining equipment and education on how to use this equipment, supporting limited-liability legislation, and performing detailed GIS analysis of loading sources.

Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black complimented the report and asked whether the recent increase in density along I-394 and Highway 55 makes a difference. Engineer Wilson confirmed that the 2017 hot spot mapping work used 2010 land use data. In addition, more analysis would use more recent data on imperviousness.

Chair Cesnik mentioned the idea previously raised to explore using CAMP volunteers to do chloride monitoring. Administrator Jester replied that the Metropolitan Council follows US EPA lab standards and the EPA's holding time for chloride samples is shorter than CAMP's. She noted the conversation on that is continuing. She also indicated that the recommendation to do further GIS analysis is good, but there isn't funding for further study right now. However, outreach to salt applicators in high-density areas in the Sweeney Lake subwatershed can still be targeted.

Engineer Wilson will look into having volunteers collect conductivity measurements (which can be correlated to chloride concentration) as suggested by Engineer Chandler, noting that the probe rents for \$50/day or could be purchased for about \$500.

Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black expressed concern that levels may be going up faster than the data shows. In response, Engineer Wilson stated that the WOMP station is a good tool to see trends and allows comparing WOMP trends with Sweeney Lake. Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black voiced that more data is needed and suggested that the Sweeney Lake Association could help purchase a probe. Administrator Jester will follow up on that idea.

D. Update on Planning for 2025 Watershed Plan Development

Administrator Jester noted that staff has begun outlining a framework, timeline, and public engagement options for development of the 2025 Watershed Management Plan. She asked whether the BCWMC is interested in hosting a workshop on "Equity in Watershed Management" early next year to support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts. Possible presenters could be from Metro Blooms, Hennepin County Commissioner Fernando, or Friends of the Mississippi River staff. Plymouth TAC member Ben Scharenbroich noted that the City of Plymouth has hired a DEI coordinator.

Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black indicated support for the workshop, noting the importance of digging deeper on this topic. There was a short discussion about hiring a student from Dougherty Family College. The TAC is working on a potential work plan for this student.

Alternative Commissioner Lawrence mentioned that a group called Skywatchers has Native speakers who talk about environmental issues, including marginalized communities.

Alternative Commissioner Polzin has connections with North Minneapolis. She suggested hiring an environmental justice expert to review the existing plan to point out gaps and places to improve.

Chair Cesnik is supportive and commented that these issues are complex to navigate. She noted the Commission is sure to have blind spots and the nature of blind spots is not knowing what they are.

There was general agreement to move forward with this workshop.

E. Review Status of 2021 Operating Budget

Administrator Jester noted that since we are two-thirds through the fiscal year, it's time to take a look at budget status. She reported that Technical Services and Education are running just under budget so far and Administration is running high due to higher than budgeted expenses for financial management, legal services, and the Administrator's hours. Overall, she noted that the Commission should come in at or just under budget for the year.

Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black expressed that going over budget for leadership activities is good and that the fund balance is healthy. She also noted that a budget is only an estimate of work.

[Commissioner de Lambert leaves meeting]

F. Consider Administrator Attendance at Joint SWCD-WD Meeting

The Executive Committee of the Minnesota Association of Watershed Administrators (MAWA) and a group of Soil and Water Conservation District Managers are planning a joint meeting to share common interests and identify opportunities

to strengthen existing partnerships. The meeting will be held on November 9th and 10th at the Arrowwood Resort in Baxter, MN. A meeting of MAWA will follow the joint meeting and Administrator Jester typically attends MAWA meetings.

There was general consensus that the Administer should attend. Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black noted the importance of these networking opportunities.

MOTION: Alternate Commissioner Crough moved to approve Administrator Jester’s attendance of the joint SWCD-WD meeting. Alternate Commissioner Holter seconded the motion. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 7-0, with the cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale absent from the vote.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Administrator’s Report

- i. Reminder of WEDNESDAY Meeting in November
- ii. Update on BCWMC Bicycle Tour

There was nice weather and there were a few commissioners as well as others who joined. All who joined had positive things to say.

B. Chair

Nothing to report

C. Commissioners

- i. Commissioner Harwell attend the Buckthorn Bust event held by the Bassett’s Creek Park Volunteer Group. It was fun and people took the education materials.
- ii. Alternate Commissioners McDonald Black and Holter attended the SEA School Walk for Water event. They appreciated the nice interactive materials that BCWMC has for them to use at the event. Alternate Commissioner Holter mentioned how nice it was to have hundreds of kids screaming in appreciation for what the watershed does and he noted the Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black did a great job kicking off the event.
- iii. Alternate Commissioner Polzin attended the Bryn Mawr open house. She noted that no attendees had questions or comments about the water quality components.
- iv. Commissioner Harwell reported she will be attending the Minnesota Association of Floodplain Managers Meeting

D. TAC Members

- i. Parkers Lake and Mt. Olivet CIP Project Bids—Ben Scharenbroich announced the bid openings: \$363,100 for both projects. Construction costs are \$230,600, about 2% above the estimated budget. The Plymouth City Council will consider awarding contracts at its next meeting.
- ii. The APWA will be doing a trash pickup on Highway 100 tomorrow.

E. Committees

- i. Administration and TAC will be meeting soon.

F. Education Consultant - Absent due to family health crisis. No new education-related news to report

G. Legal Counsel - Nothing to report

H. Engineer

- i. Environmental Work for MPRB – Commission Engineer Chandler reported that Barr Engineering was requested by SRF to provide environmental services on behalf of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board for their part of the Bryn Mawr Meadows project work. There is no conflict of interest, but she wanted to be transparent.

7. INFORMATION ONLY (Information online only)

- A. [BCWMC Administrative Calendar](#)
- B. [CIP Project Updates](#)
- C. [Grant Tracking Summary and Spreadsheet](#)
- D. Northside Lawns to Legumes Update
- E. WCA Notices, Plymouth
- F. WCA Notices, Golden Valley

8. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.