



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Thursday, April 17, 2025

8:30 a.m.

7800 Golden Valley Rd., Golden Valley MN

1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

On April 17, 2025 at 8:33 a.m. Chair Cesnik called the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission (Commission) to order.

Commissioners, city staff, and others present

City	Commissioner	Alternate Commissioner	Technical Advisory Committee Members (City Staff)
Crystal	Joan Hauer	Terri Schultz <i>online</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Golden Valley	Paula Pentel	<i>Vacant</i>	Eric Eckman
Medicine Lake	Clint Carlson	<i>Absent</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Minneapolis	Jodi Polzin	<i>Vacant</i>	Liz Stout
Minnetonka	<i>Vacant</i>	Stacy Harwell	Leslie Yetka, <i>online</i>
New Hope	Jere Gwin-Lenth	Jen Leonardson	Nick Macklem
Plymouth	Catherine Cesnik	Monika Vadali	Ben Scharenbroich
Robbinsdale	Wayne Sicora	<i>Vacant</i>	Jenna Wolf
St. Louis Park	<i>Absent</i>	David Johnston	Erick Francis
Administrator	Laura Jester, Keystone Waters, LLC		
Engineers	Stephanie Johnson and Greg Wilson – Barr Engineering Co. Karen Chander – Barr Engineering Co. (online)		
Recording Secretary	<i>Vacant Position</i>		
Legal Counsel	Dave Anderson, Kennedy & Graven		
Guests/Public	Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District Amy Timm, MPCA (online)		

2. PUBLIC FORUM ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Pentel seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 9-0.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Item 4F was removed from the consent agenda.

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the consent agenda as amended. Commissioner Hauer seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 9-0.

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

- Acceptance of April Financial Report
 - Keystone Waters, LLC – March 2025 Administration
 - Keystone Waters, LLC – March 2025 Administrative Expenses
 - Barr Engineering – March 2025 Engineering Services
 - Triple D Espresso – April Meeting Catering
 - City of Plymouth – March 2025 Accounting Services
 - Kennedy & Graven – Legal Services
 - Stantec – WOMP Services
- Approval of Reimbursement Request from City of Golden Valley for DeCola Ponds B & C Improvement Project (BC-2,3,8)
- Approval of 2024 BCWMC Annual Report
- Approval of Resolution 25-07 to Not Waive Monetary Limits on Municipal Tort Liability

Item 4F. Approval of Agreement with Metropolitan Council for CAMP Monitoring

Commissioner Hauer asked about the Community Assisted Monitoring Program (CAMP) including which lakes were monitored and the budget for the program. Administrator Jester reported that 8 lakes have CAMP volunteers and two of the lakes have two different monitoring locations and two different volunteers for a total of 10 volunteers. She noted the BCWMC Education Budget includes funding for this program which has been ongoing for nearly 20 years.

MOTION: Commissioner Hauer moved to approve the agreement with the Metropolitan Council for the CAMP monitoring. Alternate Commissioner Johnston seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 9-0.

5. BUSINESS

A. Receive Report on Medicine Lake Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Status Assessment Project

Commission Engineer Johnson provided background on this project noting that the scope and budget for the project were approved in December 2023 and that the project will help identify and estimate costs for projects needed to reduce total phosphorus in Medicine Lake and remove it from the impaired waters list – a high priority in the draft watershed plan. She introduced Commission Engineer Wilson.

Engineer Wilson presented the project report beginning with an overview of the 2010 total maximum daily load (TMDL) study. He noted the TMDL allocated pollution reduction needs across the cities contributing runoff to the lake (including Plymouth at 83%), MnDOT, Hennepin County and other minor MS4s. There was some discussion about which agency enforces a TMDL and if the water quality standard for the lake could be changed by the Federal government or another agency. It was noted that although the water quality standard originated with the federal Clean Water Act, the MPCA and BCWMC each adopted these standards as their own. It was also noted that there is no federal funding involved with this project. Commissioner Pentel indicated her desire for more easily accessible real-time data on water quality within the lake. Administrator Jester noted the BCWMC website has monitoring reports and average annual pollution concentrations for all priority waters. There was further discussion about the potential impact of reduced federal funding for programs that may impact the BCWMC. It was noted that potential impacts should be researched so that the BCWMC is planning ahead, if needed.

Engineer Wilson continued by reported that the TMDL indicated that external phosphorus loading to the lake should be reduced by 28% to meet water quality standards, plus a reduction in internal loads from within the lake. He described data from 2006 – 2024 for total phosphorus, chlorophyll-a, and water clarity (Secchi depth). He noted

that while chlorophyll-a and water clarity have significantly improved over the last 10 years, total phosphorus concentrations have not changed and remain about 55 mg/l (water quality standard is 40 mg/l). Engineer Wilson reported evidence of the effect of zebra mussels (discovered in 2017) on algae and zooplankton communities within the lake, noting the zebra mussels predate green algae leaving less food for zooplankton. He also noted that zebra mussels are less likely to eat blue green algae.

Engineer Wilson reported that lower amounts of phosphorus are entering the lake from the watershed due to projects installed and noted that the West Medicine Lake Park project alone reduces total phosphorus loading enough to meet the TMDL load reduction requirements. He noted the internal loading of phosphorus within Medicine Lake must be controlled to meet water quality standards.

There was a discussion about how improved water clarity within the lake may result in more plant growth including curly-leaf pond weed and starry stonewort and that it would be necessary to continue herbicide treatments. It was also noted that herbicide treatments don't tend to impact native communities due to the timing of the treatments. Brian Vlach with TPRD noted the lake still has a good, healthy native plant community that should improve even more with good water clarity.

Engineer Wilson's recommendations for the remaining water quality improvements needed to eventually remove Medicine Lake from the impaired waters list include a carp survey to determine if high carp populations could be impacting water quality, continued treatments of curly-leaf pondweed and other aquatic invasive vegetation, some additional best management projects or practices in a few watershed areas with direct drainage to the lake, and a 3-phase alum treatment. He noted a feasibility study should be completed before the alum treatments and that adaptive management including AIS and carp control is warranted.

Engineer Wilson reported the alum treatment may cost up to \$2 million. There was discussion about the cost of herbicide treatments. Brian Vlach noted that TRPD currently funds the treatment for starry stonewort (mostly near the boat launch) at \$8,000/year. There is a cost share agreement in place between TRPD and BCWMC for curly-leaf pondweed control. There was discussion about successful alum treatments in other lakes.

MOTION: Commissioner Carlson moved to extend appreciation for the Commission Engineer's work on the project and to move forward with implementation of the recommendations. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 9-0.

B. Consider Approval of Scope and Budget for Work on Lost Lake and Northwood Lake TMDLs

Administrator Jester reported that at the request of Commission staff, the MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has agreed to complete Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies for Lost and Northwood Lakes which are impaired due to high nutrients. She noted that after several discussions with MPCA staff and Commission Engineers, the TMDL scope or "agreement" included with meeting materials was developed by MPCA staff, submitted and approved by MPCA leadership. She noted that while the MPCA has funding to complete TMDL calculations with existing data, Commission Engineers recommend updating the P8 pollutant model and collecting sediment cores to improve TMDL accuracy. She recommended approval of the scope and budget from the Commission Engineer for this work to be funded with the Commission's Special Projects fund and direction to cooperate with MPCA on the TMDL projects, including communication and outreach to affected cities, other MS4s and residents/lake groups.

Commission Engineer Johnson reviewed the tasks outlined in the scope and budget for the TMDL support including updating the P8 pollutant model and collecting sediment samples from the lakes. Commissioner Polzin asked when and by whom the TMDL implementation plan would be developed. Administrator Jester noted that a future subwatershed assessment would likely serve as the implementation plan. Upon a question from Commissioner Hauer, Engineer Johnson described how the TMDL would account for in-lake responses to pollutant loading using the BATHTUB model.

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the scope and budget for the Commission Engineer's work on the Lost and Northwood Lake TMDLs. Commissioner Polzin seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 9-0.

[Chair Cesnik called a 5-minute break.]

C. Consider Approval of TAC Recommendations on 5-year Capital Improvement Program and Set Public Hearing for June

TAC Chair Scharenbroich reported that the TAC met in February and March and discussed the 5-year CIP. He reported the TAC recommendations to shift the starting years of some projects and update some project budgets (as listed in the memo with meeting materials). He also reviewed the TAC's recommendation to add the Fernbrook Regional Stormwater Improvement Project in Plymouth to the CIP for 2027. TAC Chair Scharenbroich reported that this project takes advantage of an opportunity to improve stormwater conditions in conjunction with expected redevelopment in the area. The City of Plymouth hired Barr Engineering to review and assess options for the site. He noted the project would be constructed on a 7-acre parcel in an area north of Hwy 55 between Fernbrook Ave. and I-494 and would alleviate flooding issues in the area and reduce or eliminate flooding of garages at an apartment complex where flooding is common, and which is within an Environmental Justice - Climate Vulnerability zone identified by the City. He reported the project would also improve water quality downstream in Plymouth Creek and Medicine Lake. He reported the planning level costs, including land acquisition, are \$5.6M and the project would create about 13.5 acre-feet for flood storage and reduce total phosphorus by about 13.8 lbs/year.

Commissioner Pentel asked if phosphorus reduction in Medicine Lake was really needed based on the TMDL status report presented in the previous agenda item. TAC Chair Scharenbroich noted the proposed project would improve water quality in Plymouth Creek as well and that overall, the city continues to implement water quality improvement projects.

TAC Chair Scharenbroich provided more information noting that the feasibility study for this project should be a streamlined effort due to Barr's prior review/assessment of the project. He also noted that the city forester recently identified some valuable trees on the eastern side of the parcel that should not be removed. He noted the project would incorporate an upgrade needed to the storm sewer system in the area, that the project was identified as an opportunity as part of the city's CIP process, and that there is little or no stormwater treatment currently in this area. He noted the project could be developed as a community amenity. Commissioner Pentel noted that she thinks the Towerside Stormwater Management Project implemented by the MWMO is a great example of stormwater management with significant community benefits.

Administrator Jester reviewed the project's score on the CIP prioritization matrix and noted that although it's not yet a metric, the fact that the project is located in a city-identified climate vulnerability zone should be considered. There was a brief discussion about the Commission's use of terminology related to equity and the potential need to review terminology in Commission documents in the future.

Commissioner Polzin asked if there was really a need for a minor plan amendment to add this project to the Commission's CIP because this project could be included with the 2026 Watershed Management Plan. Administrator Jester confirmed she was correct, that a minor plan amendment (and hence a public hearing) was NOT needed after all.

MOTION: Commissioner Polzin moved to approve the TAC's recommendation for the 5-year Capital Improvement Program. Commissioner Pentel seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 9-0.

D. Review Draft Agreement with Minneapolis for Bassett Creek Tunnel Maintenance and Inspections

Commission Attorney Anderson reviewed the map of the Bassett Creek Tunnel under downtown Minneapolis and noted the significance of this major piece of infrastructure. He noted the tunnel is owned by the City of Minneapolis and that the city and the BCWMC collaborate on maintenance, inspections, and review of projects impacting the tunnel. He noted these activities should be formalized through an agreement between the City and Commission. He reported that he developed the draft agreement in cooperation with Commission Engineers, Administrator Jester, city public works staff and city attorneys. He noted the agreement is still in draft form as multiple exhibits and descriptions are not yet complete but that he wanted to highlight significant provisions of the agreement and answer any questions.

Attorney Anderson reviewed various agreement provisions including the formal right of entry and license to do work. He noted the agreement outlines inspections, coordination, expectations, and notice requirements. He noted the city is expected to react to emergencies in the tunnel, including emergency maintenance due to their ability to mobilize more quickly than the Commission. Attorney Anderson reviewed the indemnification language noting that there was negotiation and compromise with the city. He noted the agreement has no term (does not expire unless revoked) and is mutually beneficial to both parties. He noted a final agreement with complete exhibits will be brought to the Commission for consideration of approval at a future meeting.

E. Consider Conditional Approval of Grant Agreement with MN Board of Water and Soil Resources for Plymouth Creek Restoration Project Dunkirk Ln to 38th Ave N. and Approval of Sub-Grant Agreement with City of Plymouth

Administrator Jester reminded commissioners that at their meeting in September, the Commission approved an agreement with the City of Plymouth to design, construct, and maintain this CIP project and that the Commission received a \$400,000 Clean Water Fund grant for this project. She noted a grant agreement with the BWSR needs to be executed along with a sub-grant agreement with the City of Plymouth to ensure the city adheres to the provisions of the grant agreement. She recommended approval of the sub-grant agreement with Plymouth and approval of the grant agreement with BWSR conditioned on the city's approval of the sub-grant agreement.

It was noted the grant requires that project implementation pay prevailing wages. TAC Chair Scharenbroich confirmed that the project will be designed and budgeted assuming prevailing wages.

MOTION: Alternate Commissioner Harwell moved to approve the sub-grant agreement with the City of Plymouth and approval of the grant agreement with BWSR conditioned on the city's approval of the sub-grant agreement. Commissioner Polzin seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 9-0.

F. Receive Update on Watershed Plan Development

- i. Minor Revisions to 10-year Goals**
- ii. Plan Progress Tracker**

In Plan Steering Committee Chair Kennedy's absence, Administrator Jester reviewed recommended minor revisions to goal statements in the organizational effectiveness category. She noted the revisions to not change the intent or outcome of the goal. She also reviewed the plan progress tracker. It was noted that outreach to city commissions, councils, or other groups will be conducted in June to present important elements of the draft plan and gather feedback ahead of the formal 60-day review period. Commissioner Pentel offered to help with outreach to various neighborhoods.

G. Consider Resolutions for Minnesota Watershed 2026 Legislative Session

Administrator Jester noted that with the change to the Minnesota Watershed's legislative process, proposed resolutions for the 2026 legislative session are due June 2, 2025. Commissioners or alternates are welcome to bring ideas for resolutions to the Commission for discussion. Commissioner Polzin wondered if a resolution can or should be crafted requesting an update to statutory language regarding what type of watershed organizations can be involved with multijurisdictional partnerships (MN Stat. 383B.79). Commissioner Polzin also wondered if Minnesota Watersheds would be willing to champion a resolution requesting legislation that allows any watershed management organization the ability to levy taxes directly, rather than a watershed by watershed approach. Administrator Jester said she would investigate those ideas as possible resolutions and bring information to the next Commission meeting.

There was some discussion about the MWMO structure requiring that board members be city council members which may result in a loss of expertise of commissioners.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Administrator's Report

- i. June Meeting Date and Location** – Meeting will be held on Wednesday June 18th at 8:30 a.m. at Plymouth City Hall
- ii. Update on Watershed Based Implementation Funding** – Convening group decided the grant funding would be pooled with other WBIF funding going to Hennepin County for outreach and implementation of water quality

- practices in vulnerable communities (most likely with multi-family housing properties) through Metro Blooms.
- B. Engineer – Engineer Johnson noted that discussions have been ongoing with Fruen Mill redevelopers and that the Double Box Culvert feasibility study is underway with the site evaluation happening that morning.
 - C. Legal Counsel – No report
 - D. Chair – No report
 - E. Minnesota Watersheds – Commissioner Hauer noted her attendance (virtually) at the Metro Watersheds quarterly meeting and indicated it was an informative meeting.
 - F. Commissioners
 - i. Report on Discover Plymouth Event – Chair Cesnik reported that it was a good event and attendees enjoyed the new map.
Commissioner Carlson asked if anyone had joined the webinar by the DNR on wake boats. He would like to receive a recording of the webinar, if possible. Administrator Jester will assist.
Commissioner Hauer reported that the MPCA is looking for lake monitoring volunteers.
 - G. TAC Members – Next meeting on May 2nd, 12:30 p.m. at Plymouth City Hall. Commissioner Pentel will attend as liaison.
 - H. Committees
 - i. Report on Budget Committee Meeting – Committee Chair Polzin noted that the 2026 proposed budget will be presented at the May meeting and that the group reviewed funding risks and prioritized areas for potential reductions, if needed. She noted the TAC will review the proposed 2026 budget at their May 2nd meeting.

Administrator Jester noted the Education Committee meets the following week.

2. INFORMATION ONLY (Information online only)

- A. Administrative Calendar
- B. CIP Project Updates www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects
- C. Grant Tracking Summary and Spreadsheet
- D. WCA Notice, Minneapolis
- E. [BWSR Snap Shots Article on Medley Park Stormwater Improvement Project](#)
- F. [Hennepin County 2024 AIS Accomplishments Report](#)
- G. Applications Open for [Task Force on Future of Minnesota's Water](#)
- H. Public Hearing on Minneapolis Stormwater Management Program
- I. [Dakota Plant Relatives: Discussion with Tanažidan To Win and Family, April 26](#)
- J. [Restoration Projects in Golden Valley Featured on CCX](#)

7. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.