Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Minutes of Regular Meeting
June 18, 2026
8:30 a.m.
7800 Golden Valley Rd., Golden Valley MN

1. **CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL**

   On June 18, 2026 at 8:31 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	*Absent*	Terri Schultz online	*Absent*
Golden Valley	Paula Pentel	Wendy Weirich	Emma Rakestraw and Claire Bargman
Medicine Lake	Clint Carlson	*Absent*	*Absent*
Minneapolis	Jodi Polzin	*Absent*	Liz Stout
Minnetonka	*Vacant*	*Vacant*	Eric Eckman
New Hope	Jere Gwin-Lenth	*Absent*	Nick Macklem and Lola Ellingson-Shuster
Plymouth	Catherine Cesnik	*Absent*	Ben Scharenbroich
Robbinsdale	*Absent*	John Ella	*Absent*
St. Louis Park	RJ Twiford	*Absent*	Erick Francis
Administrator	Laura Jester, Keystone Waters, LLC		
Engineers	Stephanie Johnson, Greg Wilson, and Patrick Brockamp (online) - Barr Engineering Co.		
Recording Secretary	*Vacant Position*		
Legal Counsel	Dave Anderson, Kennedy & Graven		
Guests/Public	None		

2. **PUBLIC FORUM ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

   None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Administrator Jester requested the addition of an invoice as Item 4Cxi from the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust for the annual insurance premium.

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the agenda as revised. Commissioner Carlson seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Crystal and Minnetonka were absent from the vote.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Carlson requested the removal of Item 4D: Approval of Commercial Insurance Proposal from the consent agenda.

MOTION: Commissioner Carlson moved to approve the consent agenda as amended. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Crystal and Minnetonka were absent from the vote.

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

- Approval of Minutes – May 21, 2026 Commission Meeting
- Acceptance of June Financial Report
- Approval of Payment of Invoices
    - Keystone Waters, LLC – May 2026 Administration
    - Keystone Waters, LLC – May 2026 Administrative Expenses
    - Barr Engineering – May l 2026 Engineering Services
    - Triple D Espresso – June Meeting Catering
    - City of Plymouth – May 2026 Accounting Services
    - Kennedy & Graven – April 2026 Legal Services
    - Metro Conservation Districts – Children's Water Festival
    - Stantec – WOMP Tasks
    - HDR – Website Accessibility Project
    - Metro Blooms – Minneapolis Water Quality Projects Support
    - League of MN Cities – Insurance Premium
- Approval of Budget for Watershed Plan Printing & Accessibility Updates
- Approval of Agreement with Met Council for 2026 Community Assisted Monitoring Program
  Approval of Conditional License Agreement with Hennepin County for Use of Hydrologic Model

4D. Approval of Commercial Insurance Proposal

Commissioner Carlson noted that a restructuring of insurance with regards to slip and fall litigation would be valuable and he welcomed discussion on the topic.

MOTION: Commissioner Carlson moved to approve the commercial insurance proposal. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Crystal and Minnetonka were absent from the vote.

5. BUSINESS

A. Consider Approval of Feasibility Study for Crane Lake Chloride Reduction Demonstration Project (CL-4) and Select Option for Implementation

Commission Engineer Johnson provided background on this project noting that the draft report was reviewed at last month's meeting and that since that meeting staff had discussed various implementation options with the TAC and Minnetonka staff. Commission Engineer Wilson provided a brief recap of the chloride pollution entering Crane Lake noting that chloride levels in the lake are above the water quality standard year-round. He reported that between reported application rates and modeling, it's estimated that the Ridgedale Mall, Hennepin County, and private business properties around the mall contribute 82% of the chloride pollution and that up to a 70% load reduction is needed to meet standards. He noted that based on discussions with city staff, Commission Engineers recommend a three phase approach to implementation as presented in the feasibility study. Phase I: prioritize educating/working with private landowners to incentivize best practices and tracking salt application rates; Phases II & III: informed by results of Phase I and focused on equipment upgrades and retrofit planning which may include costs/cost-sharing for upgrades to salt storage or equipment, alternative pavements, abrasives, or snowmelt systems, or creation of a Smart Salting Retrofit plan.

Engineer Wilson noted that the establishment of city-run service districts may be an approach used in the future but that was not an avenue recommended at this time due to policy and administrative hurdles.

Upon a question, it was noted that no property owners (e.g., Ridgedale Mall owners or managers) were present at the meeting to discuss implementation options. There was discussion about the need for a policy on public-private partnerships and/or cost sharing with the private sector, the benefits that might be realized by a private business, and whether or not the recommended actions constitute a CIP project. Administrator Jester and Commission Attorney Anderson noted that some CIP projects do not involve actual physical construction. Examples include alum treatments in lakes and dredging projects. It was also noted that this CIP project would be the subject of a public hearing in September before officially ordering the project and setting the final levy.

Commissioner Polzin commented that this project represents a first step into non-structural source control for the Commission and that care should be taken to develop appropriate policies (including details on what elements might be eligible for funding) and consider precedent. Engineer Johnson noted that she agreed policies are needed and that the first phase of the project to engage with property owners and managers will inform the needs and possible implementation of phases two and three. Commissioner Polzin agreed the recommended implementation phases are the right approach and wondered if the recommended budget of $330,000 is enough. It was noted that future phases could consider additional levy in future years, if warranted.

MOTION: <u>Commissioner Pentel moved to approve the Crane Lake Chloride Reduction Project Feasibility Study and implementation of the recommended phases. Commissioner Carlson seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Crystal and Minnetonka were absent from the vote.</u>

B. Consider Approval of Feasibility Study of Lagoon Dredging Project Phase II (BC-7) and Select Option for Implementation

Commission Engineer Johnson provided background, reminding commissioners that the draft study was presented at the May meeting with a recommendation to implement alternative 3 which includes a combination of dredging and wetland restoration in Lagoon G. She reported that since the May meeting additional information on wetland restoration results were included in the report and that Commission staff had met with staff with the city of Golden Valley and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) regarding wetland buffers, project construction lead, and long-term maintenance. She reported that Golden Valley agreed that existing vegetation around Lagoon G would meet requirements for the wetland buffer, provided it was not disturbed as part of the project, and that neither the city nor of Golden Valley nor the Park Board have the staff capacity to construct the project. Hence, the Commission would be responsible for project construction, including bidding and contracting.

Engineer Johnson stressed the importance of long-term maintenance of the wetland restoration beyond the three years of vegetation establishment which is already included in the construction cost. She noted that Golden Valley indicated they cannot assume the cost of long-term maintenance but may be able to add this area into existing contracts for vegetation maintenance that might streamline logistics for the Commission. She noted that the MPPB had similar comments but indicated they may have in-house capability in the future for vegetation maintenance and/or may be willing to cost share maintenance because of the aesthetic benefits to the golf course.

Engineer Johnson reviewed the project costs for alternative three along with some options for lower cost options within that alternative, including only dredging one portion of the lagoon or only dredging to four feet instead of 6 feet. She noted the added benefits of dredging to six feet including more water quality benefits and a longer project lifespan. Commissioners Pentel and Polzin indicated their support for the recommended alternative 3 including dredging to 6 feet and understanding that a plan for long-term maintenance will need to be developed.

MOTION: <u>Commissioner Polzin moved to approve the Lagoon Dredging Phase II Feasibility Study and implementation of alternative 3. Commissioner Twiford seconded the motion.</u>

Discussion: There was a question on whether the lessons learned from the prior lagoon dredging project will be incorporated into this project. Commission Engineer Johnson indicated the TAC had several lengthy discussions after the completion of the original project and the resulting lessons learned will be incorporated into this project.

Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Crystal and Minnetonka were absent from the vote.

C. Consider Approval of 90% Designs for Flood Control Project Double Box Culvert Repair Project (FCP-1)

Commission Engineer Phillips provided an overview of the 90% plans noting that not much had changed since the 60% plans presented in March. He reported that additional coordination with Minneapolis and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is ongoing and that he is scheduled to present the plans at the Minneapolis Capital Project Task Force Committee to ensure proper coordination with other city projects. Engineer Phillips reported that next steps include finalizing the plans, developing the bid documents, and working with Commission Attorney Anderson on contracting documents. He noted the Commission is likely to consider awarding the construction contract in September with construction happening over the winter.

Engineer Phillips reviewed the proposed public communication plan which includes temporary signage along the Cedar Lake Regional Trail with a QR code to link to more information on a BCWMC webpage to be developed by the Commission Administrator.

There was discussion about the importance of security at the tunnel entrance which will be a responsibility of the construction contractor. It was noted that the construction contract will include indemnification language.

MOTION: Commissioner Twiford moved to approve the 90% plans for the Double Box Culvert Repair Project. Commissioner Polzin seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Crystal and Minnetonka were absent from the vote.

[Chair Cesnik called a 5-minute break.]

D. Review 5-year Capital Improvement Program and Set Maximum Levy for 2027

Administrator Jester reviewed her recommendations for the 2027 maximum levy through Hennepin County which includes the project budgets for the alternatives chosen for implementation in items 5A and 5B above along with a second year of funding for the project in 5C, the previously approved cost share of the street sweeper for the City of Crystal, and an additional year of funding for the Main Stem Bassett Creek Restoration Project in Golden Valley. Administrator Jester reviewed the trend of levy amounts for the past 10 years noting the sharp increase in 2023 and reviewed the language in Statute 103B.251 regarding the Commission's ability to levy through the county. Chair Cesnik noted that most "low hanging fruit" (simpler, less costly projects) had been completed so that only difficult, costly projects remain. She also noted that it's important to be mindful of the cost to taxpayers and to ensure the cost benefit of projects is clear and justified.

MOTION: Commissioner Carlson moved to approve the maximum levy of $2,862,900 for 2027. Commissioner Polzin seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Crystal and Minnetonka were absent from the vote.

E. Consider Administrative Services Committee Recommendation to Approve Contract for Organizational Assessment Project

Administrative Services Committee Chair Twiford reported that one proposal was received from Strategic Consulting and Coaching (SCC) for the Organizational Assessment Project that is slated to review governance structure options, ideal staffing levels, and funding mechanisms. He noted the committee reviewed and scored the proposal as highly qualified with an experienced team and appropriate budget; that Administrator Jester corresponded with references; and a few committee members interviewed the SCC team online and found them to be good subject matter experts in organizational assessments, who were well prepared for the interview. He noted the committee's recommendation to approve a contract with SCC and that a project kick-off meeting is scheduled for June 26th. Commissioners Polzin and Pentel noted their confidence that SCC will do a good job. Chair Cesnik noted the financial analysis component of the project is important to assess taxpayer benefits.

MOTION: Commissioner Pentel moved to approve the contract with Strategic Consulting and Coaching. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Crystal and Minnetonka were absent from the vote.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Administrator's Report
   i. Fruen Mill Documentary – Administrator Jester provided an interview for a documentary project on the redevelopment of the Fruen Mill.
   ii. Applications for Communications & Administrative Assistant Position – About 30 applications have been received to date. Administrator Jester is reviewing them and will work with some members of the Administrative Services Committee to interview a slate of candidates.
   iii. Comments to Clean Water Council on Chloride Reduction Program Needs – Administrator Jester submitted comments on the need for more robust funding and support for chloride reduction programs, mirroring the letter sent to the MPCA commissioner earlier in the year.

B. Engineer
   i. Report on Bassett Creek Restoration Project – Engineer Johnson reported that the contractor, Minnesota Native Landscapes, is in place and the permitting is still in process. A productive pre-construction meeting was recently held and that work should begin in late June or early July. She noted the city is finalizing easements with landowners with 57 of 59 easements secured. It was also noted that tree removal timing limitations were waived for this project.

C. Legal Counsel – No report.

D. Chair – Chair Cesnik noted she will be absent for the July meeting. Vice Chair Pentel will chair the meeting.

E. Minnesota Watersheds
   i. Comments on MN Watersheds Resolutions – Alternate Commissioner Kennedy provided comments on the resolutions; Administrator Jester also reviewed.
   ii. Plumbing Board Rule Change Issue – Administrator Jester reported that a large and strong coalition of groups continue to engage with the Plumbing Board on the proposed rule change on stormwater reuse. She reported that a Plumbing Board meeting next week is likely to have many attendees prepared to present on this item.

F. Commissioners
   i. Report on Turtle Fest – Chair Cesnik reported an amazing turnout despite the afternoon rain with about 150 visitors to the BCWMC table including lots of kids and lots of adults with good questions. She reported Commissioner Hauer and Alternate Commission Minderman also took shifts at the event.

G. TAC Members
   i. Report on Plymouth Creek Restoration Project – TAC Chair Scharenbroich reported that tree removals are complete and that construction activities will resume later in the summer.
   ii. Report on June 3rd TAC meeting – TAC Chair Scharenbroich reported that the TAC discussed the Crane Lake Chloride Reduction Project and the Medicine Lake Task Force.

H. Committees – Administrative Services Committee will meet June 26th. TAC meeting scheduled for July 1st is likely cancelled.

7. INFORMATION ONLY (Information online only)

A. Administrative Calendar
B. CIP Project Updates www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects
C. Grant Tracking Spreadsheet
D. West Metro Water Alliance Annual Report

8. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 10:42 a.m.