



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

**Draft Minutes of Regular Meeting
January 15, 2026
8:30 a.m.
7800 Golden Valley Rd., Golden Valley MN**

1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

On January 15, 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	Joan Hauer (online)	Terry Schultz	<i>Absent</i>
Golden Valley	<i>Absent</i>	<i>Absent</i>	Emma Rakestraw
Medicine Lake	Clint Carlson	Shaun Kennedy	<i>Absent</i>
Minneapolis	Jodi Polzin	Nick Minderman	Liz Stout
Minnetonka	<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Vacant</i>	Eric Eckman
New Hope	Jere Gwin-Lenth	Jen Leonardson	Nick Macklem
Plymouth	Catherine Cesnik	<i>Absent</i>	Ben Scharenbroich
Robbinsdale	<i>Absent</i>	<i>Vacant</i>	Jenna Wolf
St. Louis Park	RJ Twiford	<i>Absent</i>	Erick Francis
Administrator	Laura Jester, Keystone Waters, LLC		
Engineers	Stephanie Johnson and Karen Chandler, Barr Engineering Co.		
Recording Secretary	<i>Vacant Position</i>		
Legal Counsel	Dave Anderson, Kennedy & Graven		
Guests/Public	Jack Lauer, Minnetonka resident; Grace Barcelow, Hennepin County; Bill Wixon, incoming alternate commissioner from Plymouth (online)		

2. PUBLIC FORUM ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Twiford seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 6-0. The cities of Golden Valley, Minnetonka, and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Alternate Commissioner Schultz seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 6-0. The cities of Golden Valley, Minnetonka, and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

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

- Approval of Minutes – December 18, 2025 Commission Meeting
- Acceptance of Financial Reports
 - 2025 Year-End Financial Report
 - January 2026 Financial Report
- Approval of Payment of Invoices
 - Keystone Waters, LLC – December 2025 Administration
 - Keystone Waters, LLC – December 2025 Administrative Expenses
 - Barr Engineering – December 2025 Engineering Services
 - Triple D Espresso – January Meeting Catering
 - City of Plymouth – December 2025 Accounting Services
 - Bolton & Menk – Parkers Lake Chloride Reduction Project
 - Minnesota Watersheds – 2026 Membership Dues
 - ECM Publishers – Public Hearing Notice
 - Finance & Commerce – Public Hearing Notice
- Approval of Resolution 26-01 Transferring Funds from Flood Control Project Long Term Account to Administrative Account
- Approval of Resolution 26-02 to Transfer Funds from CIP Account to Administrative Account
- Approval of Resolution 26-03 to Transfer Funds from Administrative Account to Channel Maintenance Fund and Long-Term Maintenance Fund

5. BUSINESS

A. Review Year-End Finances and Consider Resolution 26-04 Transferring Funds from Special Projects Account to Administrative Account

Administrator Jester referred to the memo in the meeting packet and reported that the Commission's 2025 budget includes a transfer of \$44,000 from the Special Projects Account to help balance the budget and bring the fund balance closer to the recommended 50% of annual operating expenses. She noted that given the under-budget spending in 2025, the Commission may not wish to make this transfer as the funding is not needed to balance the budget. She also reported that the Special Projects Fund currently has a balance of nearly \$1 million, which is approximately \$400,000 less than the amount projected to cover all anticipated studies over the next 10 years. She noted that this shortfall is expected to be eliminated through continued investment income during that time. Conversely, she also indicated that if the funds were transferred to the Administrative Account, it may result in slightly lower city assessments in 2027.

Alternate Commissioner Kennedy stated his recommendation to leave the funding in the Special Projects account to better support implementation of the 10-year plan. Commissioner Polzin agreed.

MOTION: Commissioner Polzin moved to leave the \$44,000 in the Special Projects Account rather than transfer it to the Administrative Account and to not approve Resolution 26-04. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 6-0. The cities of Golden Valley, Minnetonka, and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

B. Consider Revisions to Budgets Related to the Bassett Creek Restoration Project Regent Ave to Golden Valley Road (2024-CRP)

i. Review Additional Information and Consider Amendment to Engineering Services Budget

Chair Cesnik reminded commissioners that this subject was discussed at last month’s meeting and that commissioners requested additional details comparing the original budget to the requested amended budget by line item from the original scope. She noted her opinion that the additional information outlined in the memo with meeting materials was well presented. Alternate Commissioner Minderman agreed. Golden Valley TAC member Rakestraw noted the budget amendment assumes an additional contribution of \$10,810 from the city of Golden Valley which will be considered by the city council at their January 20th meeting and widely expected to be approved.

Commissioner Polzin noted that overall, this project has had a variety of significant issues and asked if the Commission should consider any changes to procedures to reduce the chance of similar issues with future projects. Commission Engineer Johnson noted that earlier communications with the Commission regarding budget difficulties will be a practice moving forward. She noted that the permitting atmosphere is a bigger unknown right now and that additional contingency may be warranted in the future. She noted that the weekly meetings with city staff and the administrator were not in the original budget but were extremely helpful and will likely be included in future project scopes.

Administrator Jester reported that some of the timing decisions for when to bring information to the Commission was her decision; that she was aware of some budgeting issues earlier and made the decision to bring issues to the Commission not right away, but when more was known or other decisions related to the project were on the agenda. She noted her feeling that it can be a tricky balancing act deciding what information to bring to the commission and at what time. Alternate Commissioner Minderman noted that the Administrator’s report could include budget updates and rising issues. Then commissioners could ask to discuss at a meeting, if warranted.

Commission Engineer Chandler reminded commissioners that Barr Engineering is contributing \$10,000 toward the over budget items due to some internal inefficiencies due to staff changes and inaccurate scoping in the initial budget estimates.

MOTION: Commissioner Polzin moved to approve the requested budget amendment for the engineering services for the Bassett Creek Restoration Project. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 6-0. The cities of Golden Valley, Minnetonka, and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

ii. Consider Approval of Updated Project Budget

Administrator Jester reviewed the updated project budget that includes the estimated construction costs presented with the 90% plans and the approved engineering services budget amendment. She indicated that the 2027 levy will include approximately \$1.3M but that other projects originally slated for 2027 are not moving forward as scheduled so there is not projected to be a big spike or increase in 2027 compared to previous years.

MOTION: Commissioner Carlson moved to approve the updated project budget of \$3,534,580 for the Bassett Creek Restoration Project Regent Ave to Golden Valley Road (2024-CRP). Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 6-0. The cities of Golden Valley, Minnetonka, and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

C. Receive Update from West Metro Water Alliance Conservation Specialist

Administrator Jester introduced Grace Barcelow who serves in a shared position between Hennepin County and the West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA). She noted that WMWA is an education and outreach collaboration among 4 watersheds that the BCWMC helps to fund. She reported that Grace’s work is also

supported by a state Watershed Based Implementation Fund grant. She also noted that some of Grace's work involving chloride pollution reduction in the Parkers Lake subwatershed. Administrator Jester noted that when the Commission had discussed this subwatershed in the past, she failed to report that Commissioner Hauer had personally reviewed data and landuse in the watershed and suggested that several properties, including the MnDOT maintenance facility and city of Plymouth maintenance facility, be inspected or reviewed for potential salt runoff. That information helped craft the outreach program currently underway.

Ms. Barcelow reviewed her position and her work with the county and WMWA on priority pollutants including chloride, nutrients, and bacteria. She reported that she has provided "chloride consultations" to 15 properties throughout the WMWA region and is looking for recommendations for similar consultations on additional properties. Ms. Barcelow reviewed the water quality improvement projects she's working on including shoreline restoration workshops and projects, and water quality projects with multi-family housing. She also reviewed her work with four properties in the Parkers Lake subwatershed that have salt storage, noting potential equipment calibration and upgrades, and staff trainings.

Ms. Barcelow reported that she develops and distributes monthly media kits for use by cities, watersheds, and others, and she has developed other written materials and social media content. She also briefly reviewed her work to promote the Adopt-a-Drain program, the classroom work of the WMWA Educator (a separate contractor), and the newly updated Hennepin County Watershed Connections.

Commissioners thanked Ms. Barcelow for her presentation and her work. There was discussion about outreach for and adoption of best practices for pet waste and deicers. Some commissioners indicated they would like to get on Ms. Barcelow's mailing list for media kits.

[Commissioner Carlson leaves the meeting; Alternate Commissioner Kennedy assumes Medicine Lake voting member.]

Given the discussion on chloride pollution, Administrator Jester took the opportunity to ask if she can send a letter to the MPCA Commissioner on the BCWMC's behalf advocating for an increase in funding for the MPCA's Chloride Reduction Program, for the chair's signature. She indicated that the Nine Mile Creek WD recently sent a similar letter and that program levels are currently being considered.

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve sending a letter to the MPCA Commissioner advocating for increased funding for the MPCA's Chloride Reduction Program. Alternate Commissioner Kennedy seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 6-0. The cities of Golden Valley, Minnetonka, and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

D. Consider Recommendations from Technical Advisory Committee

TAC Chair Scharenbroich reported that the TAC had lengthy discussions on updates to the BCWMC Requirements for Development and Improvement Projects (Requirements Document) over several meetings during development of the 2026 Watershed Management Plan. He reported that at the TAC meeting last week, the group reviewed the final edits and now recommends that the Commission officially adopt the updated Requirements Document and corresponding Design Sequence Flow Chart to be effective on May 1st.

In response to a question from Commissioner Polzin, Commission Engineer Johnson clarified that the new BCWMC requirements for linear projects would now be triggered with smaller projects and that the new requirements align with the State's MS4 permit which allows flexibility with appropriate reporting. She reviewed the proposed new requirements and triggers. She noted that the next step will be to develop a checklist for cities and others to use for reporting that will provide accountability and transparency for linear projects.

[Commissioner Carlson re-joins the meeting and assumes voting for Medicine Lake.]

Administrator Jester noted that after analysis by the Commission Engineers and review by the TAC, there are no recommended changes to the development fee schedule. She also reviewed the TAC's recommendations on communications regarding the new BCWMC requirements.

MOTION: Commissioner Polzin moved to adopt the updated BCWMC Requirements for Development and Improvement Projects and the Design Sequence Flow Chart effective May 1, 2026, to keep development review fees at current rates, and to direct staff to prepare appropriate communications regarding the updated requirements. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 6-0. The cities of Golden Valley, Minnetonka, and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Administrator's Report
 - i. Setting October Meeting Date – There was consensus that the October meeting date should be set for the 22nd to avoid the Water Resources Conference and MEA weekend.
 - ii. Governors Proclamation on Winter Salt Week – The proclamation was approved and will be distributed when available.
 - iii. Reminder of Staff Evaluations – Send staff evaluations to Commissioner Pentel by January 30th
 - iv. Update on Draft Plan 90-day Review – The draft plan was submitted for the final 90-day review on January 12th
 - v. Question on Future "Information Only" Items – Administrator Jester asked if commissioners review the WCA notices included in the information only section of the packet or if they could be left off the agenda. A few commissioners indicated they occasionally review. Administrator Jester will continue to include them on the agenda.
- B. Engineer – No update
- C. Legal Counsel – No update
- D. Chair – Chair Cesnik reported that Plymouth has a new alternate commissioner, Bill Wixon, who will attend the February meeting. She also reminded commissioners about the Campaign Finance forms that are due January 26th.
- E. Minnesota Watersheds – Planning for the summer tour is underway. Registration for the Legislative Event will be available soon. The Metro Watersheds online meeting is scheduled for the following Tuesday evening.
- F. Commissioners – No update
- G. TAC Members - TAC Chair Scharenbroich reported the city of Plymouth will host a Winter Maintenance Open House and will be making a proclamation during Winter Salt Week. Robbinsdale TAC member Wolf reported the city of Robbinsdale is hosting an ice fishing event.
- H. Committees
 - i. Report on Administrative Services Committee Meeting – Committee Chair Twiford reported that the committee is working on development of an RFP for the project to assess organizational structure and funding mechanisms and is discussing staff capacity and succession planning.

1. 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. [MNopedia Article on Bassett Creek](#)

8. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at 9:51 a.m.