



## Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

### Minutes of Regular Meeting

July 16, 2026

8:30 a.m.

7800 Golden Valley Rd., Golden Valley MN

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

On July 16, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. Vice Chair Pentel 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>Absent</i>                                     |
| Golden Valley       | Paula Pentel                                                                                          | Wendy Weirich          | Emma Rakestraw                                    |
| Medicine Lake       | Clint Carlson                                                                                         | Shaun Kennedy          | <i>Absent</i>                                     |
| Minneapolis         | <i>Absent</i>                                                                                         | Nick Minderman         | Liz Stout                                         |
| Minnetonka          | <i>Vacant</i>                                                                                         | <i>Vacant</i>          | <i>Absent</i>                                     |
| New Hope            | Jere Gwin-Lenth                                                                                       | Jen Leonardson         | Nick Macklem and Lola Ellingson-Shuster           |
| Plymouth            | <i>Absent</i>                                                                                         | Monika Vadali          | Ben Scharenbroich                                 |
| Robbinsdale         | <i>Absent</i>                                                                                         | <i>Absent</i>          | <i>Absent</i>                                     |
| St. Louis Park      | RJ Twiford                                                                                            | David Johnston         | Erick Francis                                     |
| Administrator       | Laura Jester, Keystone Waters, LLC                                                                    |                        |                                                   |
| Engineers           | Stephanie Johnson, Jim Herbert, Greg Wilson, Meg Rattei - Barr Engineering Co.                        |                        |                                                   |
| Recording Secretary | <i>Vacant Position</i>                                                                                |                        |                                                   |
| Legal Counsel       | Dave Anderson, Kennedy & Graven                                                                       |                        |                                                   |
| Guests/Public       | Jami Markle, Three Rivers Park District; Winston Wildebush and Greg Koch, Graffiti Mill; Kaitlyn Egan |                        |                                                   |

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

None

### 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**MOTION:** Alternate Commissioner Minderman moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

### 4. CONSENT AGENDA

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

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

- Approval of Minutes – June 18, 2026 Commission Meeting
- Acceptance of July Financial Report
- Approval of Payment of Invoices
  - Keystone Waters, LLC – June 2026 Administration
  - Keystone Waters, LLC – June 2026 Administrative Expenses
  - Barr Engineering – June 2026 Engineering Services
  - Triple D Espresso – July Meeting Catering
  - City of Plymouth – June 2026 Accounting Services & Audit Assistance
  - Kennedy & Graven – May 2026 Legal Services
  - LB Carlson – 2025 Financial Audit
- Strategic Consulting & Coaching – Organizational Assessment Project
- Approval of Income Agreement with MPCA and Budget for Smart Salting Trainings in Parkers Lake Subwatershed
- Approval to Set Public Hearing on 2027 Capital Improvement Projects
- Acceptance of 2025 Financial Audit
- Approval of Theodore Wirth Golf Drainage Improvements Project

### 5. BUSINESS

#### A. Consider Conditional Approval of Graffiti Mill East Building – Phase I Plans

Commission Engineer Herbert provided background on this item including a reminder that in August 2025 the Commission conditionally approved requests for variances including for use of the buildings' basements with dewatering. He noted the applicant submitted plans for renovations of the East Building for BCWMC review and that he and other Barr staff had met with the applicant and their consultants to discuss the proposed plans. He noted that since meeting materials were distributed, many conditions noted in the review memo have been addressed by the applicant. Engineer Herbert reported that the most significant outstanding issue is the condition that water being discharged from the dewatering system into Bassett Creek meet applicable water quality standards. He noted that most water quality data submitted by the applicant continue to show total phosphorus levels within the discharge water above state standards. He noted the applicant believes this may be due to decades of bird, rodent and other animal droppings that have accumulated in the building. Commission Engineer Herbert recommended approval of the proposed plans with conditions as outlined in the review memo including the development of a monitoring plan to demonstrate that water quality standards are met in the short and long-term. He noted the monitoring protocols could be similar to industrial discharge monitoring.

Vice Chair Pentel clarified that the recommendation is for approval with conditions and that if/when conditions are met to the satisfaction of the Commission Engineer, the plans would be deemed approved. She noted her appreciation for the detailed review and memo by the Commission Engineer.

**MOTION:** Alternate Commissioner Minderman moved to approve the Graffiti Mill East Building – Phase I plans with conditions as outlined in the Commission Engineer's memo and development of a water monitoring plan with appropriate re-evaluation frequency. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion.

There was a question about when the application would be considered approved. It was noted that approval would be based on the professional judgement of the Commission Engineers in coordination with the City of Minneapolis.

**VOTE:** Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

**B. Consider Approval of 50% Design Plans for Sochacki Park Water Quality Improvement Project (BC-14)**

Administrator Jester provided brief background noting the feasibility study for the project was approved in September 2023 and that TRPD secured additional funding and hired Barr Engineering to design the project. Greg Wilson with Barr described the project location and project goals including improved water quality and aquatic habitats in Grimes Pond in South Halifax Park in Robbinsdale and North and South Rice Ponds in Sochacki Park in Golden Valley – all tributary to Ĥaḥá Wakpádaŋ / Bassett Creek. He gave an overview of the project components including the creation of two new stormwater ponds, expansion of an existing stormwater pond, and construction of a permeable filtration system that will capture and treat stormwater from a total of 282.8 acres of primarily residential land and remove an estimated 66 pounds of phosphorus annually. He also described plans to temporarily lower the water level in all three ponds in order to consolidate sediment, reduce curly-leaf pondweed, and re-invigorate native aquatic plants. Engineer Wilson described geotechnical investigations and soil testing. He reported that the project was enrolled in the VIC program (Voluntary Investigation and Cleanup) and a response action plan was developed to address potential contamination that may be found during construction.

Engineer Wilson reviewed the project schedule noting that construction and water level drawdowns are planned for this winter and that a public hearing on the drawdowns (and open house on the whole project) is scheduled for August 10th. He reported that permitting for the drawdown is underway and he noted the sources of funding for the project including a Federal HUD grant, Hennepin County Environmental Response Fund grant, and the BCWMC's CIP funding of \$600,000.

Upon a question, it was reported that the filtration system lifespan is estimated at 10 years and that maintenance of that BMP will be the responsibility of the City of Robbinsdale. There was discussion about the water level drawdowns in the ponds. Engineer Wilson reported that water will be lowered both by gravity and through pumping. The drawdown will happen in the fall which will allow exposed sediments to solidify and freeze over the winter. The ponds will be allowed to fill naturally in the spring through snowmelt and precipitation. There was a question about what would happen if the ponds do not refill quickly due to the construction of new and expanded stormwater ponds which will capture runoff currently reaching Grimes, North Rice, and South Rice ponds. Engineer Wilson noted that modeling indicates the ponds should refill in the spring assuming normal climatic and precipitation conditions.

Jami Markle with Three Rivers Park District reviewed plans for communicating with park users regarding the construction phase of the project. He noted that TRPD has a dedicated webpage that will be updated regularly, the open house on August 10<sup>th</sup> will help inform residents and others, and that signs in the park will direct folks to the webpage for information. He reviewed the timeline for construction noting that bid documents will likely be available in October and a contract awarded in November (pending approval of the 90% designs at the September BCWMC meeting). The water level drawdowns are a separate activity pending a permit from the DNR which requires 75% landowner approval.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the 50% designs for the Sochacki Park Water Quality Improvement Project. Commissioner Hauer seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

**C. Receive Presentation on 2025 Water Quality Monitoring Results (45 min)**

Commission Engineer Johnson introduced Meg Rattei with Barr Engineering noting Ms. Rattei had been monitoring water quality in the watershed for decades. Ms. Rattei showed the locations and presented monitoring results for four different water bodies.

**i. Crane Lake 2025 monitoring results:**

- Chlorides failed to meet state requirements; significant increase from 1972-2025
- Total phosphorus and chlorophyll-a met state requirements; no significant change during 1999-2025
- Secchi disc failed to meet state requirements; significant decline 1999-2025; dense vegetation limited Secchi disc depth to top of plants in 2016-2025

- Phytoplankton numbers stable and consistent with good water quality during 2011-2025
- Aquatic plants improved in 2025; August FQI, a measure of quality, highest value to date and number of species tied with 2016 and 2021 for highest value to date
- Zooplankton numbers declined and the number of zooplankton species significantly declined during 1980-2025; decline is likely due to significantly increasing chlorides
- Recommendations = implement Crane Lake Chloride Reduction Demonstration Project, continue education on AIS and water quality, continue monitoring program

**ii. Northwood Lake 2025 monitoring results:**

- Chlorides continue to meet state requirements
- Total phosphorus and chlorophyll-a are not meeting state requirements; no significant change over past 10 years
- Secchi disc not meeting state requirements; significant decline over past 10 years
- Phytoplankton decreased; but within typical range
- Zooplankton and aquatic plants improved in 2025
  - 2025 zooplankton numbers highest recorded during 2000-2025 monitored period
  - Number of plant species and FQI, a measure of plant quality, were highest to date in June
  - Number of species higher than MNDNR plant IBI threshold in both June and August
  - FQI higher than MNDNR plant IBI threshold in June but not August
- Recommendations = implementation outcomes from Northwood Lake TMDL when complete, continue education on AIS and water quality, continue monitoring program

**iii. North Branch of Bassett Creek 2018 – 2025 results:**

- Met water quality standards for dissolved oxygen, temperature, pH, metals
- Did not meet water quality standards for chlorides, river eutrophication standards (including total phosphorus and chlorophyll a), total suspended solids, bacteria
- 1980 – 2024 M-IBI scores (index of biologic integrity) failed to meet state standards although some specific metrics have improved, likely due to habitat improvements resulting from the BCWMC streambank restoration project
- Recommendations = evaluate sources of bacteria, suspended solids, and total phosphorus; maintain initiatives to lower chloride levels; implement Northwood Lake TMDL outcomes because the North Branch flows through Northwood Lake; review stream corridor for erosion issues and opportunities to improve habitat; continue monitoring program

There was a question about the possibility of moving the monitoring station on the North Branch to Bassett's Creek Park. Ms. Rattei noted that moving the monitoring location would make it difficult to compare results over time. There was a question on whether climate change impacts the emergence timing of some insects. Ms. Rattei indicated she had not heard that but it's possible.

**iv. Ĥaḥá Wakpádaŋ/Bassett Creek 2015 – 2024 results:**

- Met water quality standards for temperature, pH, river eutrophication standards (including total phosphorus and chlorophyll a), metals
- Did not meet water quality standards for chlorides, total suspended solids, bacteria, dissolved oxygen
- 1980 – 2024 M-IBI scores (index of biologic integrity) failed to meet state standards
- M-IBI scores improved between 2012 and 2018, likely due to habitat improvements resulting from the BCWMC streambank restoration project but most declined again in 2024.
- Sustained improvements in some M-IBI scores, including the "tolerant" metric indicate that stream restoration projects have long term impacts
- MPCA completed stressor identification monitoring and concluded chloride, eutrophication, habitat degradation and altered hydrology/ connectivity are stressors; suspended solids and dissolved oxygen were classified as inconclusive; Bassett Creek WOMP data indicate suspended solids and dissolved oxygen contribute to impairment, while eutrophication not a stressor; habitat data further support MPCA's conclusion that habitat degradation may contribute to biological impairment.
- Recommendations = evaluate sources of bacteria and suspended solids; maintain initiatives to lower

chlorides; review stream corridor for erosion issues and opportunities to improve habitat; continue monitoring program

[Vice Chair Pentel called a 5-minute break.]

**D. Consider Approval of Scope & Budget for Assistance with Medicine Lake Task Force**

Administrator Jester reviewed the scope for the Medicine Lake Task Force including proposed participants, an initial survey of lake residents and users, a public open house or meeting at the conclusion of the task force work, and limitations on issues the task force would address. She noted the budget included only Commission Engineers' time and that her time would be accounted for in the administrator budget and city staff time would further augment the work. She noted the task force's work is akin and in place of a standard feasibility study for the BCWMC CIP project to implement projects resulting from the Medicine Lake TMDL Assessment. She further outlined the purpose of the task force including:

- To develop a shared understanding of the lake's challenges and current conditions.
- To understand lake residents' and users' observations and indicators of a healthy lake.
- To facilitate a discussion among experts on methods to improve overall lake health including water quality, ecology, and recreational suitability.
- To develop recommendations for projects or programs needed to improve water quality and lake ecology and manage aquatic invasive species while considering permitting constraints.
- To inform expenditure of the BCWMC's CIP funds for "projects resulting from the Medicine Lake TMDL Assessment"

Commissioner Carlson asked what process the BCWMC would take to implement the CIP project without the task force. Commission Engineer Johnson noted that the TMDL assessment report recommended an alum treatment which may have consequences on the plant community and the growth of aquatic invasive species. She noted the various challenges, audiences, and expectations when managing a dynamic lake system, and that bringing together the different voices and stakeholders through the task force would be a good process. There was further discussion on the usefulness of broad group discussions, education of residents, and limitations of the task force (including not addressing boating or water levels).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Twiford moved to approve the scope and budget for the Medicine Lake Task Force. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

**E. Consider Approval of Contract with Communications & Administrative Assistant**

Administrator Jester introduced Kaitlyn Egan who was selected after a round of interviews of several candidates as the new communications and administrative assistant for the Commission. Ms. Egan gave an overview of her experience, training, and credentials noting her time as a journalist, her love of environmental initiatives, and current enrollment as a graduate student in a Tribal Resource and Environmental Stewardship. She indicated her excitement to combine journalism, communication, and environmental improvement into this position and noted she already has many ideas. Commissioners welcomed her to the BCWMC team.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the contract with Kaitlyn Egan as the BCWMC Communications and Administrative Assistant. Commissioner Twiford seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

**F. Receive Report on 2026 Operating Budget Status**

Administrator Jester reported that the current operating budget is on target after 6 months. She reviewed a few areas where there may be overspending at the end of the year but other areas that should remain underspent. There were no questions or comments.

**G. Appoint Delegates to MN Watersheds Resolution Meeting**

Administrator Jester noted the Minnesota Watersheds will hold its Annual Meeting on Resolutions and Petitions

online on August 31 and that BCWMC should appoint two delegates and one alternate delegate to represent the BCWMC at the meeting.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to appoint Alternate Commissioners Kennedy and Leonardson as delegates to the MN Watersheds resolution meeting and Commissioner Pentel as alternate delegate. Commissioner Twiford seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

## 6. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Administrator's Report
  - i. Update on Organizational Assessment Project – Administrator Jester has been meeting with the consultants and expects a survey to come out next week.
  - ii. Volunteers Needed: [Golden Valley Sustainability Day](#) & [Fall Native Plant Sale](#) – Commissioner Pentel volunteered for the Sustainability Day; Alternate Commissioner Kennedy volunteered for the Native Plant sale
  - iii. [MN Watersheds Summer Tour](#) – Administrator Jester asked if any commissioners other than Alternate Commissioner Kennedy wished to attend the MN Watersheds Summer Tour. No one volunteered.
- B. Engineer
  - i. Report on Bassett Creek Restoration Project – City and BCWMC staff continue to secure permits and get all paperwork in place; tree removals (primarily buckthorn removals) are slated to begin July 27<sup>th</sup>.
  - ii. Report on Bassett Creek Valley Study Update Project – Completed model updated and developed options for implementation; a meeting with partners is scheduled for early August
  - iii. Report on H&H Model Project – Work is underway to convert the model from XP-SWMM to PC-SWMM
- C. Legal Counsel – No report.
- D. Chair – Vice Chair Pentel urged commissioners and TAC members to complete the survey for the organizational assessment project when it comes out.
- E. Minnesota Watersheds – Alternate Commissioner Kennedy noted he reviewed the tour stops planned for the Summer Tour and looks forward to learning about other projects.
- F. Commissioners – No report.
- G. TAC Members - No report; slated to meet September 2<sup>nd</sup>
- H. Committees – Administrative Services Committee slated to meet September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## 7. INFORMATION ONLY (Information online only)

- A. Administrative Calendar
- B. CIP Project Updates [www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects](http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects)
- C. Grant Tracking Spreadsheet
- D. WCA Notices, Plymouth and Golden Valley
- E. Scared Water Shared Future Press Release

## 8. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.