



Capitol Region Watershed District

595 Aldine Street • Saint Paul, MN 55104
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August 2, 2023, Board Meeting
APPROVED

Board Workshop of the Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) Board of Managers, for **Wednesday, July 12, 2023, 5:00 p.m.** (Board Workshop)

BOARD WORKSHOP MINUTES

I. A) Call to Order of Board Workshop (*President Joe Collins*)

Managers

Joe Collins
Shawn Mazanec
Rick Sanders
Hawona Sullivan Janzen
Mary Texer

Staff Present

Mark Doneux
Jessica Bromelkamp
Lindsay Schwantes
Maricella Xiong
Mary Van Sant
Meilina Dalit

Public Attendees

Bob Simonet, CAC

B) Review, Amendments and Approval of the Agenda.

Motion 23-094: *Approve the Workshop Agenda of July 12, 2023, with no changes.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

II. Communications & Engagement Program Updates

CRWD staff provided an overview of programs led by the Communications and Engagement Division including the audiences the District serves, strategies for engagement, and the ways the District has increased accessibility. The Board of Managers discussed meaningful engagement and what it means to them. They shared stories of when they participated in a community conversation, event, or project.

Maricella Xiong discussed the Adopt a Drain program and Clean Water Workshops. The Adopt a Drain program helps promote citizen science and self-guided engagement. It directly impacts CRWD's mission by preventing stormdrain run-off pollution and engaging neighbors to participate. The Adopt A Drain K12 program encourages active and engaged learning in classrooms.

Clean Water workshops are inclusive to all municipalities in the District and encourage clean water through the lens of public safety. CRWD partners with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and Saint Paul Public Works for smart salting certification.

Lindsay Schwantes presented on the Minnesota Water Stewards program, partner grants, Right Track internship, and youth engagement and partnerships. CRWD has sponsored 8 cohorts, with over 20 active stewards on the roster. The program certifies community leaders to prevent water pollution through education (online curriculum) and action (outreach and stormwater capstone projects). Stewards have expanded CRWD's capacity in numerous ways including installing new residential rain gardens, participating in community events, conducting rain garden inspections, fostering new partnerships, and more.

Since 2007, CRWD has approved over \$1.3M in partner grant funds and has approved proposals from 53 community partners and organizations. These grants allow the community to present new and creative ways to implement water education and protection and reach new audiences. CRWD staff work directly with grantees and project leads to educate them of CRWD's mission and work that connects to other projects or programs of the District.

This summer CRWD is hosting two interns through Saint Paul's Right Track program, which is a youth employment initiative for building a diverse future workforce, while supporting young people and their families. The interns will shadow all of CRWD's divisions during their internship, giving them a holistic view of the District's work, roles, and backgrounds.

CRWD's engagement with youth in the District occurs in a variety of ways including classroom visits, partnerships with middle and high school internship programs, partnerships with organizations serving youth and young adults. Staff have emphasized creating opportunities for career development beyond watershed education, including a young career professionals networking event at CRWD for attendees of MN Water Resources Conference.

Mary Van Sant shared an update on ongoing communications at the District. CRWD sends 15 newsletters a year (a monthly newsletter and three seasonal maintenance tips newsletter for clean water project grantees). CRWD has around 50,000 unique pageviews of its website a year. Staff continually updates the website with events, meeting minutes, District news, projects, staff directory, and blog posts. Blog posts are used to share stories and news that is more time sensitive. The next blog post will be contributed by the Right Track interns, who will share about their experience interning at CRWD. For flyers and other communication materials, staff incorporate plain language and ensure messaging is consistent across platform and implement accessibility best practices. CRWD maintains a presence on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter social media accounts to connect with partners and share District news and information.

Staff is working to finalize an updated style guide to improve consistency of materials, along with giving clear guidelines to staff and consultants on use of font, brand colors, and document styles. Staff worked with UNO Branding, a small business in Minneapolis that specializes in multicultural branding and communications. Four new educational signs will be installed around CRWD's building grounds. The signs will welcome visitors and invite them to learn more about CRWD and the BMPs around the site. The signs will be translated, as will other essential outreach materials, to reach more diverse audiences. With an all-staff training earlier this year, staff have been instructed to use plain language best practices in communication materials. Plain language is mandated by the State of Minnesota for government communications.

Upcoming communications projects include developing signage for Como Lake, developing plans for programming at CRWD, hiring the next Watershed Artist in Residence, and planning for CRWD's 25th anniversary celebration on September 22nd.

Manager Texer asked how CRWD is engaging underserved members of the community. Staff responded that a lot of emphasis is put on focus areas when developing or implementing programs. Staff intentionally think about how to direct resources to underserved communities to make sure the District is reaching those areas. The

Adopt a Drain program reaches youth through working with schools. The Water Stewards reaches some communities through working with various churches and congregations. Focus areas are prioritized when reviewing partner grant proposals. Staff are also looking at broadening participation in community events that are not solely water-focused (e.g., a health event) and making the connection to water to reach more people.

Manager Collins inquired about the status of the Teacher-in-Residence program. Staff responded that when the concept of the program was introduced, they saw a lot of potential overlap in opportunities and goals with the Artist-in-Residence program. Implementing programming in the Trout Brook space at CRWD and the Artist-in-Residence program are very intertwined, and what staff learn from these programs will likely inform the development of the Teacher-in-Residence program.

Manager Sanders asked how to increase visibility of CRWD's social media posts, in particular on Facebook, in his own feed. Staff recommended increasing engagement with CRWD's posts, such as liking or reposting CRWD content.

The Board requested a list of upcoming community events so that they can check whether they are available to attend these events. Staff responded they would provide a list to the Board.

III. Adjourn Board Workshop

Motion 23-095: *Adjournment of the July 12, 2023, Board Workshop at 5:55 P.M.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved



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July 26, 2023
Board Meeting
APPROVED

Regular Board Meeting of the Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) Board of Managers, for **Wednesday, July 12, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

I. A) Call to Order of Meeting (*Mary Texer, Vice President*)

Managers

Mary Texer
Hawona Sullivan Janzen
Shawn Mazanec
Rick Sanders
Joe Collins

Staff Present

Mark Doneux
Meilina Dalit
Rachel Funke
Forrest Kelley

Public Attendees

Bob Simonet, CAC
James Mogen, Ramsey County Attorney

B) Review, Amendments, and Approval of the Agenda.

Motion 23-096: *Approve the Agenda of July 12, 2023.*

Administrator Doneux requested the addition of the following action item to the agenda:

III. C) Approve Consultant Services Agreements for Wetland Management Strategy

Administrator Doneux also requested moving up action item V. C) Approve Project Funding and Consultant Services Agreements for Phalen Natural Resources Inventory as the first action item to discuss.

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

II. Public Comment

No comments were submitted; however, Administrator Doneux distributed a board training survey from MN Watersheds for the Board to fill out.

III. Permit Applications and Program Updates

A) 20-035 North End Community Center - Amendment (Kelley)

Forrest Kelley reviewed the proposed amendment for permit #20-023, North End Community Center, to remove regional flood storage system and incorporate a new rate control requirement. This project consists of the construction of a new community center, multi-purpose artificial turf field, bituminous parking lot, bituminous

basketball court, two playgrounds, reconstructed/reconfigured concrete sidewalk, and related utilities. Stormwater management consists of an underground infiltration system and a building flood storage pump system.

Motion 23-097: *Approve second amendment for permit #20-035, North End Community Center, with two conditions:*

1. *Revise plans to include a note requiring submittal of shop drawings for both underground systems when available. Shop drawings will need to be reviewed and approved by CRWD to ensure consistency with approved plans.*
2. *Revise Detail 1 on Sheet C5.03 to include the following notes. These notes were removed from the last civil plans dated 4/11/2023:*
 - a. *Installation of infiltration practices shall be done during periods of dry weather and completed before a rainfall event. Placement of engineered soils shall be on dry native soil only.*
 - b. *The bottom excavation surface of infiltration areas shall be level without dips or swales.*
 - c. *During construction, stormwater must be routed around infiltration areas until all construction activity has ceased and tributary surfaces are cleaned of sediment.*
 - d. *Excavation of infiltration areas shall be completed using a backhoe with a toothed bucket.*
 - e. *Native soils in infiltration areas shall be de-compacted to a minimum depth of 18 inches.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

B) 22-015 Highland Bridge Rowhomes 4th Addition – Approval Extension (Kelley)

Forrest Kelly reviewed permit #22-015, Highland Bridge Rowhomes 4th Addition. This permit application was approved by the Board on July 20, 2022, with the same three conditions as listed below. The project has not progressed to the point of completing remaining conditions, getting the permit fully issued, and beginning work within the allotted year following that approval. The applicant has requested an extension of the approval within the 30 days prior to the approval expiration. No changes to the plan have been proposed and no rule changes have been made. Runoff will connect to approved permanent stormwater management outlined in permit #20-013, Ford Site Redevelopment Stormwater Master Plan.

Motion 23-098: *Approve extension for permit #22-015, Highland Bridge Rowhomes 4th Addition, with three existing conditions:*

1. *Receipt of \$5,700 surety.*
2. *Provide approved plans signed by a professional engineer per the Minnesota Board of AELSLAGID.*
3. *Provide a copy of the NPDES permit.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

C) Approve Consultant Services Agreements for Wetland Management Strategy (Kelley)

CRWD is partnering with the City of Saint Paul to provide updated wetland management plans that identify wetland creation and restoration opportunities within CRWD with the goal of providing mitigation options within the District for projects that encounter unavoidable wetland impacts. The City of Saint Paul will be leading Scope 1 of the project (within Saint Paul) with CRWD providing a 50% cost share for this scope of the project (Project Funding Agreement signed in 2021). CRWD will be leading Scope 2 of the project (for the remaining District cities) with input and support from the partners. Other cities will provide support by providing wetland information and staff feedback and have expressed support for this project.

City and CRWD staff identified four consultants from CRWD's approved services pool, including one DBE, to receive a request for proposals for the two project scopes. CRWD received proposals from four consultants, Barr Engineering, Stantec, WSB, and Young Environmental. CRWD and City of Saint Paul staff reviewed and scored proposals independently, and Barr Engineering was the preferred consultant for all reviewers. Barr Engineering's proposed Scope 2 project cost is \$20,000. CRWD has successfully worked with Barr on other projects and Barr has completed similar projects in Valley Branch Watershed District and Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District. Staff recommend approval of the Consultant Services Agreement with Barr Engineering.

Motion 23-099: *Approve Consultant Services Agreement with Barr Engineering for an amount not to exceed \$20,000; and authorize the Administrator to execute the Agreement pending review and approval by Ramsey County Attorney.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

IV. Special Report – 2024 Preliminary Budget and Levy

Administrator Doneux provided a special report on the 2024 preliminary budget and levy. Following the development of the 2021-2022 Biennial Review, a number of issues were identified to help guide the District in the next two years to ensure successful implementation of the Watershed Management Plan. Overall, the program budget (200s) is consistent with 2023 Adopted budget. However, it should be noted that Regulatory, Monitoring and Research, Grants, and Communications and Engagement budgets are generally down approximately 10%, while Facility Management has increased substantially. The Projects budget (300) has also increased substantially. Overall, the Operations Budget (Administration, Programs and Projects is up ~4%). Staff are not recommending a levy increase for 2024 in Operations.

On the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) side of the budget, the noteworthy changes are the anticipated completion of the Thomas Building, Highland Bridge, and Midway Peace Park. These expenditures total ~\$2,255,563 and represent the majority of the reductions in the 2024 CIP budget. In spite of these reductions, the CIP levy still lags behind the 2022 Actuals, 2023 Adopted budget, and the 2024 Proposed Budget. Therefore, staff are recommending a 10% increase in the CIP Levy to keep pace with continued CIP expenditures. The net levy increase is 3.99%.

The overall budget is down 15% due to an anticipated decrease in CIP expenditures in 2024. The fund balance for both Operations and CIP meet the District's policies. To support the 2024 budget process, the Budget (Project List) and the Revenue and Levy Summary table has been enclosed. The Revenue and Levy Summary compares the actuals for 2020, 2021 and 2022 budgets, adopted and estimated 2023 budgets along with the proposed 2024 budget.

Manager Collins agreed with the proposed 10% reduction in the programs budgets. He expressed his concerns with seeing a reduction in future property tax revenue, which may be impacted by commercial buildings decreasing in value as fewer people are returning to work full-time in person. There may be cascading effects that impact tax revenue. He recommended a discussion on possibly increasing the CIP levy to 15%, rather than 10%, to prepare for a possible reduction in tax revenue in the future.

The Board recommended having a discussion on what the fund balance should be for CIP and Operations, as well as what funds are encumbered versus non-encumbered, before approving the budget. Administrator

Doneux will prepare budgets with three scenarios (10, 15, and 20% increase in the CIP levy). The 20% CIP levy increase will be included to see the impact of CRWD paying off all its debt.

V. Action Items

- A) Approve Minutes of June 28, 2023, Regular Board Meeting (Eleria)

Motion 23-100: *Approve the minutes of the June 28, 2023, Regular Board Meeting.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

- B) Approve Accounts Payable/Receivable for June 2023 (Dalit)

Motion 23-101: *Approve June 2023 Accounts Payable/Receivable and 2023 Year-to-Date Financial Report.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

- C) Approve Project Funding and Consultant Services Agreements for Phalen Natural Resources Inventory (Funke)

CRWD, Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD), Payne Phalen District Council, and Dayton's Bluff Community Council seek to understand and prioritize natural resources for future protection and restoration by developing a natural resource inventory (NRI) in an 11-square-mile area that overlaps these organizations' boundaries. Results from this natural resource inventory will be used to inform District Council plans and future CRWD support.

CRWD will be leading the project with input and support from the partners. RWMWD will be providing a 25% cost share for this project, a percentage-based on the portion of the project within their boundary. District Councils will be providing support by facilitating community input and coordination, and both provided letters of support for this project. CRWD will cover 75% of project expenses (\$52,631.25) which would come from the 2023 budget for District 6 natural resource restoration. Work related to that project is being postponed until next year. Staff recommend approval of the Project Funding Agreement with RWMWD.

Staff identified four consultants from CRWD's approved services pool, including one DBE, to receive a request for proposals. CRWD received proposals from two consultants, Barr Engineering and Emmons and Olivier Resources. CRWD and RWMWD staff reviewed and scored proposals independently, and Barr Engineering was both the lowest cost and the preferred consultant for all reviewers. Barr Engineering's proposed project cost is \$70,175. CRWD and RWMWD have both successfully worked with Barr on similar projects including the District 6 Natural Resources Inventory in CRWD, and the Hillcrest District Stormwater and Natural Resources Inventory in RWMWD. Staff recommend approval of the Consultant Services Agreement with Barr Engineering.

Manager Texer noted that the Ramsey County Attorney listed on the proposed agreement is Attorney Bradley Cousins, rather than Jim Mogen. Ramsey County Attorney Mogen commented that Attorney Cousins has taken on contract review, which he will do on a long-term basis. Attorney Mogen will continue to provide legal services for CRWD.

Motion 23-102: *Approve Project Funding Agreement with Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District and Consultant Services Agreement with Barr Engineering for an amount not to exceed \$70,175; and authorize the Administrator to execute both Agreements pending review and approval by Ramsey County Attorney.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

D) Appoint Mike Trojan to the Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

On June 27, 2023, CRWD received an application from Mike Trojan with a request to become a member of the Community Advisory Committee. Mr. Trojan was a hydrologist for over 30 years, with regulatory and non-regulatory experience. He has worked with diverse stakeholders, organizations, and committees. He is a former CRWD CAC member, and his motivation for returning is to support environmental advocacy, stewardship, and education.

Motion 23-103: *Appoint Mike Trojan to the Community Advisory Committee.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

VI. Unfinished Business

A) C&E Upcoming Events

Administrator Doneux shared that CRWD will be participating in an event “Spotlighting Willow Reserve” with the Urban Bird Collective. The event is free and open to the public and will be held at Willow Reserve on July 22nd. Attendees will learn about the birds and plants found at Willow Reserve. CRWD staff will host plant identification walks.

VII. General Information

A) Board of Managers’ Updates

Manager Collins alerted the Board and staff that his email account had been hacked. Administrator Doneux said IT Coordinator Nate Zwonitzer could discuss CRWD’s firewall and systems in the future.

B) Administrator’s Update

The CAC Tour has been rescheduled to Wednesday, July 19th. The bus will leave the office at 5:30 PM.

VIII. Next Meetings

- A) Wednesday, July 19, 2023 – Rescheduled CAC Tour
- B) Wednesday, July 26, 2023 – Regular Board Meeting

IX. Adjournment

Motion 23-104: *Adjournment of July 12, 2023, Regular Board Meeting at 7:24 P.M.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

Respectfully submitted,
Meilina Dalit