



## Capitol Region Watershed District

595 Aldine Street • Saint Paul, MN 55104  
T: 651-644-8888 • F: 651-644-8894 • capitolregionwd.org

**October 11, 2023**  
**CAC Meeting**  
**APPROVED**

### **Community Advisory Committee Meeting** **Wednesday, September 13, 2023, 7:00 p.m.**

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#### **CAC Members Present:**

Gwen Willems  
Mike Trojan  
Mary Lilly  
Bob Simonet  
Richard Weil  
Cheryl Braun

#### **Others Present:**

Anna Eleria, CRWD Staff  
Rick Sanders, CRWD Board  
Jessica Bromelkamp, CRWD Staff  
Lindsay Schwantes, CRWD Staff

#### **CAC Members Absent:**

Lauren Wheeler (excused)  
Andrew Montain (excused)  
Michelle Ulrich, (excused)  
Tom Elko, (excused)  
Steve Duerre (excused)  
Mike MacDonald (excused)

### **I. Welcome, Announcements, and Updates**

Ms. Lilly opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Lilly asked for any announcements or updates. There were none.

### **II. Public Comment for Issues Not on the Agenda**

Ms. Lilly asked for comments, not on the agenda. There were none.

### **III. Approval of Agenda**

**CAC Motion 23-020:** *To approve the CAC September 13, 2023, Agenda.*

Simonet/Weil  
Unanimously approved.

### **IV. Approval of Minutes**

A) Approval of the *August 9, 2023, CAC Meeting Minutes*

**CAC Motion 23-021:** *Approve the August 9, 2023, CAC Meeting Minutes.*

Braun/Willems

Unanimously approved.

## **V. District Initiatives for Review, Comment, and Recommendations**

### A) 2024 Preliminary Budget and Levy Update (Eleria)

Ms. Eleria provided an update on the Preliminary 2024 Budget and Levy that was sent out to partners including Ramsey County, the cities within our watershed, and other interested parties, and posted on our website on Monday, August 7th. The Work Plan, Budget, and Levy were previously reviewed with the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) at their August 9th meeting. The CAC passed a motion in support of the Preliminary Budget and Levy as presented. The public hearing was held on August 16th and no public comments were heard at the meeting or provided in writing. The Board of Managers adopted the Preliminary 2024 Budget and Levy at their September 6th meeting.

### B) 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration (Bromelkamp)

CRWD's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration is scheduled for Friday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> from 4 – 7pm. The celebration will include a short program, food, drinks, music, and artmaking. The speakers for the program include Mark Doneux, Administrator, Manager Joe Collins, CAC member David Arbeit, and Saint Paul Council President Amy Brendmoen. Former Board Manager Seitu Jones will emcee the event. Event invitations have been distributed to many partners, neighbors, and friends of CRWD.

## **VI. CAC Initiatives**

### A) 2023 Watershed Steward Awards Update (Bromelkamp)

CRWD staff, Board, and CAC members are invited to assist with promoting the program and nominating individuals and organizations for awards. Nominations will also be open to the public. Staff will continue to offer nominations for categories that have not been filled. All nominees will be notified via mail or email and invited to attend the 2023 Awards Ceremony. The presentation will feature this year's winners and invite them to speak briefly as in years past. Invitations will be sent to staff, Board, CAC, Ramsey County Commissioners, other elected officials, and the 2023 winners and nominees.

Ms. Bromelkamp requested two CAC volunteers to serve on the 2023 Watershed Steward Awards Program Committee. Mr. Trojan volunteered to serve on the committee. One more CAC volunteer is still needed.

**CAC Motion 23-022:** *Mr. Trojan will serve on the 2023 Watershed Steward Awards Program Committee. Promote and submit nominations for the 2023 Watershed Steward Awards Program by November 2.*

Braun/Willems

Unanimously approved.

## VII. Project and Program Updates

### A) 2024 Minnesota Water Stewards Program Update (Schwantes)

The program is implemented through partnerships between Freshwater organizations and local governments like watershed districts and cities. Freshwater manages the online curriculum and reporting platforms and hosts annual recruitment, kick-off, and graduation events. Government partners guide stewards through their capstone projects and continued volunteering and education opportunities. The training curriculum is completed online from January – May with monthly check-ins with CRWD staff. The sponsorship fee is \$1,500 per steward. From May through the remainder of the year, Stewards focus on using their new knowledge to complete capstone work. Capstone requirements include involvement in a hands-on stormwater project and an outreach and engagement project. CRWD staff from the Communications and Engagement and Planning, Projects and Grants Divisions, work with stewards to align the goals of the District with the interests of the individuals to complete capstones.

Graduated stewards are required to fulfill volunteer and continuing education requirements to maintain their certification. For several years, graduated stewards have assisted with the inspection of CRWD's boulevard rain garden projects and performed minor maintenance such as plant consultation, weed pulling, and inlet cleaning. Stewards assist with community events, promote our grant programs, and have been instrumental in assisting staff with strengthening collaboration with Ramsey County Master Gardeners and piloting the Low Salt, No Salt MN campaign. We continue to explore meaningful ways to engage these volunteers in CRWD's work and believe our participation has led to a greater awareness of CRWD's work and role in our community and more clean water projects and actions. Staff will continue to assess how best to manage this program while keeping in mind our capacity and CRWD's priorities.

**CAC Motion 23-023:** *Assist in recruiting new Minnesota Water Steward Applicants.*

Braun/Willems

Unanimously approved.

### B) 2024 Partner Grant Program (Schwantes)

In addition to making connections to CRWD's mission, partners are encouraged to discuss how their proposal addresses CRWD's diversity and inclusion goals, and priority is given to proposals serving residents in our focus area. Applications are submitted using an online form that connects to CRWD's BMP database to streamline the application, contracting, and reporting process for grantees and staff.

The 2024 Partner Grant promotion includes direct emails from staff to existing partners and the program will be featured in the September and October CRWD newsletters. Staff will host an information session for interested applicants to learn about eligibility and contracting requirements on Friday, October 6. Final proposals are due by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, October 30.

The 2023 Communications and Community Committee Board appointments are Managers Mazanec and Sullivan Janzen and this committee will assist in the Partner Grant review process. Two CAC Members are requested to participate in the grant review process as well. Ms. Braun and Mr. Trojan volunteered to participate

in the grant application review committee. The committee will meet in November to prepare a funding recommendation for Board approval in December.

**CAC Motion 23-024:** *Ms. Braun and Mr. Trojan will serve on the 2023 Partner Grant Review Committee.*

Braun/Willems  
Unanimously approved.

### **VIII. CAC Observer Update**

Mr. Simonet provided the CAC observer update for the September 6<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

### **IX. Discussion**

#### A) New & Old Issues

- a. Mr. Trojan requested that the CAC have the opportunity to review and provide input during the development of the District's Climate Plan. Ms. Eleria responded that CAC and broader community engagement will be included in the project's scope of work.
  - b. Mr. Trojan also inquired if CRWD is involved in the conceptual design of a renovated Como Pavilion. Ms. Eleria responded that staff have met with Saint Paul Parks and Recreation staff and learned that most of the renovation work will likely take place internally and the opportunities for stormwater management may be limited. Mr. Trojan also asked about interpretive signage. Ms. Bromelkamp responded that CRWD is working with the City on interpretive signage around the lake.
  - c. Ms. Braun asked about who is responsible for operations and maintenance (O&M) of the stormwater best management practices at Highland Bridge and requested that staff provide an update on the project at a future CAC meeting. Ms. Eleria responded that the City of Saint Paul is responsible for O&M and that staff will come to a future meeting with an update on the project.
- B) CAC Observer for September 20, 2023, and October 4, 2023 Board of Managers Meetings. Mr. Simonet will be the CAC observer for the October 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **X. Adjourn**

**CAC Motion 23-025:** *To adjourn the September 13, 2023, CAC Meeting.*

Willems/Simonet  
Unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

Respectfully submitted,  
Anna Eleria