



Capitol Region Watershed District

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March 7, 2024
Board Meeting
APPROVED

Regular Board Meeting of the Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) Board of Managers, for **Wednesday, February 21, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order of Meeting (*Joe Collins, President*)

A) Attendance

Managers

Mary Texer
Hawona Sullivan Janzen (absent w/ notice)
Joe Collins
Rick Sanders
Shawn Mazanec

Staff Present

Mark Doneux
Belinda Armstead
Anna Eleria
Marta Wichman
Sarah Wein
Britta Belden
Elizabeth Froden

Public Attendees

James Mogen, Ramsey
County

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

Motion 24-025: Approve the Agenda of the February 21, 2024, Board Meeting.

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

II. Public Comment

A) Public Comment For Items not on the Agenda (Please observe a limit of three minutes per person.)

None.

III. Permit Applications and Program Updates

None

IV. Special Reports

A) 2023 Climatological Summary

CRWD compiles daily climate data from the U of M as part of the NWS Cooperative Observer Program. District lake data are collected by Ramsey County Public Works (RCPW). Data from these sources have been analyzed and summarized in the 2023 Climatological Summary. Ms. Wichman presented the 2023 Climatological Summary and notable 2023 events. Climatological events directly impact District water resources, projects, and programs. CRWD uses climatological data to calculate total annual

precipitation, runoff, and nutrient and pollutant loading and assess the effects of drought and flooding in the District. According to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota is already experiencing several impacts of climate change, including winter and nighttime warming, more frequent extreme precipitation events, and long periods of drought. These trends are expected to worsen over time. It is essential to document and analyze climatological data and other noteworthy climatological events to assess their impact and how they change over time due to climate change. District climate data will directly inform the development of the CRWD Climate Adaptation Plan. A presentation will be given on the results of the 2023 Climatological Summary report.

President Collins mentioned that we're not getting the precipitation when needed; this study explained the reasons for climate change, and he inquired about the 10-inch rain event in Wilmar, MN. Ms. Wichman replied that the prediction for Minnesota is that some years will be dry and others will be extremely wet. Some of the 100-year events might be looming. President Collins mentioned that insurance companies are pulling out of some states nationwide.

B) 2023 Lakes Data Summary (Wein)

Ms. Wein presented the 2023 Lakes Data Summary. In 2023, CRWD, in partnership with Ramsey County Public Works and the Ramsey County Soil and Water Conservation Division, collected chemical, physical, and biological data from all five District lakes. Data collected included dissolved oxygen, total phosphorus, chlorophyll-a, temperature, Secchi disk depth, phytoplankton, zooplankton, macrophyte samples, biovolume surveys of vegetation, and continuous water level data. The lake data collected in 2023 have been analyzed and summarized. Ms. Wein provided an update on the 2023 lake monitoring results. Ms. Wein mentioned that, in general, lake health improved in 2023 compared to 2022. CRWD met the state standards for most of the eutrophication parameters. Como Lake had the best water quality observed in over twenty years. In addition, the highest plant diversity since plant monitoring began. There was a 45% reduction in the carp population from the 2022-2023 netting and electrofishing efforts and a significant decrease in phosphorous load from diffusive flux. Ms. Wein provided a few takeaways from 2023.

The board thanked Ms. Wein and mentioned that it was very exciting to hear about Como.

Manager Mazanec asked about Loeb Lake and the thresholds for spending resources on a lake. Ms. Wein replied that we do not have an established threshold. Loeb Lake has fewer shallow areas, whereas Como has more area for Curly Leaf and thrives in poor water quality.

President Collins commended Ms. Belden on the Como Lake Management Plan. Ms. Belden replied that seeing 20 years of work come together is exciting.

President Collins asked for an asterisk at the bottom of the report so readers understand that river flooding affects the quality of Crosby Lakes.

V. Action Items

A) Approve Minutes of February 7, 2024, Regular Board Meeting (Armstead)

Motion 24-026: *Approve the Minutes of February 7, 2024, Regular Board Meeting.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

B) Approve Accounts Payable/Receivable for January 2024 (Dalit)

Motion 24-027: *Approve Accounts Payable /Receivable for January 2024*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

C) Approve 2024 Lake Monitoring Agreement with Ramsey County (Wein)

With assistance from the Ramsey County Attorney, Ramsey County Public Works (RCPW) has developed an annual Cooperative Agreement for all services related to CRWD Lake monitoring. A yearly contract from RCPW is being proposed for all 2024 lake water quality sampling and requires approval. In 2024, RCPW will again coordinate some lab analysis with RMB Environmental Labs, Inc. to complete sample chemistry analysis. Therefore, the estimated cost for the 2024 Baseline and Extended Baseline sampling conducted by RCPW is \$21,921.55. The cost estimate for sample analysis conducted by RMB Environmental Labs, Inc. is \$28,854.00. Therefore, The total estimated 2024 lake monitoring costs are \$50,775.55. This total amount has increased compared to 2023 due to labor and lab analysis price increases.

Motions 24-028: *Approve 2024 Lake Monitoring and authorize the Administrator to execute a service agreement with Ramsey County.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

D) Approve Monetary Limits of Municipal Tort Liability (Eleria)

Historically, the Board has decided not to waive the monetary limits on municipal tort liability. As noted in the enclosed Liability Coverage Waiver Form, if the District does not waive the statutory tort limits, an individual claimant could recover no more than \$500,000 on any claim to which the statutory tort limits apply. The total of all claimants could recover for a single occurrence to which the statutory tort limits apply would be limited to \$1,500,000. These statutory tort limits would apply regardless of whether the District purchases the optional LMCIT excess liability coverage.

Liability coverage is more expensive if the District waives the limits; the cost difference is 3.5% of the liability premium for members who choose to waive. Waiving the limits would not give the District better protection; the benefit is only to the party making a liability claim against the LMCIT member.

Staff recommends that the District continue not to waive the monetary limits on municipal tort liability.

Motions 24-029: *Accept the LMCIT liability coverage and not waive the monetary limits on municipal tort liability.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

E) Approve CAC Reinvigoration Project Charter (Armstead)

Ms. Armstead presented the CRWD Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Reinvigoration Project Charter. The CAC project charter will help guide developing and implementing a plan to reinvigorate the CAC. The project aims to identify and involve the CAC in meaningful and impactful ways that advise and assist the Managers on matters of interest to the District. The plan will align with the District's Watershed Management Plan and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) goals and provide actions and recommendations for the Community Advisory Committee to ensure participation and representation from all areas of the District. It will also identify specific CRWD projects and programs for CAC members to support regularly.

The project has the support of the CRWD Board Communications & Community Committee and CAC Co-Chairs, who reviewed and commented on the draft charter on February 7th. At the February 14th CAC meeting, staff reviewed the draft CAC Reinvigoration Project Charter, which includes project goals, key tasks, deliverables, anticipated timeline, and resource needs, and solicited comments from CAC members. This allowed staff to ensure consensus on key components before commencing the project.

CRWD's Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is a volunteer group of environmentally and socially active residents in the watershed who meet monthly to assist and advise the Board of Managers in the CRWD planning processes, watershed plan preparation, and implementation of District programs and projects. In addition, they serve as a communication link between residents of the District and the Board. Post-COVID, the CAC has experienced a drop in member participation. To reflect the District's demographics and increase and sustain active member participation, the CAC needs a refresh to give new energy and strength for the CAC to weigh in on current watershed issues and CRWD's work and carry out their initiatives.

Ms. Texer commented that the CAC must have real work to do so they feel like they're contributing; otherwise, it will fall apart. President Collins mentioned that he attended the last CAC meeting, which was one of the best; Ms. Lilly, Ms. Armstead, and Deputy Administrator Eleria provided questions to help guide the discussion, which people responded to. President Collins suggested one example of a meaningful activity for the issue of Chloride. The CAC could call around for information about where people store salt and how close it might be to the water. Or a review of materials for the Chloride project they could work on. Mr. Sanders mentioned that when people volunteer, they want to feel needed.

Motions 24-030: *Approve CAC Reinvigoration Project Charter*

Mazanec/Sanders

Unanimously Approved

VI. Unfinished Business

None.

VII. General Information

A) Board of Managers' Updates.

President Collins mentioned the evaluation for Administrator Doneux will be held in April. In addition, an Administrator will be appointed on March 20. Before that, there will be a closed personnel committee meeting on March 20th.

Manager Sanders mentioned the agenda and registration for the legislative event. Deputy Administrator Eleria replied that Mr. Sanders should contact Meilina to register for the Legislative event.

B) Administrator's Update

Deputy Administrator Eleria mentioned the retreat for CRWD Leadership and Division Managers at the Capital Mall; leadership came together to discuss several topics, including the 2024 Year of Change, staffing changes, professional development, and the Administrative transition. Eight staff have shifted to new positions; we recognize this is transformational organizational change. There was a good discussion about opportunities, suggestions, and support for the DMs in the transition and the implementation of projects.

VIII. Next Meetings

A) Thursday, March 7, 2024- 6:00 PM -Board of Managers Meeting

B) Wednesday, March 13, 2024- 7:00 PM- CAC Meeting- Mary Texer will attend

IX. Adjournment

Motion 24-031: *Adjournment of February 21, 2024, Regular Board Meeting at 7:11 PM.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

Respectfully submitted,
Belinda Armstead