



Capitol Region Watershed District

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February 12, 2025

Community Advisory Committee
Meeting

IV. A. Approve Minutes of the
January 15, 2025, CAC Meeting
(Philippi)

Community Advisory Committee Meeting Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 5:30 p.m.

CAC Members Present:

Lauren Wheeler (remote)
Tori Philippi (remote)
Mary Lilly (remote)
Steve Duerre (remote)
Mike MacDonald (remote)
Gwen Willems (remote)
Michelle Ulrich (remote)
Mike Trojan (remote)

CAC Members Absent:

Barbara Hall, (unexcused)
Richard Weil, (excused)
Andrew Montain, (unexcused)
Tom Elko, (unexcused)

Staff/Board Present:

Anna Eleria, CRWD Staff (remote)
Mary Texer, CRWD Board (remote)

I. Welcome, Announcements, and Updates

Administrator Anna Eleria announced Belinda Armstead resigned from CRWD. Gwen Willems asked if the CAC could get her email. Administrator Eleria will check in with Ms. Armstead before distributing her personal email.

II. Public Comment for Issues Not on the Agenda

None.

III. Approval of Agenda

CAC Motion 24-030: *To approve the CAC January 15, 2025, Agenda.*

Willems/Weil
Unanimously approved

IV. Approval of Minutes

- A) Approval of December 11, 2024, CAC Meeting Minutes

CAC Motion 24-031: *Approve the December 11, 2024, CAC Meeting Minutes.*

Ulrich/Wheeler
Unanimously approved

V. CAC Observer Update

- A) December 18, 2024, CAC Board Meeting (Trojan):
- Election of offices and committee appointments for 2025 – no changes.
 - Highland Ravine
 - Damaged by summer 2023 storm
 - 3 repairs
 - Contractor is Stantec
 - Repairs made to meet standards for a 10–35-year storm event
 - 33 permeable check dams repaired
 - Repairs over a 400-foot section of the ravine
 - Upgraded the outlet structure by installing a sump
 - Includes a vegetation management plan – yet to be developed
 - Personal observation: District is widely utilizing underground structures for runoff detention and/or retention
 - Adoption of the 2025 budget
 - 97 percent increase in capital improvement projects
 - 33 percent increase in operations
 - Overall 54 percent increase
 - \$16.354 million
 - Several projects, with McMurray field being the largest (estimated at \$5 million)
 - Debt service is \$950,000, an increase of 0.12 percent
 - Supporting partners
 - Grants 500k
 - O&M 350k
 - Research 50k
 - Project design/feasibility 400k
 - Other revenue – 850k. Includes 319 grants, rent, interest, Clean Water Fund, Facility management, permit fees
 - Levy total \$10.5 million
 - Operations \$5.6 million
 - CIP \$3.9 million
 - Debt \$1.0 million
 - 7.7 percent increase in property tax
 - Facility management

- Contracted with Mark Doneux
- Municipal Partner funding research for stormwater facility
 - Facility management -management
 - Leveraging funding with partners plus district funds for BMP operation and maintenance
 - Policy and strategy research
- Smart Salting: Looking at possible regulatory approach rather than a legislative approach. The legislative approach has been attempted for several years, without success

B) January 8, 2025 Board Meeting (Wheeler)

- The Board reviewed a handful of permits at various stages and approved them all with the suggested conditions. Wheeler and Lilly learned:
 - Permits require a performance surety to ensure compliance with the permit.
 - The District determines the amount of performance surety.
 - Example from Permit 20-031: Survey rate is \$5,000/impervious acre.
 - If the project falls out of compliance during construction, there are charges/fees associated with the non-compliance for CRWD to address the issues. CRWD will deduct these fees from the surety.
 - The CRWD inspector completes routine checks for compliance and CRWD will continue to charge for non-compliant items until they are addressed.
 - It seems that most of the time the surety is a few thousand dollars total and the permit holder usually gets part of that back at the end of the project
 - The CRWD utilizes a linear cost cap for linear projects (roads, trails, sidewalks).
 - This means that there is a maximum required cost for linear projects related to satisfying the onsite volume reduction/water quality standards for the linear project. In other words, linear projects have a hard time meeting these standards due to limited space, so if they spend a certain amount on treatment/reduction and show good intent to try and meet the requirements, CRWD will approve the linear project and issue a permit.
 - The cost cap is currently \$94,000/acre.
 - If the anticipated cost of treatment for the site reaches \$94,000/acre or more (but does not reach the other water requirements), it can still be approved for construction by CRWD.

VI. CAC Initiatives

A) CAC Annual Calendar Discussion (Lilly and Wheeler)

- Ms. Wheeler started the conversation hoping the CAC could talk about what format would be most helpful, both for the calendar and the subcommittees.
- This being a collaborative effort, Lilly and Wheeler asked “What would we like to see on it?”
- In this meeting, or one of the upcoming meetings, the CAC hopes to identify sub-meeting task groups.
 - There are a lot of tasks in the reinvigoration plan, instead of all 12 members being involved in everything, there would be subgroups.
- Hoping people will step up to create this calendar.

B) CAC Orientation Discussion (Lilly and Wheeler)

- Ms. Lilly noted there was an orientation packet from a few years ago that has not been distributed to some of the newer members.
- There was some discussion saying to review current packet, get feedback from other members who may not have seen this.
- Tori Philippi and Barbara Hall, the two newest CAC members, might have the most poignant input.
- This subgroup would come up with some additional goals. One idea was to include a swag welcome gift.
 - This was just an idea, but the CAC wants to continue thinking about identifying all the possible resources to introduce to CRWD and CAC.
- This subcommittee would draft an orientation packet and would consider agenda items we would see throughout the months.
- Ms. Lilly would have liked to see one of these two groups (Orientation packet or CAC calendar) formed at this meeting.
- With the shortening of meetings and 3 of the 12 being virtual, the hope is people could put in more work outside of the scheduled monthly meetings.
- Mike Trojan expressed interest in being a part of the orientation group but cannot take this on himself.
- It was also noted during this discussion that a glossary of terms would be very helpful.
 - It might be useful to have a one-pager of information about CRWD, the CAC, and Minnesota Governance; the CAC is just looking to improve understanding.

C) Additional subgroup identification (Lilly and Wheeler)

- There is always the possibility of creating more subgroups. The thought was that the two already introduced would be easiest to start with.
- Other options include Communication and Outreach, Technical Resources/Seminars/Discussions, E-Review/Advisory, and Volunteering.
- Overall, the CAC co-chairs want to evaluate the interests of CAC members.

D) CAC Group Photo and CAC Spotlights (Lilly and Wheeler)

- Group photo is on the website at the bottom of the people page.
- There is a new initiative to introduce CAC members.
 - The first spotlight feature starred Barbara Hall, and it has been published in the e-newsletter.
- Ms. Lilly asked about metrics and who has seen it. Administrator Eleria is willing to get that information from Staff.
- The CAC agreed that it would be nice to create a section under CAC with the member spotlights.

VII. District Initiatives for Review, Comment, and Recommendations

A) Discussion of future need for e-review (Eleria)

- With a focus on the work to implement the reinvigoration plan during and outside CAC meetings, Administrator Eleria discussed an e-review approach for CAC members to review and comment on CRWD plans and work.
- CRWD staff want to make sure there is enough time for CAC related topics at the CAC meetings.
 - For example, there is a climate plan and chloride management plan that needs preliminary comments.
- Does the CAC want to complete this as a whole or subdivide and have this be a subcommittee, such as those described above?
- An example of when the CAC created a subcommittee and submitted comments for review by the full CAC was the 10-year Watershed Management Plan.
- Mr. Trojan brought up the fact that CAC is an advising group. He would like to see the CAC be more involved in advising.
- Among the group there was consensus that everyone should have a say, and this should not be left to a subcommittee.
- The CAC discussed that it is important for people who are not experts to weigh in on the documents to provide better comprehension to all.
- Some people would like to have a shared platform where the CAC can leave their comments for the rest of the CAC to see and comment.
- It was asked how close together these reports would come out.
- Administrator Eleria informed the CAC the climate plan would come out in the next one-to-two-weeks and they would want a two-to-three-week turnaround for comments. Sometime in March the Chloride plan would come forward.
- Ms. Lilly asked how the e-review would impact the CAC meetings; right now the CAC meetings often consist of presentations from staff. Administrator Eleria let the CAC know that staff would put together a memo and questions for the CAC to answer and that they wanted to do this in a google form.
- The CAC would be able to see comments in real time.

B) Project and Program Updates

C) CRWD Watershed Artist in Residence (Bromelkamp)

- Administrator Eleria provided a quick update informing the CAC that the Board of Managers approved Sarah Peters as the second artist in residence. CRWD wants to bring more artists into the learning center, projects, and wants to create stories that are more accessible.
 - A committee selected four artists to interview. Of those four, one was selected.
 - She is a proven leader in bringing artists together.
- The next step is to work with her to develop the scope of work.
- This is a two-year position, so CRWD is asking, how do we further activate the learning center and what can we do to improve workshops? More information will follow.

VIII. Discussion

A) New & Old Issues

- Each CAC member was asked to think about subcommittees they want to be a part of in the next month, for the next 6-12 months.
 - The co-chairs are looking for input on capacity of each CAC member.
 - Ms. Lilly asked for a list of when potential things may come forward this year (i.e. the Climate plan or Chloride plan).
- B) CAC Observer for January 22, 2025, Board of Managers Meeting
- Mike Trojan to observe.
- C) CAC Observer for February 5, 2025, Board of Managers Meeting
- Barbara Hall to observe. Barbara Hall will also do meeting minutes next month.

X. Adjourn

CAC Motion 24-032: *To adjourn the January 15, 2025, CAC Meeting at 7:00 PM.*

Ulrich/Weil
Unanimously Approved

Respectfully submitted
Tori Philippi