



Capitol Region Watershed District

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April 1, 2026
Board Meeting
V. Action Item
APPROVED

Regular Board Meeting of the Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) Board of Managers, for **Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.**

MEETING MINUTES

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

A) Attendance

Managers

Mary Texer
Hawona Sullivan Janzen
Shawn Mazanec
Joe Collins
Rick Sanders

Staff Present

Anna Eleria
Bob Fossum
Lydia Treichel
Jim Rudolph
Forrest Kelley
Eoghan O'Neill
Britta Belden
Sarah Wein
Jessica Bromelkamp

Public Attendees

Mike Trojan, CAC Member

Other Attendees

Joe Welna, Barr Engineering

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

Deputy Administrator Fossum will present Item V. D) Approve Clean Water Project Grant Award for Unity Unitarian Church instead of Projects and Grants Specialist, Matt Lundberg.

Motion 26-055: *Approve the Agenda of March 18, 2026, Meeting.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

II. Public Comment – None.

III. Permit Applications and Program Updates – None.

IV. Special Reports

A) 2025 Stormwater Report (Rudolph)

CRWD has conducted annual stormwater monitoring since 2004 to assess water quality and quantity across key outfall locations within the District. The monitoring program tracks pollutant concentrations and loading, supports compliance with MS4 permit requirements, evaluates the performance of Best Management Practices (BMPs), and informs watershed management decisions. In 2025, stormwater monitoring was conducted at six primary outfall

stations amongst others, collecting data on pollutant concentrations, flow volumes, and seasonal trends throughout the year.

The stormwater data collected in 2025 were compiled and analyzed to evaluate pollutant concentrations and transport across the District's monitoring network. Above-average precipitation during the growing season resulted in higher-than-average stormwater discharges and water yields at most monitoring stations. Exceptional rainfall in June produced peak stormwater volumes and elevated total phosphorus and total suspended solids loads, significantly influencing annual totals. Phosphorus loading varied by subwatershed, with Trout Brook Outlet and Trout Brook West Branch contributing the highest loads and Trout Brook West Branch exhibiting disproportionately high phosphorus export relative to its drainage area. Stormflow samples also showed elevated levels of E. coli, chloride, and trace metals during runoff events, reflecting seasonal patterns and urban runoff influences. These findings highlight how storm timing and antecedent conditions can strongly influence annual water quality outcomes and inform the District's ongoing watershed management efforts.

Watershed Data Specialist Jim Rudolph discussed the stormwater summary and key parameters with the Board. Rudolph focused on defining storm events and explained graphs that compared 2025 data versus 30-year data at different stations. Rudolph mentioned the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Standards and how all six monitoring stations exceeded the chronic standard for chloride from snowmelt. The Board had questions about the Villa Park monitoring station on July 16, 2026 because of its abnormally high numbers. Rudolph estimated that the high data point is most likely due to animals but could have been an illicit discharge. Data resumed normal range for the rest of 2025, but the monitoring team is keeping an eye on the station and its data. Manager Mazanec asked if there would be a reduction of lead in data because of the replacement of lead pipes in the District. Rudolph was unsure how much the replacing of lead pipes would affect and reduce the data.

B) TBI Inspection Report and CIP Presentation (Kelley)

CRWD conducts system-wide inspection of the entire length of the Trout Brook Storm Sewer Interceptor (TBI) approximately every 5 years. The purpose is to assess the condition of TBI, identify defects such as cracks, holes, and water intrusion, and recommend sections for repair. These inspections serve as the basis for 5 or 10-year TBI Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs), with completion of the 2024 Repair Project (135+00 to 180+00 near Willow Reserve) wrapping up implementation of the last CIP from the preceding 10-year period.

In October of 2024, the Board authorized Barr Engineering to conduct a full system inspection of TBI and prepare the next 10-year CIP. Confined space entry inspections were completed in February and March, with one section of pipe inspection conducted with closed circuit television camera due to tight constraints downstream of the Como Lake outlet.

Joe Welna from Barr presented the report to the Board including findings, recommendations, and estimated costs for repairs to assist with budget projections and project planning. Welna explained the inspection approach and operational activities, including ongoing yearly inspections, to the Board. Recommendations from Barr vary in timing, cost, and location. Barr

advises a 50-foot section repair in 2028 with an estimated cost of \$100,000, with two other recommendations costing over \$2 million each in 2030 and beyond. In addition, Welna mentioned access points that are becoming overgrown, so Barr advises vegetation management and maintenance to prevent roots growing into the pipelines and to create a safer environment for the inspectors. Manager Sullivan Janzen asked if the repairs are using longer-lasting materials than what was there originally. The goal is to use better materials, but Welna pointed out that sometimes there are limits because of what needs to be repaired.

In total, it is estimated that CRWD will invest over \$12 million in Trout Brook repairs over the next 10 years. Board Managers clarified that CRWD will begin saving money for these projects. Administrator Eleria responded that the Capital Improvement Projects plan will be completed before the budgeting process for 2027. Eleria also said that CRWD is in a good financial position to pay for some repairs with the fund balance from previous years and could mostly avoid using bonds. President Collins commended the grant writing team as they play a vital role in ensuring that CRWD has the funds to complete projects.

Motion 26-056: *Accept the Trout Brook Storm Sewer Interceptor Inspection Report and Capital Improvement Plan from Barr Engineering.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

V. Action Items

A) Approve Minutes of March 4, 2026, Workshop and Regular Board Meeting (Dalit)

Motion 26-057: *Approve the March 4, 2026, Workshop and Regular Board Meeting Minutes.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

B) Approve Accounts Payable and Receivable for February 2026 (Dalit)

Motion 26-058: *Approve remaining partial February 2026 accounts payable and direct Board Treasurer and President to endorse and disperse checks for these payments.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

Motion 26-059: *Approve February 2026 expenditures and accounts receivable as presented in the enclosed financial statement.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

C) Approve Contract for Como Lake Access Paths Construction (O'Neill)

Informal access paths have developed along the Como Lake shoreline where visitors frequently access the water for fishing, birdwatching, and other recreational activities. CRWD worked with Barr Engineering to review the existing conditions and design improved access points to the lake. The goal of the project is to restore shoreline stability by formalizing and improving public access and to enhance ecological function through targeted repairs, revegetation, and installation of low-maintenance landscape features. Twenty-five informal access paths have been identified as needing maintenance to stabilize the shoreline buffer and reduce erosion. Of these, nine will be formalized, and sixteen will be retired and revegetated.

On January 29, 2026, a Request for Quotes was issued to four contractors, with a deadline of February 27, 2026. The engineer's estimate, which included a 10% contingency, was \$130,000. However, an addendum incorporating additional erosion control measures, expanded plug planting, and mulching increased the overall estimated cost. CRWD's Landscape Architect consultant, Barr Engineering, reviewed the four bids for completeness, responsiveness, and arithmetic accuracy and provided a recommendation for awarding the project. Work is anticipated to begin in April, and substantial completion is expected by June 30, 2026, with full construction completion by August 31, 2026.

The Board has no additional questions or comments.

Motion 26-060: *Authorize Administrator to execute a contract with Minnesota Native Landscapes, Inc. for the Como Lake Access Paths Construction Project for an amount not to exceed \$145,037.65 and authorize Administrator to approve change orders not to exceed \$30,000.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

D) Approve Clean Water Project Grant Award for Unity Unitarian Church (Lundberg)

Unity Unitarian Church is seeking a Clean Water Project grant from CRWD for the installation of a clean water practice on their parking lot. The Unity Unitarian Church Rain Garden is located at 684 Portland Avenue in Saint Paul. It is a church that focuses on shared values of interdependence, generosity, and equity. Unity Unitarian Church is proposing a project consisting of a 1,050 square foot rain garden that will receive runoff from 16,413 square feet of untreated driveway, parking lot, and roof top.

CRWD, along with the Ramsey County Soil and Water Conservation Division (RCSWCD) completed a site analysis and developed construction plans for the proposed rain garden. The 1,050 square foot rain garden is sized to capture and infiltrate 1.1" rain events from the parking lot. The rain garden will capture 20,666 cubic feet of stormwater, 223 pounds of total suspended solids, and 0.3 pounds of total phosphorus per year.

The project is estimated to cost \$89,314. Using CRWD's Stewardship Grant award calculator, which bases grant awards on the project's water quality benefit, staff have determined a

maximum CRWD grant award of \$56,003.24. CRWD will require educational signage for the rain garden to be installed in an area visible to patrons and will provide an additional \$1,500 for sign design, fabrication, and installation. A minimum 5% match (\$2,800) is required for non-profit grant applicants, though the actual match will likely be much greater due to the high construction cost.

The Board had no additional questions or comments.

Motion 26-061: *Approve a grant award to Unity Unitarian Church Clean Water Project for an amount not to exceed \$57,503.24 and authorize the District Administrator to execute a grant agreement.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

VI. Unfinished Business

A) Como Aquatic Plant Management Update (Wein)

The Como Lake Management Plan (CLMP) was adopted by the Board of Managers in 2019 and presents an adaptive management framework for achieving water quality goals for Como Lake over the next 20 years. From Action L6 in the CLMP, CRWD developed and adopted the Como Lake Long-term Vegetation Management Plan (CLLVMP) in 2020 to define an adaptive management approach for restoring and enhancing Como Lake’s aquatic vegetation community.

Implementation of the CLLVMP began in 2020. CRWD has completed four springtime herbicide treatments (2020, 2021, 2024, 2025) to reduce curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) abundance and regrowth. The herbicide treatments using fluridone have been largely successful with remarkable reductions in CLP observed. An additional aquatic invasive species has been identified in Como Lake since the adoption of the CLLVMP—Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM)—so the control of this invasive is now in consideration when planning for aquatic plant management.

The CLP turion sampling results from October 2025 showed an increase in turion density from the previous year, suggesting the herbicide treatment from spring 2025 was not as effective at preventing turion production by CLP plants in comparison to previous years. This was likely due to the timing of the treatment relative to the CLP growth cycle and the extended CLP growing season from milder winter conditions. In addition, the fluridone concentration in the lake did not coincide with the EWM growing season (late-June), so the treatment had little effect on controlling the plant.

To address the issues encountered in 2025 and continue making progress on controlling CLP and EWM, CRWD is adapting the treatment approach in 2026 with PLM Lake and Land Management by completing a spring herbicide treatment using Galleon that specifically targets CLP followed by a fall fluridone treatment that will impact both CLP and EWM. The fall treatment will hold through the winter under the ice and be “bumped” in spring 2027 after ice

out to ensure full effect of the herbicide on both CLP and EWM regrowth. Plants can develop tolerance to certain herbicides if they are the only ones used, so it can be important to use more than one herbicide.

The Board had questions regarding the impact of Galleon on aquatic life and EWM. Water Resource Project Manager Sarah Wein assured the Board there are no worries about safety with the new herbicide as experts report it is safe for use in lakes like Como Lake and discussed the strategy of application as it is similar to what has been done in practice before. Wein explained that it is unclear if Galleon will influence EWM growth but clarified the application will not occur during the growing season of EWM. President Collins asked if EWM will float to other places in the lake. Wein emphasized that the Monitoring team has been very diligent in the hand picking of EWM and have been successful at keeping the invasive species at bay.

B) Public Art Saint Paul Poetry Update (Schwantes)

Public Art Saint Paul has been implementing the Sidewalk Poetry program since 2008. The program allows city residents to claim the sidewalks as their book pages. It is implemented in close collaboration with Saint Paul's Public Works Department and their sidewalk repair and replacement locations and schedule. Public Art Saint Paul manages the submittal process and parameters, and residents are invited to submit their poetry. Public Art Saint Paul then coordinates a jury process and selection of winning poems that become stamps to be installed in late summer or early fall.

On a recommendation from Manager Sullivan Janzen, CRWD staff explored a collaboration with Public Art Saint Paul and the Sidewalk Poetry program last year and several meetings have taken place between the two organizations since. A natural alignment between CRWD's work and goals and the program became apparent. The collaboration in 2026 is especially timely given the emphasis on the Mississippi River for Public Art Saint Paul's Wakpa Triennial and CRWD's participation in We Are Water MN and Sacred Water, Shared Future. The 2026 submittals for Sidewalk Poetry will have a water theme. Poetry in English, Hmong, Spanish, Somali, Dakota, and Karen is invited to be submitted and QR codes will be stamped on the blocks next to the poems with English translations.

CRWD is supporting Public Art Saint Paul's Sidewalk Poetry program in the amount of \$29,000 through the 2026 Partner Grant budget and will be hosting a Sidewalk Poetry workshop as one of the We Are Water community events.

Communications and Engagement Division Manager Jessica Bromelkamp reviewed the key elements of the proposal with the Board. The City of Saint Paul and Public Art Saint Paul will be supporting the project with grant money as well. The poetry submission window closes in June and the stamping on sidewalks will occur between August and November of this year. CRWD will have a say in installation sites and there are discussions about how to acknowledge and share all the submissions. Vice President Texer asked if someone could create an electronic book to have available on CRWD's website with all the poems that got submitted. Although there is a question of cost, there was strong agreement that it would be nice to have access to all the poetry after the fact.

President Collins encouraged CRWD to invite city council members to the poetry workshop, and Bromelkamp mentioned that city councilmembers and their aides will be getting invites to all the We Are Water events.

Bromelkamp also gave a brief update on the Annual Awards Ceremony that will be taking place next Wednesday, March 25th. The program and script are being finalized and all award categories are filled.

C) Hybrid Board Meeting Update (Treichel)

The Minnesota Legislature updated the State's Open Meeting Law in July 2025. The most significant change to the law allows State and local government agencies to conduct open meetings using interactive technology. The key provisions of using interactive technology for hybrid meetings include: Board managers who attend virtually do not need to make their meeting location open and accessible to the public; at least one manager must attend in person; all Managers, attending virtually and in-person, must be able to see and hear each other; and all votes must be conducted by roll call. Last December, the Board amended their bylaws to allow for hybrid Board meetings.

To adhere to requirements under the law, CRWD staff have been working on the large conference room technology and meeting guidelines to facilitate hybrid meetings. A new camera will allow for 360-degree view of the large conference room so virtual attendees can see a panoramic view of the large conference room and zoomed in view of speakers. Based on CAC feedback about virtual meeting platforms, the hybrid Board meetings will be offered on the Zoom platform. Virtual attendees will be able to access the link through the meeting agenda and the CRWD website. The Workshop and Regular Board meeting on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, is scheduled to be the first meeting for offering the hybrid option.

Administrative Assistant Lydia Treichel clarified that the Hybrid option will also include Board Workshops, and CRWD staff will monitor the Zoom meeting for any virtual raised hands from attendees online. Treichel will make a few edits to the guidelines for hybrid Board meetings after suggestions from the Board.

VII. General Information

A) Board of Managers' Updates

Board Managers Mazanec and Sanders, along with Administrator Eleria, met with Representative Gottfried last Friday, March 13th as part of the push during the Minnesota Watersheds Legislative Event to schedule meetings with local representatives.

Board Manager Sullivan Janzen shared that Mary Lily and Lauren Wheeler have decided not to renew their roles as co-chairs of the CAC. They will remain members but are stepping down from co-chair responsibilities. The CAC will begin the process of electing new co-chairs.

Vice President Texer stopped by the Payne-Phalen Community Council Sowing Bee event on Saturday afternoon and said it was a great event. Texer also mentioned an event that is being hosted at the Westminster Town Hall Forum tomorrow evening, Thursday, March 19th. NPR's Legal Affairs Correspondent, Nina Totenberg, will be speaking.

B) Administrator's Update

Deputy Administrator Bob Fossum joined staff from Friends of the Mississippi River earlier today to speak with the policy director for Governor Walz. Coincidentally, Fossum was also able to meet Governor Walz and shake his hand, as well!

Administrator Eleria shared that CRWD's Green Infrastructure project at Highland Bridge was awarded the National American Council of Engineering Companies Honor Award. The Honor Award is one of 16 in the nation, and the project beat out over 200 other submissions. Administrator Eleria and Deputy Administrator Fossum will travel to Washington D.C. to be recognized and accept the award.

VIII. Next Meetings

- A) Wednesday, March 25, 2026 – 6:00 p.m. – Annual Recognition and Awards Ceremony
- B) Wednesday, April 1, 2026 – 5:00 p.m. – Board Workshop and Regular Meeting
- C) Wednesday, April 8, 2026 – 5:30 p.m. – CAC Meeting – Vice President Texer will attend

IX. Adjournment

Motion 26-062: *Adjournment of the March 18, 2026, Regular Board Meeting at 7:57 PM.*

Mazanec/Sanders
Unanimously Approved

Respectfully submitted,
Lydia Treichel