



Capitol Region Watershed District

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Saint Paul, MN 55104

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July 8, 2026

Community Advisory Committee

Meeting

IV. A. Action Item

Approved

Community Advisory Committee Meeting Wednesday, June 10, 2026, 5:30 p.m.

CAC Members Present:

Mike Trojan
Michelle Ulrich
Richard Weil
Tori Philippi
Mary Lilly
Barbara Hall

CAC Members Absent:

Lauren Wheeler (Unexcused)
Andrew Montain (Excused)
Gwen Willems (Unexcused)

Staff/Board Present:

Rachel Funke
Rachele Krivichi
Anna Eleria
Mary Texer

Guests Present:

Tammy Villegas
Jennie Lopez
Faviola Ramirez
Chi Muepae

I. Welcome, Announcements, and Updates

Tori Philippi started the meeting at 5:30 PM. Everyone present introduced themselves, including three new prospective CAC members, and a former CRWD intern, Chi Muepae.

II. Public Comment for Issues Not on the Agenda

None

III. Approval of the Agenda

CAC Motion 26-011: *To approve the CAC June 10, 2026 Agenda*

Trojan/Lilly

Unanimously approved

IV. Approval of Minutes

A) Approval of May 13, 2026 CAC Meeting Minutes

CAC Motion 26-012: *Approve the May 13, 2026 Meeting Minutes*

Ulrich/Lilly

Unanimously approved

V. CAC Observer Update

A) May 20, 2026 Board Meeting –

- There was discussion of Minnesota Watersheds resolutions. The District submitted a resolution on the topic of stormwater as an alternate source of water available for outdoor non-potable uses.

B) June 3, 2026, Board Meeting:

- The Watershed Management Plan five-year review was discussed at this meeting. Both meetings were on the lighter side.

VI. Project and Program Updates

A) Watershed Management Plan Five-Year Review (Funke)

CRWD's 2021-2030 Watershed Management Plan guides its actions in a coordinated, thoughtful, and effective manner over a 10-year span. In alignment with WMP Goal O-3, *Ensure that high value and multiple benefits are derived from funds spent on District projects and programs through planning, adaptive management and biannual evaluation of progress*, CRWD completed a mid-plan review in 2026 to assess its progress toward WMP goals and implementation activities in years 2021-2025 of plan implementation. This review informs Staff, Board, and CAC on which goals, projects, and programs to focus on in the next 5 years and provides insight on whether adjustments need to be made to current implementation activities, schedules, and budgets.

The mid-plan review shows significant progress has been made toward achieving WMP goals and implementation activities. During the meeting, staff will share results of the review.

Overall, the findings of the mid-plan review show that the CRWD is adapting effectively to changing conditions, making steady progress toward long-term outcomes, and is well-positioned to achieve its goals by 2030. The report recommends focusing resources on a targeted set of implementation activities and goals for 2026–2030 tied to continuing implementation of water quality improvement CIPs, especially in our lakes and target subwatersheds, furthering communications and engagement, advancing facility management activities, and expanding regulatory support.

Barbara Hall asked if Ramsey County's recently authorized \$350k for Downtown revitalization has any overlap with CRWD's plan. She also asked what the role of the CAC is in reviewing the Watershed Management Plan and other plans. Many questions were intended to educate the evening's guests on the role of the CAC.

Administrator Eleria responded that largescale redevelopment projects must meet the District's rules, mainly stormwater management rules. New projects would have to meet the District's rules for volume control. Any project that disturbs more than an acre of land must submit a plan on how to reduce pollution from the site. The city will need to come before the District with a plan. The CAC offers guidance and insight to CRWD's Board of Managers. It is essential for the District to hear input from the community on its projects, specifically before projects are built.

CAC members asked if goals have had to be adjusted due to rain, climate change, etc. Funke responded that we haven't updated our lake management plans since 2021 but that two of our lakes' plans will be reevaluated soon. Como Lake, for example, has the most recent plan. Barbara Hall asked if there is a map showing the completed projects. Rachel Funke said she would share the map after the meeting. For more details on the projects, the District's website can be referenced. Mike Trojan asked which iteration of the plan this is. It is the third.

Mary Lilly asked about the Stormwater Planning for Les Bolstad Golf Course. Administrator Eleria said this is very early in the planning stages, but the District has partnered with Rice Creek and provided part of this plan to the U of M and will be getting more heavily involved in the future. Lilly also asked about the Ford Site Planning. The CAC talked about those options, but she asked if there is more in that plan that hasn't been determined. CRWD has submitted a comment letter to the MPCA but has not heard anything back yet.

Mike Trojan asked if there are any bright spots in the future for the Snelling-Midway area. Administrator Anna said she does see construction activity happening around Allianz Field and that permits have been submitted for other parcels within the 35 acres, so she thinks it will continue to pick up around the Snelling-Midway Redevelopment. There is also a community group that has formed and sought grant funding to do more planning in and around the area, namely around safety. It is an important site for CRWD because the 35-acre superblock has been half developed for Allianz Field. CRWD and the City of St. Paul strongly encouraged that the developers think about stormwater management over the whole site at the time of construction and look at designing a stormwater system for the entire 35 acres. The site is sized to receive runoff for the soccer stadium that was being constructed back in 2016 but also sized so it could receive runoff for additional parcels that would be developed over time. The District permitted the system, which captures, filters, and disinfects the water and makes it available for reuse around the stadium.

B) CRWD Summer Tour

The tour will be on September 9th. The Division Managers at the District liked the idea of a river-focused tour. At this time, the District is looking into boat rental.

C) Como Lake Fish Kill Update (added to agenda)

Last week, Como Lake experienced a significant fish kill, which are a natural occurrence in lakes. The District has seen it before in Como Lake, but the total number of fish that died were near 10,000 which is 5 to 10 times higher than typical. It started off fairly small and was first discovered by the District's monitoring staff but last week it grew in size. The District believes the likely cause of the fish kill was due to dissolved oxygen levels. Those low levels were confirmed by the District's monitoring data in the deepest part of the lake. The District found that the levels dipped significantly due to warm weather.

Due to the winds last week and the waves, the fish moved towards the northern bay of the lake next to the dock near the pavilion, where many recreational boats can be rented. The fish decomposed very quickly, and the smell was very strong. There were a number of calls made by the public to the District which were helpful. The District worked very closely with the City and the DNR to inspect and monitor the issue. Typically, fish are not removed from lakes after a die-off, but due to the number of fish and their location, the District and City decided it was best to remove the fish. They were removed by a contractor called Carp Solutions. There have not been any additional fish up to this point. The District and the City of St. Paul both posted about the die-off on social media, and Kare 11, the Star Tribune, and Pioneer Press all ran stories on the fish.

Tori Philippi asked if there is anything the District can do to improve dissolved oxygen. Administrator Eleria responded that the District has been working on improving the quality of Como Lake for a couple decades. The District has been told by other lake and fisheries experts that this is a natural occurrence. Como Lake hasn't had a fish kill like this in decades, but if it happens again the District may have to make more of an effort. Manager Texer added that the curly leaf pondweed, as it decomposes, takes up oxygen, and this may have contributed to the die-off.

Mike Trojan mentioned that this is an odd time of year for a fish die off. Air temperature and lake temperature warmed up quickly and then the dissolved oxygen levels just dropped in four days. Lake Nokomis and Lake Phalen also had fish die offs.

A visiting guest asked if the waters will be restocked because she teaches fishing classes on Lake Como. Administrator Eleria responded that while 10,000 fish died, there is still a large population of a variety of fish in the lake. When considering the entire population of the lake, this isn't a majority of fish and there is no need to stock.

VII. CAC Initiatives

A) CAC Subcommittees:

- Communications and Engagement – Michelle Ulrich and Richard Weil would like to continue to be on this committee. Andrew was on this committee and will likely stay on.
- Technical and Technology – Mike Trojan is taking this on and is looking for anyone who is interested in joining this committee. Barbara Hall said she would like to help with the technical but not the technology side of this. Technical = technical aspects of reviewing reports, developing technical information, etc. Mary Lilly would like to be on this committee, along with Lauren Wheeler.

VIII. Discussion

A) New & Old Issues –

- We Are Water ends this week and the District will provide some numbers and an evaluation of the exhibit. There will be open hours this weekend for the final weekend.
- Barbara mentioned that new prospective members do not have to be engineers, specialists, etc, to join the CAC, and that anyone with a passion and interest in water is invited.
- Barbara mentioned that Rachele K. should contact Liz Boyer about a tour of water-related sites around the city.

- B) CAC Board of Managers Meeting Observer
- C) CAC Observer for June 17, 2026 Board of Managers Meeting
 - There is now also an online option for attending Board Meetings.
 - Tori will send a reminder to sign up to be an observer
 - Barbara Hall will attend this meeting
- D) CAC Observer for July 1, 2026 Board of Managers Meeting
 - Mike Trojan will attend
- E) CAC Observer for August 5, 2026
 - Mike Trojan will attend

X. Adjourn

CAC Motion 26-013: *To adjourn the June 10, 2026 CAC Meeting at 6:55 PM.*

Weil/Trojan
Unanimously Approved

Respectfully submitted
Rachele Krivichi