



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Commission Workshop to Prioritize Issues for Watershed Management Plan Meeting Minutes

4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Monday June 24, 2013

Golden Valley City Hall Council Conference Room; 7800 Golden Valley Rd; Golden Valley MN 55427

Attendees: Chair Black, Commissioner Hoshal, Commissioner Jim de Lambert, Commissioner Welch, Commission Hoschka, Commissioner Johnson, Alternate Commissioner Goddard, Alternate Commissioner Crough, Alternate Commissioner Mueller, Alternate Commissioner Hanson, Alternate Commissioner Riss, Alternate Commissioner Tobelmann, Alternate Commissioner O'Toole, Plan Steering Committee Chair Loomis, TAC members Eckman, Oliver, Eberhart, and Edman, Administrator Jester, Engineer Chandler, Rich Brasch (Three Rivers Park District), Brad Wozney (BWSR), Karen Jensen (Met Council)

Chair Black opened the meeting at 4:37 p.m. Introductions were made around the table. Administrator Jester reported the results of the ranking performed by watershed residents at the June 13th Watershed Summit and indicated this group would be doing a similar activity. She distributed a list of 11 broad topics with more specific issues listed under each topic. Jester noted the issues and topics arose from input by residents and city staff at small group meetings, the online survey, and the Commission's Gaps Analysis. Jester also reported that the results of a Commission self-assessment should be taken into consideration when prioritizing issues. She reported that all Commission programs laid out in the 2004 Watershed Plan were on-going or had been completed. As for CIP projects, she noted some projects had not been done for various reasons. These specific projects should be reconsidered for the Implementation Program in the new Plan, but she didn't think they should be discussed individually at this workshop.

Everyone in the room was given two 1-point dots, two 2-point dots, and two 3-point dots. They were asked to put their initials on the dots and then place the dots on the issues to indicate their desired priorities. The dots were then tabulated for each issue, providing an overall ranking of the issues. Issues in order of ranking (high to low): stormwater runoff and development; water quantity, flooding and water levels; water quality; groundwater; degraded streams and shorelines; lack of education and information, need for behavior change; governance, management and funding; lack of biodiversity (tied with) flood control project maintenance; wetlands (tied with) recreation needs.

The group then discussed the issue of the Medicine Lake dam, noting past Commission involvement, past requests from AMLAC, and recent communication from AMLAC members. It was suggested that the Commission contact the DNR regarding an appropriate course of action for the Commission. There was discussion about the need to address the real problem, rather than the symptoms. If lake usability is the real issue, then an overabundance of aquatic plants and shallow water levels are symptoms of the issue. It was noted that sedimentation can cause shallow water levels. Chair Black indicated it would be good to get everyone involved at the table to lay out all the issues and hear from each other. No decisions were made at this meeting as to how to proceed.

Turning back to the results of the issues ranking, the group agreed the top three issues (stormwater runoff and development; water quantity, flooding, water levels; and water quality) were all related. There

was considerable discussion about groundwater (ranked #4) and how a focus on groundwater would be a departure from past Commission watershed plans. There was discussion about various ways the Commission may get involved with groundwater issues including disseminating information, collecting groundwater data, lobbying the County to develop a regional groundwater strategy, being involved (early in the process) with groundwater management areas. Jensen noted the Met Council is very involved with groundwater issues now (with additional funding from the Legislature); they are currently working on a Metro-wide groundwater model (with Barr Engineering as their contractor). Jensen offered assistance (including informational presentations) from the Met Council as the Commission develops goals and strategies related to groundwater.

Eberhart noted that the issues, as presented at this workshop, are in different categories and may not be comparable as “issues.” She noted that some issues are “resources,” some are “causes,” and others are “results.” The group agreed that as goals and strategies are developed, the more specific issues within each broader category would be considered.

Brasch indicated that from the perspective of Three Rivers Park District, the top three categories (as ranked) make sense and are also related to groundwater. He noted the Medicine Lake TMDL should be implemented and that aquatic plants should be addressed as well. Brasch further noted that there are synergies between the TRPD and the Commission with respect to macrophyte control (especially curlyleaf pondweed) and water quality actions.

There was also discussion about how the cities have many State regulations including NPDES and MS4 permits, as well as pollutant load reduction requirements in TMDLs. Eberhart noted that the Commission could concentrate on the resources themselves and their conditions including erosion, shorelines, and habitat. These are areas where cities don’t necessarily focus efforts and funding. The group agreed the Commission should focus on activities not already being done by cities and/or where the Commission could add value. There was discussion about the recently completed MIDS (Minimal Impact Design Standards) that watersheds could consider adopting.

Jensen reported that Met Council will soon complete a comprehensive report on the water quality of Bassett Creek using data from the WOMP station (including an IBI score for macroinvertebrates). She offered to present the completed report to the Commission. Chandler noted that the Commission has been collecting macroinvertebrate data near the WOMP station for many years and that this data can be shared with the Met Council for their report.

Commissioner Welch noted this Plan should clarify the relationship between the cities and the Commission. A flowchart of responsibilities might be a good way to define the roles. Welch also noted that watershed organizations are different, just as individual cities are different and that exact consistency with adjacent watersheds may not be possible.

There was some discussion about education programs and opportunities within the watershed including the watershed map, improvements for paddlers and other recreational users, and stream identification signs at road crossings. The point was made that the capital projects of the Commission should consider recreational and aesthetic aspects.