



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Meeting Notes of the
Watershed Plan Steering Committee
August 1, 2023 @ 10:00 a.m.
Golden Valley City Hall

Meeting Attendees:

Commissioner Welch; Alternate Commissioners Polzin, Kennedy, and Harwell; TAC Members Ray and Scharenbroich; Golden Valley resident Linda Loomis; Administrator Jester; Commission Engineers Chandler and Williams

1. WELCOME & MEETING GOAL

Meeting goal: To develop recommendations on issues and their priority level for presentation at a Commission Prioritization Workshop (potentially planned to be in conjunction with Aug 17 Commission meeting)

Committee Chair Kennedy called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

2. REVIEW MAY 24 & JULY 11 MEETING NOTES –

Committee member Scharenbroich moved to approve the May 24th and July 11th meeting minutes. Committee member Polzin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. REVIEW/BRAINSTORM ONGOING & NEW ISSUES – attached with meeting materials

The committee agreed to a recommendation from Committee Chair Kennedy to reorganize the issues into four categories (or “buckets”) including 1) Waterbody and Watershed Quality; 2) Climate Resiliency; 3) Educational Outreach; and 4) Organizational Effectiveness. It was noted that four categories would be easier to explain to stakeholders, partners, and the public. Each issue was placed into one of these four categories.

The group reviewed the issues and assigned a priority ranking of high, medium, or low to each. It was noted that measurable goals are expected to be developed to address each issue. Engineer Williams noted that the issues listed were from the 2015 Plan and he defined the “July 2022 Priority” and “Gaps Analysis Priority” rankings. As the group walked through each issue, some issues from the 2015 were removed by the group because they are already incorporated into a different issue or were too vague. Other issues were determined to be tools used to address resource based issues. Some tools, such as development requirements, were prioritized two different ways: the usefulness of the tool, and the need to consider updating the tool.

Committee member Welch noted that the Commission could lead a multijurisdictional partnership to address flooding which would also improve equity and community resiliency. He noted this is where water issues and social justice have the closest alignment.

For particular issues some discussion included:

Streambank erosion is a high priority due to the Commission’s Flood Control Project but shoreline erosion might not be something the Commission should address because there’s not a clear connection between shoreline erosion and water quality.

Engineer Williams reminded the group that this is an iterative process and their priority rankings may shift as new information is available or more discussion is had. It was also noted that this is a plan that both the Commission and cities will implement.

There was a question about protecting or repairing steep slopes or bluffs. Committee member Scharenbroich noted that steep slopes and bluffs are defined by the DNR and should be addressed with local ordinances.

There was a discussion about buffer widths, including a reminder that certain buffers are required by BWSR and the DNR along with Commission requirements. Commission staff were asked to ensure that member cities have the appropriate Commission buffer requirements in their ordinances.

Discussion on wetlands noted that the Commission is not currently involved in wetland issues aside from encouraging that wetland mitigation occurs within the same subwatershed. Cities follow the State Wetland Conservation Act. Committee member Welch recommended that the Commission identify potential wetland restoration or creation sites. Engineer Williams noted that some watershed organizations work to restore or enhance wetlands and that grant funding may be available depending on the priority level in the plan.

Training and orientation for new commissioners or ongoing education of existing commissioners should be a key activity. There is considerable room for improvement from current practice.

Bassett Creek Valley is a good example of where the Commission can help with leadership and development of a sophisticated approach to flood resilience and stormwater management.

Additional notes on specific issues and the committee's recommended priority levels can be found on the attached pages.

4. DISCUSS FORMAT FOR COMMISSION WORKSHOP & NEXT PSC MEETINGS

Staff noted they would reorganize the issues table to include the new categories and will separate out the tools. The committee's recommended issues and their priority ranking would be presented to the Commission at the August 17th workshop. Committee Chair Kennedy would lead the discussion.

5. ADJOURN The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.

List of Issues for 2025 Plan Development							
Issue Category (in 2015 Plan)	2015 Plan Section	Line No.	Sub-issue (black = noted in 2015 Plan) (red = not in 2015 Plan; considered at July 2022 workshop)	July 2022 Priority	Gaps Analysis Priority	Aug 1 Priority	Comments
Water Quality	3.1	1	Impaired waterbodies	High	Med	High	Consensus: high priority
		2	Pollutant loading hotspots (e.g., phosphorus loading)	High		Tool	useful as a tool; keep it as part of the CIP prioritization metric; important tool - subset of impaired waters - shouldn't be in priority list of issues
		3	Chloride loading is significant in some areas	Med	High	High	Consensus: high priority; where can we be effective in a solution; where is issue? How to mitigate? Do pilot projects
Water Quantity and Flooding	3.2	4	Impact of climate change on hydrology and flood risk - add water level variability	Med	High	High	Consensus: high - BCWMC should be leader in multijurisdictional solutions; equity issue
		5	Flood Control Project inspections, maintenance, and repair	High		Tool	CORE FUNCTION - Organizational effectiveness; required activity and not up for discussion
		6	Water level variability (2015 Plan addressed Medicine Lake)	Med		Move to 4	Incorporate into #4 (Discussion: Med Lake variability has ecological health implications; other lakes impacts from drought)
Erosion and Sedimentation	3.3	7	Streambank erosion (may also include gullies)			Med	[Bucket discussion - both climate and WQ buckets] Consensus:
		8	Lake shore erosion			Med	
		9	Sediment deltas in streams and lakes	Med		Removed	Considered maintenance. Shouldn't be Comm priority, local priority or part of different project, MS4 requirement
Streams	3.4	10	Impacts of urbanization on streams			Removed	From 2015 plan. Won't be specific issue in this plan but may be addressed in other issues.
		11	Stream biological impairments	Med	Med	Moved to 1	Wrapped into impaired #1. When we do projects, can address. Stressor ID analysis may find other stressors than habitat (like DO).
Wetlands, Habitat, and Shoreland	3.5	12	Buffers and buffer widths	High	Med		High priority to make sure cities are complying with current BCWMC requirements (check ordinances); low priority to adjust or change current buffers; organizational effectiveness
		13	Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)	Med	Med		Consensus: Medium
		14	Poor ecosystem health in some areas				Too vague
		15	Loss/degradation of wetlands	High		Med	Change to wetland health and restoration.
		16	Degradation of riparian areas	Med		Low	Don't know enough to rank but if we don't focus on it than who does? High priority to learn more. Low priority to address but project specific
Groundwater	3.6	17	Degraded quality/loss of upland natural areas	Low		Low	Critical corridors map
		18	Groundwater quality			Low	Contaminants, chlorides, as examples
		19	Groundwater quantity			Low	
Education and Outreach	3.6	20	Surface water - groundwater interaction			Med	Includes infiltration requirements and restrictions
		21	Insufficient Outreach to and relationships with diverse communities	Med		Med	Combine with #34
		22	Education programs to help cities fulfill requirements	Med	High	Med	TOOL
		23	Training and orientation for new Commissioners	Med		Med	TOOL - Comm has more control and ability to achieve. Organizational effectiveness; city responsibility; need terms and acronyms list
Implementation and Responsibilities	3.8	24	Protect recreation opportunities	Low		Low	TOOL
		25	Public ditch management			Low	No change from current plan
		26	BCWMC funding mechanisms	High	Low	high	ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUE
		27	Progress assessment		High	high	ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUE
		28	CIP development, prioritization, and implementation	Med	High	high	TOOL
		29	Standards and requirements for linear projects	Med	High	med	TOOL
		30	Standards and requirements for non-linear projects	High		med	TOOL
		31	Carbon footprint of BCWMC projects	Low		low	
		32	Bassett Creek Valley stormwater management	Med	Med	high	
		33	Organizational assesment of capacity and staffing may be inadequate	Med	Med	high	ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUE
34	Projects and programs implemented through a DEI lens	Med	High	med	TOOL		