



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Budget Committee Meeting Notes

April 22 and May 8, 2019

Council Conference Room; Golden Valley City Hall

Committee Members: Commission Chair Prom, Alternate Commissioner McDonald Black, Commissioner Scanlan, Commissioner Anderson

The Budget Committee met on two occasions to discuss the 2020 operating budget for the BCWMC. Alt. Commissioner Jane McDonald Black was appointed committee chair. All committee members were present for both meetings.

RECOMMENDATION: The Committee recommends the attached operating budget with a resulting city assessment increase of 3% over 2019 levels.

Committee Discussions:

The Committee reviewed the 10-year operating budget (Table 5-4) in the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Plan and briefly discussed two activities slated for implementation around 2020 including developing criteria for the allocation of funding for flood risk reduction projects, and working with member cities to consider a program to review development or redevelopment projects which include long-term dewatering within 1,000 feet of priority waterbodies. The Committee and staff decided if these activities need to be addressed in 2020 they would be addressed through existing technical services budgets, or surveys and studies.

Dues for Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD) are estimated at \$7,500 in 2020, representing a relatively significant amount for this new endeavor. The Committee discussed the benefits of MAWD and where that expense should be in the budget, if at all. It was decided the Commission should receive a presentation about MAWD from its executive director to get a better understanding of the organization and how it may help advance the mission and goals of the Commission. That presentation is planned for the May Commission meeting.

Chair McDonald Black noted the desire to keep the operating budget even over time so that cities can budget for their dues. She noted the spending down of the fund balance has been used several years in a row to reduce assessments to cities but that practice is likely to end soon as the fund balance should not go below 50% of annual operating expenses.

There was discussion about the potential costs of developing the next watershed management plan, noting that preliminary plan development would likely begin in 2022. Starting last year, the Commission (with agreement from the TAC) included a budget line item of \$10,000 - \$12,000 per year to set aside for the future plan. It was noted, however, that saving an average of \$11,000 per year for 4 years will not result in all of the funding needed for the plan, and that either city assessments will rise in planning years or other activities will have to be put on hold.



The Committee reviewed the outreach and education budget items and determined they were appropriate.

After input from the Commission Engineer, monitoring expenses were lowered from a preliminary estimate of \$120,600 to \$102,600 by reducing water quality data collection on Medicine Lake from two monitoring locations to one monitoring location + aquatic vegetation surveys + phytoplankton/zooplankton analyses. This reduction in monitoring was favored by staff over other options to reduce data collection on other lakes and streams.

Due to the significant expense of the Commission's water quality monitoring program, the Committee and staff recommend the Commission hold a monitoring workshop later in the year to review and discuss the Commission's monitoring plan, understand how the data are used to inform management decisions, and determine if changes are needed.