



## Bassett Creek Watershed Management

# MEMO

Date: September 9, 2020  
From: Laura Jester, Administrator  
To: BCWMC Commissioners  
RE: **Administrator's Report**

Aside from this month's agenda items, the Commission Engineers, city staff, committee members, and I continue to work on the following Commission projects and issues.

**CIP Projects** (more resources at <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects>.)

**2019 Medicine Lake Road and Winnetka Avenue Area Long Term Flood Mitigation Plan Implementation Phase I: DeCola Ponds B & C Improvement Project (BC-2, BC-3 & BC-8) Golden Valley (no change since July):** A feasibility study for this project was completed in May 2018 after months of study, development of concepts and input from residents at two public open houses. At the May 2018 meeting, the Commission approved Concept 3 and set a maximum 2019 levy. Also in May 2018, the Minnesota Legislature passed the bonding bill and the MDNR has since committed \$2.3M for the project. The Hennepin County Board approved a maximum 2019 levy request at their meeting in July 2018. A BCWMC public hearing on this project was held on August 16, 2018 with no comments being received. Also at that meeting the Commission officially ordered the project and entered an agreement with the City of Golden Valley to design and construct the project. In September 2018, the City of Golden Valley approved the agreement with the BCWMC. The [Sun Post](#) ran an article on this project October 2018. Another public open house and presentation of 50% designs was held February 6, 2019. An EAW report was completed and available for public review and comment December 17 – January 16, 2019. At their meeting in February 2019, the Commission approved the 50% design plans. Another public open house was held April 10<sup>th</sup> and a public hearing on the water level drawdown was held April 16<sup>th</sup>. 90% Design Plans were approved at the April Commission meeting. It was determined a Phase 1 investigation of the site is not required. The City awarded a contract to Dahn Construction for the first phase of the project, which involves earthwork, utilities, and trail paving and extends through June 2020. Dewatering began late summer 2019. Tree removal was completed in early winter; excavation was ongoing through the winter. As of early June 2020, earth work and infrastructure work by Dahn Construction is nearly complete and trail paving is complete. Vegetative restoration by AES is underway including soil prep and seeding. Plants, shrubs, and trees will begin soon along with placement to goose protection fencing to help ensure successful restoration. The restoration work is nearly complete. Bare root trees will be planted in September. Project website: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cID=433>.

**2020 Bryn Mawr Meadows Water Quality Improvement Project (BC-5), Minneapolis:** A feasibility study by the Commission Engineer began last fall and included wetland delineations, soil borings, public open houses held in conjunction with MPRB's Bryn Mawr Meadows Park improvement project, and input from MPRB's staff and design consultants. At their meeting in April, the Commission approved a TAC and staff recommendation to move this project from implementation in 2019 to design in 2020 and construction in 2021 to better coincide with the MPRB's planning and implementation of significant improvements and redevelopment Bryn Mawr Meadows Park where the project will be located. The final feasibility study was approved at the January 2019 Commission meeting. Staff discussed the maintenance of Penn Pond with MnDOT and received written confirmation that pond maintenance will occur prior to the park's reconstruction project with coordination among the BCWMC, MPRB, and MnDOT. A public hearing for this project was held September 19, 2019. The project was officially ordered at that meeting. An agreement with the MPRB and the city of Minneapolis will be considered at a future meeting. In January 2020 this project was awarded a \$400,000 Clean Water Fund grant from BWSR; a grant work plan was completed and the grant with BWSR was fully executed in early May. The project and the grant award was the subject of an article in the Southwest Journal in February: <https://www.southwestjournal.com/voices/green-digest/2020/02/state-awards-grant-to-bryn-mawr-runoff-project/>. In early September, Minneapolis and MPRB staff met to review the implementation agreement and maintenance roles. There are some additional items to discuss including which entity will be designing and constructing portions of the project outside of park property. Another meeting will be scheduled soon. Design is still slated

for 2021 and construction in 2022. Project website: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/bryn-mawr-meadows-water-quality-improvement-project>

**2020 Jevne Park Stormwater Improvement Project (ML-21) Medicine Lake (No change since Oct 2019):** At their meeting in July 2018, the Commission approved a proposal from the Commission Engineer to prepare a feasibility study for this project. The study got underway last fall and the city's project team met on multiple occasions with the Administrator and Commission Engineer. The Administrator and Engineer also presented the draft feasibility study to the Medicine Lake City Council on February 4, 2019 and a public open house was held on February 28<sup>th</sup>. The feasibility study was approved at the April Commission meeting with intent to move forward with option 1. The city's project team is continuing to assess the project and understand its implications on city finances, infrastructure, and future management. The city received proposals from 3 engineering firms for project design and construction. At their meeting on August 5<sup>th</sup>, the Medicine Lake City Council voted to continue moving forward with the project and negotiating the terms of the agreement with BCWMC. Staff was directed to continue negotiations on the agreement and plan to order the project pending a public hearing at this meeting. Staff continues to correspond with the city's project team and city consultants regarding language in the agreement. The BCWMC held a public hearing on this project on September 19, 2019 and received comments from residents both in favor and opposed to the project. The project was officially ordered on September 19, 2019. On October 4, 2019, the Medicine Lake City Council took action not to move forward with the project. At their meeting on October 17<sup>th</sup>, the Commission moved to table discussion on the project. The project remains on the 2020 CIP list. Project webpage: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cID=467>.

**2019 Westwood Lake Water Quality Improvement Project (WST-2) St. Louis Park:** At their meeting in September 2017, the Commission approved a proposal from the Commission Engineer to complete a feasibility study for this project. The project will be completed in conjunction with the Westwood Hills Nature Center reconstruction project. After months of study, several meetings with city consultants and nature center staff, and a public open house, the Commission approved Concept 3 (linear water feature) and set a maximum 2019 levy at their May meeting. 50% designs were approved at the July meeting and 90% design plans were approved at the August meeting. The Hennepin County Board approved a maximum 2019 levy request at their meeting in July. A BCWMC public hearing on this project was held on August 16<sup>th</sup> with no comments being received. At that meeting the Commission officially ordered the project and entered an agreement with the City of St. Louis Park to design and construct the project and directed the Education Committee to assist with development of a BCWMC educational sign for inside the nature center. The draft sign was presented at the October 2017 meeting and was finalized over the winter. The Sun Sailor printed [an article](#) on the project in October 2018. Building and project construction is nearly complete including the bog, small pond areas with connecting streams, hand pumps, and educational signage. The ribbon cutting is scheduled for September 13<sup>th</sup> and a larger grand opening is planned for next spring. The building is open to the public and various programs have been running this summer. Project website: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects/all-projects/westwood-lake-water-quality-improvement-project>.

**2018 Bassett Creek Park Pond Phase I Dredging Project: Winnetka Pond, Crystal (BCP-2) (See Item 6B and 6C):** The final feasibility study for this project was approved at the May 2017 meeting and is available on the project page online at <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cID=403>. At the September 2017 meeting, the Commission held a public hearing on the project and adopted a resolution officially ordering the project, certifying costs to Hennepin County, and entering an agreement with the City of Crystal for design and construction. Hennepin County approved the 2018 final levy request at their meeting in November 2017. The City of Crystal hired Barr Engineering to design the project. At their meeting in April, the Commission approved 50% design plans. A public open house on the project was held May 24<sup>th</sup> where four residents asked questions, provided comments, and expressed support. 90% design plans were approved at the June 2018 meeting. An Environmental Assessment Worksheet was recently approved and a construction company was awarded the contract. A pre-construction meeting was held December 2018 construction began in January 2019. A large area of contamination was discovered during excavation in February 2019. At their meeting February 21, 2019 the Commission approved additional funding for this project in order to properly dispose of the contamination and continue building the project as designed. An amended agreement with the city of Crystal was approved at the March 2019 Commission meeting. Pond dredging and other storm sewer work was completed in early summer 2019. Work to establish the native buffer began fall 2019 and continued through this growing season. Weeds seems to be currently dominating the area but native plants should become well established next year. The buffer specialists are under contract with the city through 2023. A final report of the project (minus the native buffer work) and reimbursement request is on this meeting agenda.

**2017 Main Stem Bassett Creek Streambank Erosion Repair Project (2017CR-M) (No change since June):** The feasibility study for this project was approved at the April Commission meeting and the final document is available on the project page at: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?CID=281>. A Response Action Plan to address contaminated soils in the project area was completed by Barr Engineering with funding from Hennepin County and was reviewed and approved by the MPCA. The Commission was awarded an Environmental Response Fund grant from Hennepin County for \$150,300 and a grant agreement is in the process of being signed by the county. A subgrant agreement with the City will be developed. The City hired Barr Engineering to design and construct the project. Fifty-percent and 90% designs were approved at the August and October Commission meetings, respectively. In September 2017, design plans were presented by Commission and city staff to the Harrison Neighborhood Association's Glenwood Revitalization Team committee and through a public open house on the project. Bidding for construction is complete and a pre-construction meeting was recently held. Construction was to begin summer of 2018 but will be delayed until summer 2019 due to the unanticipated need for a field based cultural and historical survey of the project area required by the Army Corps of Engineers and the preference for Pioneer Paper (a significant landowner and access grantor) for a spring/summer construction window. The cultural and historical survey fieldwork is complete and a final report was sent to the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) in February. The Hennepin County ERF grant agreement was amended to extend the term. Construction was scheduled to begin in September but will be pushed to late November. City staff updated the Commission on the latest developments with this project at the Sept 19 and Oct 17, 2019 meetings (see memos in those meeting packets). The section along Pioneer Paper will no longer be stabilized/restored due to lack of access and cooperation from Pioneer Paper. For various reasons the project did not get underway in late 2019 as planned. Currently, city and consultant staff are working to complete some permitting requirements and plan to implement the project starting in September 2020. The prolonged schedule and additional requirements resulted in an increase in the design budget of \$32,500, and the construction contractor will have a rate increase as well. The city is hoping to gain access to the Pioneer Paper property so that they can complete the entire project as originally planned. The ERF grant has been recommended for extension and is in the approval process.

**2014 Schaper Pond Diversion Project, Golden Valley (SL-3) (No change since Oct 2019):** Repairs to the baffle structure were made in 2017 after anchor weights pulled away from the bottom of the pond and some vandalism occurred in 2016. The city continues to monitor the baffle and check the anchors, as needed. Vegetation around the pond was planted in 2016 and a final inspection of the vegetation was completed last fall. Once final vegetation has been completed, erosion control will be pulled and the contract will be closed. The Commission Engineer began the Schaper Pond Effectiveness Monitoring Project last summer and presented results and recommendations at the May 2018 meeting. Additional effectiveness monitoring is being performed this summer. At the July meeting the Commission Engineer reported that over 200 carp were discovered in the pond during a recent carp survey. At the September meeting the Commission approved the Engineer's recommendation to perform a more in-depth survey of carp including transmitters to learn where and when carp are moving through the system. A Federal 319 grant for management of carp in relation to Schaper Pond and Sweeney Lake was recently approved by the MPCA and the grant agreement may be available by the December Commission meeting. At the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Commission received a report on the carp surveys and recommendations for carp removal and management. Project webpage: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?CID=277>.

**Sweeney Lake Water Quality Improvement Project, Golden Valley (SL-8) (See Item 4D):** This project was added to the 2020 CIP list after receiving a federal 319 grant from the MPCA. It is partially a result of the carp surveys completed through the Schaper Pond Diversion Project and a study of the year-round aeration on Sweeney Lake. This project will treat curly-leaf pondweed in spring 2020, will remove carp in summer 2020, and will perform an alum treatment on Sweeney Lake in late summer 2020. The project was officially ordered by the Commission after a public hearing in September 2019. A public open house on this project was held via Webex on April 8<sup>th</sup> with approximately 20 people joining. The open house presentation and a question and answer document is available online. The curly-leaf pondweed herbicide treatment was completed in May. Carp Solutions performed carp tracking and setting nets in early June. The first round of netting resulted in 334 carp removed from Sweeney Lake (mean length 620 mm, mean weight 3.1 kg), representing an estimated 29% of the total population. From Schaper Pond 82 carp removed which likely represents about 17% of the initial population. After another round of carp removals in late July, 118 additional carp were netted from Sweeney. Based on preliminary estimates, approximately 40% of the carp population was removed from Sweeney this summer. The carp biomass was reduced from approximately 129 kg/ha to 79 kg/ha, which is below the threshold where adverse impacts on water quality are expected. All nets have been removed from Sweeney. The nets in Schaper remain in place as carp removals continue there. The first round of alum treatment is slated for this fall. This month's

consent agenda includes approval to direct staff to finalize bid documents and to advertise for bids for the alum treatment. The October Commission meeting will include selection of the contractor and approval of contract. The project website is continually updated to keep lake residents informed: [Sweeney Lake Water Quality Improvement Project, SL-8](#)).

**2014 Twin Lake In-lake Alum Treatment, Golden Valley (TW-2): (No change since June 2018)** At their March 2015 meeting, the Commission approved the project specifications and directed the city to finalize specifications and solicit bids for the project. The contract was awarded to HAB Aquatic Solutions. The alum treatment spanned two days: May 18- 19, 2015 with 15,070 gallons being applied. Water temperatures and water pH stayed within the desired ranges for the treatment. Early transparency data from before and after the treatment indicates a change in Secchi depth from 1.2 meters before the treatment to 4.8 meters on May 20th. There were no complaints or comments from residents during or since the treatment. Water monitoring continues to determine if and when a second alum treatment is necessary. Lake monitoring results from 2017 were presented at the June 2018 meeting. Commissioners agreed with staff recommendations to keep the CIP funding remaining for this project as a 2<sup>nd</sup> treatment may be needed in the future. Project webpage: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cID=278>.

**2013 Four Seasons Area Water Quality Project/Agora Development (NL-2) (No change since June):** At their meeting in December 2016, the Commission took action to contribute up to \$830,000 of Four Seasons CIP funds for stormwater management at the Agora development on the old Four Seasons Mall location. At their February 2017 meeting the Commission approved an agreement with Rock Hill Management (RHM) and an agreement with the City of Plymouth allowing the developer access to a city-owned parcel to construct a wetland restoration project and to ensure ongoing maintenance of the CIP project components. At the August 2017 meeting, the Commission approved the 90% design plans for the CIP portion of the project. At the April 2018 meeting, Commissioner Prom notified the Commission that RHM recently disbanded its efforts to purchase the property for redevelopment. In 2019, a new potential buyer/developer (Dominium) began preparing plans for redevelopment at the site. City staff, the Commission Engineer and I have met on numerous occasions with the developer and their consulting engineers to discuss stormwater management and opportunities with “above and beyond” pollutant reductions. Concurrently, the Commission attorney has been working to draft an agreement to transfer BCWMC CIP funds for the above and beyond treatment. At their meeting in December, Dominium shared preliminary project plans and the Commission discussed the redevelopment and potential “above and beyond” stormwater management techniques. At the April 2020 meeting, the Commission conditionally approved the 90% project plans. The agreements with Dominium and the city of Plymouth to construct the project were approved May 2020 and project designers are coordinating with Commission Engineers to finalize plans per conditions. Project webpage: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cID=282>.

**2020 Crane Lake Improvement Project (CL-3) (No change since June):** This project was constructed in conjunction with the reconstruction of Ridgedale Drive in the City of Minnetonka. At their meeting on March 21, 2019, the BCWMC approved the project's feasibility study and chose to implement Option 3 from the study. At their meeting on May 16, 2019, the BCWMC approved the 90% design plans for the project. Construction is expected in early 2020. A public hearing on this project was held on September 19, 2019. No persons commented on the project. The project was officially ordered and an agreement with the city of Minnetonka was approved at the same meeting. Project webpage: <http://www.bassettcreekwmo.org/index.php?cID=490>.

June 2020 update:

- Underground storm water tank was installed last fall.
- Construction of the lift station, which will pump storm water from the underground storm water tank into the rain gardens, will be completed within the next couple weeks.
- All storm sewer along Ridgedale Drive and within the area draining to the underground storm water tank is installed.
- Rain gardens are constructed (see photo; weed control needed), plantings to be installed over the next several weeks
- Underground storm water tank and pumping system to the rain gardens will be fully operational this fall.
- Educational sign design will be completed in 2020 and installation will occur in 2021.
- Additional project updates can be viewed on our City Website Project Page: <https://www.minnetonkamn.gov/services/construction-projects/street-and-utility-projects/ridgedale-drive-improvements-project>

## **Other Work**

### **CIP Project Work and Technical Assistance**

- Assisted with finalizing report for Winnetka Pond Dredging Project and reviewed reimbursement request
- Participated in meeting with Minneapolis and MPRB staff re: Bryn Mawr Meadows Water Quality Improvement Project implementation, maintenance, and agreements; assisted with setting subsequent meeting with Commission engineers
- Participated in meeting re: Medicine Lake drone project
- Reviewed letter to residents re: Medley Park Stormwater Improvement Project
- Assisted with setting project kick-off meeting for Medley Park Project

### **Administration and Education**

- Assisted with drafting agreements with Plymouth for 2021 projects; coordinated with city staff and Commission attorney
- Drafted resolution ordering 2021 projects
- Reviewed education column and videos; posted latest video online
- Assisted with connecting Education Consultant with volunteers for next video and article
- Began drafting a grant application for a Hennepin County ERF grant for Main Stem Lagoon Dredging Project
- Posted updated 5-year CIP and fact sheets online
- Distributed watershed plan amendment revised pages and posted revisions online
- Posted approved 2021 Operating Budget online
- Sent financial report updates on grant funding received and CIP project budgets, and corrected city assessment YTD totals
- Attended Watershed Based Implementation Funding convene meeting and updated spreadsheet
- Participated in Hennepin County Climate Action Program Review meeting
- Participated in Minneapolis Pathogen Task Force meeting