



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Meeting Notes of the
Watershed Plan Steering Committee
November 1, 2023 @ 8:30 a.m.
Golden Valley City Hall

Meeting Attendees:

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

1. WELCOME

Committee Chair Kennedy opened the meeting at 8:37 a.m.

2. REVIEW OCTOBER 4 MEETING NOTES

The October 7, 2023 Plan Steering Committee meeting notes were approved by consensus.

3. REVIEW NEW DRAFT MISSION STATEMENT

Administrator Jester noted that Committee member Cesnik has been working on several statements and guidance language including a water acknowledgment statement, mission statement, vision statement, and guiding principles and methodologies. She continues to work on most of these statements. The committee discussed a potential new mission statement.

Commission's current mission statement: Stewardship of water resources to protect and enhance our communities.

Option 1: To minimize flooding and improve water quality for our natural ecosystems and human communities.

Option 2: Stewardship of water resources to minimize flooding and improve water quality for our natural ecosystems and human communities.

Committee Chair Kennedy noted that it's good to have consistent statements to help with the planning process. The group agreed the statement should be simple and explain why the Commission exists. Committee member Polzin indicated that the Commission might wish to know why the current statement is proposed to be changed. Committee member Cesnik said the current statement is too vague. She said her "elevator speech" to folks unfamiliar with the Commission includes more specific purposes and activities of the Commission.

There was a discussion about how the proposed options don't mention "water levels" which, Chair Kennedy noted, is very important to folks living on Medicine Lake. Overall, there was consensus that flooding was the primary concern with water levels, as articulated in the draft statement options. Committee members generally liked the addition of both improving conditions for humans and ecosystems. The committee eventually agreed on the following new proposed mission statement which will need Commission approval:

"Stewardship of water resources to reduce flood risk and improve water quality for our human and natural communities."

4. FINALIZE GOALS FOR IMPAIRED WATERS & CHLORIDE AND REVIEW ISSUE STATEMENTS AND DRAFT GOALS FOR REMAINING WATERBODY AND WATERSHED QUALITY CATEGORY

Discussion on Impaired Waters and Chloride Issues:

Committee Chair Kennedy asked if the title “desired future conditions” should be changed to “desired end state.” There was discussion about how an “end state” might imply that management of a particular water body is complete at some point. However, there was consensus that management would always be ongoing (it’s never really “done”), so the title will be kept as written.

When asked, Administrator Jester said the potential costs of actions recently added to the table were an annual cost unless otherwise noted. That information could be added to the table in a footnote, along with a note that “2023” dollars (or similar) were used for estimates.

There was discussion about the Commission’s water monitoring program and how it should be revisited by the Commission Engineer, then the Plan Steering Committee, then perhaps the TAC. Some changes to the monitoring program may be needed. Administrator Jester noted that the BCWMC monitoring programs are detailed in an appendix to the current Plan and the TAC reviewed the monitoring program and recommended updates to the monitoring plan a few years ago. There was additional discussion on how the City of Plymouth and MPRB also perform water monitoring. There was a suggestion that monitoring by all different entities should be summarized and reviewed by the Plan Steering Committee.

There was a brief discussion on the possibility of developing a small grant program for residents to install rain gardens, native plantings, and shoreline/streambank buffers. Administrator Jester noted the desire for such a program found in public survey responses and regular inquiries from residents and that residents find onsite technical assistance more helpful than the financial assistance.

Committee member Polzin noted she has several possible revisions for the bacteria-related actions, including leveraging the work of Minneapolis rather than performing our own assessments, and considering a requirement not to allow dog parks in floodplains.

The group reiterated the desire not to include numeric goals in the goals statements but to reference table instead (possibly using hotlinks). There was also consensus that the final document should list the priority waterbodies rather than just saying “priority waterbodies.”

There was considerable discussion about erosion and sediment control requirements and whether or not additional enforcement of standards is needed. Some advocated for an audit process while others said the Commission should set compliance standards and then help cities enforce if they can’t or won’t. Committee member Welch noted that other watershed organizations have done analyses showing that the resource impact of having and enforcing standards is more cost effective than building big CIP projects. He also noted that the Commission shouldn’t have requirements they can’t effectively enforce. He further noted that enforcement on construction sites is a “tall order” for interns. Commission Engineer Chandler noted that the Commission did have an erosion and sediment control inspection program at one time but it was dropped because it was determined to be a duplication of city efforts under MS4 requirements. Committee member Polzin recommended an annual check in meeting between each member city and commission staff to improve communications and understand needs. Committee member Ray indicated the check in meeting could also incorporate model updates, known new developments, Flood Control Project maintenance needs, etc. He also noted that building inspectors with the city of Crystal are asked to look for and report erosion issues.

Some specific changes to the goal statements and actions were discussed and incorporated into a latest version of the issues/goals/actions table including

- Adding “identify” before implementing CIP projects, where applicable, in actions

- Changing “bacteria loading” to “bacteria concentrations” to bacteria-related goal
- Adding the list of priority streams to goals involving streams
- Adding “groundwater” as an impacted resource in the issue statement on chlorides
- Adding streams and “loading” to the chloride-related goal
- Adding an action related to chloride to create a mechanism for residents to report over salting

The group began discussing the Streambank and Gully Erosion Issue and made revisions to the issue statement and the measurable goal. The group will continue to discuss this and the other issues in the Watershed and Water Quality category at their December meeting.

5. **ADJOURN** - The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30 a.m.