



Bassett Creek Watershed Management

MEMO

To: BCWMC Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners
From: Laura Jester, Administrator
Date: January 11, 2022

RE: Choosing a Watershed Plan Public Kick Off Meeting Format

On the afternoon and/or evening of Tuesday, February 28th the BCWMC will host a public kick-off meeting for the 2025 Watershed Management Plan. Per Minnesota Rules 8410.0045 Subp. 5, the BCWMC must publicly notice and host an “initial planning meeting presided over by the organization’s governing body to receive, review, and discuss input” on the 2025 Plan.

The meeting should include a review of the BCWMC and its work, the watershed planning process, and the input received to date (including input from review agencies, cities, commissioners, and the public through the online survey). The meeting should offer an opportunity for members of the public to discuss their concerns and learn more about water-related issues.

The meeting will be heavily marketed; commissioners and TAC members are strongly encouraged to attend. In fact, we need a quorum of commissioners present to officially “preside over” the meeting.

Groups to be invited include:

- General public (including those who left an email address in the online survey)
- Lake association groups and CAMP volunteers
- Friends of Bassett Creek
- City council members, city commission members, and city staff
- Minneapolis neighborhood associations
- Hennepin County Commissioner Fernando and county staff
- Agency staff (BWSR, MPCA, Met Council, MDNR, MDH, MDA, MNDOT)
- Partners/stakeholders like TRPD and MPRB

The Commission should decide between one of two different meeting formats for this public meeting. For now, I reserved the large meeting room and a smaller conference room at the library in Golden Valley.

1. Open House Format – staff recommended format

Attendees come and go on their own schedule between 3:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Allows flexibility and reaches more audiences with varying availability over the course of the afternoon/evening

Childcare and refreshments would be offered

Open house format includes large boards around half the room with the information typically conveyed in a presentation:

- What is the BCWMC, what do we do, and how do we operate
- What is the purpose of a 10-year plan and what is the planning process
- What input have we gathered so far – from whom, what were key messages

We could have a computer screen with scrolling photos of BCWMC projects, lakes, and streams – labeled if possible. (This would just be used to specifically highlight BCWMC work. We could also have a laptop open to the BCWMC website to view water quality graphs or specific CIP projects.)

We would have several “feedback” tables around the other half of the room, each with a sign indicating a topic and each with a commissioner(s) or staff there to talk with individuals about the topic and gather their input. These spaces would provide opportunities for folks to both learn more about issues and record their input and insights on maps, index cards, or large easel paper. As content is added to the maps, cards, or easels, participants at each table could be asked to consider ranking or prioritizing the importance of each issue or commenting on previously recorded priority levels.

Feedback table topics could include: surface water quality and pollution, equity and inclusion, flooding, climate resiliency, aquatic life and habitats, education and public involvement, regulatory role, other (e.g., groundwater).

2. Presentation and Small Group Discussion Format

Attendees are expected to arrive and leave at the same time

Meeting length would be 2 hours; would need to determine ideal meeting time to capture most participants

Childcare and refreshments would be offered.

Could consider offering dinner if timed over the dinner hour. This is logistically difficult but it may entice participation.

A presentation is given by a commissioner(s) and/or staff with information on:

- What is the BCWMC, what do we do, and how do we operate
- What is the purpose of a 10-year plan and what is the planning process
- What input have we gathered so far – from whom, what were key messages

A question-and-answer period is offered after the presentation along with an opportunity for commissioners to provide the public with more information on board and Commission priorities.

Participants would be asked to break into small groups. Groups could be based on specific topics (similar to the “feedback tables” above). Small group discussions would be facilitated by commissioners and staff. Key messages would be recorded in writing by an appointed note-taker.

In order to allow participants to comment on more than one topic, participants would rotate to another group/topic to interact with different people and provide feedback on different issues.

Small groups would be asked to report out to the full group. Before they leave, participants could be asked to prioritize the issues using dots on a board or easel.