



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Watershed Plan Steering Committee Meeting
Tuesday, August 1, 2023
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Council Conference Room, Golden Valley City Hall

AGENDA

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)

2. REVIEW MAY 24 & JULY 11 MEETING NOTES – attached with meeting materials

Sections highlighted in the May meeting notes include Commissioner Welch's recommended changes to original meeting notes.

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

The initial list that was briefly discussed at the July 11 meeting is attached again here. Note that there are some issues with a note in the "comments" column identifying those considered a current BCWMC core function, an organizational issue, or a tool that is used to address resource (e.g., waterbody) issues. These issues might be considered differently from resource issues. For instance, your priority level might indicate how important the tool is. We can refine and discuss how to distinguish different types of issues at the meeting.

- A. Review list and add, subtract, make notes
- B. Assign HIGH or LOW priority levels to each issue (the committee will collaboratively assign high, medium, and low priority levels at the meeting)
- C. What information is missing to help prioritize issues?

4. DISCUSS FORMAT FOR COMMISSION WORKSHOP & NEXT PSC MEETINGS

- A. August 17, 2023 Commission Workshop (immediately following BCWMC Regular meeting) – Issue Prioritization Workshop
- B. Late Aug/early Sept Plan Steering Committee Meeting – Invite Minnehaha Creek WD staff to present their model for project and program implementation; discuss potential change to BCWMC implementation methods

5. ADJOURN



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

DRAFT Meeting Notes of the
Watershed Plan Steering Committee
May 24, 2023 @ 11:00 a.m.

Wirth Lake Room, Brookview Golden Valley

Meeting Attendees:

Commissioners Cesnik and Welch; Alternate Commissioners Polzin and Kennedy; TAC Member Ray; Administrator Jester, Commission Engineers Chandler and Williams

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Because some members had not met Engineer Williams, introductions were made around the table.

2. APPOINT COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Alternate Commissioner Kennedy was appointed as committee chair person. There was a suggestion that the chair position could rotate to different members.

3. OVERVIEW OF PLAN DOCUMENT, PLANNING PROCESS, AND COMMITTEE ROLE

Committee Role and Ground Rules

Administrator Jester gave an overview of the committee's role – serving in an advisory capacity to the Commission; developing recommendations on issues, goals, policies, and implementation programs for the Commission's consideration. She noted that over the next 18 months this committee would be doing the heavy lifting, reviewing many details, and discussing significant policy issues.

Administrator Jester reviewed expectations of staff during the process including:

- Prepare meeting agendas, materials, and notes (materials to be posted online about one week in advance and no paper copies mailed)
- Provide the data and information to help committee make informed decisions
- Start and end meeting on time
- Bring snacks and drinks
- Respect all input and be open minded

The committee agreed to meeting ground rules including:

- Come prepared; review materials before meeting
- Respect all input and be open minded; realize not all voices are represented
- Step up/step back; make sure you're heard and make space for others to be heard
- Commit to active participation
- Route communications through Administrator
- Work with a spirit of brainstorming; keeping everything on table at beginning of process

The committee agreed that the group would strive for decisions by consensus and that if votes were needed a decision would be based on a simple majority of all members present at the meeting.

Administrator Jester reviewed the plan schedule with a basic graphic.

Plan Requirements and Structure

Engineer Chandler reviewed the basic contents required in the plan and noted that MN Rule 8410 was updated in

2015, the same year that BCWMC's last plan was adopted. She noted that BCWMC's 2015 Plan was written with an attempt to meet the spirit of the new 8410 Rules but not all aspects of the new rules were incorporated into that plan.

TAC Member Ray asked if the Land and Water Resources Inventory (a significant section in the watershed plan) could be streamlined as the same content is required in local plans. It was noted that local plans can reference watershed plans.

Engineer Chandler indicated that as goals and policies are being considered, staff plans to bring potential implementation (projects and programs) ideas that could be considered along with the goals and policies. She noted that during development of the 2015 plan, the implementation section seemed to be rushed because it was drafted at the end of the process. She hoped to avoid that scenario this time. She noted the plan's development should be an iterative process. She noted an internal review of the entire document would be expected during the last quarter of 2024. Committee Chair Kennedy suggested that internal reviews of the different plan sections be completed as they are developed, rather than reviewing the entire document at the end of the process.

It was noted that the structure of the plan should be developed soon. Administrator Jester asked committee members to review plans from different watersheds to see if there is a structure they like. It was noted that a draft table of contents should be reviewed at the next meeting. Alternate Commissioner Polzin asked that the plan be structured so that it's easier for cities to determine their responsibilities.

It was noted that very few printed copies of the final plan would be available and that most people would read an electronic version of the plan. There was consensus that the plan should have a landscape orientation most likely with two columns of text that can more easily include graphics and photos. It was noted that draft versions of the plan should include the version date in the header and "draft" as a watermark.

4. REVIEW INPUT RECIEVED

Administrator Jester reviewed input received from review agencies, member cities, the public open house, and the online survey. She noted much of the information was presented at the July 2022 Commission Workshop.

General input from member cities:

- BCWMC should continue core programs such as water monitoring, modeling, Flood Control Project inspections, and CIP program
- BWCMC could expand education programming including outreach to diverse communities
- BCWMC should consider starting a cost share or grant program for installation of best management practices by residents, businesses, and cities
- Provide assistance with routine maintenance of Flood Control Project
- Provide more focus on floodplain management
- Consider refining implementation of Capital Improvement Program (too time consuming and expensive)

Public online survey:

- 165 Respondents
- 80% say natural resources (lakes, streams, wetlands) are very important to their quality of life
- Biggest concerns
 - Pollutants entering waterbodies
 - Health of aquatic habitats; abundance & diversity of wildlife
 - Aquatic invasive species (AIS)
 - Impacts of climate change

Suggestions from public:

- Less trash in lakes and along streams
- Lower chloride levels (less salt!)
- More logs for turtles
- Less streambank and shoreline erosion
- More education of residents & new homeowners
- Better access to the creek for paddlers and enjoying nature
- Incentives for native plantings and other best practices

5. 5-Minute Break

6. REVIEW CURRENT CONDITIONS

- A. Conditions of water resources
- B. Progress on 2015 Plan (review 2021 performance assessment report)
- C. Capital Projects Completed
- D. Gaps Analysis (review gaps analysis)

Conditions of Water Resources

Engineer Williams reviewed the geospatial information that is used to determine watershed conditions and which is typically included in the Plan’s Land and Water Resources Inventory. He noted that once the Commission identifies the priority issue, it should determine where the issue is a priority. He noted that priority locations or priority resources should be identified in the Plan.

Engineer Williams showed maps with the following information:

Land Use	Impaired Waters and Impervious Land Use
Topography	Water Quality Modeling Results
Hydrologic Soil Groups	Potential Pollutant Sources
Wellhead Protection Areas	Hydrologic/Hydraulic Modeling
Major Subwatersheds	Floodplain (100-year)
Priority Waterbodies (streams to be added to map)	Trunk System and Flood Control Project
Wetlands and Biological Survey	Parks, Recreation, and Public Access
Monitoring Locations	

Commissioner Welch noted that one emerging issue is the conflict between State agencies on how to handle stormwater infiltration in relation to groundwater concerns. He noted that infiltration is prohibited in some cases. He noted that the Commission should determine if MDH’s requirements reflect sound science.

There was some discussion about the need to confirm the Commission’s current list of priority waterbodies. The group was reminded about the detailed process that was used during the 2105 Plan to analyze and assign priority levels to waterbodies across the watershed. Commissioner Cesnik wondered why French Regional Park wasn’t included on the MN Biological Survey map. Commissioner Welch noted that the Commission should understand and map flood prone areas in order to help build climate resiliency.

It was noted that maps should include the source and date of the data and that aquatic invasive species should be added to the maps. Other comments/ideas for maps included presenting data from the P8 model and including a standalone list of Flood Control Project features.

Progress on 2015 Plan (review 2021 performance assessment report)

Administrator Jester presented the high level results of the performance assessment by the MN Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) in 2021 which looked at progress on implementation of the BCWMC 2015 Watershed Plan. She noted three important recommendations from BWSR:

Recommendation 1 –Prioritize developing an education and outreach strategy for BCWMC constituents
Survey respondents that indicated there were potential roadblocks to implementing education and outreach activities –specifically staff capacity and funding.

Recommendation 2 –Conduct a review of the CIP
Review the CIP program to identify specific barriers limiting implementation of some large projects, and develop a strategy for addressing those issues

Recommendation 3 –Develop clear, measurable goals and actions for future plan implementation
Highly recommended that the next watershed plan define a strategy to identify the top resource priorities, identify clear measurable goals and actions, and develop metrics to measure progress

Commissioner Welch noted that the 2021 Performance Assessment should guide development of the plan, specifically with regard to focusing BCMWC's efforts on critical resource-improvement and flood-risk-mitigation priorities. He suggested that the committee may wish to have Minnehaha Creek Watershed District staff again present MCWD's structure for focusing and being responsive to emerging needs and opportunities. He indicated that the Commission should have a robust and meaningful assessment of water resources issues such as pollutant loading and flooding and determine the best ways to address those issues. He said the 2025 watershed plan should be “a plan rather than a list of ideas.”

Alternate Commissioner Polzin noted that the plan should be built on good data with a description of the higher-level decision-making process and details on identified issues. It was also noted that removing unimpactful activities would also be helpful to focus Commission work to priority issues and areas.

Next Steps/Meetings:

Administrator Jester asked committee members to review plans from other watersheds for good/effective plan formats. There was consensus that the next committee meeting would focus on identifying and defining watershed issues. It was noted that a presentation from MCWD could follow at the subsequent meeting. (The committee should first identify the issues before determining the best mechanism to solve them.)

The next meeting would be scheduled for July (through a scheduling poll) since Committee Chair Kennedy is gone during the month of June.

7. ADJOURN – The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:15



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

DRAFT Meeting Notes of the
Watershed Plan Steering Committee
July 11, 2023 @ 10:30 a.m.
Golden Valley City Hall

Meeting Attendees:

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

1. WELCOME & REVIEW GROUND RULES

Administrator Jester reviewed the ground rules and expectations that were discussed at the first PSC meeting in May. Ground rules and expectations of committee members include:

- Come prepared; review materials before meeting
- Respect all input and be open minded; realize not all voices are represented
- Step up/step back; make sure you're heard and make space for others
- Commit to active participation
- Route Communications through Administrator
- Work with a spirit of brainstorming; keeping everything on table at beginning

Decision Making:

- Strive for consensus among all members
- If votes needed, base decision on simple majority among all members in attendance

Expectations for staff include:

- Prepare agenda, materials, meeting notes
- Provide the data and information to help committee make informed decisions
- Start and end meeting on time
- Bring snacks and drinks
- Respect all input and be open minded
- Meeting materials one week in advance (online), especially weekends

There was some discussion about how committee appointments were made, noting that all commissioners, alternate commissioners, and TAC members were invited to participate. Community members also able to be on BCWMC committees. It was noted that this group is recommending the overall policy direction of the organization. It was acknowledged that it is imperative that the entire Commission understand and agree on "who the Commission is and where it's going as an organization." There was discussion about the possible need for revising the BCWMC mission statement (Stewardship of water resources to protect and enhance our communities) and/or developing a vision statement, guiding principles, or list of values.

It was noted that the purposes of a watershed management organization from MN Rule 8410 should be aligned with priority issues for presentation at the Commission workshop where issues are identified and prioritized.

Commissioner Cesnik noted that she believes that between the 2015 Plan and the recent gaps analysis, there is a good foundation to start from. She wondered if a workshop is needed for developing a vision and mission.

Commissioner Welch indicated that there are many issues and opportunities throughout the watershed but added that focus is needed. He indicated that the Commission could start with a statement such as "this plan will focus on addressing impairments Bassett Creek and its tributaries, improving water quality in Medicine Lake, and

working with member cities to improve climate resilience and reduce flood impacts.”

Alt. Commissioner Polzin agreed that a more water resource focus is needed and she advocated for a resource-based approach rather than an issues-based approach.

There was more discussion about the need to target/focus on addressing certain issues with achievable outcomes by the end of 10 years. Committee Chair Kennedy relayed a good rule of thumb to consider: spend 80% of your resources on most important targets (biggest games changers) and 20% of resources on all other issues.

Linda Loomis introduced herself to the group as a new committee member, noting that she’s a former Golden Valley mayor, former chair of the Commission, and led the Plan Steering Committee for the 2015 Plan.

2. REVIEW MAY 24 MEETING NOTES

Commissioner Welch had a few suggested edits. Rather than reviewing those at this meeting, it was decided that the next meeting would include two sets of meeting notes.

3. REVIEW NEW PROCESS FLOWCHART GRAPHIC

Engineer Williams walked through the new planning process graphic pointing out where input is used to make decisions. He noted that the plan can have broad goals but that outcomes should be measurable (such as how many pounds of total phosphorus will be removed from X waterbody).

4. REVIEW DRAFT TABLE OF CONTENTS

Administrator Jester noted the table of contents (TOC) in the meeting packet was developed as a starting point to better understand the information that will go into the plan. There was some discussion about the potential section on acknowledging Native cultures and their care for land and water. Administrator Jester noted that there may be some Native practices that could be incorporated into the Commission’s resource management or project implementation. It was noted that even though the Commission uses an engineering approach to water management, there may be room for other approaches as well.

Administrator Jester noted that the TOC includes an idea to distinguish responsibilities of the Commission as “strategies” and responsibilities of the member cities as “policies.” There was discussion about how the 2015 Plan was poorly structured; how the Minnehaha Creek WD plan may be a good model to consider; how the Mississippi WMO plan includes a good reference table for use by cities; and how Brown’s Creek WD plan is streamlined and simple. It was acknowledged that the final TOC will be informed by the information, issues, goals, and implementation activities developed through the plan process. There was some discussion on Alt. Commissioner Polzin’s idea to structure the TOC around resources or subwatersheds (which would need to be delineated). It was noted that fact sheets on each waterbody could be incorporated into the plan that may be useful particularly for new commissioners.

5. REVISIT CURRENT CONDITIONS

Engineer Williams reviewed the summary of the gaps analysis. There was acknowledgment that the committee should discuss staffing and organizational capacity in the near future to determine what can realistically be accomplished by the Commission in the next 10 years.

Administrator Jester reviewed the recommendations from the 2021 Assessment including education, CIP implementation, and developing clear and measurable goals. There was discussion about how education is a tool but may not be a primary function of the Commission and about how the new Hennepin County Education

Coordinator may be able to help meet some education goals.

6. REVIEW/BRAINSTORM NEW AND ONGOING ISSUES

Committee members were asked to take 5 minutes to review the list of issues provided with meeting materials and to make notes, determine if issues are missing, and cross off any irrelevant issues.

Discussion: Committee Chair Kennedy noted the “buckets” or categories may need to change and gave “climate change” as an overarching issue that impacts many other issues. There was acknowledgement that maintaining the Flood Control Project is a core function of the Commission and, therefore, a high priority. However, there is a difference between high priority issues that need a significant amount of work and resources to address, and high priorities that are core functions (easier to address in the plan).

7. ADJOURN – The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:35. The committee will pick up where they left of at the August 1st meeting. Administrator Jester noted that she’s hopeful the August 17th Commission meeting will have a short business meeting with enough time to hold the Commission’s Issue Prioritization Workshop.

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 Analysi s Priority	Comments
Water Quality	3.1	1	Impaired waterbodies	High	Med	
		2	Pollutant loading hotspots (e.g., phosphorus loading)	High		
		3	Chloride loading is significant in some areas	Med	High	
Water Quantity and Flooding	3.2	4	Impact of climate change on hydrology and flood risk	Med	High	
		5	Flood Control Project inspections, maintenance, and repair	High		CORE FUNCTION
		6	Water level variability (2015 Plan addressed Medicine Lake)	Med		
Erosion and Sedimentation	3.3	7	Streambank erosion			
		8	Lake shore erosion			
		9	Sediment deltas in streams and lakes	Med		
Streams	3.4	10	Impacts of urbanization on streams			
		11	Stream biological impairments	Med	Med	
Wetlands, Habitat, and Shoreland	3.5	12	Buffers and buffer widths	High	Med	
		13	Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)	Med	Med	
		14	Poor ecosystem health in some areas			
		15	Loss/degradation of wetlands	High		
		16	Degradation of riparian areas	Med		
		17	Degraded quality/loss of upland natural areas	Low		
Groundwater	3.6	18	Groundwater contamination			
		19	Groundwater quantity			
		20	Surface water - groundwater interaction			Includes infiltration requirements and restrictions
Education and Outreach		21	Outreach to and relationships with diverse communities is lacking	Med		
		22	Education programs to help cities fulfill requirements	Med	High	TOOL
		23	Training and orientation for new Commissioners	Med		TOOL
		24	Provide and enhance recreation opportunities	Low		TOOL
Implementation and Responsibilities	3.8	25	Public ditch management			
		26	BCWMC funding mechanisms	High	Low	ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUE
		27	Progress assessment		High	ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUE
		28	CIP development, prioritization, and implementation	Med	High	TOOL
		29	Standards and requirements for linear projects	Med	High	TOOL
		30	Standards and requirements for non-linear projects	High		TOOL
		31	Carbon footprint of BCWMC projects and programs	Low		
		32	Bassett Creek Valley stormwater management	Med	Med	
		33	Organizational capacity and staffing may be inadequate	Med	Med	ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUE
		34	Projects and programs implemented through a DEI lens	Med	High	TOOL