



Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Thursday, January 16, 2025

8:30 a.m.

7800 Golden Valley Rd., Golden Valley MN

1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

On January 16 at 8:30 a.m. Chair Cesnik called the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission (Commission) to order.

Commissioners, city staff, and others present

City	Commissioner	Alternate Commissioner	Technical Advisory Committee Members (City Staff)
Crystal	Joan Hauer	Terri Schultz	<i>Absent</i>
Golden Valley	Paula Pentel	<i>Vacant</i>	Eric Eckman
Medicine Lake	Clint Carlson	<i>Absent</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Minneapolis	Jodi Polzin	<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Minnetonka	Maryna Chowhan	<i>Absent</i>	Leslie Yetka
New Hope	Jere Gwin-Lenth	Jen Leonardson	Nick Macklem
Plymouth	Catherine Cesnik	Monika Vadali	Ben Scharenbroich
Robbinsdale	Wayne Sicora	<i>Absent</i>	Jenna Wolf
St. Louis Park	<i>Absent</i>	David Johnston	Erick Francis
Administrator	Laura Jester, Keystone Waters, LLC		
Engineers	Stephanie Johnson, Greg Wilson – Barr Engineering Co.		
Recording Secretary	<i>Vacant Position</i>		
Legal Counsel	Dave Anderson, Kennedy & Graven		
Guests/Public	None		

2. PUBLIC FORUM ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Commissioner Pentel moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0 with the cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale absent from the vote.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Items 4A, 4F, 4G, and 4H were removed from the consent agenda.

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the consent agenda as amended. Commissioner Hauer seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0 with the cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale absent from the vote.

The following items were approved as part of the consent agenda.

- Acceptance of January Financial Report
- Approval of Payment of Invoices
 - Keystone Waters, LLC - December 2024 Administration
 - Keystone Waters, LLC - December 2024 Administrative Expenses
 - Barr Engineering - December 2024 Engineering Services
 - Triple D Espresso - January Meeting Catering
 - City of Plymouth - December Accounting Services
 - Met Council - 2024 CAMP Services
 - CNA Surety - Insurance Bond Payment
 - State Register - Official Publication for Proposal Solicitation
- Approval of Three Rivers Park District Agreement for Medicine Lake Activities
- Approval of MnDOT Pond Maintenance Project (Sites #10, #14, #15)
- Approval for Commissioner and Administrator Attendance and Registration Costs at Minnesota Watersheds Legislative Event

[Commissioner Sicora arrives.]

Item 4A: Approval of Minutes – December 19, 2024 Commission Meeting

Commissioner Pentel commented that the minutes did a good job of reflecting a tough discussion at the December meeting and that she appreciated the passion in that discussion.

MOTION: Commissioner Pentel moved to approve the December meeting minutes. Commissioner Polzin seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carried 8-0 with the city of Minnetonka absent from the vote.

5. BUSINESS

A. Receive Sweeney Lake Carp Update and Consider Approval of Schaper Pond Monitoring

Commission Engineer Wilson provided background on the Sweeney Lake Total Maximum Daily Load study (TMDL) and the original Schaper Pond Diversion Project and effectiveness monitoring. He reminded commissioners about the activities and outcomes of the Sweeney Lake Water Quality Improvement Project which included carp management and an alum treatment resulting in removing the lake from the impaired waters list (delisting). He noted that because Schaper Pond is directly upstream from the lake, the pond’s water quality significantly influences the lake.

[Commissioner Chowhan and TAC member Yetka arrive.]

Engineer Wilson reviewed data from previous carp population surveys and carp removal efforts in the lake and pond, including the latest activities in 2024. He reported that Carp Solutions completed carp population surveys of Sweeney Lake on two occasions and in Schaper Pond once. He noted that carp biomass in Sweeney Lake exceeded the 100 kg/ha threshold for water quality impacts which was a significant increase over the past two assessments. He reported that carp biomass in Schaper Pond was approximately the same as the past two assessments and well below the 100 kg/ha threshold for water quality impacts. He reported that due to the high carp biomass in Sweeney Lake, another round of carp removal was performed in Sweeney Lake.

Commission Engineer Wilson reviewed his recommendations for approval of a budget of up to \$42,000 from the remaining Schaper Pond Diversion Project CIP funds for 2025 effectiveness monitoring in Schaper Pond; and approval of

a budget of \$12,000 from the remaining Schaper Pond Diversion Project CIP funds for carp biomass surveys in Sweeney Lake and Schaper Pond in 2026 including reporting results and recommendations for carp management.

[Commissioner Hauer leaves the meeting; Alternate Commissioner Schlutz becomes voting member for Crystal.]

There were questions about the effective life of the Schaper Pond diversion curtain, potential impacts to wildlife, and how inspections are done. There was also a question about the cost benefit of carp management. Engineer Wilson noted that carp management is considered a maintenance activity and that no cost benefit analysis has been completed. He noted the original diversion project was shown to be very cost effective if it functioned as designed. It was noted that now that other factors, such as carp, have been removed, additional effectiveness monitoring should indicate whether or not the original diversion project is as effective as anticipated at reducing total phosphorus from entering Sweeney Lake. TAC member Eckmann noted that City of Golden Valley staff do not perform any regular maintenance activities associated with the curtain.

Commissioner Polzin pointed out that it was good to hear the full history of the original project and that it seems that the ongoing work is more a function of maintenance. She indicated that the next report should include information on a plan for long-term maintenance recommendations. Administrator Jester reminded the group that the Commission is likely to seek maintenance levy funds from the county starting in 2026. Commissioner Sicora noted the possible need for a maintenance schedule with adaptive management built in and funding sources identified.

MOTION: Commissioner Polzin moved to approve the Commission Engineer's recommendations for additional monitoring and carp surveys with up to \$54,000 in funding from the Schaper Pond Diversion Project budget. Commissioner Chowhan seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carried 9-0.

4H. Approval of Resolution of Appreciation for Maryna Chowhan

Chair Cesnik read the resolution of appreciation for Commissioner Chowhan who is resigning her role when her appointment term ends at the end of the month. Chair Cesnik noted her appreciation for Commissioner Chowhan's contributions to the Commission and particularly on the development of the new watershed map. Commission Chowhan indicated that she learned a lot and that serving on the board was a great experience.

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the resolution of appreciation for Maryna Chowhan. Commissioner Carlson seconded the motion. Upon a vote, the motion carried 9-0.

B. Receive Update on Plan Development and Commission Operating Budget Status

4F. Approval of Resolution 25-01 Transferring Funds from Next Generation Plan Development and Flood Control Project Long Term Accounts to Administrative Fund

4G. Approval of Resolution 25-02 to Transfer Funds from Administrative Account to Channel Maintenance Fund and Long-Term Maintenance Fund

The agenda items listed above were combined into the discussion below.

Administrator Jester reported that at their last meeting the Plan Steering Committee (PSC) received an update on the plan development budget and directed staff to bring the information to the Commission. She reported that plan development expenses are significantly overbudget for 2024 and would also be over the budgeted amount for 2025. She relayed the factors for the additional expenses including a slower than expected pace of progress, longer discussions at PSC meetings, discussions on plan structure and terminology, development of vision and mission, etc. She noted that with the slower pace of progress, it resulted in additional Plan Steering Committee meetings. The participation of three commission engineers at the PSC meetings and bi-weekly check in meetings was also a factor, although behind the scenes, commission engineers divide tasks to ensure little or no duplication of efforts.

Administrator Jester noted that some of the other line items in the Commission's 2024 operating budget were also over budget, although other areas of the budget were under budget. She reminded commissioners that the 2024 operating budget was expected to have a \$106,700 deficit. She noted that the deficit is now expected to be around \$141,000.

Administrator Jester showed graphics created by Commissioner Polzin showing the commissions budget categories

(operating/general/administration vs. CIP) and she reviewed Resolutions 25-01, 25-02, and 25-03 which would transfer funds between accounts. She noted these are routine, annual transfers that are part of the 2024 budget. She indicated that one way to increase income by \$11,000 for 2024 is to transfer 2.5% rather than the typical 2.0% of the CIP levy to the administrative fund.

Commissioners voiced their appreciation for the budget graphics and there was discussion about the budget situation. Staff apologized for not bringing the budget information to the PSC and Commission earlier and acknowledged that there were lessons learned. Staff committed to bringing progress and budget information to the Commission earlier and will make sure to voice when a task is out of scope. Commission Engineer Johnson noted that future PSC discussions are expected to be more routine in nature. Commissioner Sicora indicated that the Commission should consider building up a plan development fund over a longer period of time. Commissioner Polzin noted that the Budget Committee could meet to discuss how to address the 2024 budget shortfall and potential adjustments to the 2025 budget. She also noted that there wasn't a reason to hold off on approving the resolutions at this meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Polzin moved to approve Resolution 25-01 Transferring Funds from Next Generation Plan Development and Flood Control Project Long Term Accounts to Administrative Fund as presented. Commissioner Carlson seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 9-0.

MOTION: Commissioner Polzin moved to approve Resolution 25-02 Transfer Funds from Administrative Account to Channel Maintenance Fund and Long-Term Maintenance Fund as presented. Commissioner Sicora seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 9-0.

C. Consider Resolution 25-03 to Transfer Funds from CIP Account to Administrative Account

MOTION: Commissioner Polzin moved to approve Resolution 25-03 to transfer 2.5% of the 2024 levied CIP funds to the administrative account. Commissioner Sicora seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 9-0.

D. Review Plan Progress Tracker

Administrator Jester reviewed the plan progress tracker and gave a brief overview of the Plan Steering Committee's latest work. She also noted the Plan TAC, which includes member cities and review agencies, will meet via Zoom on February 7th.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Administrator's Report

- i. Winter Salt Week www.wintersaltweek.org/ Administrator Jester reminded commissioners about the opportunity to register for free webinars during winter salt week. TAC member Scharenbroich invited commissioners to the City of Plymouth's Winter Maintenance Open House on January 30th.
- ii. Reminder of February Officer Elections and Committee Appointments – Administrator Jester reminded commissioners about officer elections and committee appointments at the February meeting. Commissioner Polzin indicated that Minneapolis recently appointed her as commissioner and are now searching for an alternate commissioner.

B. Engineer – Commission Engineer Johnson reported that Crane Lake monitoring equipment was installed and that MnDOT will delay dredging one of their ponds that houses equipment until after monitoring is complete. She also reported that the Commission Engineer was asked to provide a scope of work to update the Bassett Creek Valley Floodplain and Stormwater Management Report. There was a question about who would pay for the study update. Administrator Jester noted that details had not been worked out but it would likely be a cost share agreement between the city and the BCWMC.

C. Legal Counsel – Attorney Anderson reported that he continues to work on developing an agreement with Minneapolis for inspection, repair, maintenance activities in the Bassett Creek Tunnel. He noted discussions with the city have stalled with no response from the city attorney for months, despite numerous efforts to engage. He recommended the Commission consider sending a letter from the Commission Chair expressing eagerness to get an agreement in place. There was discussion about a potential timeline or schedule to be included in the letter. There was consensus that if after one more attempt by the Commission Attorney to move forward the city attorney still does not respond, the Commission Chair should send a letter asking for a response and continued negotiations.

- D. Chair – Chair Cesnik reminded commissioners about completing the campaign finance forms from the state and the staff evaluation forms.
- E. Commissioners
 - i. Staff Evaluation Reminder
- F. TAC Members
 - i. Ponderosa Woods Stream Restoration Project Update – TAC Chair Scharenbroich reported that the city has multiple projects in various stages including construction of the Ponderosa Woods Stream Restoration Project, potential beginning of construction on Four Seasons Area Water Quality Project, and pond dredging activities. He noted that construction bids have been lower than expected.
 - ii. Appoint Liaison to Feb 5th TAC Meeting – Commissioner Polzin volunteered to be the liaison at the next TAC meeting.
- G. Committees
 - i. Education Committee Meeting – The committee will meet on February 3rd at 4:00 p.m. at Brookview.

2. INFORMATION ONLY (Information online only)

- A. Administrative Calendar
- B. CIP Project Updates www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects
- C. Grant Tracking Summary and Spreadsheet
- D. Clean Water Council [Story Map](#)
- E. Preserving Minnesota’s Waters: Virtual Lecture Series

7. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.