



MINNEHAHA CREEK
WATERSHED DISTRICT
QUALITY OF WATER, QUALITY OF LIFE

Meeting: Board of Managers
Meeting date: 6/9/2022
Agenda Item #: 7.4
Request for Board Action

Title: Approve Organizational Chart and Authorize Hiring of Positions

Resolution number: 22-037

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Recommended action: Approve organizational chart
Authorize hiring of positions

Past Board action: May 26, 2022 Policy and Planning Committee Discussion

Strategic Context:

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) envisions a landscape of vibrant communities where natural and built environments exist in balance to create value and enjoyment. To achieve this vision, MCWD strives to be an elite organization with high standards of excellence and is committed to achieving outstanding results that honor its partners in protecting and improving land and water for future generations.

MCWD is guided in this pursuit of a balanced urban ecology for the watershed, by sound science, service, partnership, focus, and a spirit of innovation where flexibility and creativity combine to create a culture of continuous improvement.

To achieve its bold goals, the MCWD Board has recognized that its most important organizational assets are its people. Beginning in 2018, to align and maximize the impact of MCWD's talent, the Board of Managers approved a comprehensive reorganization and right-sizing of MCWD's staff structure. Since then the MCWD's has been working through a period of contraction, before beginning the process of scaling for impact off of a foundation of proven results. Currently, the number of MCWD employees is down from a high in 2017 of 36 full-time employees (FTE) to 27 in 2022.

2022-2023 represent a milestone for MCWD. These years represent the mid-point in 10-year plan cycles, a 5-year milestone from the District's strategic plan, and 5-years since initiating a reorganization of staff.

In the last five years the District has refocused its efforts on delivering high-impact capital improvements and shaping policy at the nexus of land use and water planning. With a reorganized and aligned staff the District has produced results, delivering significant capital improvement projects in the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, at Arden Park, and in the Six Mile – Halsted Bay Subwatershed. Policy frameworks for streamlining regulation, building land and water partnerships, and climate action have been advanced. All supported by sound science through innovations in data analytics.

As the Board of Managers looks strategically to the future, to build off lessons learned, to grow positive impact within the watershed, and to achieve its mission, additional capacity is needed within the organization. Recommendations to generate the additional capacity needed were discussed during the May 26, 2022 Policy and Planning Committee meeting, and are summarized below:

2022-2023 Human Resource Recommendations

There are three areas of recommended adjustment to MCWD's human resources:

1. Additional Positions – Staff Capacity:
 - a. The addition of 3 positions
 - i. Planner-Project Manager
 - ii. Policy Planner
 - iii. Operations Manager
2. Changes in the Organizational Chart – Driving Organizational Clarity:
 - a. Establishing Project Maintenance (PMLM) as its own program. Moving PMLM out from under Project Planning to drive organizational clarity regarding roles, reporting, and accountability.
 - b. Formally recognizing the elevated classification that currently exists for the Policy Planning Manager and Project Planning Manager positions, through title change to "Director," to directly assist the Administrator in providing direction, and maintaining alignment of programs with MCWD's strategic focus on policy and projects.
3. Create Added Gradation of Existing Positions – Enhancing Retention Strategies:
 - a. Create a senior gradation for positions, and adjust existing policy to delegate authority to the Administrator to promote individuals to senior level positions based on tenure and benchmarks for performance as a strategy to support retention of high-performing staff that MCWD has already trained and invested in.

1. Additional Positions:

Three additional positions are recommended to strategically add capacity needed to maximize MCWD's impact.

*See Attachments A and B for existing and proposed organizational charts.

- Planner-Project Manager
 - The delivery of high-impact capital improvements is a core strategy in achieving MCWD's mission in the watershed. MCWD's Project Planning Team currently consists of one Manager, and three Planner-Project Managers. To grow MCWD's ability to cultivate the pipeline of capital projects, and to balance planning and partnership development with construction and project management, an additional Planner-Project Manager position is recommended.

The addition of this position would provide two Planner-Project Managers per focal geography, four total. Currently the Manager is providing a significant amount of day-to-day project planning and project management. This additional capacity would also allow the Manager to provide more forward-facing leadership, and to spend additional time on partnership development and the project pipeline, by increasing the capacity for work to be delegated.

- Policy Planner
 - Shaping policy at the nexus of water and land planning is the second core strategy in achieving MCWD's mission. MCWD's Policy Planning Team currently consists of one Manager, one Policy Planner, and one GIS Coordinator. Policy Planning is responsible for MCWD's long range watershed planning, mid-range strategic planning, the cultivation of relationships with local communities across the watershed, policy development at the land and water interface, and engagement in regional and state planning efforts (e.g. Met Council, MPCA TMDLs, County Strategic Natural Resources & Climate Planning, Watershed Based Funding Changes).

As the Land and Water Partnership program continues to take shape, an on-ramp for partners to integrate eligible projects into MCWD's CIP, and with a five-year vision for robust community engagement around the 2027 Plan and Climate Action, the addition of a Policy Planner position is recommended. This additional capacity would allow the Manager to provide a higher level of strategic leadership, delegate the implementation of the Land and Water Partnership program, and fully drive the direction of the 2027 Plan.

- Operations Manager
 - MCWD Operations has run lean for two years. Following turnover in the Manager position, followed immediately by the COVID-19 pandemic early in 2020, a decision was made to not immediately backfill. This allowed MCWD to baseline its operations with an Office Manager position and support from the Administrator. This has resulted in a focus on the efficient and quality administration of all existing operational systems.

However, running this lean has also limited forward direction in developing and improving the systems MCWD needs to scale the impact of the broader staff team. It has also pulled the Administrator's time more heavily into operations. From the learnings developed during this lean period, it is recommended that an Operations Manager position be hired.

This position would exist to as dedicated support for the development of systems to scale MCWD's impact by making it easier for mission focused staff to implement their duties. It would also provide the District Administrator more capacity to focus on organizational strategy, internal alignment and program support, and more intentionally on cultivating external partnership. The addition of this position will also provide for succession planning as the current Office Manager begins evaluating a 3–5-year plan for potential retirement.

Operational systems that would support the scaling of MCWD's impact include: (1) centralized project management systems, to map project scope and timeline, allocate staff time, and to roll-up routine status reports to organizational leadership, thereby improving clarity and driving organizational accountability; (2) improving MCWD's financial planning system, moving beyond the clarity of the existing budget process into developing multi-year forecasts, and strategic policy to guide the future alignment of levy, grants, reserves and use of debt to support project implementation; (3) continuing to build out MCWD's human resources systems, by creating standardized written processes, with emphasis on professional development and performance management systems to maximize the output of MCWD talent; and (4) having dedicated capacity to oversee facility management and improvements in MCWD's campus and interior space.

Generally, the timing for implementation of new staffing changes would be the next fiscal year. In this instance, 2023. However, given current vacancies and the capacity of the 2022 personnel budget, coupled with needs and opportunities identified through recent hiring processes to move faster, it is recommended that the hiring of a Planner Project Manager, and the Operations Manager, be advanced in 2022.

2. Changes in the Organizational Chart:

Two areas of change are recommended to the organizational chart to drive clarity and maximize existing capacity.

*See Attachments A and B for existing and proposed organizational charts.

- Establishing Project Maintenance (PMLM) as its own program
 - In 2018, Project Maintenance and Land Management was placed within the Project Planning Program. The PMLM Manager was envisioned as providing both management and leadership to PMLM Technicians and serving as a senior project planner advancing capital projects. However, experience has taught that there is enough work responsibility within PMLM to require a dedicated Manager. Moreover, the program will be expected to take on more work in the future as MCWD grows its portfolio of capital projects. Within the organizational chart, this is also the only program at MCWD that currently has a Program Manager classified position reporting to another Program Manager. While this is true on paper, within the organizational chart, as a matter of practice the PMLM Manager reports directly to the Administrator. For these reasons, it is recommended that this program be established as its own independent program and moved out from under Project Planning to drive organizational clarity.
- Crystalizing the elevated classification that exists for the Policy Planning Manager and Project Planning Manager
 - In 2018, through the District's reorganization, as part of the positional classification and compensation study, both the Policy Planning Manager and Project Planning Manager positions were classified at higher levels than other program manager positions.

These positions were anticipated to support and assist the Administrator in maintaining the organization's strategic direction and alignment through the development of the District's strategic plan, watershed plan, and providing matrix management to align programs and personnel in support of MCWD's highest strategic priorities – policy development and high-impact capital projects.

While both positions have provided support, much work related to programmatic alignment in support of policy or projects, including final direction or decision making, continues to flow through the Administrator. As operational steps are taken with the Program Manager team to increase the clarity of MCWD's matrix management delegation structure, it is recommended that the titles of these positions be adjusted to "Director," and the organizational chart be adjusted to drive organizational clarity.

Enacting these steps is expected to improve the clarity of the District's delegation structure by empowering the Policy Planning Manager and Project Planning Manager to make more day-to-day decisions. This is anticipated to provide some additional capacity for the District Administrator, and empower decision making at the right levels within the organization by those who are most closely responsible for outcomes.

3. Create Added Gradation of Existing Positions – Enhancing Retention Strategies:

- Create additional gradation for positions to support career development and retention
 - MCWD’s current compensation policy requires the District Administrator to maintain the alignment of the organizational structure and human resources to support mission priorities, by periodically assessing and making recommendations to the Board. Among the recommendations that can be made are changes to the classification of positions, for which the policy requires the Board of Managers approval.

For the creation of new positions, or adjustments in organizational structure, this makes sense. However, to support career development and support strategic priorities for employee retention, it is recommended that through the upcoming classification and compensation project, additional gradation be created to allow for seasoned employees to be elevated in responsibility, position classification and compensation.

For example, providing for the promotion of a Permitting Assistant to a Permitting Technician; promotion of a Planner-Project Manager to a Senior Planner-Project Manager; or promotion of a Technician or Coordinator to a Senior Technician or Coordinator.

Creating these additional steps within MCWD’s existing classification system will allow MCWD to offer career development pathways that support the progression of individuals in their career, while also supporting retention of performing individuals and maximizing MCWD’s return on investment in training and professional development.

Creating this gradation, where it does not already exist, is planned to occur through the 2023 Classification and Compensation work. Revisions to existing policy will be proposed in parallel.

Cost To Implement 2023 Proposed Staffing Changes:

Changes to the District’s organizational chart are not anticipated to come at any cost to MCWD. Adjusting MCWD’s classification to provide for senior level gradation in positions would be evaluated through the 2023 Classification and Compensation Study. Costs to implement this framework could reasonably be integrated into MCWD’s future annual personnel budgeting process, to ensure appropriate budgeting for any anticipated promotions.

Changes in staffing, by adding three positions, will require an increase in MCWD’s 2023 personnel budget. The total cost to implement the recommended changes, assuming for hiring purposes a mid-point placement in the 2023 salary grid, and including PERA, payroll tax, and employee benefits, would be \$341,131.

Pending Board adoption of this resolution, these costs would be integrated into the 2023 draft budget in process of being developed and reviewed by committee.

Supporting documents (list attachments):

- Attachment A – Existing Organizational Chart
- Attachment B – Proposed Organizational Chart



RESOLUTION

Resolution number: 22-037

Title: Approve Organizational Chart and Authorize Hiring of Positions

- WHEREAS, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District strives to be an elite organization with high standards of excellence and is committed to achieving outstanding results that honor its partners in protecting and improving land and water for future generations;
- WHEREAS, to achieve its bold goals, the MCWD Board has recognized that its most important organizational assets are its people, and
- WHEREAS, beginning in 2018, to align and maximize the impact of MCWD's talent, the Board of Managers approved a comprehensive reorganization and right-sizing of MCWD's staff structure; and
- WHEREAS, since then the MCWD's has been working through a period of contraction, before beginning the process of scaling for impact off of a foundation of proven results;
- WHEREAS, as the Board of Managers looks strategically to the future, to build off lessons learned, to grow positive impact within the watershed, and to achieve its mission, they have found that additional capacity is needed within the organization;
- WHEREAS, in collaboration with the District Administrator three areas adjustment to MCWD's human resources have been identified:
1. Additional Positions – Staff Capacity:
 - a. The addition of 3 positions
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 - ii. Policy Planner
 - iii. Operations Manager
 2. Changes in the Organizational Chart – Driving Organizational Clarity:
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 3. Create Added Gradation of Existing Positions – Enhancing Retention Strategies:
 - a. Create a senior gradation for positions, and adjust existing policy to delegate authority to the Administrator to promote individuals to senior level positions based on tenure and benchmarks for performance as a strategy to support retention of high-performing staff that MCWD has already trained and invested in.

WHEREAS, given current vacancies and the capacity of the 2022 personnel budget, coupled with needs and opportunities identified through recent hiring processes to move faster, it is recommended that the hiring of a Planner Project Manager, and the Operations Manager, be advanced in 2022;

WHEREAS, these proposed adjustments were reviewed by the Policy and Planning Committee on May 26, 2022

WHEREAS, the Board of Managers has reviewed the proposed adjustments, including the fiscal impact, and finds that the recommendations will align staff with MCWD's focus on high impact capital improvements and policy development at the nexus of land use and water planning, while providing the organizational capacity and clarity to effectively pursue MCWD's mission;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby approves the organizational chart (Attachment B), directs that these human resource adjustments be integrated into the 2023 budget, and authorizes the District Administrator to take the steps necessary to implement the approved changes including advancing the hiring of a Planner-Project Manager and Operations Manager in 2022.

Resolution Number 22-037 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: 6/9/2022

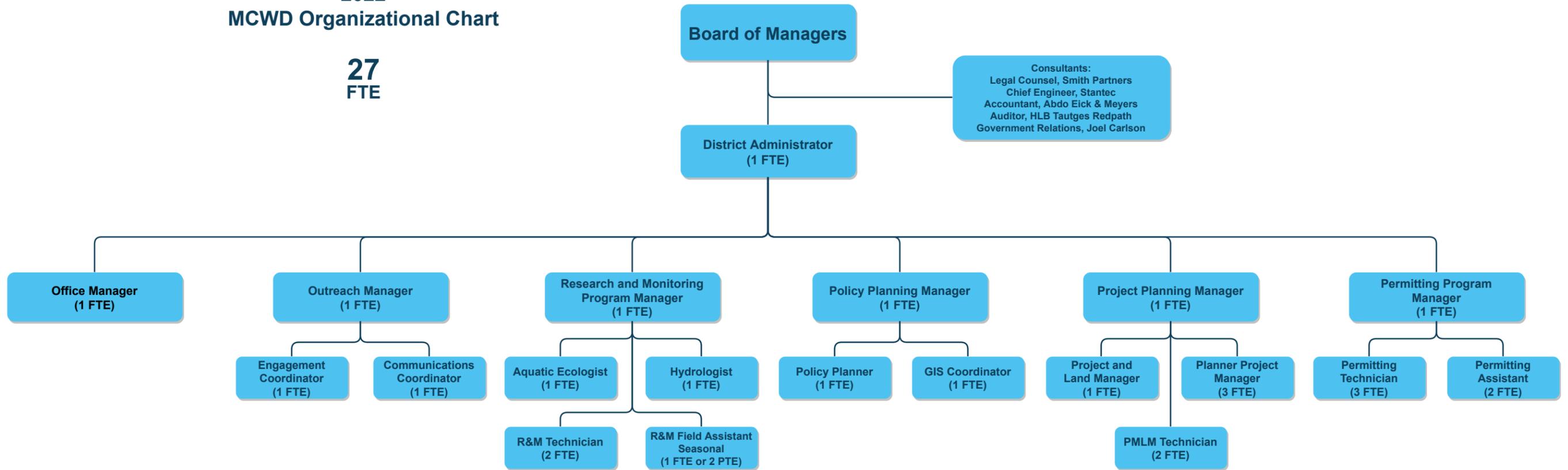
Secretary

Secretary

Date: _____

2022
MCWD Organizational Chart

27
FTE



2023 Proposed Changes
MCWD Organizational Chart

30
FTE

