

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF
THE MINNEHAHA CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
November 18, 2015**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Citizens Advisory Committee was called to order at 6:37 p.m. in the Community Room at the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District offices.

2. CAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Peter Rechelbacher, Bill Bushnell, Colin Cox, Jerry Ciardelli, Richard Manser, Steve Mohn, David Oltmans, Chris Dovolis, Sliv Carlson, Jacqueline di Giacomo, Marc Rosenberg

MANAGERS PRESENT

Sherry White and Kurt Rogness

OTHERS PRESENT

MCWD staff - Darren Lochner, Sarah Fellows, Becky Christopher, Matt Cook, Roma Rowland

Members from the Public: Richard Nyquist, SW Minneapolis; Nancy Rose, St. Louis Park

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF October 14th MINUTES

4.1 October 14, 2015 minutes

Ciardelli moved to approve minutes of the meeting and seconded by Manser. Minutes will be amended to include Steve Mohn in the report of attending the Watershed Heroes event. Motion carried, none opposed.

5. REPORT FROM STAFF

Mr. Lochner presented on the Will Steger event and that the event was well represented, including members from the Department of Defense, water quality and the agricultural community. He shared a new publication which was based on the Noah study incorporating the city of Victoria and Minneapolis. View the key findings and other materials here: <http://minnehahacreek.org/project/weather-extreme-trends>

Mr. Lochner also handed out flyers for the Lakes and Rivers Summit, and more information can be found here: <http://minnehahacreek.org/events/2015-metro-summit-lake-and-river-groups>

As a reminder these workshop trainings for winter road maintenance and parking lots and sidewalks maintenance are free.

Upcoming Events:

December 1 – Lakes and Rivers Summit - Hopkins

December 1 – Winter Road Maintenance Training – MCWD office

December 2 – Parking Lots and Sidewalks Maintenance Training – MCWD office (postponed due to weather)

December 9 – Land of 10,000 Salty Lakes seminar – Nine Mile Creek Watershed 7-8pm (include link)

The application deadline for the [Master Water Stewards](#) program closes in December for the 2016 program. CAC members are encouraged to apply for the program or encourage others to do so. Di Giacomo followed by saying the program has come a long way since she did the program with top notch speakers, and stewards get to know the community even better. President White also recommended the program. Seven other watersheds are now participating as well. The tuition cost is \$200 per individual, however there are scholarships available through MCWD. Those needing assistance should contact Darren Lochner.

Applications for CAC for 2016 should be submitted by December 2nd. Board of Managers will select CAC members at the December 10th meeting. This ensures that CAC can begin right in January.

6. REPORT FROM CAC MEMBERS

Mr. Bushnell attended the climate change session. Ms. Carlson went to the NEMO salt use workshop in October for elected officials and was impressed with Minnetonka's plowing schedule which is all handled electronically. Everyone who works in Minnetonka's public works department can drive a plow.

7. REPORT FROM BOARD OF MANAGERS LIAISON

President White served as Liaison and introduced Kurt Rogness. She highlighted some great work the staff has been doing. Operations and Maintenance staff have worked with engineers to list all the projects that require maintenance, and then strategizing the different kinds of maintenance. She also mentioned that the final report to FEMA on the 2014 flooding is also coming up, which will better prepare the district for future events.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 Update on MCWD Comprehensive Planning – Christopher

Ms. Christopher presented a regular update of the Comprehensive Planning process. This was an opportunity for guests and the public to hear what's going on and receive public input. This also helps to inform the technical and planning workgroups.

Ms. Christopher passed around materials with graphics (Pending Agenda List for Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committees; Organization Strategic Framework; Water Resources Management Plan (2017) Timeline; Draft Process for the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update) and explained that the Comprehensive plan is a 10 year plan which will begin in 2017. Current funding challenges are addressed with the strategic planning framework, as the framework provides a context for all the programming and budget issues. If there are plan amendments, it would have to go through a public process to go back and update it.

Plan development process and role of committees

Ms. Christopher explained that the handout "[Pending Agenda List for Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committees](#)" shows how committee feedback will be incorporated into the process.

"[Draft Process for the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update](#)" handout shows a flowchart for how the planning department is moving forward to implement new policies and procedures. This also incorporates new studies and data which helps inform this new plan. [Organization Strategic Framework](#) serves as a flowchart used to facilitate evaluation of existing programs and future initiatives. It also provides a context for each program in terms of figuring out priorities and evaluating each program individually as it relates to larger objectives. Ms. Christopher shared the permitting department, as a program listed on the framework flowchart, as an example of the various activities in how they help to achieve the outcomes, and the measureables within the

process to track success. This framework tool also has the capacity to show how resources are allocated within each program (staff time, budget, etc.).

The process is to reevaluate goals and tactics of not only the district, but each program, and then developing the implementation framework. The orange cells on the diagram is where the advisory committees are involved.

There will be a 60-day internal and Board review period, followed by a 90-day period where other state agencies review the plan. The Board of Water and Soil Resources reviews plans and, should the District need to make amendments in the future, BWSR won't frown on the district - these strategic plans are intended to be living documents.

8.1 Cynthia Krieg education grant program review - All

Staff reviewed all applications (20+ staff members) in early November. Staff ranked and made recommendations to the subcommittee. The Subcommittee met on Monday, November 16th to review the grant proposals in order to make suggestions to the CAC. A brief summary of each project was given and the suggested funding levels listed with each project below are based on both staff and subcommittee recommendations. Staff did not make funding suggestions, and the suggested award dollars were proposed by the subcommittee.

While 21 preproposals came through in September, only 18 submitted full proposals (totaling \$287,058). There is \$125k available for this grant round. 150 projects have been funded since 2000. The recommendations from CAC meetings will be forwarded to Board Workshop on December 10th where the Board will make the final decision. Those applicants who were not recommended for the full requested amount, or were not recommended entirely, will be provided feedback and suggestions for other funding sources.

The decision by subcommittee was to award \$108,850 and not the full amount. Mr. Lochner and Ms. Fellows also presented some possible staff recommended increases in funding in addition to what the subcommittee recommended. By incorporating these increases, it ends up to be a total of \$123,888 use of Cynthia Krieg funds. Any funds that are not used this year would be rolled over into the 2017 Cynthia Krieg grants (these are restricted funds).

Ms. Carlson asked whether MCWD investigates the survivability of an applicant and their programs-specifically with charter schools. Mr. Lochner said that some organizations provided letters of support from the community, however MCWD doesn't really know anything outside the paper application. The concern could be that a grantee could go out of business. Mr. Lochner explained that the District is protected because the applicants' work plans will be received in early 2016, whereby the formal grant agreement is developed. MCWD uses the legal department to draft this legal agreement so that the grantee will be held accountable for completing the project as described. Applicants also must submit a final report.

Mr. Ciardelli suggested that by funding those projects at 35% or lower than the requested amount might be setting the applicant up for failure and that they might not complete their project. St. David's for example shows that MCWD is only funding a portion of their project (example: signage and curriculum/education and outreach) and suggesting they apply for cost-share for the remainder of their project. Mr. Rechebacher stressed that the subcommittee did go through the budgets for each applicant, and the funding suggestions reflect the funding of each project's proposed expenses, line item-by-line item. Ms. Carlson applauded the hard work that went into the process.

The following are the proposal summaries and recommendations by the CAC:

2015 Cynthia Krieg Proposal Summaries

I. **Alliance for Sustainability – *Linking Master Water Stewards with Cities to Strengthen Surface Water Plans & Lake Associations***

Alliance for Sustainability will support Master Water Stewards in Edina, St. Louis Park, Minneapolis, Hopkins, Chanhassen, and other interested cities to work with their City's Environmental Commission and staff to develop strong ten year Surface Water Management Plans for their cities by engaging residents and by using best practices from NEMO, the Met Council, MPCA, and other cities. Surface Water Management plans will include an assessment of their city's water resources related problems, and their local implementation plan of solutions. MWS will then engage residents to reduce phosphorus and chloride runoff in surface waters through city wide education and behavior change campaigns and will mentor the newly forming volunteer Lake Associations in their cities, helping neighbors to develop and implement action steps that address the specific impairments their lakes are facing.

\$5,000 Recommended

II. **Camp Fire Minnesota – *Camp Fire's Water Systems & Quality Initiative***

Camp Fire Minnesota will expand its Water Systems and Quality Initiative through curriculum enhancements, environmental education partnerships, the launch of a new Fellow position to deliver, support and organize nature-based curriculum and experiential education activities for our Club and Camp youth, and the introduction of a dynamic new program: "Canoe Club". Canoe Club will get Camp Fire youth out to paddle their own urban backyard waterways, for an up close and personal experience with their watershed.

\$10,000 Recommended

III. **Citizens for Lakeview Preservation Inc – *Lakeview Legacy Park***

Citizens for Lakeview Preservation will organize public participation in the planning and installation of wetland-related demonstration areas that will be used to educate and inspire visitors to a new and innovative park. Pond shoreline will be transformed into a healthy native plant community providing buffering for water quality protection as well as healthy aquatic and upland habitat while previously untreated stormwater runoff will be pretreated through installation of an infiltration basin/raingarden. Funds will also be used to create permanent educational displays and brochures describing the rationale, construction, function, and maintenance of these areas.

Not recommended for funding

IV. **City of Victoria – *Healthy Community, Healthy Environment***

The City of Victoria will put on community bus tours to the Landscape Arboretum to educate, bring together, and help our citizens understand the importance of landscape maintenance of different grass types, and how different lawn maintenance (such as fertilizer) affects water quality. In the spring, they will have community workshops with topics on lawn maintenance and water quality. Funds will support outreach materials including flyers, festivals, and booths

at public events to promote the workshops and bus tour.

Not Recommended for Funding

V. Field Community School – *Field Community School Watershed Education*

Field Community School will develop hands-on, site-specific education curriculum for 5th – 8th grade science staff to use in coordination with on-site raingardens and pollinator gardens. They will also provide community education opportunities through the development and installation of permanent signage at the raingardens and pollinator gardens to educate the general public and neighborhood at large about the benefits of stormwater best management practices and how the site specific gardens improve water quality and ecosystems.

\$14,350 Recommended

VI. Freshwater Society- *Water Re-Use Workshop*

High demand for water in Minnesota has put pressure on freshwater resources – pressure that could be alleviated through stormwater re-use. In partnership with industrial, non-profit, and government partners, the Freshwater Society will host a one-day conference that results in action steps to make it easier to realize stormwater re-use projects. The conference will allow officials and designers to see the spectrum of potential reuse projects in Minnesota, from capture (raingardens) to large-scale outdoor use to indoor harvest and reuse systems, and identify the policy and legislative changes that will remove unnecessary barriers to implementing more of these projects.

\$5,000 Recommended

VII. Friends of the Mississippi River – *Minnehaha Creek Watershed Youth & Community Stewardship Initiative*

Friends of the Mississippi River will hold two community rain barrel workshops to train and inspire 40-60 local residents to take action in their homes and yards to protect local water resources. FMR will organize and lead classroom presentations and outdoor service projects to engage and educate 120-150 youth about how our actions and practices on the landscape can affect water quality, and how to prevent water pollution. In addition, FMR will build sustainable relationships with MCWD teachers, youth group leaders, community organizations, and local citizens to support FMR's continued work in the watershed.

\$12,000 Recommended (CAC members voted on this recommendation. 8 in favor, 2 opposed)

VIII. Lake Minnewashta Preservation Association - *LMPA Digital Display Campaign for Awareness and Abatement of Aquatic Invasive Species*

There is a continual need to educate the public, particularly those that use the watershed lakes, of the threat of invasive species to the health of watershed lakes as well as how they can individually help prevention the invasion and spread of those AIS. Digital display ads will run across mobile platforms (tablet and smartphone) targeted to users by GPS geographical

location (Geo-fencing) to increase awareness and prevention of aquatic invasive species in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. Ads will also run across the Star Tribune network (PC/Desktop, tablet, and mobile) and will be targeted by zip code, to take users to a website with targeted messaging.

Not recommended for funding

IX. Meadowbrook Collaborative – *Meadowbrook Collaborative Friends of the Creek*

Many of the families of Meadowbrook Collaborative are low-income and/or newly arrived to the country. Meadowbrook Collaborative aims to increase their familiarity with the creek, understanding of local ecology, and confidence in how to use natural resources safely through seasonal visits to Minnehaha Falls, resources for a canoe trip to observe the beginning of the creek, and educational materials to be used near the boardwalk at the Minnehaha Preserve. The project will provide experiences that many of the residents would otherwise not be able to afford.

\$9,038 Recommended

X. Metro Blooms – *Sustainable Maintenance Approaches for Stormwater Best Management Practices*

Metro Blooms will develop and implement maintenance education pilot projects, develop new and enhance existing online maintenance and evaluation resources, and encourage maintenance through voluntary inspections. Together, these projects improve water quality by implementing options for long-term, sustainable maintenance of stormwater management practices within the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

\$15,000 Recommended (CAC members voted on this recommendation. 9 in favor, 1 opposed)

XI. Minneapolis Area Synod - *Watershed Moment Campaign*

The Minneapolis Area Synod will increase the practical engagement of Lutheran Congregations through a holistic campaign that integrates education, ritual, water stewardship projects, storytelling, and action events. Through large travelling maps of the watershed districts, a toolkit of guiding questions and resources for congregations, and dedicated congregational organizing efforts, leaders from the 31 Lutheran congregations in the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District will guide their communities to better understand and care for the watershed.

\$12,000 Recommended

XII. Partnership Academy – *Why Care About the Creek?: A Curricular Collaboration for Elementary Students*

Partnership Academy 5th grade teachers and Stonebridge World School 4th grade teachers will work together to develop an integrated curriculum to promote understanding of ecology, conservation, an appreciation of nature, and an interdisciplinary understanding of the

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. Over this long-term study, students will explore the essential questions: Why care about the creek? And Is it worth time and energy to protect the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District?

\$7,000 Recommended

XIII. Southside Pride – *Protect Precious Water*

Southside Pride will sponsor an essay contest for high school students at South, Roosevelt, and Washburn High Schools. Students will be asked to write a 500 word essay on the question: “What can we do to protect and improve the Minnehaha Creek Watershed?” Winning students at each school will receive a \$100 prize and their essays will be published in all three editions of Southside Pride.

Not recommended for funding

XIV. St. David’s Center – *St. David’s Center Wetland Education Initiative*

St. David’s will install a boardwalk, design and create a raingarden exhibit, and install educational signage throughout the wetland that complements and supports their science curriculum for children ages 3 through 8. The three primary goals are: 1) significantly increase child, parent, staff, and community resident access to the wetland; 2) deepen understanding of the value of raingardens as one strategy to improve water quality; and 3) expand knowledge about wetlands, natural science and the importance of conservation and environmental stewardship.

\$4,500 Recommended

XV. University of Minnesota – *You Can Build A Raingarden*

The University of Minnesota will produce a professional video about raingardens, using local music, local musicians, and social media to reach residents throughout the watershed. The goal is to connect viewers to the watershed and Metro Blooms/Blue Thumb in a practical, yet creatively compelling way. Residents will be encouraged to attend raingarden workshops, install raingardens, and practice other water and soil conservation strategies.

\$7,000 Recommended

XVI. University of Minnesota – *Bee Squad and Master Water Stewards Raingarden Insect Survey*

Beneficial insects, such as pollinators and garden pest predators are an essential component to the health of urban green spaces, and are often indicator species for the health of the local environment. This project will investigate the benefits of local raingardens by the systematic sampling of insects in those systems to provide useful baseline data on what insects are present in these raingardens and facilitate teamwork between partners who can be trained to scientifically observe urban green spaces.

\$5,000 Recommended

XVII. Vortex Navigation Company – *The Ark of the Anthropocene*

The Ark of the Anthropocene will incorporate and preserve the plants that are native to the area in an enclosed biosphere. It will also monitor the health of the lake through sensors installed on the ark. These components will allow the public and researchers to access and use current data about the lake, centralize data resources for disparate organizations, citizen scientists and interested neighbors. The ark will transmit a live camera feed and will broadcast water quality data about the lake. The ark will contain an archive about the lake and its previous condition.

Not recommended for funding

XVIII. Wilderness Inquiry – *Watershed Education through Urban Wilderness Canoe Adventures*

Wilderness inquiry will provide hands-on watershed education by reaching more than 2,250 youth along the Minnehaha Creek Watershed. Staff and partners will use proven best practices to deeply engage with three Minneapolis schools and two suburban schools, in addition to continuing to serve 2,000 students through activity days involving canoeing and watershed education. The project will result in increased environmental awareness among youth, greater collaboration among environmental/outdoor agencies and local school districts, and innovative alternatives to traditional education experiences among underserved youth.

\$17,000 Recommended

9. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Rechelbacher suggested the CAC tackle one of the objectives at the next meeting December, January or as late as February (based on the 20-some topics previously outlined). Topic to be decided by CAC executive committee prior to Thanksgiving and will send the topic via email. Mike Haymen will give an update on Japs Olson at the December meeting. In January, the topic of discussion will be balanced urban ecology and talking about the Minnehaha greenway.

10. SPECIAL ITEMS TO ADDRESS BY CAC/STAFF BEFORE NEXT MEETING

The CAC suggested 2016 meetings should stick to either the 1st or 2nd Wednesday of the month just so that any and all proposals (cost-share) could be given to the board at the following week's board meetings. 2nd Wednesday in January 13th tentative. CAC will revisit this date when new CAC is selected and on board.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Carlson motioned to adjourn the CAC meeting at 8:52 p.m. Manser seconded the motion. Motion carried, none opposed.

Next meeting date is December 9, 2015