

Sunrise River Water Management Organization Meeting
Thursday July 18, 2019
6:30 pm at East Bethel City Hall

1. Call to order

Chair Dan Babineau called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Dan Babineau, Leon Mager, Matt Downing, Sandy Flaherty, Tim Harrington, Janet Hegland (arrived 6:45), Shelly Logren (arrived 6:45)

Absent: Paul Enestvedt

Audience: Jamie Schurbon, Anoka Conservation District (ACD)
Ben Gutknecht, Columbus City Staff

3. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Downing asked that “Consider Alternate Change to 1W1P” be added under New Business as item 8 d. Mr. Mager asked that “Coon Lake zebra mussels” update be added under Other. **Mr. Harrington moved and Mr. Downing seconded to revise the agenda by adding two items: New Business 8d. Consider Alternate Change to 1W1P and Other Coon Lake update. Motion carried unanimously.**

4. Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) for Thurnbeck Preserve Second Addition

Background information:

A new development in Columbus called Thurnbeck 2nd addition is partially in both the SRWMO and the Rice Creek Watershed District. The watershed organizations have differing stormwater standards. The City of Columbus is suggesting a joint powers agreement be signed by the SRWMO and RCWD to explain how this issue is being addressed.

City of Columbus staff member Ben Gutknecht presented the JPA. It was discussed that the purpose of the JPA is to establish a permitting authority boundary for Thurnbeck Preserve Second Addition that differs from the current legal boundary of the Sunrise River Watershed Management Organization and the Rice Creek Watershed District **for this development only**. It was noted that the current SRWMO-RCWD boundary will bisect some of the proposed parcels. The JPA proposes that regulatory authorities shall be geographically split at the centerline of a proposed road. Mr. Gutknecht also stated that the road centerline will be the new hydrologic boundary after the proposed development is complete.

Mr. Schurbon expressed concern with the JPA language in several places including:

- Purpose of the agreement is not clearly stated.
- The agreement discusses the SRWMO permitting, however the SRWMO does not do permitting. Rather, it needs to be clear that the SRWMO provides standards which the city must incorporate into its ordinances and permitting. He also noted some language that did not seem relevant and could be deleted.

Discussion favored directing Mr. Schurbon to send comments to the city, and then authorizing Chair Babineau to sign the agreement when he is satisfied the comments are addressed.

Objections to the general purpose of the agreement were not raised.

Ms. Flaherty voiced her concern that this may set a precedent for other developers to ask for watershed organization boundary changes to better meet their regulatory preferences. Chair Babineau stated that he felt it is important for watershed management to be based on hydrologic boundaries. It was discussed that this situation is different from other boundary change proposals in that the proposed regulatory boundary will be the hydrologic boundary after construction is complete.

Ms. Hegland believes it makes sense to make this boundary permanent change. It was noted that the current SRWMO-RCWD jurisdictional boundary is old and almost certainly inaccurate, as it is straight for long distances and bisects at least one waterbody. It was noted that in the past boundaries may have been drawn to follow parcel lines, which are now changing. There was general discussion that permanent RCWD-SRWMO boundary updates are needed in several areas. Earlier in the year the RCWD communicated that it had hired a consultant to lead the process of updating the boundaries to the hydrologic boundary.

Mr. Downing moved and Mr. Mager seconded to direct Mr. Schurbon to submit JPA comments to Columbus, and authorize Chair Babineau to sign the JPA once he is satisfied that appropriate changes have been made. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Mager moved and Mr. Harrington seconded to approve the May 2, 2019 minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Financial Reports

a. Treasurer’s report

May beginning balance	\$59,651.82
- 8,938.33 – ACD	
- <u>175.00</u> – Recording secretary	
May ending balance	\$50,538.49

June balance began and ended at \$50,538.49.

Update on interest bearing account – It was determined it is not worth the time and effort to open an interest-bearing checking account based on the low interest amount and discussion with East Bethel Finance Director Mike Jeziorski. Mr. Downing suggested considering a Certificate of Deposit (CD). It was noted that while the SRWMO does receive most of its funds in two disbursements from the member cities, some of those funds are spent quickly and others later in the year. Funds in a CD are not available until it matures. Consensus of the Board was not to pursue a CD nor interest-bearing checking account.

Mr. Downing reported that he checked on the noted discrepancy between the treasurer’s ledger and the bank statement reported; corrections have been made.

Ms. Flaherty moved and Ms. Hegland seconded to approve the Treasurer’s Report as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Current grants financial report from Anoka Conservation District (ACD)

Mr. Schurbon provided a report of grants and grant projects utilizing SRWMO funds as match.

7. Unfinished Business

a. 2020 budget – update on ratifications by member communities

Except for the City of Ham Lake all member communities have ratified the 2020 budget.

b. City of Ham Lake concerns about WMO budgets and joint powers agreement

As previously discussed, the City of Ham Lake sent a request to the other SRWMO member communities to change the SRWMO Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) so that operating expenses are split by the same percentages as other expenses, not split equally. It is understood that a similar request was sent to Upper Rum River WMO cities. Responses received have included:

Columbus – in favor of the change

Linwood – not in favor

East Bethel – no response yet, but city council is discussing it soon.

Upper Rum River WMO cities – some in favor, some not, some no response yet

Joint powers agreement changes require all participants.

It was discussed that it is unlikely that the issue will be resolved by the time that 2020 SRWMO invoicing is to be done. This could result in major financial problems, as funds may not be available to pay for obligations.

Mr. Downing suggested in-person meetings amongst the cities were needed to rectify the issue. Ham Lake city council will be discussing their concerns with the WMOs at their meeting August 5th at 6:00 pm. By consensus it was decided that Chair Babineau, Ms. Flaherty and Mr. Schurbon will attend that meeting. The Upper Rum River Chair will be invited to join them. Messages to communicate to Ham Lake city council will include the urgency to find solutions for the 2020 budget, idea of accepting the 2020 budget as is with an understanding that a process to address Ham Lake's concerns for all following years should begin immediately, and that the SRWMO could help organize a meeting of all the cities if necessary to get the process moving.

If a meeting of all of the cities and township is arranged, it was discussed whether the Upper Rum River WMO cities should be invited. The board favored informing the URRWMO Chair of any such meeting and letting them decide.

8. New Business

a. Watershed plan - approve responses to 60-day review comments

Mr. Schurbon presented a list of comments received on the draft SRWMO Watershed Management Plan 60-day comment period that ended July 8, 2019. Also provided were proposed responses to each comment. The following changes to the proposed responses were requested:

#10 – The comment pertains to the SRWMO paying for aquatic invasive species treatments. Mr. Mager noted that the draft policy states the SRWMO could pay for such treatments if there are water quality benefits, but there are no such funds allocated in the plan. He stated money put toward this item will take away from other Plan items. However, he requested to leave this in the

Plan in order to apply for grants. He asked not to list curly leaf pondweed specifically as an example within the policy. Consensus of the Board was to strike part that content.

P1 has been expanded as follows: “The SRWMO will not pay for maintenance treatments of aquatic invasive species unless those treatments will achieve a water quality benefit. Maintenance treatments are treatments expected to recur regularly over many years to maintain AIS density for recreational purposes. Water quality benefits are reductions in water borne nutrients, ~~such as may occur when curly leaf pond weed is managed.~~”

#28 – This comment encouraged the SRWMO to compare its funding capacity to other WMOs, and consider increasing. The response included 2016 per capita expenditures for nearby WMOs. Mr. Downing questioned whether this information should be included. After discussion, consensus was to leave the response as is.

#38 – The proposed response to this comment was “*Manage carp in Typo, Martin, Linwood and Coon Lakes to 100/kg per hectare, the threshold above which they are destructive to lake health. This is equivalent to 89 lbs./acre.*” Consensus of the Board was the following rewrite of the comment response: “Manage carp in Typo, Martin, Linwood and Coon Lakes to 100/kg per hectare *or as otherwise determined on a lake-by-lake basis by the SRWMO*, the threshold above which they are *detrimental* to lake health. 100 kg/hectare is equivalent to 89 lbs./acre.”

#58 – The comment was the SRWMO needed a better method for self-evaluating its progress toward goals and implementation during the plan life. Mr. Schurbon reported that he further discussed this comment with BWSR. Mr. Schurbon provided new SRWMO self-evaluation templates. These templates will be included in the appendices of the Plan.

#60 – In the third paragraph of the response, replace the word *feels* with *believes*.

Mr. Downing moved and Chair Babineau seconded to approve the 60-Day Plan Review Comments and Responses with the inclusion of the noted changes and to direct Anoka Conservation District to send out the 60-Day Plan Review Comments and Responses to review agencies. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Schurbon intends to revise and send it out to the agencies tomorrow.

b. Lakeshore Restorations Outreach Plan update

Background information:

The SRWMO’s 2018 Watershed Based Funding grant includes lakeshore restorations outreach. The goal is to increase use of grants to landowners for installed projects. A draft strategy has been developed with Emily, the County-wide Outreach Coordinator. Target areas include larger recreational lakes, with emphasis on impaired lakes or those where lakeshore restorations have been identified as a management strategy. Therefore the highest priority would be Martin and Linwood Lakes. Coon Lake would be a moderate priority. The lowest priority would be Typo and Fawn Lakes.

The favored strategy is a short video with a target audience of lakeshore homeowners. A video would be a re-usable count-wide outreach tool, perhaps with a customized ending for the

SRWMO. The video should inspire action, not just inform. It should be followed with active, in-person outreach to the lakeshore homeowners.

A video of this type will likely cost about \$4,000. The Rice Creek Watershed District has pledged \$500. Other watershed organizations, lake associations and cities are considering, and likely to provide support.

The board discussed providing \$1,000 of its \$1,925 overall project budget toward the video. The difference would be used for in-person outreach and promotion that uses the video.

Mr. Downing moved and Ms. Hegland seconded to authorize use of \$1,000 of the SRWMO's 2018 Watershed Based Funding grant for a short video that informs and motivates landowners about lakeshore restoration. The video will be overseen by the Anoka County Water Resources Coordinator. The video must include an ending that tells SRWMO landowners where they can get technical and financial assistance. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Linwood Family Fun Day booth Sept. 7

Mr. Schurbon will provide a SRWMO display to Chair Babineau. Mr. Schurbon will also ask Emily, the Anoka County Water Resources Coordinator, if she is able to assist at the event. Ms. Hegland asked if the same items can be used at Columbus' Fall Fest on Sept. 14. They can, and Mr. Schurbon will coordinate with Mr. Hegland.

d. Consider Alternate Change to 1W1P

Mr. Downing is the current SRWMO alternate to the Lower St. Croix One Watershed, One Plan Policy Committee. He was recently appointed to the 1W1P Steering Committee. He suggested it may be better for someone else to represent the SRWMO on the Policy Committee as an alternate. Currently, Mr. Enestvedt is the primary representative but cannot attend the next meeting so an alternate representative needs to be appointed tonight. **Mr. Downing moved and Mr. Harrington seconded to appoint Janet Hegland as the alternate representative to the 1W1P, replacing Matt Downing. Motion carried unanimously.** Mr. Schurbon will send information to Ms. Hegland prior to the 1W1P meeting.

9. Mail

Metropolitan Council has reviewed and approved the East Bethel Water Management Plan.

10. Other

a. Coon Lake Zebra Mussel update

There was a zebra mussel identified in Coon Lake. Authorities were notified and the lake was searched for additional mussels with none being found. Thank you to both Mr. Downing and Mr. Mager for their help with this matter.

11. Invoice(s) approval

a. Recording secretary July 2019 invoice - \$175

Ms. Logren moved and Ms. Flaherty seconded to pay the July 2019 recording secretary invoice for \$175. Motion carried unanimously.

12. Adjourn

Ms. Hegland moved and Mr. Harrington seconded to adjourn at 8:56 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Gail Gessner, Recording Secretary

Submitted via email on 7/26/19