

CARNELIAN-MARINE-ST. CROIX WATERSHED DISTRICT
Regular Minutes March 11, 2015

Managers Present: Kristin Tuenge, Dave DeVault, Andy Weaver and Eric Lindberg

Managers Absent: Victoria Dupre, Tom Polasik and Steven Kronmiller

Others Present: Jim Shaver (administrator), Carl Almer (EOR), Jed Chesnut (WCD), Susannah Torseth (Lawson Law), Christine Maefsky and Pam Smith (Log House Landing) and Big Marine Lake residents Mike Blehert, Jeff Dahlberg, Doug Salmela, Rich Burton, Craig Johnson, Gary Olson, John Krueger, and Tsia Krueger

Manager Tuenge called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

1. Approve Agenda—Board Action

Manager Weaver moved to approve the March 11, 2015 agenda as amended. Seconded by Manager Lindberg. Motion carried 4-0.

2. Approve February 11 Minutes—Board Action

Manager Tuenge moved to approve the February 11, 2015 minutes as presented. Seconded by Manager Lindberg. Motion carried 4-0.

3. Treasurer's Report

Manager Weaver presented the Treasurer's Report.

Manager Tuenge moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Seconded by Manager DeVault. Motion carried 4-0.

4. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

5. New Business

a. Big Marine Lake Owners—Board Action

i. Grant Participation Request

Mr. Blehert, speaking on behalf of the Big Marine Lake Association (BMLA), introduced members. He stated that this is a more complicated year for treating aquatic invasive species (AIS). BMLA is seeking funding from three sources to support the association's work on AIS: Washington County, which received \$202,000 from the state for AIS; the Initiative Foundation (administers the Sam-Lessard Legacy Fund, which provided AIS funds for the first time); and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Based on past monitoring and treatment of Eurasian watermilfoil, BMLA is proposing a new approach to increase the contact time of the herbicide 2,4-D on the milfoil. Instead of one treatment in July followed by an inspection in August, the BLMA will contract for three treatments in one 24-hour period. Laboratory studies indicate that 2 parts/million of 2,4-D maintained on milfoil for 24 hours will kill it. If the lake is calm, this approach should improve the contact time and the kill rate. This approach is also more expensive because of increased labor and product costs. Steve McComas of Blue Water Science was hired by BMLA to investigate the lake for AIS

and take sediment samples to identify conditions in the lake that will support the growth of specific AIS. This report should be completed in the next few months.

Mr. Dahlberg outlined BMLA's 2015 budget. Income includes \$9,300 in carryover; grant requests of \$16,800 from Washington County for Blue Water Science and extra treatment, \$14,000 from Initiative Foundation for treatment costs and \$4,000 from the DNR for treatment; \$2,800 from dues; \$3,000 from a garage sale/fundraising; \$500 from the Lions Club and a request to the District of \$10,000, if it is needed. Expenses of a little over \$38,000 include \$25,500 for treating 53 acres three times in 24 hours and \$11,800 for Blue Water Science to conduct a spring survey and sediment and water analysis, develop a fast response plan and monitor for zebra mussels, which can be controlled if found and treated early. BMLA and Mr. McComas will meet with Chip Welling of the DNR on Monday about the new treatment method and streamlined permitting. It was noted that 2,4-D does not kill native milfoil.

ii. 2015 Funding Request

Mr. Blehert stated that although the DNR has verbally committed to the \$4,000 and county funding looks good, there is no guarantee that BMLA will get the grants or all of the requested amounts. For this reason, the association is requesting the District make \$10,000 available, if it is needed. Manager Weaver stated that with BMLA's carryover of \$9,000 and \$4,000 from the DNR, there is a cushion. It is easier for the District to provide funds through a cost share or match than commit \$10,000 without a demonstrated need. Administrator Shaver stated that in addition to the \$10,000, BMLA also requested that the District be the applicant to the Initiative Foundation (as suggested by the foundation) because the association is not a 501(c) 3, tax-exempt organization. Ms. Torseth advised that doing so would make this a District grant and, therefore, should meet District rules and needs. The District should also determine that there are no legal issues with grant implementation and dispersal of funds. Mr. Blehert stated that the association could be named as the administrator of the grant and the District could pay the contractor directly for the chemical treatments. A letter of inquiry needs to be approved and signed by the District. Administrator Shaver in response to questions about District staff, replied that staff time for the grant is not a concern. The concern is potential legal aspects of a District grant managed by another organization. Manager Lindberg stated that he thinks this is a good opportunity for the District and the association.

Manager DeVault moved to authorize the administrator to apply for the Initiative Foundation grant in the amount of \$28,000 (14,000 per year for two years) contingent on legal counsel's review, consultation with the Big Marine Lake Association and drafting a memorandum of understanding, if deemed necessary after legal review. Seconded by Manager Lindberg. Motion carried 4-0.

Further discussion continued about funding of BMLA. If all the grant money applied for is received, the association will not need \$10,000 from the District. Treatment will always be needed, but the association's goal is to get treatment acreage down from 50-70 acres to 10 acres per year. The District has had a lengthy history of supporting the association starting in 2009. DNR funding has been reduced per acre. The District has money in reserve for AIS

and can consider a funding request at a later time, if the association needs additional funding.

6. Log House Landing (LHL)

Manager Tuenge introduced Christine Maefsky and Pam Smith. She summarized four points in the memo from Manager Kronmiller.

- Boat ramp. Administrator Shaver and Managers DeVault and Kronmiller met with DNR staff about the ramp. The DNR has two separate programs to support ramps. One supplies concrete planks, contingent on what is in inventory. Installation is not included. The second funds design and construction of a launch area, but can take up to four years. The timeline can be accelerated, if the District covers the design and contracting. The District can apply for both programs, while also pursuing other funding. Discussion included that a concept plan with budget will need to be developed for the launch project and shared with both the DNR and the City of Scandia. A public input process, including funding, will be needed. Bank restoration could be done during launch reconstruction and could be part of the grant request.

Manager Lindberg moved to authorize the Administrator to work with the City of Scandia and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on a possible grant(s) application to the DNR for the Log House Landing boat launch. Seconded by Manager Weaver. Motion carried 4-0.

- Sediment loading study. There have been three assessments—done by the WCD, Jim Almendinger of the St. Croix Watershed Research Station and Carl Almer—to look at the costs of a sediment loading study. None supports doing a costly scientific study. Mr. Weaver stated that Mr. Almendinger recommended using funds to stop the sedimentation. Manager Lindberg agreed.

Manager DeVault moved to halt the sedimentation loading study due to the estimated cost exceeding the \$10,000 allocated limit. Seconded by Manager Tuenge. Motion carried 4-0.

- DNR grant status. The District, the LHL Committee and the City of Scandia supported the 13-foot wide road contingent on the grant. At the last city council meeting, it was agreed that a variance for a 13-foot drive lane would not be approved by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). The city then asked and received permission to use the grant to resurface Quinnell Avenue, leaving the LHL project unfunded. Scandia is looking for guidance from the District on LHL, including the road design. Christine Maefsky summarized the reasons behind the city's decision to keep the 13-foot road width, rather than expand it. The city's comprehensive plan prioritizes keeping scenic, low traffic roadways including a narrower right-of-way and keeping landscapes, and scenic viewsheds. The National Park Service design recommendations were also considered. Conclusions were that LHL is considered a gateway to the national parks and the city's most intact historic site. It was an immigrant landing site and a New Deal Civilian Conservation Corps project. The narrower road calms traffic ending at the river, while a 20-foot wide road disrupts the ecology. There are clear sight lines for sharing the road. Community input—including 57 emails—has been articulate and in agreement with the narrow road.

With the Managers also in agreement with the narrow road and acknowledgement that there are no funds for the project, discussion focused on how to proceed. While the city appears to be looking for guidance and leadership on the road and launch, the District does not construct roads.

Its role is erosion control. The road could be a BMP-cost share project for erosion control and stormwater management. The city has concluded that \$300,000 for asphalt is too expensive, though it is willing to consider other products, such as aggregate, that are less expensive. An expert on a new aggregate product will present to the city council in May or June. Another option is to leave the gravel, but re-grade the road. Ms. Smith stated that, based on her conversation with councilmembers, the council will welcome additional information about reasons not to do the scientific study, bank restoration needs, potential grants for the boat launch and guidance on stormwater management. Staff and Managers agreed that the city must communicate what it wants to do with the road, before the District can provide input on erosion and stormwater management. The city could also send a formal request on what guidance it wants. And there is time for Scandia wants to investigate options.

- Manager Kronmiller's role in the process. Manager Tuenge stated that, based on his involvement in the committee process, she asked Manager Kronmiller to take the lead in talking with the city about possible next steps with the launch, the road and a citizen input process. Administrator Shaver expressed concern for crossing the lines between a manager's role and an administrator's. He suggested getting guidance from BWSR on appropriate roles for staff and managers. He also suggested both he and Manager Kronmiller attend meetings with the city. It was agreed to table the discussion until roles are clarified.

7. New Business (continued)

a. Permit Requests

Mr. Almer stated that there are some county applications for road projects on Hwy 55 and Manning near the Gateway Bridge that are impacting high quality wetlands. The District rules require mitigation beyond Wetland Conservation Act standards for high quality wetlands as a disincentive to impact these wetlands. The permit applications will come before the Board in April.

It was clarified that Administrator Shaver needs to provide Mr. Almer with needed information before he can review and close-out a number of permits.

b. Cost Share – Jed Chesnut—Board Action

Mr. Chesnut presented two cost share projects that were reviewed and recommended by the Cost Share Committee.

Manager Tuenge moved to approve a cost share of up to \$2,500 for John and Vicky Dotolo. Seconded by Manager DeVault. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Chesnut reported that the WCD received a Green Marina's grant that will fund 75% of the Kiwanis Camp project to stabilize access to the river, plant along the river and install a retention basin. The total project cost is \$56,873, with an estimated reduction of 9.5 pounds of phosphorus to the St. Croix River. Permits will be required. An education seminar on the site is being planned with EMWRAP.

Manager DeVault moved to approve a community cost share not to exceed \$14,219 for the Kiwanis Camp. Seconded by Manager Lindberg. Motion carried 4-0.

c. Watershed Steward Program (WSP)

Administrator Shaver reported that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and the Freshwater Society developed the WSP through a grant to train volunteers in watershed stewardship. At the end of an intensive classroom study, participants are charged with completing a water quality project in their neighborhoods. The organizations have applied for a \$100,000 grant to make the program available on-line and expand it to other watershed districts. There will still be an application process and the cost will be about \$2,000-\$2,000 per participant. If the grant is not received, the organizations are asking for watershed district support. Administrator Shaver clarified that there would be minimal staff time required in overseeing community projects. The program will develop good ambassadors for the District and because it is geared more toward the urban environment, it could be aimed at residents in Marine, Scandia and around all district lakes, plus board and CAC members. Manager Weaver spoke against pledging support because it does not have local application.

Manager Lindberg moved to pledge support of \$5,000 to the Freshwater Society for the Watershed Steward Program, if funding is needed. Seconded by Manager DeVault. Motion carried 3-1.

8. Old Business

a. Reports

i. Audit

Administrator Shaver reported that the audit is ahead of schedule and should be completed by April 1.

ii. Manager Board Numbers

Manager Tuenge reported that she and Administrator Shaver met with county commissioners Miron and Kriesel about reducing the number of District managers. The commissioners recommended that the District talk to municipalities, bring responses to the District board for a motion and bring the approved motion to the county commission. The commissioners felt the entire commission would support the District. Administrator Shaver reported that there are candidates for the Board from Scandia, May and Marine. Manager DeVault added that he knows of another interested candidate and with this number of candidates, a reduction might be a mute point. Manager Weaver stated that with the District's large budget, it is better to have more residents involved in how money is spent.

b. BWSR Grant Agreement

Administrator Shaver reported that the Marine stormwater work plan is due to BWSR on March 20. BWSR should approve the plan by April 10. A kickoff meeting in Marine is scheduled on April 14. The grant agreement covers two grants.

Manager Tuenge moved to accept and sign the BWSR grant agreement. Seconded by Manager DeVault. Motion carried 4-0.

c. Project Updates

Mr. Almer reported that the *Sand and Long Lakes* survey work was completed and two implementation options will be presented at the March 25 meeting. Engineering students selected the Big Carnelian Homeowners Group for a *Capstone Project* to address sediment runoff on Panorama Avenue and 133rd St. Mr. Almer is in the sixth week of mentoring the

students. Final projects are due in April. If timing works, students will present solutions to the Board and then to the landowners. Landowners near *Willow Brook Stream* observed sediment in the stream and think it is runoff from Hwy 95. Mr. Almer, however, thinks it is the natural sand that is bubbling up, although the stream has been over widened. Possible solutions would be habitat improvements and narrowing the stream. Next steps are to develop a draft management plan, present it to the Board and then meet with neighbors. This could be a cost share project.

Mr. Chesnut reported that the Washington Conservation District received a \$200,000 grant last year for phosphorus reduction projects in the south half of Washington County. BWSR has approved extending the projects to the north. Rural landowners have been invited to a meeting to discuss project opportunities. The grant covers 75% of project costs. Turn-out for previous meetings has been good.

d. Plan Amendment

Administrator Shaver reported that the plan went out for the 60-day review a few weeks ago.

e. Additional Personnel

Administrator Shaver reported that this is not a new issue and now with the two new BWSR grants, an additional person is needed.

Manager DeVault moved to authorize the Administrator to develop a job description. Seconded by Manager Weaver. Motion carried 4-0.

It was noted that members from the public have requested to speak on this issue next month.

f. Lease Renewal

Administrator Shaver reported that the office lease expires at end of the month. He provided a memo summarizing space options to accommodate additional personnel. Manager DeVault agreed to work with Administrator Shaver on personnel needs and a job description.

Manager DeVault moved to authorize the Administrator to sign the lease for the current office space for up to one year and try to get a 60-day release and, if a 60-day release is granted, the Administrator is authorized to sign a new lease. Seconded by Manager Weaver. Motion carried 4-0.

g. 2015 Work Plan Discussion

Managers DeVault and Tuenge requested more timelines on the work plan. Administrator Shaver stated that he will resend the plan and should have a final plan by the April meeting. Manager Tuenge suggested that the Executive Committee review the updated plan.

9. Bills to be Paid

Manager Tuenge moved to pay bills in the amount of \$21,184.35. Seconded by Manager Weaver. Motion carried 4-0.

10. Administrator's Report

Administrator Shaver reported:

- Association of District Administrators talked about revising the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD). Input from administrators on roles, board development,

leadership training, relationships with legislators, legislation and watershed planning will be compiled.

- Water monitoring workshop on March 25.
- Joint Scandia-Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District workshop on April 1. The CMSCWD might be invited to attend.
- St. Croix River Summit in Stillwater on April 29.
- MAWD summer tour and conference in Duluth on June 24-26.

11. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting is Wednesday, March 25 at 6:30 p.m. at Scandia City Hall.

12. Adjourn

Manager DeVault moved to adjourn at 9:57 p.m. Seconded by Manager Tuenge. Motion carried 4-0.

Submitted by
Debbie Meister, MMC Associates