

LOWER RUM RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

MAY 17, 2018

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Todd Haas called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. in the Committee Room of Anoka City Hall.

ROLL CALL

Voting members present were: Mark Kuzma, Ramsey; Jeff Weaver, Anoka, and Todd Haas, Andover.

Voting members absent were: None.

Also present were: Deputy Treasurer Brenda Smith, Ramsey Civil Engineer IV Leonard Linton, Ramsey City Engineer Bruce Westby, Anoka Engineering Technician Ben Nelson, and Jamie Schurbon of Anoka Conservation District.

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion was made by Kuzma, seconded by Weaver, to approve the May 17, 2018 agenda as presented. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

RESIDENT'S FORUM

None.

APPROVE MINUTES

April 19, 2018 Regular Meeting

Motion was made by Kuzma, seconded by Weaver, to approve the April 19, 2018 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

FINANCE MATTERS

Treasurer's Report

Smith presented the Treasurer's Report for the period ending April 30, 2018. Account balances for the period were: Checking, \$222,547.46; less permit account balance of (\$57,808.08), for a total balance of \$164,739.38.

Kuzma noted the reserves for 4th Generation Plan of \$90,000 in 2017 and \$110,000 in 2018.

Haas stated there are a number of negative balances on Anoka and Ramsey permits. Smith stated they have corrected a billing error on one permit to bill Lennar and notices will be sent.

Motion was made by Kuzma, seconded by Weaver, to accept the Treasurer's Report for the period ending April 30, 2018. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Payment of Bills

Smith presented the payment of bills for TimeSaver in the amount of \$843.57 (services rendered in April of 2018), Barr Engineering in the amount of \$2,555.93 (services rendered in Feb/Mar of 2018), and RJ Marco in the amount of \$317.50 (permit refund).

Motion was made by Kuzma, seconded by Weaver, to authorize payment as presented and indicated above. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

2019 Member City Assessments

Smith presented the 2019 estimated budget with proposed member assessments as follows: Andover \$11,659; Anoka, \$9,348; and, Ramsey \$20,993.

Haas asked members to submit this information to their respective cities, noting the 2019 budget will be considered for approval later in the year.

Informational; no action required.

NEW BUSINESS

LRRWMO Permit #2018-05 ~ Anoka County Solar ~ Ramsey

Haas reviewed the May 9, 2018 memo from Barr Engineering in which Barr Engineering recommends that the LRRWMO approve of the permit for this project subject to eight conditions detailed in the memorandum. Haas noted this is a large sized site.

Linton stated it is a site that Anoka County acquired for construction of the interchange, the bridge over the river to Dayton, but now it will be leased for 25 years and 13,000 solar panels installed. He explained that Dayton and Hennepin County don't want the bridge.

Weaver noted some attitudes can change after elections and asked whether Anoka County is okay with this property being leased for 25 years, if they are willing to take that gamble. Westby stated the bridge crossing is not in any of Anoka County's plans.

Linton stated the applicant will also plant pollinator-friendly vegetation under the solar panels. Haas noted the dimensions of the solar panels on this 18.6-acre site.

Motion was made by Kuzma, seconded by Weaver, to approve Permit #2018-05, Anoka County Solar, Ramsey subject to eight (8) conditions as detailed in the Barr Engineering memorandum dated May 9, 2018. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

CONSIDER COMMUNICATIONS

Coon Rapids 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update

There being no objections, Haas stated he will sign and submit the response form indicating the LRRWMO has reviewed the proposed Plan Update, has no comments and, therefore, wave further review.

REPORT OF OFFICERS & WAC ADMINISTRATION REIMBURSEMENT ~ None

ACD QUARTERLY REPORT ~ None

OLD BUSINESS

Buffer Law “Additional Waters” Amendment to LRRWMO Water Management Plan

Haas asked if there were questions or comments on this language.

Nelson stated a lot of Anoka’s storm ponds are noted as rare species instead of wetlands and asked how that can be removed. Schurbon stated they are open water so whether classified as wetland or pond, they are open water for buffer purposes. He noted the action just acknowledges this criterion and that there are rare species in the area but does not indicate any action is needed.

In response to Weaver, Nelson stated his concern relates to when they need to do maintenance on these storm ponds and basins, some of which are dry. Schurbon agreed the water storage could be temporary and explained the rare species wording comes from the DNR data base.

Haas stated it looks like the maps are included two times. Schurbon clarified there are only two maps and this is not an amendment to the watershed plan, it is an addendum, which makes a difference to BWSR.

Motion was made by Kuzma, seconded by Weaver, to approve the following addendum to the LRRWMO Plan:

“The Anoka Conservation District, in accordance with MN Statute 103F.48, identified waters matching the following criteria as potentially benefitting from perennially vegetated riparian buffers or other best management practices:

- 1: Hydrologically connected, open waterways and wetlands as part of a flowing drainage network, and**
- 2: Wetlands of high or outstanding ecological value and/or supporting rare species.”**

Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Schurbon explained the only change needed is what is reflected in the meeting minutes and then the next time the Plan is updated, this will be included.

Water Based Funding Discussion

Schurbon stated the County-wide group met yesterday to discuss and move forward its outreach program. He explained the funding went from \$100,000 to \$120,000 so the LRRWMO allocation went down by \$4,075. Haas noted the LRRWMO had \$114,274 and the focus is on riverbank stabilization.

Weaver asked whether projects that qualify are root based or rocks and hard armor, noting rootballs are only good until high water when erosion tears them out and they end up on someone else's property or the dam. Schurbon stated the method has not yet been specified but projects will be more hard armored.

Weaver asked whether the LRRWMO gets to approve the projects. Schurbon stated the projects were approved at the last meeting. Weaver asked whether the LRRWMO will find out what they are before the projects are under construction. Nelson answered in the affirmative, noting the project will be in Anoka's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) so Anoka will go out for bids and administer the project. It was noted Anoka will receive \$115,000 from this grant and has budgeted \$100,000. Weaver stated he wants to make sure we get to see the projects before they are approved and construction starts.

Schurbon described the timetable and stated the payments will be received in installments and a match is required. The 10% match, or \$11,427, is provided by whoever administers the project and can be an in-kind match (staff salaries) and does not have to be in cash. Administration of the project can be paid at BWSR hourly rates, which includes a number of rules.

Schurbon reviewed the pros and cons of administering the project, noting there is flexibility if done by a larger organization to move remaining funds to another project whereas if Anoka is the recipient, then it would go into their bank account. Haas noted the project will be larger than \$100,000.

Schurbon stated the ACD is open to being the administrator since they know the rules, if that is a simpler process. He noted there is also a liability aspect, but minor in this case.

Nelson stated if Anoka has the money and administers the project, then it will have the ACD assist with the grant funds. Schurbon stated that is a good recommendation and option as a small agreement could be signed to cover administrative help, as needed.

Motion was made by Kuzma, seconded by Weaver, to designate the City of Anoka as administrator with assistance from the ACD for administrative help, as needed. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Haas commented on the County-wide outreach program, noting it was started 12 years ago by East Metro staff, they are still responsible for all outreach programs, and report to Washington County WD. Schurbon stated the outreach efforts include work with elected officials, staff training, schools, and public events like home improvement shows. Haas stated that is where the \$125,000 is for a two-year pilot program and then, depending on funds received, the agencies can decide if they want to keep it going.

Linton stated some people said they already had that type of outreach and didn't need it but the representative pointed out that while there is communication, there are gaps in outreach and with their system, the outreach is unified and crosses school district, city, and watershed boundaries.

Kuzma asked if the LRRWMO would need to come up with funding to continue this program beyond the two-year pilot. Haas answered in the affirmative. Schurbon estimated the contribution could range from \$600 for small entities up to \$1,200. Linton agreed it is not a huge expense and by pooling funds, you can create a larger program. Schurbon stated there is still discussion on how to continue outreach beyond the pilot program.

Linton stated he found the educational articles were well written, offering an explanation, instead of just stating the rules. Haas agreed and stated his support for the two-year pilot program.

Schurbon noted all participating entities are offered the opportunity to help steer the pilot program. Haas stated in another year, BWSR may also put out more funds for the future year projects so this is the initial push to get something started.

Schurbon asked about the match for the riverbank stabilization grant and asked whether the City of Anoka will make a cash match. Smith answered in the affirmative.

OUTSTANDING ITEMS/TASK CHECKLIST

Haas reviewed the outstanding items and task checklist and stated Andover will be submitting its newsletters. He noted the local officials workshop is every four years so it should be scheduled for 2021. Schurbon stated he will reformat the checklist to show that event, but it may be part of the Plan update.

OTHER BUSINESS

LRRWMO Website Update

Schurbon asked for comments on the new website before it goes public on Monday.

Weaver noted Carl Anderson is still listed as the Anoka representative. Schurbon stated that has been updated. Weaver stated he may also be replaced after the election.

Haas noted a wording correction to add 'other watershed in Anoka County.'

Fourth Generation Plan

Haas stated the Fourth Generation Plan is due in 2021 so the process to get a consultant on board needs to start soon.

Schurbon supported that process noting it will also help when seeking BWSR grant funding. He estimated the Plan update may cost \$60,000 and stated he will provide the Sunrise River RFP information.

Smith stated she will confirm the amount budgeted at the next meeting.

The Board supported an RFP process for the Fourth Generation Plan and directed staff to provide information on that process at the June meeting.

Upper Rum River Water Management Organization (URRWMO)

Weaver asked if there should be a contingency plan in case the URRWMO fails. Schurbon stated that would be the decision of the Anoka County Board and BWSR. Haas stated he doubts Anoka County will want that responsibility so it could fall to the LRRWMO. Weaver stated the Upper Rum River is the main thread for the Rum River so it does make sense for the LRRWMO to have a contingency plan in the event that happens.

Schurbon stated to be more proactive, he could send an e-mail to BWSR saying he knows the LRRWMO is starting its Plan update process and if anything is going to happen with the URRWMO, then it would be good to know sooner. **The Board supported that suggestion.**

Schurbon explained the URRWMO operates the same financially but their city contributions are only a few thousand dollars each. Kuzma asked if the LRRWMO has taxing authority. Schurbon stated they do not but instead assess member cities.

Kuzma asked if assuming the URRWMO would change the LRRWMO into a Watershed District. Haas stated that is not necessarily the case. Weaver concurred and stated a Watershed District would be a totally different organization. Haas stated the LRRWMO functions well.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Kuzma, seconded by Weaver, to adjourn the meeting. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Time of adjournment: 9:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Wirth, Administrative Secretary