

LOWER RUM RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

OCTOBER 17, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Debra Musgrove called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. in the Committee Room of Anoka City Hall.

ROLL CALL

Voting members present were: Debra Musgrove, Ramsey; Jeff Weaver, Anoka; and Valerie Holthus, Andover.

Voting members absent were: None.

Also present were: Deputy Treasurer Lori Yager, Ramsey Civil Engineer IV Leonard Linton, Ramsey City Engineer/Public Works Director Bruce Westby, Anoka Engineering Technician Ben Nelson, Heather Lau of Barr Engineering, Andover Interim City Administrator Dave Berkowitz, Becky Wozney of Anoka Conservation District, and Colleen Werdien of Anoka Conservation District.

APPROVE AGENDA

Motion was made by Weaver, seconded by Holthus, to approve the October 17, 2024 agenda as presented. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

RESIDENT'S FORUM

Chris Smothers, 3800 Rum River Drive in Anoka, commented that he is present to observe the meeting. He stated that he has lived on the Rum River for multiple decades and there is a peninsula near his home that used to be an island. He wondered what he could do to receive approval to restore that to an island again and restore the water to his and his neighbors' properties. He stated that the conditions make it more difficult for him and his neighbors to get out on the river.

Weaver commented that the City of Anoka shared the concern with sand that filled in places where it had not previously been, and that the sand blocked navigation. He stated that the City spent one year or more obtaining the permits to dredge that navigation channel. He asked if the resident could shovel out the material to restore their navigation.

Nelson commented that he would defer that question to the DNR area natural hydrologist. He noted the different entities that are involved in permitting activities of that nature for the river. He noted that the DNR hydrologist would be able to provide the correct information to the resident as to what would be allowed and/or what would require a permit.

Smothers commented that the channel they use to access the river is now about one foot wide, where before it was much larger.

Wozney stated that she would provide the resident with the correct contact information.

Weaver commented that residents make a large investment to live on the river and to not be able to use that resource is a big deal.

APPROVE MINUTES

September 19, 2024 Regular Meeting

Motion was made by Holthus, seconded by Musgrove, to approve the September 19, 2024, Regular Meeting minutes as presented. Vote: 2 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstain (Weaver). Motion carried.

FINANCE MATTERS

Treasurer's Report

Yager presented the Treasurer's Report for the period ending September 30, 2024. Account balances for the period were: Checking, \$188,042.84; less permit account balance of (\$32,949.51), less Generation Plan reserves balance of (\$32,493.43); for a total balance of \$122,599.90.

Musgrove noted that the permit statement showed a lot of outstanding balances and asked if that is accounted for in the summary report as uncleared transactions. Yager clarified that uncleared transactions are checks that have not yet cleared the bank whereas receivables are reflected on the second page of the report.

Motion was made by Holthus, seconded by Weaver, to accept the Treasurer's Report for the period ending September 30, 2024. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Payment of Bills

Yager presented the payment of bills for Barr Engineering in the amount of \$8,522.91(August engineering services), TimeSaver in the amount of \$747.40 (September secretarial services), and RTY Consulting in the amount of \$2,059 (third quarter accounting services).

Musgrove referenced the Barr Engineering invoices that are from August and asked if that delay is typical. Yager stated that Barr Engineering has changed their invoicing to do full month invoicing and therefore is behind. She stated that she has received the September invoice, but it was not early enough to include for this meeting and will come forward next month.

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

Posting for Audit Services

Yager stated the 2025 budget includes an audit, noting that the last audit was completed in 2020 for the 2019 calendar year. She stated that the LRRWMO is required to complete an audit every five years and therefore she would like to post for the services to get someone on board to complete the audit.

Motion was made by Weaver, seconded by Holthus, to authorize posting for audit services as proposed. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

LRRWMO Funding Request for Rivers Bend Regional Pond Project ~ Ramsey

Westby explained how the City discovered the need for regional water treatment to support development in the area. He stated that the City developed the plans for the pond and identified the area that would be treated by the pond, noting a total of 35 acres that includes a residential development that has never been treated as it was built before the current water treatment regulations. He stated that the project has begun with a cost of almost \$900,000. He stated that watershed-based funding was awarded for this project in the amount of \$248,250 and the City is funding the remainder of the project. He stated that in additional discussions with Schurbon, he was made aware that the City of Anoka had been awarded \$45,000 in watershed-based funding but that project did not move forward so, therefore, those funds could be reallocated towards this project. He stated that Schurbon also noted that the LRRWMO would have funds that could be applicable to this project, which led to the request for an additional \$46,000.

Wozney stated that the LRRWMO has budgeted cost-share funds through the years as part of the annual budget and City paid assessments. She stated that this does seem like a great project and Schurbon recommended that this would be a good use of cost-share funds. She stated that the request for the Board is to consider authorizing \$8,450 from the LRRWMO cost-share grant to go towards the project, which would provide the necessary match to the WBIF grant.

Yager stated that the Board annually has budget line items for the WBIF, noting \$18,600 in 2024 and \$20,000 for 2025. She stated that the LRRWMO also budgets annually for the cost-share grant program noting \$6,000 for 2024 and a carryover from 2023 in the amount of \$8,450.

Weaver asked where the water is currently draining for these 35 acres. Westby identified a floodplain wetland in River's Bend Park, noting that water is directed there from the stormwater system. He stated that is currently a shallow floodplain wetland that overflows and does not have the capacity to treat this water. He confirmed that this pond would treat the water before it goes downstream.

Weaver asked if maintenance agreements would be put in place to ensure the sediment is cleaned out. Westby replied that pond would become part of the City's stormwater system and would be maintained as needed. He stated that Ramsey is currently working to develop a stormwater maintenance policy which will better identify a maintenance schedule.

Weaver noted that the City of Anoka has been installing grit chambers as part of street improvement projects which are cleaned once or twice a year and noted that is resulting in better water quality in the river. He applauded this project from the City of Ramsey.

Musgrove asked if there should be two separate motions for this item. Wozney noted that the action could be completed in one motion.

Motion was made by Weaver, seconded by Holthus, to authorize \$30,000 from the WBIF fund to the Rivers Bend Regional Pond Project. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Weaver, seconded by Holthus, to authorize \$8,450 from the LRRWMO cost share grant fund to the Rivers Bend Regional Pond Project. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Weaver commended Ramsey for this initiative, noting that anything done upstream to improve the water quality also has a positive impact downstream.

NEW BUSINESS

LRRWMO Permit #2024-24 ~ Voice of Hope Church ~ Ramsey

Linton reviewed the October 11, 2024 memo from Barr Engineering in which Barr Engineering recommends that the LRRWMO approve of the permit for this project subject to 11 conditions detailed in the memorandum.

Motion was made by Holthus, seconded by Weaver, to approve Permit #2024-24, Voice of Hope Church, Ramsey, subject to eleven (11) conditions as detailed in the Barr Engineering memorandum dated October 11, 2024.

Further discussion: Lau noted the condition for the applicant to provide a geotechnical report prior to construction to ensure separation from the groundwater.

Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

LRRWMO Permit #2024-35 ~ Martin's Meadows Wetland Enhancement ~ Andover

Wozney reviewed the October 11, 2024 memo from Barr Engineering in which Barr Engineering recommends that the LRRWMO delay its decision until after the DNR has an opportunity to review and comment on the project.

Motion was made by Holthus, seconded by Weaver, to table Permit #2024-35, Martin's Meadows Wetland Enhancement, Andover, as detailed in the Barr Engineering memorandum dated October 11, 2024. Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

CONSIDER COMMUNICATIONS ~ None

REPORT OF OFFICERS & WAC ADMINISTRATION REIMBURSEMENT

2024 Third Quarter Reports ~ Andover, Anoka, Ramsey

Berkowitz presented the Year 2024 Third Quarter Report for the City of Andover.

Nelson presented the Year 2024 Third Quarter Report for the City of Anoka.

Linton presented the Year 2024 Third Quarter Report for the City of Ramsey.

Musgrove asked about the status of the water treatment plant. Westby replied that project is on schedule to be completed in August of 2025.

Weaver noted previous concerns from Ramsey residents related to Lake Itasca and asked if there was an update. Wozney commented that the water level has rebounded to the typical level, and she has not received any additional comments. She did reach out offering to do survey work, but noted that would involve financial assistance from that association and she did not hear anything back on that offer.

ACD QUARTERLY REPORT

2024 Third Quarter Report

Wozney presented the Year 2024 Third Quarter Report from ACD.

Musgrove asked if there was an update on the streambank stabilization. Nelson stated that they are awaiting a 401 certificate before proceeding.

OLD BUSINESS

JPA Update

Wozney reviewed the comments received from Ramsey and Andover.

Westby provided a summary of the comments from the City of Ramsey staff and City Council.

Wozney stated that the grammatical changes would be easy to address and noted that she would like the LRRWMO Attorney to review some of the comments, but noted that they seem reasonable.

Musgrove agreed that the LRRWMO Attorney could provide clarification on those items.

Weaver stated that in the comments from the cities, member is capitalized and asked if that is accurate. Musgrove confirmed that is correct.

Nelson referenced page 12, number nine, related to the dam, and stated he would like that removed as the City of Anoka has sole authority and the LRRWMO does not control the dam. He asked that the item be removed or specify that the Anoka dam is excluded. He noted that the LRRWMO passed a resolution recognizing that authority in 2016. Musgrove stated that perhaps the LRRWMO Attorney can provide clarification on the language that would be better to use.

Weaver left the meeting.

Nelson summarized the remaining comments that he had, noting that he can follow up with his comments in an email to Wozney.

Berkowitz commented that there are a lot of strong words such as 'order' and 'shall,' noting that while that is good, there should also be an appeal section. He summarized the additional comments from Andover.

Musgrove commented that perhaps the LRRWMO Attorney can clarify whether the LRRWMO would have the power to condemn property, or whether that language should be removed. She did agree that there should be a process for appeal.

Motion was made by Holthus, seconded by Musgrove, to direct staff to submit the comments related to the JPA from the cities to the LRRWMO Attorney for review. Vote: 2 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

It was noted that this item would return to the LRRWMO at the November meeting and would then go forward to the member city councils in order for the LRRWMO to consider this for adoption at its December meeting. Wozney stated that the resolution could be approved by member cities on their consent agendas if that is desired by the city.

OUTSTANDING ITEMS/TASK CHECKLIST

Wozney reviewed the outstanding items and task checklist.

OTHER BUSINESS

Bus Tour October Dates

Wozney stated that the bus tour is planned for October 29th, noting that more details will be provided within the week. There was additional discussion about who would be attending and the size of the bus that would be needed. Wozney stated that she will rent a bus which would allow for additional attendees.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Holthus, seconded by Musgrove, to adjourn the meeting. Vote: 2 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Time of adjournment: 9:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amanda Staple". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Amanda Staple
Administrative Secretary