



Meeting Minutes

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board Meeting

July 28, 2022, 1 p.m., In-person and Teleconference using Zoom

Board Members in Attendance

Dakota County Commissioner Mike Slavik, Chair

Scott County Commissioner Tom Wolf, Vice Chair

Dakota County Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg, Secretary/ Treasurer

Others in Attendance

Bruce Johnson, Dakota County SWCD, Supervisor

Jennifer Mocol-Johnson, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, PRAP Coordinator

Steve Christopher, Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, Board Conservationist

Brian Watson, Dakota County SWCD, Manager

Mark Zabel, Dakota County, VRWJPO Administrator

Melissa Bokman-Ermer, Scott County, Watershed Co-administrator via teleconference

Travis Thiel, Dakota County, VRWJPO Senior Watershed Specialist

Mark Ryan, Dakota County, VRWJPO Watershed Engineer

Brita Moore-Kutz, Dakota County, VRWJPO Communications and Outreach Specialist

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Slavik, Holberg, and Wolf were in attendance.

3. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

There were no comments from the audience.

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of Minutes from the June 23, 2022, Meeting
- c. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report
- d. Authorization to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Lakeville for Irrigation System Audits and Improvements
- e. Authorization to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Rosemount for Irrigation System Audits and Improvements

- f. Authorization to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Apple Valley for Irrigation System Audits and Improvements
- g. Schedule a Public Hearing to Receive Comments on the Draft Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) 2023 Budget and Watershed Management Tax District Levy

Res. No. VRW 22-13: Motion by Commissioner Holberg, Second by Commissioner Wolf and passed on a 3-0 vote to approve the consent agenda.

5. Approval of Expenses

Mark Zabel presented the current expenses for approval as shown on item 5.

Res. No. VRW 22-14: Motion by Commissioner Holberg, Second by Commissioner Wolf and passed on a 3-0 vote to approve the expenses totaling \$54,647.64 incurred between June 12, 2022 and July 13, 2022.

Business Items

6a. Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Performance Review and Assistance Program

Mark Zabel introduced Jennifer Mocol-Johnson of the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) who is the coordinator for the Performance Review and Assistance Program (PRAP). Jennifer provided some of her background as a former Board Conservationist. Jennifer noted that the PRAP began in 2008 with an authorization through the Minnesota Legislature which directed the BWSR to assess the performance of certain local units of government. Jennifer described the process used for implementing the assessments for the program. There are four basic types of assessments, a statewide summary of information supplied to the BWSR, organizational assessments which are performed with local units (Counties, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Watershed Districts, Watershed Management Organizations) on a ten year rotation, Watershed Based assessments are performed with entities involved with watershed based planning (One Watershed/ One Plan), Special Assessments are performed on an as needed basis. The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization will be undergoing an organizational assessment. The organizational assessment for the VRWJPO will include completion of an evaluation checklist, an organizational assessment survey (sent to Board members, Advisory Committee members, staff, and partners), and a Water Plan progress assessment. Completing the survey should take 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Jennifer is planning to return to deliver the report on September 22, 2022.

6b. Authorization to Release Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Watershed Management Plan Amendment to Plan Review Authorities for 30-day Review and Comment Period

Mark Ryan presented the purpose and need for the amendment. Mark also spoke to specific contents of the amendment and how adjustments were made for budgeting in relation to expected potential grant funds through Watershed Based Implementation Funding. Commissioner Slavik commented that this was well founded and understandable. Commissioner Slavik asked if comment was limited to agencies or if it was available for public comment. Mark Zabel responded that the 30-day review and comment period is a requirement for an opportunity for plan review agencies but that because the amendment will also be posted to our website for public review the public may also comment.

Res. No. VRW 22-15: Motion by Commissioner Wolf, Second by Commissioner Holberg and passed on a 3-0 vote to approve authorization to release Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Watershed Management Plan Amendment to plan review authorities for 30-day review and comment period.

6c. Presentation and Discussion on Proposed VRWJPO 2023 Draft Budget and Watershed Management Tax District Levy

Mark began the presentation by returning to the budget portion of the strategic planning presentation from July showing a pie chart of the budget from 2021. 70% of the budget for 2021 is allocated to project development and implementation. Mark showed a graph depicting the history of realized revenues and expenses from 2005 on to the present and the growth in budget, particularly the growth related to grant funding. Mark also showed a graph of levy and rate over time for both the Dakota County portion and the Scott County portion. Mark showed a slide of levy rates for some other peer organizations for a comparison to the VRWJPO rates (VRWJPO rate are significantly lower than others). Mark went on to show the proposed draft budget for the VRWJPO highlighting those line items where a budget change compared to the Final Budget for 2022 is proposed. Overall expenditures are \$2,959,573 with a cash reserve of \$427,850. There is also revenue in reserve for Wetland Bank of \$155,393. The overall budget for 2023 is \$3,387,423. Mark requested the VRWJPB's input regarding the potential to allocate \$100,000 from cash reserve to CIP Cost Share in anticipation of a potential project need in 2024. Mark noted that cash reserve is an unrestricted fund and can be used anywhere in the budget and CIP Cost Share is a restricted fund and can only be used for CIP.

Staff Reports

Brian Watson

Brian noted that Lana Rotty will be retiring. The Dakota County SWCD has found a highly qualified individual to backfill that position and Lana has agreed to delay her full retirement date to allow an opportunity to train the new person in the nuances of the position.

Brita Moore-Kutz

Brita reported on progress on the We Are Water exhibit but that the project will actually be kicking off in August with a display at the Dakota County Fair which will include a "Water Bar". The Water Bar is an opportunity to offer water from various sources for people to try and using this as a means to engage in a conversation about water and its importance. Commissioner Slavik asked what days the Water Bar would be at the fair as he may wish to sign up as a Watertender. Brita directed Commissioners to Valerie Nepple, Groundwater Protection Unit Supervisor, if they had an interest in signing up as a Watertender. Virtual events with We Are Water will begin next Wednesday, August 3, 2022 with Water Story Sharing hosted by the Dakota County Libraries. The Dakota County Libraries will also be hosting a Writing With Water workshop on August 9, 2022.

Mark Ryan

There is a public hearing tonight for Ravenna Township doing a water resources ordinance update. Mark will be there for questions if any come up. Mark noted that there have been five permits issued in June. Normally there are about two per year. Mark is highlighting the rise in activity. Mark reported that the City of Lakeville will be initiating the stream restoration (WBIF funded) project in North Creek. Mark also mentioned that the stormwater project in Foxborough Park near this same area has been awarded and although very near to each other will be phased with a winter construction of the stream restoration and a later construction of the stormwater treatment basin.

Mark Zabel

Mark handed out a summary from last month's strategic planning session allowing Board members to review and asking they provide him with any further comment or input and staff will move to implement their priorities.

Adjourn


Motion by Commissioner Wolf, Second by Commissioner Holberg and passed on a 3-0 vote to adjourn the meeting at 2:07 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, August 25, 2022, at 1 p.m. in Conference Room A at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center, 4100 220th Street West, Farmington, MN.

Respectfully submitted by

Mark Zabel
Administrator for the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

Attest



Commissioner Secretary/ Treasurer

8.25.22
Date