



Meeting Minutes

Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (VRWJPB) Meeting

Thursday, January 23, 2025, 1 p.m., in-person at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center and virtual via Microsoft Teams

Board Members in Attendance

Dakota County Commissioner Bill Droste

Dakota County Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg

Scott County Commissioner Tom Wolf

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Members in Attendance

Brad Blackett

Others in Attendance

Nikki Stewart, Dakota County, Environmental Resources Department Director

Travis Thiel, Dakota County, Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO) Administrator

Melissa Bokman Ermer, Scott County, VRWJPO Co-Administrator (virtual)

Kelly Perrine, Dakota County, VRWJPO Senior Watershed Specialist (virtual)

Jeff Dunn, Dakota County, VRWJPO Water Resources Engineer

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

Brian Wisdorf, Dakota County, Assistant County Attorney, VRWJPO legal counsel

Joe Barten, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Senior Resource Conservationist

Bruce Johnson, Dakota County SWCD, Board Member

John Nicolai, Rosemount resident and applicant to the CAC

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m.

2. Election of Officers

Commissioner Holberg nominated Commissioner Wolf to serve as Chair of the VRWJPB, seconded by Commissioner Droste. Motion carried on a 3-0 voice vote.



Commissioner Holberg nominated Commissioner Droste to serve as Vice Chair, seconded by Commissioner Wolf. Motion carried on a 3-0 voice vote.

Commissioner Droste nominated Commissioner Holberg to serve as Secretary-Treasurer, seconded by Commissioner Holberg. Motion carried on a 3-0 voice vote.

3. Roll Call

Commissioners Wolf, Droste, and Holberg were present.

4. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

None.

5. Approval of Agenda

Res. No. VRW 25-01: Motion by Commissioner Holberg to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Droste. Motion carried on a 3-0 voice vote.

6. Approval of Minutes from the December 5, 2024, Meeting

Res. No. VRW 25-02: Motion by Commissioner Holberg to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Droste. Motion carried on a 2-0 voice vote (Commissioner Holberg abstained).

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

a. Acceptance of Treasurer's Report

b. Delegation of Authority to Administrator and Co-Administrator

Commissioner Wolf asked if the change in the Delegation of Authority raising the limit from \$50,000 to \$100,000 for expenditures that can be approved by the Administrator or Co-Administrator in lieu of the VRWJPB is consistent with Dakota County's policy. Legal Counsel Brian Wisdorf said it was.

Res. No. VRW 25-03: Motion by Commissioner Droste to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Holberg. Motion carried on a 3-0 voice vote.

8. Approval of Expenses

Travis Thiel presented the expenses submitted between November 1 and November 30, 2024, totaling \$435,340.93.

Travis also presented the expenses submitted between December 1 and December 31, 2024, totaling \$610,517.85.



Res. No. VRW 25-04: Motion by Commissioner Holberg to approve the expenses, seconded by Commissioner Droste. Motion carried on a 3-0 voice vote.

9. Business Items

a. Consideration and Appointment of John Nicolai to the Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee (CAC).

Travis introduced John Nicolai, a Rosemount resident, and confirmed he met the criteria for joining the CAC.

John asked about the role of the CAC in implementing watershed plans and policies. Travis answered that the CAC makes recommendations to the JPB to implement the work plan through the budgeting process.

Res. No. VRW 25-05: Motion by Commissioner Holberg to appoint John Nicolai to the CAC, seconded by Commissioner Droste. Motion carried on a 3-0 voice vote.

b. Authorization to Execute a Grant Agreement with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources for FY25 Clean Water Fund Grant for Phase 2 of the Alimagnet Lake Alum Treatment Project

Travis presented the Alimagnet Lake alum treatment project, intended to reduce internal phosphorus loading in the lake, and explained the reason for applying for a second Clean Water Fund (CWF) grant for the second of two alum doses. The only bid submitted for applying the alum was much higher than the original Engineer's Estimate and the first CWF grant the VRWJPO received in FY24, so staff determined that a second grant application was needed to sufficiently fund both doses of alum necessary for desired results.

Commissioner Droste mentioned he'd been hearing about community concern about planned pickleball courts on Alimagnet Lake, which is separate from the alum treatment project, and asked if VRWJPO was aware. Travis replied that yes, VRWJPO staff are tracking the project, but are not aware of further developments from the City of Burnsville besides a concept plan. Joe Barten added that the Dakota County SWCD could provide support for stormwater mitigation projects alongside the pickleball courts, which would be impervious surfaces. Travis said the concept plan includes a rain garden.

Brad Blackett said he lives on Alimagnet Lake and is concerned that the raingarden described in the concept plan is insufficient for the amount of impervious surface proposed by the pickleball courts and that they would drain directly into the lake. The Burnsville City Council had yet to formally approve the project.



Res. No. VRW 25-06: Motion by Commissioner Droste, seconded by Commissioner Holberg. Motion carried on a 3-0 voice vote.

c. Authorization to Execute Two Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Agreements with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for North Creek Channel Improvement Projects in Empire and Farmington

Jeff Dunn presented the two projects awarded Conservation Partners Legacy (CPL) grants from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, which involve culvert repairs and replacements and streambank stabilization in Empire and Farmington on North Creek. The projects were recommended in a past geomorphic assessment. After executing the grants, Jeff plans to begin the preliminary engineering work.

Commissioner Holberg asked if trout were getting stuck in the culverts. Travis said the VRWJPO hasn't been electrofishing in the area, but if fish are getting stuck in the downstream culvert (Empire), they likely aren't reaching the upstream culvert.

Res. No. VRW 25-07: Motion by Commissioner Droste to execute the grant agreements, seconded by Commissioner Holberg. Motion carried on a 3-0 voice vote.

10. Staff Reports

Jeff Dunn

- In discussion with SWCD technical staff about further water quality projects.

Brian Wisdorf

- Working on VRW CAC bylaws, plans to have them available for VRWJPB comment at the next meeting.

Brita Moore-Kutz

- Spoke with Dakota County Master Gardeners in early January, introducing them to the VRWJPO. More than 100 people joined the virtual presentation.
- The Sun Thisweek newspaper published an article about the low-voltage electric fish barrier and removal efforts at East Lake. Kelly Perrine was quoted. The reporter reached out after Brita and Kelly worked with City of Lakeville staff to produce a short video about the project.

Kelly Perrine

- The Water Conservation and Landscaping for Clean Water Marketing Campaign is underway, with the first of two videos completed and running online about LCW. The second video,



focused on irrigation practices, will launch closer to the irrigation season. Both videos are being shown through Dakota County SWCD's social media platforms and are funded with an Accelerated Implementation Grant from the Minnesota Department of Health, plus from Dakota County, Dakota SWCD, VRWJPO, Black Dog Watershed Management Organization, Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization, and Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization.

Travis Thiel

- Receiving inquiries from developers for the number of wetland bank credits available. Purchase agreement work is ongoing. More credits are expected after the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers releases them.
- The VRWJPO has been pursuing an independent federal tax identification number but has faced opposition from the IRS. Travis is in talks with others at Dakota County to contact local Members of Congress to address the issue. Commissioner Holberg said she may be able to help by contacting Rep. Tom Emmer as well.
- Revised JPA is finalized and approved by both County boards.

11. Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Droste to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Holberg. Motion carried on a 3-0 voice vote.


Next Meeting Date: Thursday, February 27, 2025, at 1 p.m. in Conference Room A at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center, 4100 220th Street West, Farmington, MN, and via teleconference on Microsoft Teams.

Respectfully submitted by

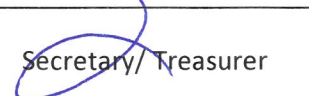
Brita Moore-Kutz

Communications & Outreach Specialist for the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

Attest



Commissioner



Secretary/ Treasurer

4-24-25

Date