



Meeting Minutes

Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

Date: 2/12/2025

Minutes prepared by: Brita Moore-Kutz, Communications and Outreach Specialist for the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization (VRWJPO)

Location: In-person at the Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center, Farmington, MN, and virtual via Microsoft Teams

CAC Members in Attendance

- Josh Borton
- Brad Blackett
- John Nicolai
- Andy Riesgraf (virtual)
- Sandy Weber

CAC Members Absent

- Kevin Chamberlain
- Jim Kotz
- Steve Hamrick

VRWJPO Staff in Attendance

- Travis Thiel, VRWJPO Administrator
- Jeff Dunn, VRWJPO Water Resources Engineer
- Brita Moore-Kutz, VRWJPO Communications & Outreach Specialist
- Kelly Perrine, VRWJPO Senior Watershed Specialist

Others in Attendance

- Curt Coudron, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Project Supervisor

Agenda Items

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m.

2. Election of Community Advisory Committee Chair and Vice Chair

Sandy Weber nominated Josh Borton for Chair, seconded by Andy Riesgraf. No other nominations. Josh Borton was elected Chair on a 5-0 voice vote.

Josh Borton nominated Brad Blackett for Vice Chair, seconded by Sandy Weber. No other nominations. Brad Blackett was elected Vice Chair on a 5-0 voice vote.

3. Roll Call

Members Borton, Blackett, Nicolai, Riesgraf, and Weber were present.

4. Audience Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

None.

5. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Brad Blackett to approve the agenda, seconded by Sandy Weber. Motion carried on a 5-0 voice vote.

6. Approval of Minutes from the November 20, 2024, Meeting

Motion by Brad Blackett to approve the minutes, seconded by Sandy Weber. Motion carried on a 5-0 voice vote.

7. Business Items

a. Comments on and Adoption of Vermillion River Watershed Community Advisory Committee Revised Bylaws

Travis Thiel presented the updated bylaws, changed to reflect revisions made to the VRWJPO empowering joint powers agreement (JPA).

Brad Blackett asked if the bylaws affected the provision for current members serving extra terms in case no new applicants could be found. Preference is given to applicants living within the watershed, but residency is no longer required, per the revised JPA, but this has no impact on the ability for members to serve “interim” terms during the search for new applicants. Travis said language could be added to the bylaws that would include these membership and term length provisions, which the committee agreed would be helpful for clarification purposes.

Motion by Sandy Weber to adopt the CAC revised bylaws, seconded by Brad Blackett. Motion carried on a 5-0 voice vote.

b. Presentation and Discussion of Vermillion River Watershed Budget-Identified Capital Improvement Projects

Jeff Dunn and Kelly Perrine gave a presentation on planned projects for 2025 and 2026 and answered questions from the committee. Projects discussed:

- East Lake Invasive Fish Barrier and Removals (Lakeville)
- Launch Park Wetland Restoration (Lakeville)
- Grand Prairie Park Water Reuse and Recirculation (Lakeville)
- Firelight Way Hydrodynamic Separator (Lakeville)
- Mork Wetland Bank (Castle Rock Township)
- Dakota County Street Sweeping Study
- 4th and Willow Hydrodynamic Separator (Farmington)
- North Creek culvert improvements at Denali Way (Farmington) and MN Highway 3 (Empire)
- 15th and Bailey Stormwater Improvements (Hastings)
- Alimagnet Lake Alum Treatment (Apple Valley/Burnsville)
 - Members asked about how long it would potentially take for Alimagnet Lake to be delisted from the state Impaired Waters List following the alum treatment. Kelly said that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is compiling the 2026 list at present and isn't sure exactly when Alimagnet would meet the eligibility for delisting.
 - Brad Blackett reported that he had tested some pipes and ponds near Alimagnet Lake for chloride levels with a test kit acquired during the Winter Salt Week campaign at the end of January 2025.

8. Updates

a. Chairperson's Report

None.

b. Staff Updates

Travis Thiel

- Staff are working on a policy regarding projects and maintenance to be included in the next Watershed Plan. The growing costs of maintaining existing projects are burdening partner local government units' (LGU) budgets, so VRWJPO hopes to find a more equitable solution. Draft policies will be presented to the CAC when they are available.
- VRWJPO, Dakota County natural resources staff, and Minnesota Trout Unlimited have been in discussion about a potential stream restoration project on South Creek. The County owns the land, and Trout Unlimited is taking the lead on project design. Construction could take place as early as 2026, depending on how long the design process takes.
- The 2025 budget had initially projected \$50,000 in wetland bank credit sales revenue for the VRWJPO. Due to strong demand for credits, there will likely be more revenue from these sales that can go towards the Mork Wetland Bank, which would mean less money from the Capital Improvement budget is needed.

Brita Moore-Kutz

- VRWJPO is hosting a table at the Dakota County Fix-It Clinic on Saturday, Feb. 15, at the Galaxie Library in Apple Valley.

Curt Coudron

- Dakota SWCD is updating their cost-share program policy following feedback from partners.
- Landscaping for Clean Water course registration is open. About 100 people have registered for the introductory course so far. The social media video marketing campaign for the program has launched, making more people in the County aware of the program and how to sign up.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Josh Borton to adjourn, seconded by Brad Blackett. Motion carried on a 5-0 voice vote.

Next Meeting

Date: May 14, 2025

Time: 4:30 p.m.

Location: Dakota County Extension and Conservation Center Conference Room A