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**MISSISSIPPI
WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT
ORGANIZATION**

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 8 September 2020

Attachment 3

Time: 3:00 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Location: Zoom Video Conference

Commissioners in Attendance

Donna Schmitt, Columbia Heights; Steve Eggert, Fridley; Jeffrey Dains, Lauderdale; Kevin Reich, Minneapolis; Randy Stille, St. Anthony; and Chris Meyer, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB).

Staff and Guests: Alicia Beattie; Nick Busse, Brett Eidem, Adam Flett, Dan Kalmon, Sadie Loose, Abby Moore, Michaela Neu, Udai Singh, Nancy Stowe, and Doug Snyder MWMO; and Amy Juntunen, JASS.

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by Chair Reich.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Motion by Dains, second by Stille to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Eggert, second by Dains to approve the Minutes of the July 14, 2020 meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Motion by Dains, second by Eggert to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports from Staff

The MWMO facility will remain closed through November 1. Staff will re-assess the COVID situation in mid-October to determine whether to re-open based on potential resurgence after Labor Day and the start of the flu season.

Staff has determined that MWMO will not participate in the deferred payroll taxes due to too many unknowns. There is no proper guidance from the Treasury Department or IRS. The Presidential memorandum is vague and the current information is confusing.

A special meeting will likely need to be held in late September/early October to approve the final bid documents for the North Columbia Golf Course project. The bid needs to be approved by October 15 at the latest. Staff is waiting on a few items to finalize. If MPRB doesn't approve the project or MWMO is otherwise unable to approve the bid, all bids would need to be denied and the bid process redone once all approvals are received.

Staff are internally reviewing the Stewardship Program with the goal to present to the Board in early 2021 with proposed updates. These updates will not increase the allocation of funds, but will define the number of grants per round.

The Mississippi River Green Team has approved additional Tuesday and Thursday mornings through October to perform work at North Mississippi Regional Park. All precautions and policies re COVID will be strictly adhered to. Work will also be done on Saturday mornings through mid-November.

Singh thanked the monitoring team for following all COVID guidelines. MWMO is providing monitoring services to the Bassett Creek WMC in the Bassett Creek tunnel this year. A weather station is being tested at the Towerside Stormwater District and is providing good data. MWMO is helping Columbia Heights to monitor their iron-enhanced sand filter and to work on vegetation management at their stormwater pond. Real-time WIFI data monitoring is now working, after a few weeks of trial and error.

As of this week all professional services needed to complete the ten-year Watershed Management Plan have been contracted. The contract runs through July 2021. A 60-day informal review period has been set beginning September 1. Staff will offer the pre-draft plan to agencies and member cities for review. Staff has been compiling and incorporating public comments already received into the plan. Comments will also be collected during the 60-day informal review period.

In March the Board approved a grant to Wahl Co. to connect the two systems at Towerside as part of the Towerside Phase II project. Agreements for that project are currently being drafted and will be aligned with the \$100,000 Met Council grant received by the City of Minneapolis. Wahl will be looking to split any costs beyond the \$100,000 grant on a 50/50 basis. The current proposal to complete the project is \$160,000. The grant approved by MWMO in March has a not-to-exceed

amount of \$82,000. Partners in the project include the Towerside Innovation District, MPRB, Minneapolis Public Works, U of M, Wahl Companies, and others.

The Upper Harbor Terminal base design is complete. Minneapolis Public Works has hired SRF Consulting to move ahead the design with streets, ROWs, park lands, etc. There has been support for a district stormwater system, though design of the system is still conceptual at this time. As the city sets elevations for roads, they can consider what it will mean for a district stormwater system. Partners include MPRB, Minneapolis Public Works, and Upper United Properties as developer.

Staff has been making headway with the Restorative Development Partnership, working with over 20 different organizations to define restorative development. A website has been created to help people understand what the study is about. The study timeframe has been elongated due to COVID. The funding is in place for the feasibility study. Staff anticipates bringing an additional funding request in November for the partnership side of the program. This program will look at food and energy needs, along with water needs, to be input into the modeling and support moving the feasibility to the second phase, looking at costing out a system that would work for the whole city with stormwater tied into waste reuse. The partnership is essential to raise funding for that part and keep the project moving forward.

Three applications are under consideration for capital project grants. The capital project grant program is designed to fund costs for components with clear public benefit, water benefit, habitat, and technological advancement above regulatory minimums.

The first application is Artspace at 1500 Jackson St NE. The goal is to create space for artists and creative businesses. This project repurposes the Northrup King Campus in the NE Art District to incorporate art studios, commercial studio space and living space while simultaneously displaying the campus' history. Components with potential to receive support through the MWMO capital grant program include wildlife habitat, planting native trees and shrubs over as much area as possible, planning for tree trenches and rain gardens, a water reuse cistern for irrigation, and permeable pavement for the parking lot. Projects supported by MWMO grants usually have a public education/signage component to inform the public. Staff will continue to review as the project moves through the planning process and may request funding in November for this project.

The second application is the Hiawatha maintenance facility expansion. Seven acres have been purchased to the south of the existing facility which will also house the Water Maintenance Division. The current building on the property will be demolished. The project is still in the conceptual stage and is looking for opportunities of stormwater reuse for washing vehicles and water meter testing, incorporating large underground stormwater storage, pollinator habitat around stormwater ponds, biofiltration, and a stormwater feature in the employee courtyard area to educate employees and the general public. The water maintenance division employees manage stormwater features throughout the city. Another opportunity is to create a partnership for educational, training and recruitment opportunities with local unions. Environmentally-focused BMP-driven elements will help train future tradespeople in our mission.

The third application is the North Point Health and Wellness Center project. In November 2018, the MWMO Board awarded a \$350,000 grant for stormwater best practices serving this project. However, the bids came in too high and the project did not move forward. The developer is now working with Hennepin County staff and design team to ensure the revised project has the same benefit for the funds previously awarded. The revised design includes modular wetlands and a large underground tank for stormwater reuse in green areas. Staff has performed a detailed review of the new stormwater calculations and agrees that the revised design provides more pollutant removal than originally proposed. This project will proceed to final design and detailed cost estimates for commencement in 2021.

The building-out of the Towerside reuse system is in its final stage. The contractor has provided a quote for a remote monitoring system at \$7,300. The reuse system is currently operational but requires on-site visits to troubleshoot through sensors and alarms. The remote system allows staff to operate and adjust treatment levels remotely. The Board had originally approved up to \$100,000 for the system. To date, only \$88,000 has been spent. MWMO will operate the system through December 31, 2022 and then turn it over to the Towerside District for ongoing operations.

General Business

Resolution 2020-25: TNT Levy Amount. The 2021 budget includes a 3.75%, or \$275,000, increase over 2020. There has been no increase in the budget over the past five years. There are some relatively large projects upcoming the 2021-2025 period that this increase will help to fund. Staff is requesting to set a not-to-exceed levy limit at \$5.95 million for the 2021 tax levy. Motion by Eggert, second by Dains to approve Resolution 2020-025 approving the MWMO maximum levy amount for FY 2021 at \$5,950,000. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2020-026: Stewardship Fund Planning Grants. Five applications were received for planning grants. Staff recommends funding four projects: 1) ASK: Drawing Water – Visualizing the B3 Standards and Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) by the Minnesota Stormwater Manual at \$10,000; 2) Children’s Dental Services: Improving water quality through permeable materials and community engagement in Northeast Minneapolis at \$10,000; 3) First Lutheran Church of Columbia Heights stormwater mitigation project at \$10,000; and 4) Kingfield Neighborhood Association: Stormwater management and rainwater use implementation strategies for small multi-use buildings at \$10,000. Motion by Eggert, second by Stille to approve Resolution 2020-026 approving 2020 planning grants to ASK, Children’s Dental Services, First Lutheran Church, and Kingfield Neighborhood Association. Motion carried unanimously.

Open Public Input

None.

Board Updates and Announcements

None

Adjourn

There being no further business, motion by Dains, second by Eggert to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Juntunen
Recording Secretary

Records of Motions

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