



2522 Marshall Street NE
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55418-3329

612-746-4970
contacts@mwmo.org

mwmo.org

**MISSISSIPPI
WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT
ORGANIZATION**

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 8 November 2022

Time: 3:00-5:00 PM

Location: 2522 Marshall Street NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418

Commissioners in Attendance

Connie Buesgens, Columbia Heights and Hilltop; Steve Eggert, Fridley; Jeffrey Dains, Lauderdale; LaTrisha Vetaw, Minneapolis; Randy Stille, St. Anthony Village; Michael Lukes, St. Paul; and Billy Menz, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB).

Staff and Guests: Nick Busse, Madison DelCastillo, Eva Hanson, Shawn James, Brian Jastram, Dan Kalmon, Abby Moore, Kevin Reich, Jim Rudolph, Wyatt Schulman, Udai Singh, Nancy Stowe, and Mary Thelen, MWMO; Glenda Meixell, Anoka Conservation District; and Amy Juntunen, JASS.

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

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Motion by Dains, second by Menz to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Buesgens, second by Dains to approve the September 13, 2022 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

4.1. Resolution 2022-031: Juneteenth Holiday

Motion by Stille, second by Vetaw to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports from Staff

Moore provided an update on training and community learning, including the Mississippi Green Team and Minnesota Water Stewards (MWS). The 2023 MWS cohort will support six stewards, four traditional and two art stewards. The Art Steward capstone project is to create public art projects to engage community members. Art has proven to be a great way to engage and educate citizens and build our network within the art communities. Staff are also working in partnership with the Capital Region Watershed District to schedule an Art on the River experience as an engaging way to connect people to the river. A budget request is expected in January. The Mississippi Green Team had 14 youth participants in 2022 with half new participants and half second-year participants. Green Team members perform green infrastructure maintenance and restoration projects across MPRB properties and Minneapolis. During the school year there are monthly educational and work days, with regular communication regarding work and educational opportunities and coaching and mentoring throughout the year. Staff will begin recruiting for the 2023 season soon.

Busse showed drone footage taken in 2022, including a flyover of the river and the demolition of the domes at the Upper Harbor Terminal site. Busse is a licensed drone pilot and other organizations have requested MWMO to capture drone footage on their behalf. Drone footage has also been used in local newscasts. The drone allows capture of the transformation of large landscapes like Upper Harbor Terminal, Northpoint Health & Wellness Center, and other large projects. Footage is also very popular on social media. The drone cost \$3,200 to be replaced in 2022.

Singh introduced the water quality team and described the MWMO water quality monitoring program, which includes regular sampling of the river at various points including storm sewer discharging to the river. Baseline data allows for evaluation of changes. The team also monitors installed BMPs to evaluate effectiveness. Data is used to create Subwatershed Assessments and shared in partnership with federal, state and local agencies, including sister watersheds, to reach the common goal of improving water quality in the Mississippi. The West Mississippi WMO also contracts MWMO to perform water quality monitoring. All monitoring data is organized and published to the MWMO website. MWMO has been invited to present at various conferences about water monitoring. Commissioners requested staff to arrange a field trip to visit project installations.

General Business

Resolution 2022-032: FY 2023 Levy Certification. As discussed at the September meeting, the levy is in an amount not-to-exceed \$6.971 million. This is an 8.2% increase over the 2022 levy due to anticipated project timelines for the UHT capital project, as well as others. Staff recommends approval of the budget and levy as presented.

Motion by Dains, second by Buesgens to approve Resolution 2022-0032 approving the levy at \$6.971 million. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2022-033: Graco Park Development. MPRB applied for a Capital Project Grant this fall for the development of Graco Park. The site is on the river north of Boom Island Park and the Plymouth Avenue Bridge, just east of Hall's Island. Construction is anticipated in 2023 with the park opening to the public in 2024. Plans include a multi-purpose and energy efficient community building, habitat restoration, above-ground stormwater management features, gathering spaces, improved river access, and a realigned bike and pedestrian trail with a tunnel under the Plymouth Avenue Bridge to improve access and mitigate safety concerns at the 8th Avenue and Sibley Street intersection. MPRB is requesting funding for the native habitat restoration, stormwater management features, and the heated sidewalk snowmelt system as a chloride reduction measure. The plan gives pedestrians access to the river and a walkway along the river. Community engagement led to a habitat-focused concept plan. The native habitat restoration will include about 1,300 perennial native species and over 150 trees planted. Staff is requesting an amount not-to-exceed \$480,000 in capital grant funding for above and beyond BMPs that improve habitat and reduce chloride and sediment entering the river.

Motion by Menz, second by Vetaw to approve Resolution 2022-033 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2022-034: UHT Not to Exceed Limits. The MWMO has been actively participating in the Minneapolis Upper Harbor Terminal project since 2015. The MWMO's Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan has up to \$11,000,000 in funding as part of the CIP schedule for potential projects at the Upper Harbor Terminal Site.

The District System which includes MWMO capital projects that will connect district habitat, public space and stormwater together across the 50-acre site are now all moving ahead with design. 2023 Phase 1 of the District stormwater system elements are closing in on 100% design.

MWMO Staff and the project partners have been writing and negotiating the terms of a Reciprocal Easement and Operating Agreement (REOA) which will be distributed to all partners' legal representatives on November 14, 2022. The estimated grant and phasing loan costs have been narrowed to a set of not-to-exceed limits which will allow MWMO staff to

finalize negotiations on a REOA that will be brought forth to the MWMO Board at the January meeting.

At this time staff is requesting the Board to approve the following for the Upper Harbor Terminal (UHT) project: a not-to-exceed limit of \$ 8,800,000 (2022 dollars) which does not include inflationary adjustments through the end of the project's 2030 phasing; and a not-to-exceed for a phasing loan of \$3,000,000 which includes estimated 6% inflation and 3% interest through 2030.

Commissioners questioned enforcement methods for the loan to be repaid and were answered that the costs are tied to the parcels and repayment is necessary only when permits on those parcels are pulled.

Motion by Vetaw, second by Buesgens to approve Resolution 2022-034 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

[Vetaw departed at 4:47 p.m.]

Open Public Input

None.

Board Updates and Announcements

Lukes noted he has urged the City Council and company servicing the Kasota Ponds area to attend the MPCA chloride application training.

The US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) is conducting a disposal study for the lower St. Anthony Lock & Dam and Ford Dam. Staff may want to consider a response for the Lower St. Anthony Lock & Dam since it is within the MWMO watershed area. Staff noted that the disposition is not within the purview of the Watershed; the MWMO's role would be to provide water quality data that may inform future decisions. MWMO will be involved regarding material claims on shoreline improvements that have been installed and may be affected by such disposition.

The Executive Committee will meet in January. Officer and Executive Committee elections will be held at the January meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. on January 10, 2023, at the MWMO office.

Adjourn

There being no further business, motion by Buesgens, second by Menz to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Juntunen
Recording Secretary

Record of Motions

Motion by Dains, second by Menz to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Buesgens, second by Dains to approve the September 13, 2022 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Stille, second by Vetaw to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Dains, second by Buesgens to approve Resolution 2022-0032 approving the levy at \$6.971 million. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Menz, second by Vetaw to approve Resolution 2022-033 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Vetaw, second by Buesgens to approve Resolution 2022-034 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.