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**MISSISSIPPI
WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT
ORGANIZATION**

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 10 January 2023

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; Jeff Dains, Lauderdale; Randy Stille, St. Anthony Village; Michael Lukes, St. Paul; and Billy Menz, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB).

Staff and Guests: Emmy Baskerville, Nick Busse, Shawn James, Abby Moore, Kevin Reich, Udai Singh, Nancy Stowe, and Mary Yang, MWMO; Glenda Meixell, Anoka Conservation District; Colleen Sheehy, Public Art St. Paul; and Amy Juntunen, JASS.

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 p.m. by Chair Eggert.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

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

Motion by Buesgens, second by Stille to approve the November 8, 2022 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

4.1. CAC Appointment Renewals

4.2. Service Providers 2023-24

Stille noted that it is no longer “City of Roseville Metro-INET,” just Metro-INET.

Motion by Menz, second by Stille to approve the consent agenda with the change noted. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports from Staff

A special meeting of the Board is scheduled for Tuesday, February 21, 2023 regarding Upper Harbor Terminal at 3:00 p.m. at the MWMO office.

In 2023 MWMO is obligated to amend its Watershed Management Plan in three categories: Long-term operations & maintenance, climate change, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). Amendments will be presented for approval mid-year and will help to inform future projects.

Two new staff members were introduced, Emmy Baskerville, Project and Grant Specialist, and Mary Yang, Outreach Specialist. Baskerville is a botanist and will bring a lot of knowledge to projects. Yang is a Green Team alumnus from the 2013-2015 cohort.

General Business

Resolution 2023-003: Proposed Boundary Change. The Shingle Creek and West Mississippi WMOs are in the process of updating their Watershed Management Plan and have completed mapping and modeling, including use of MWMO hydrologic models, to update watershed boundaries to more accurately reflect hydrologic boundaries. Overall, the net change is a loss of approximately 40 acres, or 207 parcels. Certain areas did gain parcels, but there is a net reduction in MWMO watershed area. The Shingle Creek WMO will initiate the process for boundary changes with Hennepin County. Staff recommends the Board adopt Resolution 2023-003 concurring with Proposed Boundary Changes.

Motion by Lukes, second by Dains to approve Resolution 2023-003 concurring with the boundary changes proposed by the Shingle Creek and West Mississippi WMOs. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2023-004: 37th Avenue Street Reconstruction. This is a scheduled Capital Improvement Project (CIP) on the approved CIP plan scheduled for 2023 at \$800,000. This is a joint project between Columbia Heights and Minneapolis and will install green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) over a one-mile stretch of 37th Avenue between Central Avenue and Stinson by narrowing the road and adding 27 curbside bioswales and tree trenches with pollinator friendly native plants and trees. The MWMO is only funding components above and beyond city

requirements. This GSI will capture runoff from the right-of-way (ROW) and untreated areas outside the ROW, provide some flood storage, add wildlife and pollinator habitat, and add green space and trees for public benefit, as well as to reduce the heat-island effect. This project will be very visible to the public and reduce 13 lbs. of TP and 2,632 lbs. of TSS. The total GSI project cost is \$789,000, or 7.5% of the total road project cost. The amount requested to be funded by MWMO is \$436,000 from the Capital Improvement Project Fund.

Motion by Dains, second by Buesgens to approve Resolution 2023-004 Approving the Community Artist-in-Residence as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2023-005: Artist-In-Residence 2023. MWMO has been inadvertently running an Artist-In-Residence program since 2021 with the *Weaving Water Workshops* and *Personal Watersheds* exhibits which have brought many residents into the MWMO community space and created a successful engagement program, proving that art is essential to community engagement. In 2023, Staff would like to formalize Sarah Nassif as the Community Artist-in-Residence to meet the 2021-2031 Watershed Management Plan’s goal of developing “an engaged, empowered, and informed public by providing information, opportunities for engagement, training and financial support to promote connection with and responsible stewardship of water and natural resources in the watershed.” Nassif has collaborated with outreach staff to tailor a variety of flexible public outreach projects for the MWMO to rebuild community connections after the pandemic. Art has proven to be a powerful vehicle to engage individuals and encourage discussion on how water connects our communities. In 2023 MWMO will facilitate additional public arts programs at the MWMO site, as well as take these engagement efforts out of the MWMO space and into different community and neighborhood groups to expand upon past successes and build partnerships between community groups. Staff is requesting \$20,000 to fund this program in 2023.

Motion by Dains, second by Buesgens to approve Resolution 2023-005 approving the Community Artist-in-Residence as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2023-006: Public Art St. Paul artARK Project. Public Art St. Paul hosts the Triennial Wakpa Art Festival. In 2023, the festival’s focus is the Mississippi River. Public Art St. Paul will partner with MWMO and Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) to commission artist Seitu Jones for his art/science project called artARK. The project involves building a boat that will be able to take groups of up to 18 people at one time onto the Mississippi River to learn about, collect data, and use art to respond to and document experiences on the river. The broad intention is to use art and ecology to foster a greater connection to the river, a better understanding of the Mississippi River watershed, and promote river stewardship. The team will consult with MWMO staff on curriculum and provide tours on the river throughout the summer. The Wakpa Festival runs June 24 – September 16, 2023 and will reach thousands of people at the festival, on boat tours and through social media postings and virtual tours. The project is well-aligned with the 2022-2023 outreach campaign, Meet the Mississippi. Seitu Jones Studio will own the artARK and continue to operate it beyond the timeframe of the Triennial festival. Jones plans an ongoing partnership with MWMO and

CRWD to operate the artARK in the future. Public Art St. Paul is seeking funding from MWMO to complete the artARK build this winter and develop programs for use in spring/summer 2023.

Commissioner Eggert asked staff to manage expectations by documenting and creating agreements for ongoing programming past the Triennial, if deemed necessary.

Motion by Menz, second by Lukes to approve Resolution 2023-006 funding the artARK project in partnership with Public Art St. Paul and authorizes staff to implement with funding not-to-exceed \$45,000. The resolution in the meeting packet should have the title corrected prior to signing. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2023-007: Professional Services for UHT District System Easement. This is a request for approval of the professional services agreement to complete easement descriptions for the Reciprocal Easement and Operating Agreement (REOA) that will spell out the roles and responsibilities of all parties to the agreement and record all easements necessary for the operations and maintenance of the district system. Staff is requesting a not-to-exceed amount of \$25,000 for Rani Engineering to complete work on the easement depictions and descriptions for the UHT District system. Rani initiated this work on October 18, 2022 upon administrative approval. Consensus by partners resulted in the need to document over 40 integrated and complex easement layers in the ROEA, necessitating the shift to a Board-approved agreement.

Motion by Dains, second by Menz to approve Resolution 2023-007 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 2023-008: Election of Officers and Meeting Dates. The Executive Committee nominated the existing officers: Eggert, Chair; Stille, Vice Chair; Vetaw, Treasurer. The Commission's regular meetings will continue the same schedule on the second Tuesday of odd months.

Motion by Dains, second by Buesgens to approve Resolution 2023-008 approving officers as nominated and meeting dates for 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

Open Public Input

None.

Board Updates and Announcements

Lukes noted the St. Anthony Park Community Conservation Group and St. Paul Environmental Committee have updated goals including a re-wilding plan for the Kasota Ponds area to include

turtle basking logs, reduce water pollution and road salt within the area, enhance salamander habitat and host walking tours. A cleanup will be held this spring.

Singh added that MWMO completed a 10-year monitoring plan for Kasota Ponds and continues to perform water quality monitoring every five years to document changes in trends. MWMO employees are regular attendees of the Kasota Ponds cleanup event each spring. Singh will forward the invitation to the cleanup to Commissioners.

Meixell announced that she has been re-elected and will continue attendance on behalf of Anoka Conservation District for her four-year term.

The next meeting is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. on March 14, 2023, at the MWMO office.

Adjourn

There being no further business, motion by Buesgens, second by Dains to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Juntunen
Recording Secretary

Record of Motions

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

Motion by Buesgens, second by Stille to approve the November 8, 2022 minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Menz, second by Stille to approve the consent agenda with the change noted. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Lukes, second by Dains to approve Resolution 2023-003 concurring with the boundary changes proposed by the Shingle Creek and West Mississippi WMOs. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Menz, second by Buesgens to approve Resolution 2023-004 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Dains, second by Buesgens to approve Resolution 2023-005 approving the Community Artist-in-Residence as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Menz, second by Lukes to approve Resolution 2023-006 funding the artARK project in partnership with Public Art St. Paul and authorizes staff to implement with funding not-to-exceed \$45,000. The resolution in the meeting packet should have the title corrected prior to signing. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Dains, second by Menz to approve Resolution 2023-007 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Dains, second by Buesgens to approve Resolution 2023-008 approving officers as nominated and meeting dates for 2023. Motion carried unanimously.