Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

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MEETING MINUTES

Date: 8 September 2026 **Attachment 3**

Time: 3:00 PM

Location: 2522 Marshall Street NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418

Commissioners in Attendance

Connie Buesgens, Columbia Heights; Ann Bolkcom, Fridley; Jeff Dains, Lauderdale; Lona Doolan, St. Anthony Village; Kate Lowisz, St. Paul; Meg Forney, MPRB (online); and LaTrisha Vetaw, Minneapolis (online).

Staff and Guests: Emmy Baskerville-Doeckel, Adam Flett, Aaron Goemann, Shameka Gherau, Kevin Reich, Emily Resseger, Grace Polverari; and Nancy Stowe, MWMO; Glenda Meixell, Anoka Conservation District; and Amy Juntunen, JASS.

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m. by Chair Buesgens.

The new Commissioner for St. Paul, Kate Lowisz, introduced herself to the Commission and staff.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Motion by Bolkcom, second by Doolan to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

None.

Reports from Staff

None.

General Business

2026-0022: FY2027 Draft Levy

Staff propose a 3.9 percent levy increase over fiscal year 2026 for a total of $8,505,000. This amount reflects the current Watershed Management Plan including Capital Improvement Projects, general operations, and a contribution to MWMO's capital asset replacement fund. This resolution sets the maximum levy. The final levy will be submitted for approval at the November Board meeting and may decrease but cannot increase beyond this proposal.

Motion by Dains, second by Doolan to approve Resolution 2026-0022 approving the MWMO maximum levy amount for Fiscal Year 2027 of $8,505,000. Motion carried unanimously.

2026-023: Preliminary Stormwater Design 1720 Marshall

MWMO is collaborating with MPRB to convert a property acquired by MPRB from a vacant industrial lot into a public park with a regional stormwater treatment feature. The site is just south of MWMO and across the river from the 27th Avenue Overlook and Ole Olson park. This is part of the MPRB River First and Above the Falls plan to convert properties on both sides of the river into parkland. The Marshall Street Study identified and ranked 70 opportunities for water quality improvement, habitat connections, flood mitigation, and public amenities.

This property was identified as an opportunity area. A regional stormwater treatment feature on this site would treat 39 acres, reducing TSS by 13,576 lbs./year and TP by 43 lbs./year from the 18th Avenue outfall. In January 2026, the MWMO Board of Commissioners authorized MWMO staff to fund the demolition of the vacant facilities and conduct initial site preparation for park and stormwater facilities. MPRB's long-term vision for this site includes pedestrian and bicycle access, a boat launch, and a pedestrian bridge over the river.

Next steps are to refine the location for the stormwater treatment feature, determine how the feature will integrate with the finalized park design, design reconstruction of existing stormwater infrastructure between Marshall St NE and the river, coordinate with

permitting entities, and continue collaborating with partners, to reach a 60% design of the stormwater treatment facilities at this site. Staff are requesting $50,000 for professional services to develop a 60% design of stormwater treatment facilities at this site to be fully integrated with the redeveloped park property. Full buildout of the park and facility is anticipated to take three years.

Motion by Forney, second by Lowisz to approve Resolution 2026-0014 approving preliminary design for stormwater treatment facilities at1720 Marshall Street NE at a cost not-to-exceed $50,000. Motion carried unanimously.

2026-024: Shoreline Access Enhancement 2100 Marshall

In 2025 the Board approved a feasibility study with MPRB to extend an existing bike/pedestrian path from Gluek Park, located directly south of this property, through this property behind The Sample Room, a restaurant located on this property, to MPRB property north of the site. The owners of the parcel have agreed to allow the path extension across the property, including shoreline stabilization and the rebuilding of an existing stairway to allow access to the river.

Current conditions on the site include eroded, steep slopes, an existing private dock and staircase, a mix of riprap and urban fill, and invasive species. The area has become degraded and overgrown. Overall goals for this site are to enhance habitat, stability, and make the area amenable to public access. This property is not conducive for stormwater treatment but is prime for ecological enhancement. This site is within the Mississippi flyway. This proposal includes coordination with MnDNR to install amendable mussel habitat and includes 90% design completion, defining easements/land exchange, a more enhanced ecological plan, pre-permit coordination with DNR, NPS and USACOE, and finalization of construction phases with MPRB for shoreline and access enhancements and parkland enhancement and connection.

Staff are requesting approval of $220,700 for professional engineering services to complete 90% design and construction plans for shoreline and access enhancements.

Motion by Forney, second by Dains to approve Resolution 2026-024 approving funding for shoreline improvement and access enhancement at the 2100 Marshall Street NE site at a cost not-to-exceed $220,700.

Motion carried unanimously.

2026-025: Stewardship Fund Action & Planning Grants

MWMO staff received three applications for planning grants and three applications for action grants. Grant applications were reviewed by staff and the CAC and all six grants are recommended for approval. Action and Planning grants are open for application twice a year with Action grants available up to $50,000 and Planning grants available up to $20,000.

Action grants recommended for approval include:

Augsburg University – Living with Rivers conference and pilot research workshop. This application is for a three-day workshop for their river semester program and connects on-water education and recreation to the ongoing work of urban stormwater management, paired with a pilot research project on stormwater flows, urban wetlands, and ecosystem services in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood. Total grant requested $47,807.50 for 120 people to participate in this program.

MPRB – East River Flats. This is a $50,000 grant application to support rehabilitation of a stormwater BMP and 2500 LF of shoreline restoration including invasive species removal, removal of infected ash trees, stabilization of steep slopes and turf to prairie conversion at East River Flats. Long-term maintenance will be done by MPRB.

We All Need Food and Water – Green Light Puppets youth outreach and education event. This application is requesting $27,000 to teach North High and Frankle Middle school students to conduct a puppet performance about stormwater, pollution, habitat, etc. This program teaches the students about these topics as well as pubic speaking and confidence. Students will then perform the puppet show for elementary school students at at least four events with performances to be scheduled this winter or next spring.

All action grants include match either in-kind or cash.

Planning grants include:

Lyndale Neighborhood Association – patio drainage correction. MWMO funded a permeable paver patio at this location in 2009 and 2011. The Association is requesting funding for a redesign and retrofit. Installation included a liner under the pavers, and the patio is sloped toward the building instead of away from the building, resulting in stormwater flow toward the building. This request is for $15,700 and includes a 45% cash match. This building is also shared with multiple community groups and the project will include outreach via their regular newsletter and newspaper.

McKinley Community – Green and Grow Together neighborhoood organization is requesting $20,000 to complete a design for stormwater management and habitat improvement on site. The project will engage the community in the planning process and create a concept plan including community gathering spaces, green stormwater infrastructure, food production, and environmental education opportunities. Match is in-kind and volunteer engagement time.

The Towerside Innovation District request is for $20,000 for extensive engagement with four properties adjacent to TID covering 14 acres. These properties are planning for fairly extensive improvements so it is a good time to engage regarding stormwater and habitat enhancement. This request is for $20,000 with 25% match via in-kind (staff time) to increase education on MWMOs investment in the Towerside Improvement District.

Total request across all six grants is for $180,508 in Stewardship Grant Funding.

Motion by Dains, second by Lowisz to approve Resolution 2026-025 approving funding the 2026 Action and Planning grants at a cost not-to-exceed $180,507.50. Motion carried unanimously.

Open Public Input

None.

Board Updates and Announcements

Doolan attended the Minnesota Watersheds annual meeting on August 31, 2026. Plumbers have proposed legislation to limit stormwater reuse, it was voted to not support that restriction. The other main topic was regulation of wake boat usage. However, legislation is needed to bring statewide consistency and determine enforcement authority.

Lowisz announced that Friends of the Mississippi River will be holding their annual fundraiser on September 24, 2026.

Forney noted that the 2026 Nobel Conference at Gustavus Adolphus is called “Mighty Mississippi: Currents of Change” and will be held October 6-7.

Adjourn

There being no further business, motion by Dains, second by Forney to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 4:17 p.m.