



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting
Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Agenda Item

Item 5. D. – Report from Citizen Advisory Committee

Prepared By

Linda Loomis, Administrator

Summary

On Tuesday, March 5, 2024, the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) met virtually. There was not a quorum of the CAC present. The CAC discussed Educator Mini-Grant applications received and made recommendations to the Board. Members of the CAC that were not present were asked to rank the applications too.

The CAC discussed opportunities for outreach and resources that they would like to use when tabling at events.

The March CAC meeting packet is attached

Attachments

March CAC meeting packet

Recommended Action

No action recommended – for information only



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Agenda

Citizen Advisory Committee

Tuesday, March 5, 2024 | 4:30 p.m.

Virtual via WebEx

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Citizen Input on Non-agenda Items
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of the March Agenda
 - b. Approval of the February Minutes
4. Old Business
 - a. Winter Salt Use Video Review – CAC provide status update
 - b. Update on MN River Journey video – Sent for Board approval in February 2024
 - c. Update on Education and Outreach Priorities Meeting (January CAC Meeting)
 - d. Refresher of CAC Role in LMRWD (Linda)
5. CAC Discussion Items
 - a. 2024 Calendar Planning (*see attached calendars in packet, updated with dates*)
 - CAC Meetings (i.e. group events, learning opportunities, and tours)
 - Outreach Events (i.e. group volunteering and tabling)
 - Arbor Day Event (Eden Prairie)- Exhibitor Application due **Monday, March 11th**
 - b. Finalize Ideas for Spring/Summer Newsletter Draft: **Discuss and Prioritize**
 - i. Show photos of rain gardens from cost-share grants.
 - ii. Share ways to reduce water use and introduce rain barrels.
 - iii. Showcase spring pollinator gardens.
 - iv. Share information on the use of fertilizers vs. native plants.
 - v. Provide information about keeping storm drains clean and impact to waterways.
 - vi. Continue to repeat pet waste topic for any season.
 - vii. Share information that's unique to the Minnesota River – i.e. presentations on Minnesota Department of Natural Resources fisheries or fishing on the river.
 - viii. Show Ike's Creek (information from resource signs?)

- ix. Introduce nature viewing opportunities and waterfowl migration that can be viewed in the spring.
- c. Educator mini-grant applications review
 - a. Tammy Hakanson (Integrated Arts Academy, Chaska)
 - b. Natalie Warren (Friends of the Mississippi River's Environmental Stewardship Institute)
 - c. Alexis Buesgens (Chaska Middle School West)
 - d. Amy Conniff (Shakopee Area Catholic School)
 - e. Maggie Ekrem (Prior Lake High School)
6. Communications
 - a. Administrator Report
 - Update on Watershed Activities
 - Board Transitions
 - b. CAC Report
 - Open Floor for Announcements and Information Sharing
7. Adjournment

Please RSVP to confirm a quorum



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Agenda

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

Tuesday, February 6, 2024 | 4:30 p.m.

Virtual via WebEx

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

- a. The meeting was called to order by Suzy Lindberg. The following members were present: Judy Berglund (CAC Member), Lee Peterson (CAC Member), Linda Loomis (Lower Minnesota River Watershed District [LMRWD] Administrator), Della Schall Young (Young Environmental), Suzy Lindberg (Young Environmental), Jess Norby (Young Environmental), and Rachel Kapsch (Young Environmental).
- b. The following CAC members were absent: Greg Genz, Thomas Hartle, Kevin Kedrowski, Patty Thomsen. **It was noted that the meeting will not have a quorum with only two CAC members present.**

2. Citizen Input on Non-agenda Items

3. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of the February Agenda. Peterson motioned; Berglund seconded.
- b. Approval of the December Minutes. No quorum = no action was taken.

4. Old Business

- a. Fall Newsletter – Sent for Board approval in February 2024. It was noted that the fall newsletter will be on the Board meeting agenda this month and then advanced to publication on website.
- b. Winter Salt Use Video Review – This topic was tabled as the owner of the item was not present at the meeting. The group noted that without snow this year, it has been difficult to get the chloride content the CAC planned for.
- c. Update on MN River Journey video – Sent for Board approval in February 2024. It was noted that the video will be on the Board meeting agenda this month and then advanced to publication on website and social media.

5. CAC Discussion Items

- a. **2024 Calendar Planning** (*see attached calendars in packet*)
 - CAC Meetings (i.e. group events, learning opportunities, and tours)
 - i. Discussion: Peterson noted that he would like to see the CAC/LMRWD go out and visit with farmers and have a two-way

discussion about issues and solutions. Originally from northeastern Iowa, he noted that he has connections there to the local soil and water conservation district (SWCD) that has done the largest implementation of cover crops. He offered to employ this connection to create a demonstration about their large-scale work in Iowa and how it could apply to the upstream LMRWD communities. **Action item: Work with Lee Peterson to explore arranging this meeting for July 2024.**

- ii. Discussion: Berglund noted she is specifically interested in visiting Cargill to see the work on the river and interested in touring cost-share projects to give the CAC experience to talk about what can be done when they meet with community members.
 - iii. Next steps: Peterson and Berglund generally noted their agreement with the 2024 meeting calendar as it stands; however, they recommended repeating the topic for concurrence at the March 2024 meeting to gain full input from the rest of the group.
- **Outreach Events** (i.e. group volunteering and tabling)
 - i. Discussion: Berglund asked if there are tabling opportunities with farmers in Carver County and through other events. Loomis noted the need for more discussion about how to reach farmer groups and the use of handouts to influence topics such as cover crops.
 - ii. Peterson noted he lives near Black Dog and Berglund recommended the Eden Prairie event as a fun event to get an introduction to tabling in March. Berglund noted she is located conveniently to do Chaska and Chanhassen events, noting the Burnsville market is a successful event for native plants.
 - iii. Berglund recommended we remove the Hennepin County Fair listing in Corcoran, MN, as there is limited connection to the LMRWD. She also noted there was a lot of interest in the Carver County and Eden Prairie Arbor Day Celebrations, requesting those dates be researched and added. Everything Spring and Egan Expo were noted to be the same event.
 - iv. Discussion: Farmer's market dates should be spread throughout the summer, allowing two CAC members to staff each event or run the event in shifts for longer events. For example, the Eden Prairie event had shifts for an all-day event where farmer's markets may just be morning shifts.
 - v. Noted that tabling should focus on promoting the cost-share program; this leads to a lot of excitement. Many visitors are interested in rain gardens. Loomis noted that other watershed districts offer a class in how to plant gardens.
 - vi. Next steps: It was requested that the tabling event list be refined with dates and details to coordinate CAC sign-ups for volunteer shifts. SignUpGenius was recommended as a tool to use. Recommendation was made to repeat this topic for concurrence at the March 2024 meeting to gain full input from the rest of the group. Note one of the early events is in March with the opportunity to work next to Wild Ones.
- b. Refresher of CAC Role in LMRWD
 - a. Loomis noted that the CAC is an important function of the organization and volunteers can serve in an advisory role and be engaged with LMRWD work. The CAC provides ideas and information to the Board of

Managers to guide decision-making from a citizen level.

- c. Update on Education and Outreach Priorities Meeting (January CAC Meeting): Lindberg shared an update that the workshop summary will be presented to the LMRWD at the February Board meeting and made available to the CAC once approved. The summary will provide updates and next steps to focus in on priorities of the Education and Outreach Program.
- d. Brainstorm Ideas for Spring/Summer Newsletter Draft:
 - a. Discussion and ideas:
 - i. Show photos of rain gardens from cost-share grants.
 - ii. Share ways to reduce water use and introduce rain barrels.
 - iii. Showcase spring pollinator gardens.
 - iv. Share information on the use of fertilizers vs. native plants.
 - v. Provide information about keeping storm drains clean and impact to waterways.
 - vi. Continue to repeat pet waste topic for any season.
 - vii. Share information that's unique to the Minnesota River – i.e. presentations on Minnesota Department of Natural Resources fisheries or fishing on the river.
 - viii. Show Ike's Creek (information from resource signs?)
 - ix. Introduce nature viewing opportunities and waterfowl migration that can be viewed in the spring.
 - b. Berglund noted a recent Star Tribune article highlighting chloride awareness; however, the group confirmed this topic is better for the fall/winter newsletter.
 - c. Action Item: Young Environmental can start a Word document with initial ideas and get CAC input to advance this project.

6. Communications

- a. Administrator Report
 - I. Update on Watershed Activities: More information will be shared at March meeting due to attendance.
- b. CAC Report
 - I. Open Floor for Announcements and Information Sharing
 - I. Judy Berglund noted she will be out of town for the March CAC meeting and recommended Kevin facilitate the March meeting. Action item: Young Environmental sent a note to Kevin.
 - II. Della Schall Young noted Jess Norby and Rachel Kapsch are new members of the team on the call and invited them to share a bit about their background:
 - Rachel Kapsch is a Water Resources Scientist with experience in consulting. She has worked in watershed management through her time at the Coon Creek Watershed District, which included water quality and permitting projects as well as education and outreach work for the Metro Children's Festival and farmers markets promoting science education and outreach.
 - Jess Norby is a Senior Water Resources Scientist who joined Young Environmental from Carver County Watershed Management Organization, where she worked for six years. She helped support the Education and Outreach Program there, which gives her a lot of ideas for how to be successful.

She is a Chaska native and has done monitoring within the LMRWD, including Seminary Fen and Clay Hole Lake. Jess led the stormwater monitoring program, which included cost-share grants and she is familiar with rain gardens on local properties.

7. Adjournment: Peterson motioned; Berglund seconded.

Note: Future need to obtain RSVPs to confirm a quorum

2024 Citizen Advisory Monthly Meeting Calendar

Events, Tours, Topics, and Talks

January	February	March	April	May	June
<p>Joint Workshop with Board/Staff Connect to discuss priorities of the Education and Outreach Program</p>	<p>Standard Virtual Meeting Focus on confirming 2024 calendar.</p>	<p>Standard Virtual Meeting Review Educator Mini-Grants.</p>	<p>Waterfowl Migration Viewing Outdoor viewing of birds at a Minnesota River location.</p>	<p>CHS/Cargill Tour Learn more about local commerce's connection to the Minnesota River.</p>	<p>Cost-Share Tour Visit cost-share sites in the LMRWD to see dollars at work for the environment.</p>
July	August	September	October	November	December
<p>Standard Virtual Meeting Presentation about best practices with conservation farming.</p>	<p>Ike's Creek Tour Tour Ike's Creek with the summer interns to learn about the site.</p>	<p>Minnesota River Boat Tour Watch the leaves change as you enjoy the Minnesota River.</p>	<p>Standard Virtual Meeting Presentation about water quality monitoring in waterbodies.</p>	<p>Standard Virtual Meeting Presentation from an engineer about</p>	<p>Standard Virtual Meeting End-of-year recap, celebration, and recognition of CAC.</p>



To-Do List/Wishlist

In December 2023, the group discussed tours and presentations they would like to participate in during 2024. Below is a list of potential opportunities and recommendations:

CAC Brainstorm	Staff Recommendations
Boiling Springs tour	Recommend avoiding Boiling Springs as sacred ground.
Ike's Creek or other trout stream tour	Ike's Creek is a good site visit: the Citizen Advisory Committee could do a joint tour with the summer interns in July/August following their geomorphic assessment work.
CHS or Cargill tour	Linda has connections to pursue a tour. Goal for spring 2024. Action Item: Linda supply contacts to arrange tour.
Water treatment plant tour	Back-burner tour based on number of ideas. Action Item: Research potential partners for tour in late 2024.
Waterfowl migration outing on the Minnesota River (Minnesota Valley Wildlife Refuge or Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) mentioned as potential partners)	The Minnesota River at the Old Cedar Bridge is noted as an ideal place for wildlife viewing. Goal for late April or May 2024 to do a bird-watching activity along the river. Action Item: Research potential partners/events through either the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources or the Saint Paul Audubon Society.
LMRWD cost-share project tours	June should be a good time of year to tour cost-share projects.
Conservation farming presentation demonstrating farming along the Minnesota River (Sever Peterson mentioned as a potential partner)	Action Item: Research potential partners and discuss whether an in-person site visit or web-based presentation is the best method.
Wetland bank tour	We recommend this is not the best fit with the LMRWD's work. Could consider fens as a resource to visit at another time in the future.

<p>Presentation from an engineer about how water and natural resources issues are identified and solved</p>	<p>Action Item: Schedule and confirm an engineer/scientist speaker from the technical consultant pool to present on the process of taking a project from start to finish.</p>
<p>Minnesota River water quality and monitoring presentation Presentations on other resources monitored in the LMRWD (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) mentioned as potential partners)</p>	<p>Action Item: Schedule and confirm a volunteer speaker to discuss the topic virtually.</p>
<p>Additional Recommendations from Staff:</p>	
<p>Minnesota River Boat Tour</p>	<p>This has been successful in the past. Increase connection to the Minnesota River. Action Item: Inquire with Greg Genz about whether he could provide the boat for a tour.</p>
<p>Annual Report</p>	<p>Staff can present the draft 2023 Annual Report before it is finalized and sent to the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). This will give the CAC an understanding of the report and a chance to provide any feedback.</p>