



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Board of Managers

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Carver County Government Center, 602 East 4th Street, Chaska, MN 7:00 p.m.

Approved _____, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

A. ROLL CALL

On Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 7:00 PM CST, in the Board Room of the Carver County Government Center, 602 East 4th Street, Chaska, Minnesota, President Barisonzi called to order the meeting of the Board of Managers of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD).

President Barisonzi called for the roll call. The following Managers were present: President Barisonzi, Manager Lauren Salvato, Manager Vinatha Viswanathan and Manager Janet Williams. Manager Kuplic was absent.

In addition, the following attended the meeting in-person: Linda Loomis, Naiad Consulting, LLC, LMRWD Administrator; Will Lytle, Evergreen International Sustainability Solutions, LLC, incoming LMRWD Administrator; Della Schall Young, Young Environmental Consulting Group, LLC, LMRWD Technical Consultant; Rebecca Mittelstaedt and Jeff Wanat, residents, 5120 102nd Street W. Bloomington; Dan Tix, MNL, 8740 77th St NE, Otsego; and Greg Emerick, POLLi. John Kolb, Rinke Noonan Attorneys at Law, LMRWD Legal Counsel; Lindsey Albright, Dakota County Soil & Water Conservation District; Commissioner Lisa Anderson, Carver County; Commissioner Jodi Brennan, Scott County; Ben Burnett, Manager, Prior Lake/Spring Lake Watershed District; Joe Birkholz and Molly Jansen, Park Street Public, LMRWD Government Relations Consultant and Patricia Larson, resident, 11073 Oregon Circle, Bloomington attended virtually.

2. CITIZEN FORUM

No one present wished to address the Board of Managers.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

A. Additions, Corrections and Deletions to the Agenda

President Barisonzi introduced this item.

Administrator Loomis requested the removal of the invoice from Naiad Consulting.

Manager Salvato made a motion to approve the agenda with the removal of the invoice from Naiad Consulting. Manager Williams seconded the motion. Upon a vote being taken the motion was carried unanimously.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS & PRESENTATION

A. Presentation of 2024 monitoring results by Dakota County SWCD

Lindsey Albright, Monitoring and Outreach Coordinator for the Dakota County SWCD, gave the Board a presentation on the 2024 monitoring results from Dakota County.

Manager Salvato asked if they had taken action associated with these findings in the past. Ms. Albright said no action has been taken involving her organization; however, they have been having annual meetings with the Met Council and the DNR to discuss what they are seeing through their monitoring.

Administrator Loomis suggested inviting the Met Council to an upcoming meeting to discuss these findings and the declining well levels.

Ms. Young shared that because of the decreasing levels at Nichols, they have requested a fen management plan from the Met Council, and they have been working on this over the past year. She explained that the LMRWD funded this monitoring, and this information was then made available to the DNR to maintain and enforce their statutes.

President Barisonzi asked if they are producing this data for the DNR so they can be responsible for it and held accountable. Ms. Young explained that the Board has looked at this in the past as a partnership with the DNR.

President Barisonzi asked if they had any documentation on this partnership. Ms. Young shared that this has been an informal partnership, and she is not sure if they have any documentation on this.

Administrator Loomis added that these are water resources within the LMRWD, and the Board has historically taken ownership of these, even though statutorily, it is the responsibility of the DNR.

President Barisonzi shared that when data is collected, he wants that to feed action. He said he would like to see the DNR prioritize action on trends that are being seen with the data being collected.

Ms. Young explained that the hydrogeology of the system is connected to many different things. She noted that at Nichols, it is very clear that declining water levels are connected to dewatering being done at the wastewater treatment plant; however, at other sites, it is unclear what variable water levels is connected to. She added that there have been changes made based on the data they are supplying to the DNR.

President Barisonzi shared that he would like to see a future agenda item on this that addresses the Board's concerns with the response by the DNR and the Met Council.

The Board thanked Ms. Albright for her presentation and work.

B. 2025 Legislative Report from Park Street Public

Joe Birkholz and Molly Jansen, Park Street Public, gave an update on the 2025 legislative session.

President Barisonzi asked about the permit reform that slipped through. He asked about the language that was compromised in this bill. Mr. Birkholz said he is not sure of the level at which the language was compromised. He stated that all of this negotiation is happening behind closed doors and has not yet been made public.

Mr. Birkholz shared that they will likely be moving into a special session to wrap up the remaining bills.

C. May 2025 Administrator Report

Moved to item 7B.

D. 2025 Workplan Progress Report

Moved to item 7C.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

President Barisonzi introduced this item.

A. Approve Minutes March 19, 2025, and April 16, 2025

B. Receive and file April 2025 Financial report

C. Approval of Invoices for payment

- i. Clifton Larson Allen (CLA) - Financial services for April 2025
- ii. Rinke Noonan, Attorneys at Law - March 2025 general legal services & Area #3
- iii. Daniel Hron – June 2025 office rent
- iv. US Bank Equipment Finance – May 2025 copier lease payment
- v. Young Environmental Consulting Group, LLC – April 2025 Technical, and Education and Outreach services
- ~~vi. Naiad Consulting, LLC – April 2025 administrative services, mileage, and expenses~~
- vii. Bolton & Menk, Inc. – Engineering services related to Area #3
- viii. Bolton & Menk, Inc. – Engineering services related to Vernon Avenue through April 14, 2025
- ix. Bolton & Menk, Inc. – Engineering services related to Vernon Avenue through May 14, 2025
- x. Braun Intertec Corp. - Soil testing services related to Spring Creek
- xi. I & S Group Inc. - March engineering services related to Spring Creek
- xii. Park Street Public – May 2025 Government Relations Services
- xiii. Redpath and Company - progress payment on FY 2022 financial audit
- xiv. Scott County Soil & Water Conservation District - Q1 2025 invoice
- xv. First American Title Insurance Company - title investigation for purchase of Area #3 property
- xvi. HDR Engineering, Inc. - website maintenance service through May 3, 2025
- xvii. 4M Fund - March 2025 fund service charges

D. Citizen Advisory Committee Report

E. Authorize reimbursement of Educator Mini-grant for Pilot Knob STEM Magnet School

F. Modifying Authorized Signers on Depositories for the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District

G. Authorize Pay App #1 for Vernon Avenue

H. Minutes of Board Committees

- Personnel Committee – May 14, 2025

Manager Salvato made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Manager Williams seconded the motion. Upon a vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

6. PERMITS

A. LMRWD Permit Renewals

President Barisonzi introduced this item.

Manager Williams made a motion to renew permits as recommended in Technical Memorandum – May 2025 Permit Renewal Requests, dated May 14, 2025. Manager Salvato seconded the motion. Upon a vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

7. ACTION ITEMS

A. 2025 Cost Share Incentive and Water Quality Restoration Program

President Barisonzi introduced this item.

Manager Salvato made a motion to approve requested funding to grant applicants and authorize execution of Cost Share Agreements as follows:

- o 9839 Pleasant Avenue South, Bloomington for \$2,500
- o 5120 102nd Street West, Bloomington for \$7,500
- o 10209 102nd Avenue Circle South, Bloomington for \$1,846
- o 7061 West 110th Street/11045 Oregon Circle – Sutton Place for \$7,500

The motion was seconded by Manager Viswanathan. Upon a vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

B. May 2025 Administrator Report

Administrator Lytle reviewed the May 2025 Administrator's report. He gave an update on his transition to Administrator and shared the changes that he has made. He discussed his scope of work as Administrator. He shared the intent to keep Administrator Loomis on as a contractor throughout his transition. He reviewed the budget impacts of these changes.

C. 2025 Workplan Progress Report

Administrator Loomis introduced this item. She gave an update on each project in the 2025 work plan.

Manager Williams asked if Administrator Loomis had heard anything from an organization called Friends of the Fen. Administrator Loomis said no.

Manager Williams said this was an organization that she just learned about today and wanted to do some more research on.

D. Administrative Services Succession Update

President Barisonzi introduced this item. He shared that the Personnel Committee met and came up with a recommendation for the Board.

Manager Salvato made a motion to approve the recommendations of the Personnel Committee with the addition of the President being authorized to execute a contract with Naiad Consulting as developed by legal counsel, consistent with the MOU. The motion was seconded by Manager Viswanathan. Upon a vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

E. Fen Invasive Species Mapping Project

Ms. Young reviewed the Staff report in regard to the fen invasive species mapping project.

Administrator Lytle shared that while he was not involved in the RFP process for this project, he did want to share that he has a pre-existing relationship with both parties in the service agreement.

Manager Williams asked if this was mapping for all fens in the watershed district. Ms. Young said yes.

Manager Salvato made a motion to adopt Resolution 25-06 to approve services for the Fen Invasive Species Mapping Project. The motion was seconded by Manager Williams. Upon a vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

F. Authorize Next Generation Management Plan

President Barisonzi introduced this item.

Manager Salvato asked about what the internal collaboration process will look like for this. Attorney Kolb shared that there is a statutory and rules process for the development of this plan, and they are welcome to add on additional public input or listening sessions if they so choose. He noted that this motion is to authorize Staff to start getting information together for the management plan, and they will have more conversations with the Board in the future on what they want this process to look like.

Administrator Loomis added that it is in the 2025 work plan for Young Environmental to begin working on some sections that are required in this management plan by the State. She noted that she and Ms. Young would come back to the Board with a plan on how to get the goals and priorities of the Board established.

Administrator Lytle shared that the Board had previously approved a work plan and a budget to begin the planning process; however, they decided to pause it until the new Administrator was identified. He noted that this motion would resume the work that the Staff had been doing.

President Barisonzi reiterated that the Board had decided to pause this process previously as they wanted the new Administrator in place before moving forward. He said he feels it is appropriate that they restart this process now that Administrator Lytle is on board.

Manager Salvato made a motion to direct the Staff to restart the process of planning for the next generation LMRWD Watershed Management Plan. The motion was seconded by Manager Viswanathan. Upon a vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

G. Education and Outreach

- **Award Educator Mini-Grant**

President Barisonzi introduced this item.

Manager Viswanathan made a motion to approve Spring 2025 Education Mini-Grants to Poplar Bridge Elementary School for \$500 and to Integrated Arts Academy for \$340, and to authorize execution of individual grant agreements between the LMRWD and the schools. The motion was seconded by Manager Salvato. Upon a vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

- **Public Relations Firm Subcontractor and Public Listening Session Next Steps**

President Barisonzi introduced this item.

Manager Salvato made a motion to authorize Tunheim to serve as a subcontractor to the LMRWD as proposed and schedule a kick-off meeting for June 2025 to provide direction to the PR subcontractor. The motion was seconded by Manager Williams. Upon a vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

8. BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. SkyWater Technology

Administrator Lytle introduced this item. He shared that the Board has two options: waiting for this permit to come up for comment or being proactive and finding out what the activities of SkyWater Technologies are and asking for a presentation from them.

President Barisonzi noted that this is very close to Ike's Creek, which is a significant resource that the LMRWD and other partners have invested in. He said it would behoove them to get involved on the front end.

Manager Salvato agreed and noted that it is important to understand what threats this could have to their resources.

Manager Salvato made a motion to recommend that the Administrator spend up to 3 hours scheduling an MPCA leadership visit for a presentation at the next meeting and to direct them to reach out to the MPCA Commissioner to understand the scope of this project. The motion was seconded by Manager Viswanathan. Upon a vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

B. LMRWD 65th Anniversary

Administrator Loomis introduced this item. She shared that they have a preliminary meeting with Young Environmental to discuss ideas. She added that Administrator Lytle also has a lot of ideas on how to commemorate this anniversary.

Administrator Lytle asked the Board to create a committee that could help with delegating roles to help with the planning of this event.

President Barisonzi noted that he has been hesitant to call anything a Committee due to open meeting laws and the rules around that. He asked if they could use a different term or guidelines for this group without triggering the open meeting law requirements. Attorney Kolb said yes and explained that they could find a way to create planning groups to work on this.

President Barisonzi said he would like to see the work being done by Staff on future workplan updates with budget line items. He added that he would also like to secure some sponsorship partners to help with this.

Manager Salvato made a motion to request Staff allocate time and reflect the planning and coordination of a 65th Anniversary River Boat Tour in their work plan and budget. The motion was seconded by Manager Viswanathan. Upon a vote being taken, the motion carried unanimously.

9. FOR INFORMATION ONLY

A. Study Area #3 Update

President Barisonzi introduced this item.

For information only – no action was taken.

B. Vernon Avenue Update

President Barisonzi introduced this item.

Administrator Lytle shared that he and Administrator Loomis were able to tour this site last week.

Administrator Loomis added that there are two Public Waters Work permits to do dredging, and they anticipate that there will be additional materials that will be placed in the containment area of this site.

President Barisonzi shared his appreciation for the Staff managing these items so well.

For information only – no action was taken.

C. Distribution of Managers

President Barisonzi introduced this item. He shared that a letter has been sent to the Scott County Board Chairman to invite them to request an increase in representation on the Board. He stated they have not yet heard back from Scott County on this matter.

For information only – no action was taken.

D. LMRWD Permit Program Summary

President Barisonzi introduced this item.

For information only – no action was taken.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Supplemental Work Report:** Administrator Loomis shared that she and Administrator Lytle had a great conversation with Le Sueur County on a ravine and gully inventory that they are conducting. She said they may be able to support some of these projects.

Administrator Lytle shared that they had an inter-agency meeting to discuss river monitoring and level gauges. He noted there is a specific need for velocity gauges, which are hard to place.

- B. Administrator Report:** See Item 7. B.

- C. President:** President Barisonzi noted that the Board has made a great step in going through the hiring process for the new Administrator. He added that they are also increasing their diligence around tracking the work being done and the time it is taking Staff to better prioritize work.

- D. Managers:** No report.

- E. Committees:** No report.

- F. Legal Counsel:** No report.

- G. Engineer:** No report.

11. ADJOURN

Hearing no further business, President Barisonzi adjourned the meeting at 8:58 PM.

The next regular meeting of the LMRWD Board of Managers will be at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 18, 2025, in the Board Room at the Carver County Government Center.

Lauren Salvato, Secretary

Attest:

Linda Loomis, Administrator