

**REGULAR MEETING**  
**Minutes**  
**June 20, 2024**

**1. CALL TO ORDER.** A regular meeting of the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order by Chair Joe Baker at 6:13 p.m., Thursday, June 20, 2024, at Maple Plain City Hall, 5050 Independence Street, Maple Plain, MN.

Present: Mark Workcuff, Greenfield; Joe Baker, Independence; Brenda Daniels, Loretto; Andrew Burak, Maple Plain; Pat Wulff, Medina; Claudia Lacy, Minnetrista; Roz Davis and Kris Guentzel, Hennepin County Environment and Energy (HCEE); Andrew Vistad, Hakanson-Anderson; Brian Vlach, Three Rivers Park District (TRPD); and Amy Juntunen, JASS.

Also present: Brad Spencer, Independence; and Tom Blanck, Lake Independence Citizens Association (LICA).

**2. AGENDA.** Item 4.f. Kingwood Stabilization Request was moved up in the agenda to item 4.a. directly followed by item 6.a. Ardmore GS-3 CIP application and 8.c. TRPD report. Item 4.h. Bell Rose Culvert was added to the agenda. Motion by Burak, second by Wulff to approve the agenda\* as revised. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**3. CONSENT AGENDA.** Motion by Burak, second by Daniels to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**a. May 16, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes.\***

**b. June Treasurer's Report/Monthly Claims \* totaling \$12,106.01.**

**4. OPEN FORUM.**

**5. ACTION ITEMS.**

**a. Kingswood Channel Stabilization Request for Funding.\*** Kingswood Park has unique native natural resources, including a pristine tamarack bog which indicates excellent wetland quality. This project will address erosion in a gully draining to the bog area. The gully drains a 3.5-acre area and this project will reduce TP by 4.8 lbs./year and TSS by 1,605 lbs./year. The project will install a raingarden to capture sediment, along with check dams above the raingarden to slow water flow and capture sediment as well. The raingarden will drain through a directionally bored pipe underground to the bog. Total project cost is approximately \$156,000 including contingency, design, and construction management. Minnetrista has approved \$25,000 in funding and Hennepin County will contribute up to \$100,000. TRPD is requesting Commission funding of \$20,000. This project aligns with the Commission's Watershed Management Plan to protect unimpaired waters and the functions and values of wetlands within the Commission area. TRPD will be responsible for future maintenance of the project. Motion by Wulff, second by Burak to approve adding the Kingswood Channel Stabilization project to the Commission's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). *Motion carried unanimously.* This addition will require a Minor Plan Amendment.

**b. Ardmore GS-3 CIP Application.\*** This is a gully stabilization project identified in the Lake Ardmore subwatershed assessment in 2016. TRPD has a regional trail in the area that has been closed due to poor soil conditions making it impossible to maintain a paved trail. TRPD will be re-routing that trail so it will bisect GS-3 in the eroding area, providing a great opportunity to address this project while there is equipment in the area. The trail project is planned for construction in 2025. The GS-3 project will install check dams to slow water flow and revegetate the area to reduce erosion. The subwatershed assessment in 2016 estimated a TP reduction of one to two lbs./year, though more erosion is occurring now so that number may be increased. Cost is estimated at \$120 per linear foot with under 750 LF to be stabilized. TRPD will return at a future meeting with the full estimated cost and updated load reductions. Motion by Wulff, second by Burak to approve adding Ardmore GS-3 to the Commission's CIP with the next Minor Plan Amendment. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**c. TRPD Report.** The Park District hosted a national Park District Forum last week. There were about 100 attendees from Park Districts across the nation. Activities included a boat tour on Lake Independence and a walleye fish fry. May was the 14th wettest month in recorded history. Many lakes in the area are at slow/no wake levels due to high water. So far in June we have received 4.6" of precipitation. TRPD staff are busy collecting lake and stream samples. A spring plant survey was conducted on Lake Independence. Baker noted that flow monitoring at Pagenkopf Road would be helpful in identifying the flow problems, but all of TRPD's monitoring equipment is in use at other sites. TRPD did have flow monitoring at Pagenkopf for four consecutive years, unfortunately all under drought conditions. Flow meters cost \$10,000-\$12,000.

**d. 2024-003 Greenfield Road Construction.\*** This is a 28 ft. wide gravel road that will be widened to 34 ft. and paved. The project drains in two directions, to Lake Sarah and to the Crow River. There are no landowners adjacent to the project willing to allow installation of a stormwater pond or other BMPs. Due to proximity to wetlands and cost, underground storage is not feasible. Greenfield will install three stormwater ponds but are unable to meet standards for volume and water quality. Water quality to Lake Sarah will be improved, but the area draining to Crow River will have a slight increase in TP and TSS. Volume to four of five measurement points will be increased. Staff requested the City to include turf reinforcement at areas where the curb and gutter end to prevent future erosion. Commissioners asked if iron-enhanced sand could be added to the stormwater ponds to further improve water quality. The Commission is unable to fund projects to meet Commission standards, only above-and-beyond practices.

Staff recommends approval with no contingencies and a request that the City discuss whether the addition of iron-enhanced sand filtration to meet water quality standards could fit into the project budget. Motion by Workcuff, second by Wulff to approve the project per staff recommendations. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**e.** Motion by Baker, second by Daniels to accept the **2023 Audit\*** as presented. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**f. Lakeshore/Shoreline Workshop Request for Funding.\*** Hennepin County Staff have been working with the West Metro Water Alliance (WMWA) and Metro Blooms to host shoreline workshops and included Pioneer-Sarah Creek in the scoping process. This would be an in-person workshop followed by an

optional on-site consultation and project design. Not included in the budget is a stipend for project implementation, usually \$500-\$600 per person. The budget in the proposed scope is for a maximum of 20 attendees at a total cost of \$20,625. County staff asked which lake should be the focus for this workshop. Due to the high water environment, a lot of shoreline owners are concerned about their shoreline.

Commissioners asked to do a combined Lake Sarah and Lake Independence workshop. If the demand is high, a second workshop could be scheduled for the following year. There are 150 residents on the LICA email list and 130 in the Lake Sarah Improvement Association. Past outreach has noted a 10% signup rate so 200 invitations result in 20 attendees.

Hennepin County is proposing to fund one quarter of the workshop (\$5,156.25) and requesting the same amount be funded by the Commission and the remainder to be funded by WBIF grant funds which are available for both FY21 NFC and SFC WBIF grants. The costs are an estimate and small projects may require far less design time than budgeted in the scope. The funds to reimburse landowners for project implementation could come from CIP or WBIF funds. The Commissioners agreed to a reimbursement of \$500 per project with a potential for larger reimbursements on larger projects. Riprap may be included in a project where hard armoring is a requirement, but the Commission will not fund projects that are limited to only riprap. Independence City Hall has a large room to host the workshop. County staff will continue working with Metro Blooms to schedule a workshop for fall 2024. If a 2024 workshop cannot be scheduled with Metro Blooms, the County may host a more generic shoreline workshop and/or include with 2025 Lake Association annual meetings.

**g. HELP Grant Letter of Support.\*** The County is applying for a Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) Habitat Enhancement Landscape Program (HELP) grant. This grant provides funding and assistance for habitat enhancement implementation. The County has identified two landowners in the Lake Independence watershed to convert large areas to native prairie, Serenity Hills HOA with 15-20 acres of hay field, and the Flakne property up to 4.5 acres. The Ampe property is 10-13 acres of former farm fields that may also be converted to native prairie in the Spurzem Creek watershed. These are in upland areas with little measurable impact to water quality, but great for habitat enhancement.

Hennepin County is requesting the Commission to provide a letter of support for the grant application and a commitment to co-host a future field day on at least one site after native prairie is established to invite residents to learn about the benefits of installing native plantings, including water quality. The field day would most likely occur in 2027 or 2028 to allow establishment of native vegetation at the sites. The letter of support does not imply financial commitment from the Commission. Motion by Burak, second by Wulff to approve the letter of support. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**h. Non-Waiver of Tort Liability.** \* Motion by Daniels, second by Burak to not waive the municipal tort liability limit. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**i. Bell Rose Culvert BMP.** The City of Independence is replacing a culvert at Bell Rose Drive. The Lake Independence subwatershed assessment identified a project potential here. Eighty acres drains to the south side of Lake Sarah through this culvert. The City is proposing to add a stormwater device here that will attenuate the water flow through the wetland from three hours to 36-72 hours. By holding the water in the wetland for a longer period it is estimated that 4.2 lbs. of TP will be removed. The cost for the

stormwater manhole outlet structure proposed is \$14,950 plus engineering time. This project will not increase the 100 year high water level. Wetland bounce will be about one foot. This will not have any change on the type or impact the wetland. This project would be completed in conjunction with road work in the area within one to three months. This project should fall within the current BMP under generic Lake Independence area projects and would qualify for WBIF funding. Motion by Daniels, second by Wulff to support this project at a cost not to exceed \$18,000 using WBIF and CIP funding. Staff are authorized to contact BWSR and use WBIF funds to every extent possible for this project. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**6. OLD BUSINESS.**

**7. NEW BUSINESS.**

**8. EDUCATION.**

**9. STAFF REPORTS.**

**a. Engineer's Report.\*** The final payment for the GS68 project has been made and vegetation is beginning to establish. Vistad will perform a site visit and take photos later this summer once vegetation is established.

The rainbow sheen seed on Lake Sarah coming from Dance Hall Creek was identified as coming from iron bacteria, not a petroleum spill. Staff does not feel that testing on the water sampled with the bacteria is necessary. This type of bacteria lives in the ground and was likely flushed from agricultural drain tile due to the heavy rains.

**b. HCEE Report.\*** Davis has been working with **Cindy Flakne**, a shoreline owner on Lake Independence who is interested in bioengineering efforts on her shoreline. This would be critical area plantings focused on the shoreline. The owner does not want to damage or remove trees if possible.

Davis met with EOR re the **Vinland project**. Currently they're exploring placing the raingardens to capture more stormwater from a greater area. EOR is also reviewing incorporation of an iron-enhanced sand filter and reviewing the ravine behind the building.

County staff made a post-construction inspection at **Bridgevine**. A few areas are eroding and will need to be addressed. Based on changes by the contractor, staff do not recommend funding either the Aedermann or Kingston projects since the projects no longer include the environmental protections originally discussed. A stop order was issued by the City due to the contractor not following city ordinance.

MPCA is offering **flood resistance grants** that may be available to address potential flooding from the outlet of Lake Independence. More study will be needed to determine the best way to encourage water flow through the area, possibly a second culvert at Pagenkopf Road. The biggest issue is the relatively small change in elevation from the Lake Independence outlet to County Rd 90. Baker volunteered to contact Wes Saunders-Pierce at DNR to review the current levels. Lake Independence has been above the OHWL for 18 of the past 20 years.

**10. COMMISSIONER REPORTS.**

**a. Baker** noted that the Lake Sarah water level continues to be high with the recent rains and

is likely to move into the no wake zone by next Monday. The CLP treatment was not as effective in 2024 as in past years and there will likely be algae blooms this year. Shoreline owners are anxious that there may be flooding.

b. **Wulff** shared that Medina enacted new regulations for the brush and compost site requiring a permit to use the site at a cost of \$25 annually. Only residents of Medina or Loretto are allowed to receive a permit.

**11. OTHER BUSINESS.**

a. The **next regular meeting** is scheduled for July 18, 2024, at Maple Plain City Hall.

**12. ADJOURNMENT.** There being no further business, motion by Burak, second by Baker to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy Juntunen  
Administrator

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