

Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization
Bayport Public Library
6:00 pm June 9, 2016

Present: Richard Glasgow, City of Lakeland, Nancy Anderson, City of St. Mary's Point; Dan Goldston, City of Bayport; Brian Zeller, City of Lakeland Shores; Tom McCarthy, City of Lake St. Croix Beach; Annie Perkins, City of Afton; Chuck Dougherty, City of Oak Park Heights; Administrator Mike Isensee, GreenCorps Member Katherine McLellan

1. Call to Order – Regular Board Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the submitted minutes for the May 112, 2016 meeting was made by Ms. Anderson and seconded by Mr. McCarthy. The motion carried.

3. Treasurer's Report:

a) Report of savings account, assets for June 9, 2016

The treasurer's report was presented. The remaining checking account balance is \$249,290.63. First State Bank CDs are valued at \$32,084.13. The ending balance in the RBC savings account is \$34,656.05.

Bills to be approved this month are: \$208.25 Carmen Simonet Design; \$1,702.80 Colter Manely; \$1,577.70 Emmons and Olivier Resources; \$319.25 Emmons and Olivier Resources; \$2,756.25 Washington Conservation District (CWF-Lily Lake); \$1,768.00 Washington Conservation District (CWF-Lily Lake 2015); \$2,663.00 Washington Conservation District (MIDS); \$2,354.50 Washington Conservation District (Admin-May); \$3,915.00 Washington Conservation District (Tech Svc-May).

Contributions received this month are: \$780.69 Lakeland Shores; \$20,491.13 Stillwater; \$9,674.35 West Lakeland; \$6,601.99 Lakeland; \$8,048.12 Bayport; \$10,603.74 Oak Park Heights; \$488.32 Afton (second half dues); \$2,591.27 Lake St. Croix Beach; \$5,552.14 Town of Baytown; \$533.27 St. Mary's Point.

Administrator Isensee noted that the treasurer's report included deposits from the State of MN from Clean Water Fund grants and reimbursements for completed grants, as well as a few expenditures for 2015 grants.

Mr. Dougherty moved to approve the treasurer's report and pay the bills presented. Nancy Anderson seconded the motion, and it carried.

4. Public Comment:

No public comment was given.

Administrator Isensee introduced an item to add to the meeting's agenda regarding Clean Water Fund Grants for 2017. He explained that he wanted approval from the Board to apply for Clean Water Fund Grants for 2017 and that he would need that approval before the next meeting

because the next meeting will not be until August. Mr. Zeller suggested that the item be handled immediately and that approval be granted.

Mr. Zeller motioned to approve Administrator Isensee's applications for Clean Water Fund Grants in 2017. The motion was seconded by Mr. McCarthy, and it carried.

5. Old Business

a) 2017 Draft MSCWMO Budget

Administrator Isensee introduced the draft budget for the MSCWMO in 2017. He said that the budget is very similar to last year's budget, and that the only increases are for tracking erosion and sediment control inspections in the database, as well as an increase in fees to operate the existing database. Mr. Zeller asked what percent increase the draft budget proposed, and it was generally agreed that the increase was a fraction of a percent. Mr. Zeller stated that he felt fine about a small increase in the budget, but that in the future this process would need to happen in February so that Townships, which make their budgets in April, would be able to account for changes. He pointed out that this would avoid the current, unresolved issue with Baytown Township and its refusal to pay the increase in budget for the previous year. Mr. Isensee noted that the proposed budget for 2017 had been introduced to the Townships back in the early spring this year. Mr. Isensee also noted that the changes in boundaries with the Valley Branch Watershed District would not affect the taxation formulas until 2018. Mr. Glasgow said that he believes that the MSCWMO provides great value for the amount that Lakeland pays, and Mr. Zeller agreed that the MSCWMO is very effective.

There was a motion by Ms. Anderson, seconded by Mr. McCarthy, to approve the 2017 MSCWMO Budget of \$133,070. The motion carried.

b) St. Croix Riverway Variance Discussion Updates

Administrator Isensee updated the Board on the riverway variance discussion that began in November 2015 between Mr. Zeller, Administrator Isensee, Mr. Riggs (Manager of the Washington Conservation District), Natalie Warren (St. Croix River Association), and Jen Sorenson (MN DNR). He said that EOR (consulting firm) submitted a freedom of information request to collect data from the DNR on variances granted along the riverway. This action released variance information since 1976. Mr. Zeller said that he thinks that the variance information from the DNR is a good start, but is concerned about how helpful it will be. As an example, he pointed out that the top request is a bluffline setback, but that many of those requests are for structures that already exist and the variance requested is just to renovate the existing structure. He asked what Administrator Isensee thought about how to attach more meaning to the data. Administrator Isensee said that initially, the focus is on where the majority of the variances are being issued. He said that the next step is to find out where the numbers are coming from, and which variances are actually having a negative impact on the river and which are not. Mr. Glasgow suggested that it would be helpful to have a map of where the blufflines are, and Administrator Isensee said that Jen Sorenson is working on something similar, which is a map of where the Riverway District is. Mr. McCarthy wondered if Lake St. Croix Beach had a high percentage of lots that are non-conforming for the impermeable pavement regulation. Mr.

Zeller asked whether the ultimate goal of the project is still to create a worksheet to evaluate a variance application. Administrator Isensee said that the goal is to promote clarity and consistency in the variance process throughout the Riverway District. Mr. Glasgow emphasized that education with new homeowners is also an important element for the variance process.

6. New Business

a) An Overview of Phosphorous in Water Resource Management

GreenCorps Member McLellan gave a presentation on phosphorus as it relates to watershed science and water resource management. She explained that the element phosphorus (P) is commonly found as the ion phosphate (PO_4^{3-}). It exists in both soluble and particulate forms, and is present in sediment, fertilizer, and organic materials. The phosphorus cycle describes where phosphorus naturally exists in the landscape and how humans interact with phosphorus.

Phosphorus is the limiting nutrient in many ecosystems, and is therefore applied in the form of fertilizer to agricultural fields and other settings. However, when unnaturally high levels of phosphorus are found in an ecosystem, it has damaging effects, such as high algae growth and decreased dissolved oxygen levels. In the Mississippi Watershed, this has created a hypoxic “dead zone” where normal aquatic life cannot live in the Mississippi delta.

In Lake St. Croix, phosphorus levels have increased sharply since about 1940, and are currently about four times higher than pre-European settlement levels. Management strategies to reduce the load of phosphorus delivered to the lake include decreased fertilizer application and other agriculture best management practices, as well as urban best management practices such as infiltration basins and iron enhanced sand filters. Even after the pollutant load delivered to the Lake by runoff is reduced, management strategies will have to address the in-lake, or “legacy,” phosphorus that exists in lake sediments from historical pollutant loads.

Mr. Zeller brought up the importance of composting in communities. He said that there is a need for a market for compost, and pointed out that Gertens is using compost in their soil. Mr. Glasgow asked about other pollutants’ impacts on water quality beyond phosphorus, and Administrator Isensee mentioned that other important pollutants in surface water include nitrate, sediment, fecal coliform (bacteria) and heavy metals. Mr. Glasgow asked about pollutants that exist in drinking water, and Administrator Isensee told him that chloride and chemicals from pharmaceuticals are concerning contaminants in drinking water.

b) Yard Waste Pick Up

This item is postponed until the August meeting.

7. Cost Share Program

a) 1770 Riviera Bioretention Basin Cost Share Partial Reimbursement Request

Administrator Isensee told the board that the project that the board approved at the May 9th meeting at 1770 Riviera Avenue in Lake St. Croix Beach is substantially complete. He said that the only part of the project left to install is the plantings. Since the board will not meet in July, Administrator Isensee said that the homeowners requested a partial reimbursement of 75% of materials purchased to date, which equates to \$1,702.80.

There was a motion by Mr. Zeller, seconded by Mr. Dougherty, to reimburse 75% of total costs accrued to date for the installation of the bioretention basin at 177 Riviera in Lake St. Croix Beach a total of \$1,702.80. The motion carried.

8. Plan Reviews/Submittals

- a. None

9. Administrator's Report

- a. A written report was submitted. Administrator Isensee said that he has been spending a lot of his time working in the field, and has completed repairs on 14 practices formerly listed on partially- or non-functional. He reported that the Clean Water Fund audit went well, though it will result in a few changes due to a few minor errors and differences in interpretation. He said that he will provide a more detailed report on the audit in August. Administrator Isensee also updated the board on Perro Creek water monitoring, which has begun for the season. He informed the board that he is still working with municipalities on the MIDS ordinance updates. He also discussed Lily Lake management, saying that the Phase III grant is being used towards a gully stabilization project and that the Phase IV grant will be the final phase before 2021, and will need to reduce pollutant loading to the lake by 99.3 lbs/yr in order to prevent the need for a TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) study on Lily Lake.

10. Adjourn:

There was a motion by Mr. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Dougherty, to adjourn. The motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:50pm.