

Regular Meeting of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization
HELD REMOTELY DUE TO COVID -19 PANDEMIC
Thursday, October 8th, 2020
6:00PM

Present: Brian Zeller, Lakeland Shores; John Fellegly, Baytown Township; Mike Runk, Oak Park Heights; Tom McCarthy, Lake St. Croix Beach; Beth Olfelt-Nelson, St. Mary's Point; Ryan Collins, Stillwater; Susan St. Ores, Bayport; Annie Perkins, Afton; Cameron Blake, WCD; Aaron DeRusha, WCD; Administrator Matt Downing; Christopher Smith, Public.

Call to Order

Manager Zeller called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Manager Fellegly motioned to approve the agenda and Manager McCarthy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote with all in favor.

Approval of Minutes

Manager Fellegly motioned to approve the September 10th minutes and Manager Collins seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report was presented by Administrator Downing. The remaining checking account balance on October 8th 2020 for the month of September was \$560,129.38. First State Bank CDs were valued at \$38,549.15. The ending balance in the RBC savings account for August 2020 was \$65,548.32 and for September 2020 was \$71,106.53.

Bills to be approved this month are: Washington Conservation District (Administration): \$2,726.00; Washington Conservation District (Technical Services): \$4,103.11; Washington Conservation District (EMWREP): \$1,575.00; Washington Conservation District (Water Monitoring): \$5,410.26; Total: \$13,814.37.

Manager Zeller asked if the bank balance was so large due to the MSCWMO holding funds for large projects and Administrator Downing confirmed this, but informed the board that the funds would be leaving the account for these projects soon. The board requested this be noted in the Treasurer's Report as a footnote or asterisk to indicate the funds are committed and soon to be used for projects. Administrator Downing agreed and also considered that they are only insured at the bank up to \$260,000. All community contributions are paid for the year.

Manager Zeller moved to accept the treasurer's report and approve payment of bills. Manager Runk seconded this motion, and the motion passed on a roll call vote with all in favor. Manager Perkins arrived before 6:08PM. Dawn Bulera (Lake St., Croix alt.) also joined the board meeting.

Public Comment

Christopher Smith said he has a grant related question covered by one of the topics later in the agenda.

RBC Investment Account

Manager Zeller asked if the account could be opened in 3 month increments to see if the interest rate improves. Administrator Downing said the account manager at the bank did not recommend this but he could check. Manager Fellegly asked if they should just keep the RBF. Administrator Downing explained that the original purpose of the RBF was to build money for the next plan update in 2025, and for equipment so there was not a need for urgency. The board thanked Administrator Downing for exploring the options.

Manager Olfelt-Nelson motioned for staff to direct RBC to transfer all savings funds into a 1 year term CD, and reassess the market conditions upon maturity. Manager Perkins seconded this and the motion passed on a roll call vote with all in favor.

Floodplain Vulnerability Assessment Participation

Administrator Downing informed the board that CLFLWD, BCWD, and CMSCWD have all decided to fund this assessment and that it could offer useful insight to future floodplain planning efforts. There is no board action needed. Manager's Olfelt-Nelson and McCarthy both expressed individual interest for their communities and will talk to Administrator Downing at a different time. Manager Susan St. Ores (Bayport alt.) asked Administrator Downing to check with Adam Bell from Bayport as well as Manager Dahl. The board indicated their comfort in individuals of the board participating in these discussions.

Adopt-a-Drain Request

Metro Watershed Partners has requested that the MSCWMO continue participation in the Adopt-a Drain Program for 2020. They are seeking a \$500 commitment to funding, similar to the request that was fulfilled in 2019. Preliminary indications from available data are that an exponential increase in adoptions occurred, particularly in Stillwater. Through our partnership in the program, these adopters are informed of and directed to the MSCWMO for additional resources related to water quality improvements.

Manager McCarthy motioned to approve \$500 to fund the AAD program in 2020. Manager Runk seconded this motion and it passed on a roll call vote with all in favor.

2021 Water Quality Monitoring Proposal

Administrator Downing presented the proposed 2021 water monitoring budget which would include the cost of monitoring for the implementation of the Lily Lake Alum Treatment. The proposal comes in under the budgeted amount for 2021.

Manager Fellegly motioned to approve the 2021 monitoring proposal, and Manager Collins seconded this motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote with all in favor.

Martin Permeable Parking Cost Share Request

Ann Martin is requesting a MSCWMO Water Quality grant to install up to 300 square feet of permeable pavers to reduce runoff from her roof and adjacent yard. The TP load reduction for the project is 0.58 lbs/year. The total for the paver portion of the quote is approximately \$6,825.00. Staff is recommending a cost share request of \$1,500.00, which is 22% of the install cost.

Christopher Smith asked if the project was required to include permeable pavers to meet city ordinance, and Administrator Downing explained that it was an elective project, because there was not enough impervious surface involved to trigger any stormwater rules.

Manager Zeller asked what the maximum amount of cost-share the MSCWMO offered for these projects and Administrator Downing explained there were ambiguous categories with “up to” amounts. The MSCWMO has previously covered around 15-20% of the total project cost for these voluntary WQ projects. The board discussed previous decision to increase the cost-share budget vs. offering more assistance through the TA budget. In 2019 the board approved an increase to \$20,000 to accommodate more of these projects. The board has currently spent 83% of this budget (\$16,685.50). Manager Perkins asked what the frequency of these requests was and Administrator Downing said there was usually an increase after educational/public events. There is no downside to not using the full budgeted amount as the value will just roll over into the next year.

The board discussed impervious surfaces and pervious paver projects, with Manager Olfelt- Nelson wondering how permeable surfaces were treated when projects were below the MSCWMO stormwater trigger but on lots with a large percentage of impervious surface. Manager Zeller said this would vary based on the community. Some communities can chose to give infiltration credits, and river communities can be different in that regard. Manager Fellegly asked why different projects received different cost-share amounts and Administrator Downing explained that these projects had different costs, which is why the MSCWMO tried to be consistent in providing 15-20% of the total cost when it falls into the water quality category. The group discussed the role of the timing of these requests over the course of the year and whether it is an issue of cost share funds are used up early vs. being spread out over the course of the year. Administrator Downing explained that he would like to clarify the MSCWMO cost-share policy.

Manager Zeller motioned to approve the Martin cost share award of up to \$1500 and Manager McCarthy seconded this motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote with all in favor.

Erosion and Sediment Control Inspection Reports

Administrator Downing introduced ESC Inspector Aaron DeRusha from the WCD. Aaron DeRusha presented the materials he created and sent out to contractors to help them prepare their sites during the fall and spring, which are the times of year when soil erosion risk is the highest. He explained it is easier to stop erosion before it becomes sedimentation, and this is done by covering the soil somehow with blanket, hay, or hydromulch. The managers thanked Mr. DeRusha for his work.

Staff Report

Administrator Downing went through the staff report. The county budget workshop is on October 20th and Administrator Downing asked if anyone would be available, although he doesn't believe the WMO will have any issue from the commissioners about their budget. The Lily Lake project should begin in 2021, and the Lake. S.t Croix Beach project has already begun. The last sampling event of Perro Creek for E.coli showed no human markers which left the next steps unclear, although Administrator Downing was not recommending nay further sampling events; there will be a report on the E. coli sampling by the end of the year which will include a map of the findings. The samples taken this year can be stored and re-tested for additional animal markers to narrow down the source of the E. coli should the managers choose.

1W1P Updates

Manager Fellegy doesn't have any new information for the board as the plan is still in the BWSR review process. The next Policy Committee meeting is October 25th. Administrator Downing will check in with Manager Fellegy about next steps in the 1WW1P process.

Adjourn

Manager Fellegy motioned to adjourn and Manger Runk seconded that motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:53 PM.