

Regular Meeting of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization
HELD REMOTELY DUE TO COVID -19 PANDEMIC

Thursday, December 10th, 2020

6:00PM

Present: Joe Paiement, City of Lakeland; John Fellego, Baytown Township; Mike Runk, Oak Park Heights; Tom McCarthy, Lake St. Croix Beach; Beth Olfelt-Nelson, St. Mary's Point; Ryan Collins, Stillwater; Brian Zeller, Lakeland Shores; Administrator Matt Downing; Cameron Blake, WCD; Stu Grubb, EOR; Dawn Bulera, Lake St. Croix Beach alt., Christopher Smith, Public.

Call to Order

Manager Zeller called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Administrator Downing added one item to the agenda under supplemental materials. Manager Fellego 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 Fellego motioned to approve the November 12th minutes and Manager Olfelt-Nelson 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 December 10th 2020 for the month of November was \$543,105.01. First State Bank CDs were valued at \$38,549.15. The ending balance in the RBC savings account for October 2020 was \$71,107.08.

Bills to be approved this month are: Emmons & Oliver: \$338.00; Emmons & Oliver \$1,134.50; Emmons & Oliver \$3,580.75; Washington Conservation District (Administration): \$2,454.00; Washington Conservation District (Technical Services): \$3,580.75; Washington Conservation District (Hours Audit): \$7,902.25; Total: \$18,915.01.

Manager Zeller asked if Administrator Downing had the year-to-date balance and budget information. Administrator Downing said he was bringing the budget synopsis to the January Board meeting but that he knew some of those numbers now. The admin budget was at 89% and the TA budget was at 84%. He said the checking account value was still high but grant expenditures were going to start happening soon. Manager Fellego asked what the usual checking account value was and Administrator Downing said it was usually around \$100,000. Manager Zeller clarified that much of these funds were committed funds that were yet to be dispersed and asked when these grant funds would be used. Administrator Downing said he expected this to occur by next June as that's when many of the large projects will have had expenditures. The Lily Lake project plan sets will be out by end of the year and the St. Croix Beach Bluff project should be finished in the spring for partial payment.

Manager Zeller motioned to approve the December treasurer's report and Manager Fellego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote. Manager Runk motioned to

pay the December bills and Manager McCarthy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote.

Public Comment

Christopher Smith did not have any public comment.

3M PFAS

Administrator Downing introduced Stu Grubb and explained that he has been attending the state agency/3M meetings on behalf of the MSCWMO for the last year and a half. This time is paid for by a MPCA grant. Mr. Grubb was going to present the groundwater model for south Washington County that was created by 3M consultants.

Manager Olfelt-Nelson asked if Stu could speak to any of the non-groundwater information. Mr. Grubb explained that he planned on focusing on contaminant transport and pumping scenarios and their effect on the MSCWMO and water resources in the MSCWMO. He said the meetings have also included information such as the different treatment system options, the associated costs, and conversations about if 3M should sponsor a municipal water system for West Lakeland Township. Manager Zeller asked what financial contribution will be made to West Lakeland from this fund and Mr. Grubb said he didn't know as there was still much debate around the long term costs estimate. He said 3M had pledged to give West Lakeland a new well and water system and there was debate around this option or remaining on individual systems with point-of-entry treatment. He said the cost estimates had issues such as including road repairs into the estimate for the cost of water mains. The estimates are being revised and there was still a lot of debate on how to calculate the net present value of the expenditures versus the future. Manager Zeller asked how that negotiation would take place and said Lake Elmo was seemingly penalized for having some of these systems in place already. He said it wouldn't be fair for a community to receive a system of roads as well.

Mr. Grubb said he didn't know the solution for each community as these solutions were individualized based on what systems are in place. He said some solutions would have a lower cost than others. Smaller communities would receive small individual treatment plants that could service 100 homes versus Woodbury which requires large treatment plants. The objective is to provide safe drinking water for residents. The question included controlling the pumping of different wells to prevent the spread of the contamination. The complex groundwater model would be used to answer some of these questions. Mr. Grubb said there would be one on one meetings with water suppliers to determine how their situations would be handled.

Mr. Grubb started his presentation about the groundwater model and pumping scenarios. There were well advisory areas identified along with different pumping scenarios. The WMO will not be involved in the supply or pumping rates. Essentially there will be a drawdown around major pumping wells in Woodbury and Oakdale with some locations proposed in Lake Elmo and Lakeland. But there will not be a major effect on water resources in the MSCWMO. The proposed West Lakeland well should be looked at and some residents expressed interest in keeping their private supply wells for irrigation.

Manager Zeller said Woodbury was already overdrawing from their aquifer and asked if they had considered using surface water from the Mississippi. Mr. Grubb said re: Woodbury that there was over 50ft of drawdown for the Prairie Duchene aquifer. He said that the pumping influences away from the well field and explained how a cone of depression functioned in the

groundwater presence in an aquifer. Mr. Grubb explained that there would be little difference between the pumping scenarios to the MSCWMO other than the question for West Lakeland.

Manager Zeller asked if the MSCWMO should consider groundwater re-charge opportunities. Mr. Grubb explained that large scale recharge has been looked at by the DNR and other public agencies and non-profits. There would be a report on that in a few months. He personally felt that groundwater recharge was a good idea including the scale the WMO usually approaches with infiltration and volume control projects. Manager Zeller noted that West Lakeland didn't have a storm sewer and wondered if the WMO could look into recharge projects there to coincide with future pipe installation. Administrator Downing said the WMO uses Subwatershed Analyses (SWAs) to identify those kind of opportunities in the watershed and noted that recent infiltration restrictions in DWSMA's complicated that question.

The group discussed the question of landowners possibly using private supply wells for irrigation and whether that could cause contamination of surface waters. There could be low levels of PFA's in the water used for irrigation which would spread across the lawns. Mr. Grubb explained that this was an interesting question in terms of the transfer of groundwater from deeper aquifers to shallow aquifers. This was explored in the particle tracking summary which follows the sources of PFAs to predict where they will end up. He explained the slides in his presentation and how the symbology indicated whether each well would see an increase or decrease in the particles.

Manager Zeller asked about how surface water connections contributed to the spread and if these could be stopped. Mr. Grubb explained that this question has been studied with the 1007 project in Valley Branch WD. This connected many landlocked basins and lakes and eventually outlets into the St. Croix River. This provided an opportunity for the contaminated water from the landfill locations to travel and infiltrate. A potential solution that has been used is lining the waterways to prevent infiltration and this question was under careful study.

Manager Olfelt-Nelson asked how the MSCWMO should consider these events when considering recharge systems. Mr. Grubb said he would consider it a cautionary tale to remember when planning future projects but that it has been shown that properly designed and maintained infiltration systems will not cause these issues.

Manager Zeller asked if there was anything that could be done to stop the flow of contamination from coming into the WMO, and Mr. Grubb said no. In extreme cases there have been pumping efforts to control the groundwater gradient but it is not practical from a watershed district perspective. Also in extreme cases there have been efforts involving grout curtains and walls but he does not advise this as is it expensive.

Manager Zeller asked when they would start implementing the activities discussed. Mr. Grubb said in the next 6 months they will start system construction which will be scheduled out and completed within 3-5 years. Manager Olfelt- Nelson said this was great information but she had a lot of questions still. She asked how communities could be sure that they were included in these conversations so they don't miss important information. There is an email distribution list with all of these updates. Administrator Downing will forward the distribution list to Manager Olfelt-Nelson. Mr. Grubb explained that each city has a representative present at the meetings, for West Lakeland it is the city engineer. Manager Olfelt-Nelson asked if Mr. Grubb could send memos to the managers to update them. Mr Grubb explained that he was focusing on the groundwater results but that he could do this also if the managers would like to get the other information from him rather than from their city representative. The board requested this.

Lake St. Croix Beach Bluff Partial Payment

In August 2020, the MSCWMO Board of Managers approved encumbrance of up to \$198,089.75 for the installation of the Lake St. Croix Beach Bluff Toe Stabilization project. The project is a public partnership between the MSCWMO and the City of Lake St. Croix Beach. The project utilizes several funding sources and provides a pollutant load reduction to the St Croix River of 30 lbs/TP year. As of November 13th, the original contract work was 93% complete. The City Engineer and WCD staff verified that all work completed was done according to plans. Max Todo Marine Services has requested and received partial payment from the City in accordance with the work contract. The City is requesting reimbursement of \$132,289.40 in accordance with the cost-share contract. Staff recommends payment of the work as completed. Expenditures will be reported to BWSR and allow for the next 40% of the grant funds to be requested.

Administrator Downing explained that they didn't get as far as they wanted but the project is wrapped for the year. Manager Zeller confirmed there was supporting documentation.

Manager Runk motioned to approve the partial payment of \$132,289.40 for the Lake St. Croix Beach Bluff Stabilization Project. Manager Zeller seconded this motion and the motion passed on a roll call vote.

Fox-INFORM

The construction of a new trail down the bluff on a residential property is proposed at 1485 Rivercrest Road N. in Lakeland. A project application for review was received on October 22nd, 2020. A variance for construction within the bluff line will be needed from the City of Lakeland. Additional information regarding the surfacing of the trail was requested as well as materials for the erosion and sediment control plan. MSCWMO staff are currently awaiting for the variance process for construction on a bluff with the City of Lakeland to be complete prior to providing a recommendation to approve or deny based upon MSCWMO standards.

Manager Zeller asked if Administrator Downing had connected with Joe, and he said he has been working with staff. Manager Paiement said he hasn't seen details come before the city board yet. Administrator Downing explained that the main issue was the presented plan included grading which is not allowed on slopes of over 12%. He has directed them to go through city channels first and if it passes the WMO can look at it. The MSCWMO engineer at the WCD has looked at the project. Manager Olfelt-Nelson commented saying that the plans look like a mini-road. Manager Paiement thanked the board for the information and said he would be surprised if the city passes it.

Manager Zeller said that he completed a path without needing a variance 3 years ago by using a design similar to a neighbors. He appreciates the need to be careful with these projects but noted that sometimes these trails pop up without going through proper channels so he doesn't want to scare people away from going through the correct process. He said that before Administrator Downing's time these projects would appear and then the approach was asking for forgiveness rather than permission. He noted that they can't deny property owners access to the waterway. Administrator Downing agreed but clarified that according to the rules stairways are permitted but not grading on a slope like that. Manager Zeller pointed out that stair and tramway projects still involve grading in order to drop footings and said he just wants to make sure the WMO is involved in the process rather than just saying no and having the trail appear later anyway.

Villas-INFORM

Revised plans were received for the Villas of Inspiration residential development in Bayport on December 1, 2020. The development was previously reviewed and recommended for approval in May 2019. MWCWO staff is reviewing the revised low opening structure elevations relative to high water levels for conformance with MSCWMO flood control standards.

St. Michael's Cemetery-ACTION

This was not included with the initial board packet. A project review application and materials for the expansion of St. Michael's Cemetery in Bayport was received on December 1, 2020. The review fee was received December 4, 2020. MSCWMO staff will begin the review process December 7, 2020. Administrator Downing wanted to bring this project to the boards attention as staff recommends approval but there are a high number of conditions and a quick turnaround time. The board discussed the location of this project and where on the site the work was proposed. Administrator Downing said its part of a multiple step process and that he was working with the applicant to submit the total plans rather than just the part they want to do next year so that the stormwater features can be planned appropriately. Manager Zeller motioned to approve the project with the identified conditions and Manager Olfelt-Nelsons seconded that motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote. Administrator Downing will send the plan set to Manager Runk.

200 Chestnut St.-INFORM

Incomplete materials were received for a proposed development of a 73-unit apartment structure at 200 Chestnut Street East in Stillwater on December 1, 2020. MSCWMO staff are awaiting receipt of a complete application package to review the project for conformance with MSCMWO standards.

Erosion and Sediment Control Inspection Reports

There was just one completed for the MSCWMO bluff project. There was a C grade, and concerns were brought to the contractor and city. They addressed many of them but were unable to completely blanket it due to flood complications in which the blanket would have actually made things worse. It is a unique project based on its location so there wasn't much else that could have been done. They are hoping there won't be as high water flooding in the spring. Christopher Smith asked if they could have tried hydromulching. Administrator Downing explained that this was considered but access and timing made the cost not worth incurring for the small amount of benefit it could have provided. Many options were considered but ultimately the normal solutions would have caused more issues.

Staff Report

Adminstrator Downing presented the staff report. The Lily Lake project is at 90% and close to bid for early next year. The bluff project should be completed next year. They were hoping to complete 340ft before the end of the season but only completed 285ft. This should be completed in the spring and then Administrator Downing can ask for the next 40% of funding from BWSR.

1W1P Updates

No updates until the January 4th Policy Committee Meeting.

Other

Manager Zeller asked Manager Runk about his involvement in the Excel energy meetings as the council can't be involved in the discussions. Manager Runk said the discussions were off to a slow start and that there would be an advisory council in the future. There were supposed to be 10 meetings about once a month but they may put them on hold until march as they think they will be better in-person. Manager Zeller said he was on the list and hadn't missed anything and agreed it was mostly a lot of background information so far.

Manager Zeller told the board that Administrator Downing was up for review soon and this is usually something he does with Jar Riggs from the WCD. He asked the board to send any feedback they have to bring to the meeting with Jay.

Manager Olfelt-Nelson asked if anyone knew any information about a question at a fire chief meeting about potential contaminant floating into the St. Croix River. Administrator Downing advised her to check with the County Public Health and Environment. They used to send out information but don't anymore. Manager Olfelt-Nelson said it was described as orange junk. Administrator Downing said he used to get calls in the fall about Valley Creek which ended up being iron flocculent which can naturally drop out of the water. But if it was a film or continuous color it wouldn't be iron flocculent.

Adjourn

Manager Zeller motioned to adjourn and Manager Fellegly seconded this motion. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 7:31 PM.