

Regular Meeting of the Middle St. Croix Watershed Management Organization
Washington Conservation District, 455 Hayward Ave N
Thursday, May 8th, 2025
6:00PM

Present: Brian Zeller, Lakeland Shores; Tom McCarthy, Lake St. Croix Beach; Carly Johnson, Oak Park Heights; Ryan Collins, Stillwater; Dave Millard, Lakeland; John Dahl, Bayport; Administrator Matt Oldenburg-Downing; Amanda Herbrand, WCD

Call to Order

Manager Zeller called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

Approval of Agenda

Manager Collins motioned to approve the agenda. Manager Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

Approval of Minutes

Manager McCarthy motioned to approve the draft April 10th, 2025 board meeting minutes, Manager Dahl seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

Treasurer's Report

Manager Johnson presented the treasurer's report. The ending checking account balance for April was \$99,498.92. First Bank CD's were valued at \$213,549.15. The ending value on the RBC savings account from March was \$98,346.20. Manager Zeller motioned to approve the report of the savings account and assets for May 8th, 2025. Manager McCarthy seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

Bills to approve are three bills to the Washington Conservation District for admin, watershed plan, and technical services totaling \$14,486.00. Manager Zeller motioned to approve payment of bills for \$14,486.00 for May 8, 2025. Manager Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

Public Comment

None

Watershed Management Plan Update

Update to be given during staff report.

Old Business

None

New Business

2026 Draft Budget

Administrator Oldenburg-Downing presented the 2026 draft budget for approval to be sent to member communities. The draft budget shows an overall increase of 2.81% from the 2025 budget. Manager Zeller motioned to approve the 2026 draft budget, Manager Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

Grant and Cost Share Applications

Deneui Stewardship Grant Request

The City of Lakeland residents Bob and Gail Deneui are applying for a MSCWMO Stewardship Grant to enhance their 0.9-acre parcel at 16344 7th St Ct S with native trees, shrubs and perennial vegetation. The project will include invasive species management, seeding, and planting to enhance native plant diversity. The estimated total for the project is \$946.00 and the cost share request is for \$500.00.

Manager Johnson motioned to approve encumbrance of \$500.00 cost share for the Deneui Native Landscaping Project, Manager Dahl seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

Dibble Stewardship Grant Request

The City of Bayport resident Jim Dibble is applying for a MSCWMO Stewardship Grant to enhance Waterford of the St. Croix HOA property with native trees, shrubs and perennial vegetation. The project will include ash tree replacement and streambank enhancement along Perro Creek. The project estimate is \$857.00 and the cost share requested is \$500.00.

Manager Zeller motioned to approve encumbrance of \$500.00 cost share for the Dibble/Waterford of the St. Croix Native Landscaping Project, Manager Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

Kelly Stewardship Grant Request

City of Stillwater residents Tara and Colin Kelly are applying for a MSCWMO Stewardship Grant to enhance their landscape at 1323 1st St S. The project will include 150 square feet of native garden enhancement through addition of 40 native perennial plants. The project estimate is \$945.00 and the cost share requested is \$500.00.

Manager Collins motioned to approve encumbrance of \$500.00 for the Kelly Landscaping Project. Manager McCarthy seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

Plan Reviews/Submittals

Administrator Oldenburg-Downing notes that on the summary page there are a couple projects with recommendations that are not typical, those recommendations are that the board discuss further.

16670 8th St S

Submittal items were received on March 10th, 2025 for the proposed riprap and slope stabilization at 16670 7th St. South within the MSCWMO boundaries and the City of Lakeland. The proposed project qualifies for full review under the MSCWMO 2015 Watershed Management Plan (WMP) since it involves grading within 40' of the bluffline. MSCWMO staff recommends approval with three conditions:

1. Ordinary High Water Level (680) and Base Flood Elevation (692) are shown on the plans.
2. The plan provides notes for the installation time frames of erosion and sediment control measures, sediment tracking, inspections, and pollutant prevention.
3. Burial of drain tile is not permitted as an allowable exception of prohibited construction on steep slopes. The plans shall remove drain tile and direct runoff away from the bluff to the maximum extent practicable.

Manager Zeller motioned to approve the project with the three conditions, Manager Millard seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

850 Quixote Ave N

Submittal items were received on March 5th, 2025 for home and septic reconstruction at 850 Quixote Ave N within the MSCWMO boundaries and the City of Lakeland. The proposed project qualifies for full review under the MSCWMO 2015 Watershed Management Plan (WMP) since it involves reconstruction of more than 500 square feet of impervious surface in the St. Croix Riverway and impacts within the bluffline setback. MSCWMO staff recommends the board discuss the construction within the bluffline setback and staff recommendation to revise and resubmit.

Administrator Oldenburg-Downing asks for further direction from the board. As the plan exists, it does not meet MSCWMO standards due to it proposing construction within the 40' bluffline setback, and Administrator Oldenburg-Downing believes the plan further violates St. Croix Riverway rules. The board states that as presented they would not recommend approval of the project, and that the applicant is able to resubmit if desired after reviewing what aspects of the plan do not meet MSCWMO standards.

Manager Dahl motioned to have Administrator Oldenburg-Downing edit the presented recommendation letter to state that MSCWMO does not recommend approval of the project as presented. Manager Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

16855 21st St S

Submittal items were received on March 19th, 2025 for the residential reconstruction at 16855 21st St S located within the MSCWMO boundaries and the City of Lake St. Croix Beach. The proposed project qualifies for full review under the MSCWMO 2015 Watershed Management Plan since it involves reconstruction of more than 500 square feet of impervious surface in the St. Croix Riverway and impacts within the bluffline setback. MSCWMO staff recommends the board discuss the construction within the bluffline setback, a variance to Riverway impervious coverage limits and staff recommendation to revise and resubmit. The board states again that as presented they would not recommend approval of the project, and that the applicant is able to resubmit if desired after reviewing what aspects of the plan do not meet MSCWMO standards.

Manager Zeller motioned to have Administrator Oldenburg-Downing edit the presented recommendation letter to state that MSCWMO does not recommend approval of the project as presented. Manager Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

13 Point Rd

Submittal items were received on April 15th, 2025 for the home reconstruction at 13 Point Road within the MSCWMO boundaries and the City of Bayport. The proposed project qualifies for full review under the MSCWMO 2015 Watershed Management Plan (WMP) since it involves reconstruction of more than 500 square feet of impervious surface in the St. Croix Riverway. The proposed project demonstrates compliance with MSCWMO performance standards. MSCWMO staff recommends approval with four conditions:

1. Show the DNR OWHL 680 (MSL 1912) on plans.
2. Construction limits and silt fence shall be outside of the 40' bluffline setback.
3. Regulatory flood protection elevation of 694.5' is shown correctly on the plans.
4. Discrepancies between plan contours for rain gardens and labels are corrected.

Manager Zeller motioned to approve the project with the four conditions. Manager Dahl seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

880 Quixote Ave N

Work was completed without MSCWMO review or a City permit which involved vegetation removal and grading on steep slopes at 880 Quixote Ave N in the City of Lakeland. MSCWMO staff and City of Lakeland staff coordinated on enforcement actions and a restoration plan.

Manager Johnson asks about the fine for damage of City trees in the right-of-way. Manager Zeller notes to the board to check their community fine limits as many are small amounts that haven't been updated.

Erosion and Sediment Control Inspection Reports

Administrator Oldenburg-Downing further discusses 880 Quixote Ave N, there are two inspection reports in the board packet showing conditions on site upon arrival to the violation and a follow-up inspection showing some erosion control measures were put into place. Administrator Oldenburg-Downing states City follow-up with the homeowner and contractor are ongoing.

The two remaining erosion control reports in the board packet are for 1411 Old Toll Bridge Rd and 16530 1st St S which both received A grades, meaning they were in full compliance.

Staff Report

Administrator Oldenburg-Downing reports that the audit is complete, all materials have been submitted. For the Watershed Management Plan Update, Administrator Oldenburg-Downing notes the 60-day comment period has closed and 164 comments were received. Due to the comment period closing less than 14 days ago, those comments were not able to be brought to the May meeting, and will likely be presented at the June meeting. Water monitoring activities continue as normal, Administrator Oldenburg-Downing notes that water clarity on Lily Lake continues to be excellent.

Manager Zeller asks if Administrator Oldenburg-Downing followed up regarding monitoring on the St. Croix River. Administrator Oldenburg-Downing states he reached out to the MPCA and DNR and is awaiting a more detailed response.

1W1P Updates

Minor Amendment to LSCWMP

The Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership (LSCWP) Policy Committee met on April 28th and recommends that the LSCWP local governing boards approve the following minor amendments to the Lower St. Croix River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (Plan). These amendments are not expected to increase the overall cost to administer or implement the Plan.

The full proposed minor plan amendments are included in the board packet. In summary, these amendments change the language to priority location descriptions to expand the priority areas for forest management or woodland stewardship plans, and add the St. Croix River as a priority waterbody.

Manager Zeller motioned to approve the proposed minor amendments, Manager McCarthy seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

LSC FY23 WBIF Work Plan Revision

The LSCWP Policy Committee met on April 28th and recommends to the Lower St. Croix Watershed Partnership local boards the following work plan revision and budget amendment to the LSC FY23 WBIF grant work plan and budget:

1. Add Forest Management Plans or Woodland Stewardship Plans as an eligible activity under the Targeted Analyses activity.
2. Amend the budget as recommended by the LSC WP Policy Committee on April 28, 2025.
3. Extend the grant agreement expiration date from December 31, 2025 to December 31, 2026.

Manager Zeller motioned to approve the work plan revision and budget amendment to the LSC FY23 WBIF grant work plan and budget. Manager Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

Other

Manager Zeller asks if the St. Croix River Tour is happening this year. Administrator Oldenburg-Downing states yes, and that Wild Rivers Conservancy has volunteered to take over planning and ticket sales. He states more information should be available soon.

Adjourn

Manager Zeller motioned to adjourn the meeting, Manager Dahl seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:09PM.