

**REGULAR MEETING**  
**Minutes**  
**August 15, 2024**

**1. CALL TO ORDER.** A regular meeting of the Pioneer-Sarah Creek Watershed Management Commission was called to order by Vice Chair Mark Workcuff at 6:06 p.m., Thursday, August 15, 2024, at Maple Plain City Hall, 5050 Independence Street, Maple Plain, MN.

Present: Mark Workcuff, Greenfield; Brenda Daniels, Loretto; Andrew Burak, Maple Plain; Pat Wulff, Medina; Peter Vickery, Minnetrista; 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: Jen Dullum, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) and Darcy Malchow, Lake Independence Citizen's Association (LICA).

**2. AGENDA.** Item 4.d. LICA Request was added to the agenda. Motion by Vickery, second by Burak to approve the agenda\* as revised. *Motion carried unanimously.*

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

a. **July 18, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes.\***

b. **August Treasurer's Report/Monthly Claims \*** totaling \$2,934.05.

**4. OPEN FORUM.**

**5. ACTION ITEMS.**

a. **2024-005 Breckenridge Farm & Motor Condos, Independence.** This is a motor condo development plus seven residential lots on the western edge of the watershed. The site drains to both the north and the south, with both discharge points flowing through Wright County to the Crow River. The project was reviewed for compliance with Commission rules for stormwater, erosion control, and buffer strips (Rules D, E, and I). The development includes three infiltration basins on site with curb and gutter for the motor condo portion of the site. The residential portion of the site will address water quality through tree preservation and additional wetland buffer. Post development TP will be reduced by 3 lbs./year and TSS by 500 lbs./year. The project meets Commission requirements. Wetland impacts were reviewed by the LGU. Staff recommends approval with two contingencies, 1) a recorded easement for tree preservation, and 2) receipt of an operations and maintenance agreement. Motion by Daniels, second by Burak to approve project 2024-005 as recommended. *Motion carried unanimously.*

b. **2024-006 Kingswood Channel Stabilization, Minnetrista.\*** This is a TRPD project to stabilize an eroded channel in Kingswood Park. The Commission will be cost-sharing in this project. Staff recommends approval of the project with no contingencies. Motion by Vickery, second by Burak to approve project 2024-006 as presented. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**1) Project Review Fee Waiver Request.** The Commission is cost-sharing in this project, but a project review is needed to ensure the design meets Commission standards. The City of Minnetrista also reviewed the project prior to the submittal for Commission approval. Due to the nature of the cost-share, staff request that the project review fee for this project be waived. Motion by Burak, second by Wulff to waive the project review fee for project 2024-006. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**c. GS-3 Ardmore Gully Stabilization Consultant/Scope of Work.\*** The Commission approved a CIP application for this project at the June meeting. This gully was identified in the Lake Ardmore SWA as a source of erosion. TRPD is re-routing a regional trail to cross this gully, making it a perfect time to address the stabilization in conjunction with the trail work. TRPD will be hiring a consultant to survey the site for existing conditions and estimate current loading to the wetland, which ultimately drains to Lake Ardmore, and complete design and development of stabilization plans for the gully. The same consultant will also be providing plans for the regional trail, but separately from the gully scope of work. The cost for the consultant to complete the scope of work for the gully is \$42,000, more than originally anticipated. TRPD will pay \$25,000 and is requesting \$17,000 from the Commission. Once the work is completed, the Commission can review the water quality benefit to determine the cost-effectiveness of the stabilization project. Construction is expected to be done in 2025.

FY25 WBIF funding will not be available until a workplan is completed. FY25 funding should be available for construction of the project in 2025. Currently there are FY21 and FY23 WBIF funds available as this project falls within the Commission's CIP for improvements to Lakes Independence and Ardmore. Motion by Burak, second by Daniels to approve \$17,000 for project feasibility and design work for GS-3 from FY21/FY23 WBIF funds. *Motion carried unanimously.*

**d. LICA Request.** Brad Spencer attended the LICA Board meeting last night. Lake Independence has had persistently high water for decades, with the lake level dropping below the OHWL only a handful of years out of the past 30 years. Several properties are facing damage due to shoreline erosion and loss of trees due to the high water. Lack of recreational opportunities due to the slow-no wake requirement in effect is also a concern to many LICA members.

Drone footage has shown that the outlet channel is choked with cattails. Understandably, 2024 has been a year of record rainfall, but Lake Independence water levels are not dropping like the water level does in other area lakes. LICA requests that the outflow channel through the wetland be restored and a study be performed to determine why the lake level remains over the OHWL for long periods of time. A study may determine that the OHWL should be adjusted. LICA members noted that the Association has money set aside for an alum treatment but does not have a way to fund ongoing channel or outlet maintenance.

The Commission directed Juntunen to schedule a TAC meeting to include Wes Saunders-Pierce, DNR, and LICA members to discuss the issue and determine next steps.

**6. OLD BUSINESS.**

**FY21 WBIF Grant Agreement Amendment.\*** Informational only. The grant was amended to extend

the expiration date to December 31, 2025.

**7. NEW BUSINESS.**

**8. EDUCATION.**

**9. STAFF REPORTS.**

**a. Engineer's Report.** Vistad met with Bohl, the contractor, and Roz Davis, HCEE, on site at the Bridgevine development to discuss the deficiencies in the ravine stabilization. The contractor was unwilling to take any responsibility for the deficiencies, citing site constraints but did agree to make a return visit to fix some impacts. The contractor attended the pre-construction meeting and so should have been aware of any site constraints. The Commission cost-share for this project is a performance-based grant. If the above-and-beyond ravine stabilization measures will not perform as constructed, the Commission is not under obligation to pay the agreed upon cost-share amount, which was approximately \$30,000. A lesser amount could be considered for the impacts that are performing reasonably well. Bohl was open to removing sediment from the settling pond and working to correct the issues. Vistad will send a formal memo to the contractor listing the repairs needed, which will be included in the September meeting packet. There are concerns about the contractor's ability to complete the work, both due to the wet year pushing back schedules and whether the right equipment would be used.

Vistad met with Joe Baker and the owner of the property upstream from GS68 regarding Hydrologic Restoration 68 (HR68). The property has a new owner who is more amenable to a potential project. The owner would like to install driveway access across the wetland, and may allow a control structure to be installed if the driveway access is approved. Access to the property to survey elevations and determine flow will be allowed this fall. The project will need to determine how water elevation changes could affect landowners around the area. One local farmer is working with Hennepin County to plant Kernza, which requires specialized equipment to harvest. Kernza is a perennial grain and this would be a four-field six-year contract, the County's longest contract so far for incentivized cover crops.

Project SS-1, Identified in the Ardmore SWA, may be viable again because the property obstructing the project has changed hands. Guentzel asked Wulff to schedule a site visit with Guentzel and Vistad to review the potential project. If it's determined that the project is viable, the new landowners may be contacted.

**b. HCEE Report.\*** Roz Davis and Joe Baker have been working to engage with the landowners around the Dance Hall Creek projects. FY21 WBIF funding has been set aside for survey work, but without landowner buy-in, there is no need to complete the surveys. The County has also been engaging with farmers in the area and working on the Vinland property BMP designs.

The County administers the buffer laws and starts with an aerial review. Any areas that need more investigation will be visited in the fall. Hennepin County is nearly in full compliance with only one or two outstanding issues.

**c. TRPD Report.** High water levels continue to be an issue across the region. Algal blooms have become an issue over the past few weeks along beach closures due to high E. coli levels with geese

overnighting on public beaches. Lake and flow sampling continue to go well and will be completed in October-November.

**10. COMMISSIONER REPORTS.**

**a. Wulff** shared that Fortin Consulting completed a vegetation survey on Lake Independence, finding a lot of coon tail, new beds of water celery, and very little Eurasian water milfoil. The resurgence of coon tail and water celery is a good sign as native species are returning after removal of CLPW.

**B Workcuff** noted that the Greenfield Road project has not yet begun due to rain delays.

**11. OTHER BUSINESS.**

The **next regular meeting** is scheduled for September 19, 2024, at Maple Plain City Hall.

**12. ADJOURNMENT.** There being no further business, motion by Burak, second by Vickery to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy Juntunen  
Administrator  
AAJ:tim

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