APPROVED

RCWD Board of Managers Workshop

Tuesday, January 17, 2023

**Rice Creek Watershed District Conference Room
4325 Pheasant Ridge Drive NE, Suite 611, Blaine, Minnesota**

**And**

**Meeting also conducted by alternative means
(teleconference or video-teleconference) from remote location**

The Board convened the special workshop at 1:00 p.m.

Attendance: Board members Marcie Weinandt, John Waller, Mike Bradley, and Steve Wagamon

Absent:

Staff: Administrator Nick Tomczik, Public Drainage Inspector Tom Schmidt, Permit Coordinator and Wetland Specialist Patrick Hughes, Lake and Stream Specialist Matt Kocian, Office Manager Theresa Stasica (video-conference), and Permit Intake Technician Anna Grace

Consultant: District Attorney Louis Smith, Smith Partners

Visitors: Jess Robertson

The agenda includes onboarding information for the new manager appointment from Anoka County, Jess Robertson.

Louis Smith, Smith Partners

* Louis provided background into Watershed Districts and RCWD’s roles. Discussion topics included:
	+ 1955 Watershed Act, legal authority (tax, issue debt, condemn land, imminent domain, etc.), overarching goal is to not push water issues downstream (flooding, water quality, drainage, erosion), hydrologic boundary vs. political boundary, City and Watershed partnerships, 1982 Metropolitan Surface Water Management Planning Act, and the Watershed Management Plan.

RCWD Administrator, Nick Tomczik discussed the District’s declaration for manager virtual participation in Board meetings based on advice of health care professional (COVID exposure or infection).

Tom Schmidt, RCWD Public Drainage Inspector

* Tom provided an introduction on 103E and RCWD’s role as Public Drainage authority. Discussion topics included:
	+ RCWD custodians of operations of 22 PDS (Public Drainage Systems) encompassing 114.9 miles of open ditch and tile, distinction between repair and maintenance projects, costs ad valorem vs. landowner, and PDS right-of-way.

Patrick Hughes, RCWD Permit Coordinator and Wetland Specialist

* Patrick provided introduction into the RCWD regulatory program. Discussion topics included:
	+ Regulatory rules, WCA LGU duties, permitting process (intake to close out), differences between Administrative and Board permit approval (Board notified via email), CAPROC (Conditional Approval Pending Receipt of Changes, goals of Rule C – specific call out to Rule C.7(c) Flood Management Zone, Level 2 Cities Mounds View, Hugo, Circles Pines adoption of equivalent regulations to RCWD Rules C, D, E, and F (RCWD retains permitting authority for Rules G and I).

Matt Kocian, RCWD Lake and Stream Specialist

* Matt provided introduction into water quality monitoring and improvement projects at the District. Discussion topics included:
	+ RCWD can play a supporting role for monitoring of PFAS, mercury etc., but RCWD’s main focus is on nutrients and sediment, monitor many of the 55 lakes in the District (compare against state standards or otherwise), projects have included Iron Enhanced Sand Filters (IESF), stream restoration, alum treatment, carp management. Grant writing is collaborative, in house and with HEI (Houston Engineering).

Other Meeting Notes

Manager Bradley discussed that each Manager represents based on County appointment, but the Board represents the District as a whole – holistic view. Manager Bradley also noted RCWD does not work in a vacuum and is subject to regulations (BWSR, DNR, Counties, Cities etc.)

Manager Weinandt discussed RCWD’s CAC (Citizen Advisory Committee).

New Board member Jess Robertson provided background into her current council member role at the City of Blaine (permitting, wetland banking, etc.), familiarity with various RCWD permits/projects/PDS, interest in natural resources, and readiness to begin her role as the new RCWD manager appointment for Anoka County.

RCWD Board of Managers, Administrator Nick Tomczik, Louis Smith, and RCWD presenting staff noted availability to Jess Robertson for questions.

The special workshop was adjourned at 2:03 p.m.