

MEETING MINUTES

Riley-Purgatory-Bluff Creek Watershed District

October 19, 2023, RPBCWD Board of Managers Work Session

PRESENT:

Managers: Jill Crafton, Treasurer
Tom Duevel, Vice President
Larry Koch
Dorothy Pedersen, Secretary
David Ziegler, President

Staff: Amy Bakkum, Office Administrator
Liz Forbes, Communications Manager
Terry Jeffery, District Administrator
Louis Smith, Legal Counsel, Smith Partners
Scott Sobiech, Engineer, Barr Engineering

Other Attendees: Marilynn Torkelson

Note: the Board work session was held remotely via meeting platform Zoom because it was deemed not prudent to meet in person due to COVID-19.

1. Call to Order

1 President Ziegler called the Board work session to order at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Smith called roll as
2 follows:
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<i>Manager</i>	<i>Action</i>
Crafton	Present
Duevel	Present
Koch	Present
Pedersen	Present
Ziegler	Present

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2. Approval of Agenda

6 Manager Crafton moved to adopt the agenda as proposed. Manager Pedersen seconded the
 7 motion. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0 as follows:

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<i>Manager</i>	<i>Action</i>
Crafton	Yes
Duevel	Yes
Koch	Yes
Pedersen	Yes
Ziegler	Yes

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3. Presentation: 2023 Grant Year Summary

11 Liz Forbes shared the PowerPoint presentation “RPBCWD Creek Week Summary – October
 12 19, 2023.” She explained the month-long program running throughout October is designed to
 13 engage the public with the watershed and the District. Ms. Forbes said the program features
 14 activities like Build a (Rain) Barrel workshop, Cycle the Creek, and an Urban Soils walkshop
 15 as well as a passport adventure with sites to visit and prizes.

16 Manager Duevel said approximately 110 people participated across the activities, which is a
 17 positive result. He said he thinks the District should continue and expand these types of
 18 public engagement initiatives.

19 Manager Pedersen commented lake associations tend to have their own newsletters. She
 20 suggested staff directly send District event notices to the newsletter manager for each lake
 21 association.

22 Ms. Forbes shared the PowerPoint presentation “Stewardship Grant Summary – October 19,
 23 2023.” She summarized the 2023 program to-date, which includes 30 site visits, 11 new
 24 agreements, and 19 active projects. She said 11 of the projects are in Eden Prairie, 4 is in
 25 Minnetonka, 3 are in Chanhassen, and 1 is in in Bloomington. Ms. Forbes said the most
 26 popular project type this year is the habitat restoration.

27 Ms. Forbes reported that out of the 2023 program budget of \$280,000, the District has
 28 awarded almost \$160,000 in grant funds. She said the District has spent approximately
 29 \$9,000 of the program budget for professional services with the Carver County Soil and
 30 Water Conservation District and for District engineer and legal reviews. She reviewed the
 31 District’s Stewardship Grant Program online project management system and several project
 32 case studies.

33 Manager Duevel asked if the District has the case studies on its website or if the District is
 34 otherwise sharing this information with the public. Ms. Forbes said these case studies are not
 35 posted on the District's website but she would like to publicize these projects more broadly.
 36 Manager Duevel asked if unused program budget from 2023 will roll over to the 2024
 37 program budget. Administrator Jeffery indicated yes. Manager Duevel commented this
 38 program is a fundamental level of work the watershed needs to be doing.

39 Manager Pedersen suggested staff post project before and after photos, categorized by best
 40 management project type, on the website section that houses the grant application. Manager
 41 Koch suggested staff post a snippet of Ms. Forbes presentation on the District's YouTube
 42 channel and/or on the District's website.

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4. Upper Bluff Creek Ecological Enhancement Plan

44 Administrator Jeffery and Mr. Scott Sobiech shared the PowerPoint presentation "Bluff
 45 Creek Reach 5 Ecological Enhancement Plan." Mr. Sobiech reminded the Board the project
 46 vision is to provide an ecologically diverse wetland and stream reach and restore an impaired
 47 water. He reminded the Board this reach of Bluff Creek is impaired for water quality and the
 48 project is included in the District's 10-Year Plan.

49 Mr. Sobiech said the project proposes to include a crossing enhancement, wetland restoration,
 50 and stream restoration. He said there is an opportunity for the District to team with the City of
 51 Chanhassen to replace the culvert under Galpin Boulevard with a box culvert to help reduce
 52 streambank erosion. Mr. Sobiech said the City is looking to the District to cover the costs
 53 above and beyond an in-kind replacement. He said the estimated cost, based on project bid
 54 unit prices, for the box culvert plus riffle is \$395,205 and the District's portion of the cost
 55 would be approximately \$298,811.

56 Mr. Sobiech said regarding the wetland and stream restoration components, they are in the
 57 very early stage of the design process. He said due to the number of unknowns at this point,
 58 the cost estimates are broad. Mr. Sobiech said the cost estimate range for restoring the
 59 wetland hydrology is \$216,400-\$336,600 and the range for restoring the streambank and
 60 stabilizing the gullies is \$329,100-\$512,000.

61 Mr. Sobiech said the District will consider at its November meeting ordering the project as
 62 well as consider entering into a partnership agreement with the City of Chanhassen in late
 63 2023 for the crossing enhancement. He said construction of the crossing enhancement would
 64 be in late 2024 as part of the Galpin Boulevard reconstruction. Mr. Sobiech said the timeline
 65 for the wetland and stream restoration components include design, property agreements, and
 66 permitting in 2024 through early 2025 and construction in mid-2025 through early 2026.

67 Manager Crafton asked if the project could include habitat restoration, for which the District
 68 could seek grant funds from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR).
 69 Administrator Jeffery said the District could consider restoration such as plant restoration as a
 70 project that follows the current components. He said he plans to talk to Mr. Sobiech on
 71 whether the weir could be designed with removable pieces so the District could do draw

72 downs for restoration projects. He said there are numerous grants from BWSR that fund that
73 type of restoration work.

74 Manager Koch said he shared with Administrator Jeffery information about how waters and
75 wetland contribute greenhouse gases. He said he asks staff to consider potential negative
76 impacts of wetlands.

77 Manager Koch asked staff to add a Gantt chart to presentations like this one to visually show
78 the project components and timelines.

79 Manager Pedersen asked about the data being used to design this project given the
80 acceleration of climate change, as reported in The New York Times, and if the project is
81 being sufficiently designed to last 50 years.

82 Mr. Sobiech responded the project is designed based on Atlas 14 data, which is the best data
83 available from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA). He said NOAA
84 is working on Atlas 15, which will also incorporate climate models to make projections and
85 to downscale it into usable information. Mr. Sobiech said Barr is reviewing the information
86 from the Department of Natural Resources and the University of Minnesota, as both
87 organizations have conducted such downscaling of information, to see if the information is
88 applicable to implement into watershed or city projects moving forward.

89 Manager Koch asked if it makes sense to consider including in the project some ability to
90 hold back water from rain events more significant than expected as based on current data.

91 Manager Crafton asked if the District monitors for nitrates. Administrator Jeffery said it is on
92 the staff's radar as nitrates may be the next NPDES pollutant impairment to be listed.

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5. 2024 Workshop Calendar

94 Manager Koch asked to have numbers added into the projections listed in the memo on this
95 topic included the Board meeting packet. He said he finds the Board workshops are a great
96 way to be brought up to speed on some of the things the District is doing, such as its
97 Stewardship Grant Program. Manager Koch suggested the Board continue for another year
98 holding both a Board meeting and a Board work session each month.

99 Manager Duevel commented on the greater level of interaction that occurs at the Board work
100 sessions compared to the Board meetings.

101 Manager Pedersen commented she would like the managers to respect one another and
102 respect the expenditure of taxpayer dollars by being mindful about the amount of time they
103 take in giving comments at meetings and by avoiding repeating comments already expressed.

104 Manager Koch said he thinks the taxpayers are getting their money's worth and are interested
105 in the issues raised at Board meetings. Manager Koch said he raises issues repeatedly because
106 when something hits the fan or the wall, he will be the one that raised that issue. He said he
107 will not intentionally be a wall flower and let an issue continue that he believes needs to be

108 addressed. Manager Koch said he thinks it is important to go on record to make sure that
109 people know that in his opinion the Board is not addressing very important issues.

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6. Adjournment

111 Manager Koch moved to adjourn the work session. Manager Pedersen seconded the motion.
112 Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0 as follows:

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<i>Manager</i>	<i>Action</i>
Crafton	Yes
Duevel	Yes
Koch	Yes
Pedersen	Yes
Ziegler	Yes

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115 The work session adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Dorothy Pedersen, Secretary