

Upper Rum River Watershed Management Organization
Meeting Minutes of January 8, 2019

Chair West called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Present: John West, Dan Denno, Tim Harrington, Matt Downing, Sandy Flaherty, Lan Tornes

Absent: David Olsrud, Jerry Tveit, Dan Breyen,

Audience: Chuck Schwartz and Amber Converse, MSA
Jamie Schurbon, Anoka Conservation District

3. Adopt Agenda **Mr. Denno moved and Mr. Tornes seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.**
4. Approve Minutes **Mr. Tornes moved and Mr. Downing seconded to approve the December 4, 2018 minutes with the following corrections: Jerry Tveit was not in attendance and under New Business A. “The new position suggested by Jamie should be posted...” Motion carried.**
5. Treasurer’s Report A. Financial report
Ms. Flaherty reported a deposit of \$8,614.44, bring the ending balance for December 2018 to \$15,222.81. **Mr. Harrington moved and Mr. Downing seconded to accept the Treasurer’s Report as presented. Motion carried.**
- B. Budget Billings
 Receipt of St. Francis payment 2 of 2 for **2018**
 Receipt of Oak Grove payment 1 of 1 for 2019
 Receipt of Bethel payment 1 of 1 for 2019
6. Unfinished Business A. Approval of 2019 budget
Mr. Downing moved and Mr. Harrington seconded to table approval to the next meeting to allow board members time to review the proposed final budget. Motion carried. Ms. Gessner will mail a copy of the proposed final 2019 budget to board members.
7. New Business A. 2019 watershed coordinator position - review of the draft RFP for the position to use for solicitation of proposals.
After reviewing the draft RFP the following changes were requested:
1. Change the headline date to March 6, 2019 to March 5, **2020**
2. Article VII. Term and Termination - Set the term for one (1) year (it can be adjusted to a longer term if needed in the future)
3. Change the wording of “Partner” to **“Applicant”**
4. RFP needs to state “independent contractor for services” not “hiring employee”
Mr. Schwartz will forward a revised RFP to Chair West for approval. Once approved, Mr. Schwartz will forward it to board members, member communities, and Mr. Schurbon. Mr. Downing suggested sending it to MN Assoc. of Watershed Districts (MAWD) also. This RFP should be posted on member communities’ websites and at their city halls. **Mr. Downing moved and Mr. Tornes seconded that contingent upon approval of the revised RFP by the Chair, the RFP will be distributed by Mr. Schwartz to board members, member communities, and**

Mr. Schurbon, with Mr. Downing sending it to MN Assoc. of Watershed Districts (MAWD). Motion carried.

B. 2018 work results presentation from Anoka Conservation District

Mr. Schurbon reviewed a report of 2018 work done by the ACD for the URRWMO under contract. The report also included other tasks done with other funding. This was a DRAFT report allowing for edits to be made between now and late February when it will be finalized as part of an Anoka Water Almanac report.

Notable accomplishments include:

- Lake level monitoring completed with volunteers at five (5) lakes.
- Lake George water quality monitored in collaboration with the Lake George Improvement District. Clarity was improved compared to the last few years.
- Rum River was monitored where it enters and leaves the URRWMO, as well as in Anoka (by Met Council). Phosphorus and dissolved constituents increase mildly within the URRWMO. An area of recommended focus is preventing future phosphorus increases, as the river is close to State standards for impairment. Suspended solids did not increase within the URRWMO.
- Three (3) Rum River tributaries were monitored. All three have higher phosphorus than the Rum River. Ford Brook and Seelye Brook have lower suspended solids than the river, and Cedar Creek has higher suspended solids than the river. The fact that the river water quality does not dramatically change above and below these tributaries may be due to dilution, exchanges with groundwater or other factors. Some of these pollutants, especially phosphorus in Cedar Creek, may be from “natural” wetland sources. As far as priorities, Mr. Schurbon recommended first and foremost working to ensuring there are not additional phosphorus increases as the area develops. Secondly, work to reduce phosphorus in all the tributaries.
- Five (5) reference wetlands were monitored. The data was used by wetland regulators.
- The Lake George Study is complete. The purpose of the study was to better understand why lake clarity has been decreasing, find projects to fix it, and rank those projects by cost effectiveness. While there are likely several factors contributing to poorer clarity, the largest appears to be more frequent wet years. Poorer lake water quality follows wet years, and wet years have occurred much more frequently. In 2018 precipitation was more normal and lake clarity recovered. Projects and preventative actions were identified to improve lake water quality. Most immediately, the Ditch 19 weir is scheduled for replacement in 2019. Other projects include an iron enhanced sand filter, behavioral changes, lakeshore restorations, and agricultural projects. It is very important that these projects be placed in the correct place. For example, a project upstream of Grass Lake will have lesser benefit because Grass Lake itself treats water before it reaches Lake George; that’s not to say we should sacrifice Grass Lake.
- URRWMO website was overhauled.

- Annual reports to the State were completed.
- Recommendations:
 - Ensure stormwater treatment standards for new development result in no increase, and preferably a decrease, in phosphorus. The Rum River is just below State standards for impairment and several tributaries exceed State nutrient standards. State MS4 stormwater treatment standards are aimed at maintaining water quality only, and it may be favorable to consider Minimum Impact Development Standards (MIDS) that are aimed at pollutant reductions.
 - Participate in the Rum River One Watershed One Plan process, resulting in prioritized management across the entire Rum River watershed.
 - Install projects identified in the 2018 Lake George Water Quality Improvement Assessment, St. Francis stormwater assessment and Rum River WRAPS. In the Upper Rum River WMO priorities to consider include reversing the declining transparency trend in Lake George and ensuring Rum River phosphorus does not increase because it is close to State impairment thresholds.
 - Periodically monitor chlorides in streams to verify if observed baseflow specific conductivity increases are due to salts. Monitoring every 3 years minimum is recommended.
 - Promote practices that limit road deicing salt applications while keeping roads safe. Streams throughout the URRWMO have increasing specific conductivity. Requiring municipal plow drivers to become certified through MN Pollution Control Agency deicing courses is recommended.
 - Monitor Lake George water quality at least every other year. The lake has a declining trend. The Lake Improvement District has taken up monitoring every other year when the URRWMO has not funded that work but would prefer to put their dollars into projects.
 - Promote groundwater conservation. Metropolitan Council models predict 3+ ft. drawdown of surface waters in parts of the URRWMO by 2030, and 5+ ft. by 2050.

During discussion, it was noted that Pickerel Lake is having some new development around it and it needs to be on the URRWMO's radar.

After review, these revisions were suggested:

- Highlight the OHW line on lake level graphs
- Update the graph on page 6 to include 2018 results
- Page 8 - Check to ensure the correct numbers are used on the Lake George graph. On the graph comparing tributary and Rum River water quality, use either plus or minus symbols or greater than or less than symbols.
- Page 45, Project #2 is a good project to be listed in the Comp Plan, this is also a good list to be used by the TAC to look at for project suggestions.
- URRWMO Website – All data needs to be correct and list meeting dates in an additional location.
- Under Recommendations - Add tributary determination and revise the statement on Chlorides to read: “Periodically monitor chlorides in streams to verify if