



UPPER RUM RIVER

Watershed Management Organization

Regular Meeting for **Tuesday, January 7, 2025, 6:30 pm**

Meeting location: Oak Grove City Hall, 19900 Nightingale St NW Oak Grove, MN

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Mr. Breyen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Paul Tradewell, Dan Breyen, Chris Beyett, Patrick Sullivan, Tim Miller, Radja Lohse, and Jeff Entsminger.

Absent: John West, Andrew Wood, Ryan Seguin, and Brian Kirkham.

Other: Jamie Schurbon (URRWMO Watershed Coordinator).

2. Adopt Agenda

Mr. Schurbon requested to add Item 7B, Audit, to the agenda.

Mr. Tradewell made a motion to adopt the agenda with the noted addition. Mr. Sullivan seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes for November 12, 2024

Mr. Beyett made a motion to approve the minutes for November 12, 2024. Mr. Lohse seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report

a. Financial report

Mr. Tradewell provided a summary of the report and stated the balance is \$21,071.70 as of December 31, 2024.

Mr. Lohse made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. Mr. Beyett seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

5. Unfinished Business

a. Projects Update

Mr. Schurbon provided an update on the status of the projects. Mr. Breyen noted that the 221st Ave Rum River Stabilization project has made a dramatic difference.

b. Watershed Plan Amendment

Mr. Schurbon stated that direction was provided at the last meeting to amend the plan to include the Ford Brook Study and update the JPA within the plan. He stated that the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) has approved those actions as a minor plan amendment. He noted that there will be a required public hearing at the next meeting to continue that process.

c. Bylaws

Mr. Schurbon stated that there was discussion at the last meeting as to whether the group desired bylaws and there seemed to be a split opinion. He stated that the full Sunrise River WMO bylaws were provided in the packet for review, and he provided additional explanations on what the bylaws could accomplish. He provided additional reasoning behind the decision for Sunrise River WMO to implement bylaws. He confirmed that bylaws could be added at any time. Mr. Breyen stated that the JPA provides the authority for the Board to create bylaws if it desires.

Mr. Tradewell recommended the bylaws not be finalized until after the audit, since that process may identify some policies to procedures to add. Mr. Schurbon commented that they could work on the non-audit-related bylaws in the coming months and then follow up with audit-related bylaws following the audit.

Mr. Lohse made a motion to table the consideration of bylaws at this time. Mr. Tradewell seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

6. New Business

a. 2026 Budget

Mr. Schurbon stated that a draft budget was included in the packet, which is a decrease from the 2025 budget, and provided a brief review. He explained how the cost for the next watershed plan could be split over multiple years starting with 2026 rather than placing that burden on just 2027 and/or 2028.

Mr. Breyen provided additional insight on the watershed plan, which is required every ten years.

Mr. Tradewell referenced the Lake George monitoring, which is funded by the URRWMO every three years, and stated that cost could be split over each year in a lesser amount. He similarly recommended that the organization budget for the watershed plan updates in every year to reduce budget fluctuations. Mr. Schurbon stated that the previous Board, at the time of the last watershed plan development, declined to budget the watershed plan over multiple years, instead planning all of the estimated \$50,000 expense in 2028 which could cause a more than doubling of the budget in that year. Mr. Tradewell commented that he would support spreading those costs more evenly but recognized that he is one voice.

Mr. Schurbon noted that if the board wishes to budget some funds in 2026 to be used in 2027-2028 for the plan update, those funds could be identified as being for that purpose in the organization's ledger. This would provide transparency and make the purpose of the funds clear.

Discussion ensued about other ways to reduce 2027-2028 budgets in the face of a large watershed plan expense. Mr. Schurbon described how planned funds for studies could be applied to the plan expense because the studies are mostly done. Mr. Beyett asked if funding for projects would change. Mr. Schurbon stated that project funds are planned to be used as 10% match for WBIF grants, so reducing them would mean sacrificing large sums of grant dollars.

Mr. Breyen commented that he would want to minimize budget increases in any year due to the watershed plan. The consensus of the board was to add \$10,000 to the draft 2026 budget for the watershed plan update. Mr. Schurbon was directed to revise the budget accordingly and bring it back to the next meeting.

b. Audit

Mr. Schurbon reviewed the state requirement for an audit every five years, noting that an audit would

be required in 2025. The type of audit required is an agreed upon procedures engagement. He stated that he received two quotes and would recommend accepting the quote from Smith Schafer and Associates in the amount of \$3,200.

Mr. Breyen recognized that the item was not included in the 2025 budget. Mr. Schurbon explained how that item could be funded with undesignated reserves, which are currently over the target amount.

Mr. Entsminger made a motion to authorize \$3,200 for the audit services and authorize contracting with Smith Schafer for the work. Mr. Sullivan seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

7. Mail

- a. Mr. Tradewell reviewed the mail that had been received, which includes two checks: East Bethel's contributions for the year and an insurance dividend.

8. Other

- a. Anticipated Board Member Changes and Orientation

Mr. Schurbon noted one member, Shanni Fladebo, has resigned. A replacement will be appointed by the City of Nowthen. There were no other changes noted.

9. Invoice(s)

- a. TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc. \$ 167

Mr. Breyen moved to approve payment of the recording secretary invoice for \$167. Mr. Sullivan seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

10. Adjourn

Mr. Tradewell made a motion for adjournment at 7:04 p.m. Mr. Beyett seconded. Motion approved unanimously.