



Scott Watershed Management Organization

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**Scott WMO – Watershed Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**I. Call to Order & Roll Call**

Commissioner Pint called to order the regular meeting of the Watershed Planning Commission meeting at 4:00 PM on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, which was a Zoom meeting.

Specific details and video of the entire August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Scott WMO Watershed Planning Commission Meetings are available for viewing on the Scott County Website.

The video link can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00HMR2WADQc>

Roll call

Members Present:	Members Absent:	Staff Present:	Others Present:
Virgil Pint	Kevin Shea	Vanessa Strong	Tom Wolf
Pam Caselius	Rita Weaver	Ryan Holzer	Kate Sedlacek
Brian Schmidt		Melissa Bokman Ermer	Lisa Quinn
Mark Vierling		Nicole Jacobson	Bruce Loney
Joe Thill		Troy Kuphal	

**II. Approval of Agenda and Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Schmidt; Seconded by Commissioner Vierling to approve the August Agenda as presented. Commissioner Thill abstained.

**The Motion carried unanimously for the agenda to be approved as presented.**

Approval of the Meeting Minutes from the August meeting August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Motion by Commissioner Schmidt; Seconded by Commissioner Vierling to approve the August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Minutes as written.

**The Motion carried unanimously for the Meeting Minutes to be approved as written.**

### III. Staff Reports

#### SCOTT SWCD:

Updates presented by Troy Kuphal

*Please see the presentation and graph materials in the 8/28/23 WPC packet. If there are any specific questions or concerns, please contact Troy Kuphal.*

#### SCOTT WMO:

Updates from Vanessa Strong

1. Vanessa mentioned the County is holding a Volunteer Appreciation Picnic on September 19<sup>th</sup> from 4pm – 7pm at the County Fairgrounds.
2. Other events coming up in September is Outdoor Education Days (OED) sponsored by the SWCD, SWMO and other SCWEP partners. The WBIF grant was used to update teaching education plans for OED. Also, the same week is the Metro Children’s Water Festival. Staff is helping to host that.
3. Last year we started to update our rates for erosion & sediment control permits. We haven’t updated our fees for 10 years. The program tries to collect enough fees to cover the cost of the program. The stormwater fees and groundwater fees will be reviewed this year to update them to help pay for the cost of the program.
4. Staff participated in the Scott County Fair, the SWMO created a display to receive input from the public on their favorite waterbodies to recreate on.
5. Vanessa is participating in Met Council’s 2050 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. Vanessa is on the Water Policy Committee and Subregional Groundwater Subcommittee.
6. Vanessa introduced Nicole Jacobson to the WPC. Commissioner Pint welcomed Nicole to the County.

### IV. Ongoing Business

#### Project Updates – August 2023:

Updates from Ryan Holzer

1. CIPs - Xanadu Project. We are in the process of putting together the bid packet. The County Transportation Dept. and Megan Tasca are helping with the items for the bid packet. We plan to advertise the bid packet the week of September 7<sup>th</sup>. Inter-Fluve is providing the design. Bids are due by the end of September, and we would be asking the County Board in October for approval of a chosen contractor and next set a pre-construction meeting late October or early November. We would like the in-stream construction to be complete by February 28<sup>th</sup> before spring melt. This project is larger than past CIPs we’ve completed. The Picha Creek Ravine Stabilization CIP status is between 30-60% design phase. We

are still working through some of the permitting. We are working on getting the rock check dams locations from the consultant so they can be marked in the field. We will be doing a Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) meeting to go over the impacts of those dams. All landowners are still on-board. Timeline for construction is winter 2024.

2. Macroinvertebrate Monitoring. This is our third-year sampling for macroinvertebrates. Fall has been the timeframe for sampling. Right now, the CIP bid packet is taking priority, but once that's done, Ryan will start macro sampling for 2023. There are four (4) sites: Two on Sand Creek, one on Credit River and one on Picha Creek.
3. Sand Creek Fish Survey – Ryan gave some background on what led to the completion of a fish survey. One of the key reasons for completing the fish survey is to compare if there are differences in fish diversity upstream and downstream of the falls. Because there was a fish ladder some time in the 1960s that allow fish to move upstream, the question to consider is whether we want to install something similar in the future to allow that movement within the stream. Ryan gave a PowerPoint presentation on what was done including results. Thirty-five different fish species were found. Sampling was completed on August 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>.
4. SRF and IFI Amendments for Xanadu & Picha CIPs. These contracts are design consultants for both Xanadu and Picha CIPs. We are requesting amendments to each contract to add additional budget to both contracts. Inter-Fluve is performing construction oversight and it has come to our attention that more hours were needed for that task of the project, so an amendment is needed to increase the not to exceed total in the amount of \$30,000 to ensure enough supervision hours during construction. An amendment to the SRF contract is needed to add construction supervision hours as our county staff may not be able to provide that service. We do not have an exact dollar amount yet for the needed increase in their contract.

### **Project Updates – August 2023:**

Updates from Melissa Bokman–Ermer:

1. Shallow Lakes Seminar – The seminar is set for October 11<sup>th</sup> with 5:30p.m. arrivals. The first presentation starts at 6pm, (shallow lake ecology basics) - second presentation starts at 7pm (lake management strategies), with time for questions. Postcards were mailed to households on Cedar, McMahan, O'Dowd & Thole lakes. A news release was sent to SW News Media. Deadline to sign up is September 11<sup>th</sup> so we can finalize the catering order.

2. 1W1P - I've been busy with 1W1P homework, working on participating in the planning process with input on measurable outcomes, implementation table and meetings. The first three chapters were recently sent out for a preliminary review, those comments are due this Wednesday, Aug. 30<sup>th</sup>.
3. Aquatic Plant ID Workshop – I attended an Aquatic Plant ID workshop on July 27<sup>th</sup> hosted by the U of M and DNR. I learned a lot and it was a good refresher on some plants I commonly see in our lakes.
4. Scott County Fair – Our educational display at the Fair this year was a map of public water accesses throughout the county. A table showing the public accesses, who owns them and contact information. In addition, we created a large table/chart for the public to put stickers on their favorite waterbody and water recreational activity.
5. Scott WMO Logo/Branding – work is underway with the creation of our new logo and branding. We have completed an inventory of questions from Jamie and are in the process of creating the inspiration board. This includes colors we like, fonts, icon ideas, inspirational pictures, etc.
6. Eagle Scout Project/Lagoon Park - I ordered native plants and erosion control blanket from Minnesota Native Landscapes for this project. Those will be delivered September 12<sup>th</sup> to me so I can take care of them. I spoke with Joe Stang, Nick's dad and they have events going on Labor Day weekend, Jordan's annual celebration the weekend of Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, so we decided September 15<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup> would be the best weekend for Nick to install this project.
7. Water Testing Clinic & Environmental Health Fair - The Minnesota Well Owners Organization, the Minnesota Groundwater Association and local partners are planning a free water quality screening clinic in Elko New Market on Sept. 30. The water clinic will invite private well users (PWU) to bring a water sample from their home that we will analyze for nitrates and chlorides for free. We will have volunteer water experts available to discuss the sample results with each PWU. We will have information about wells, water quality, and local water issues and will give each PWU a free "well portfolio", a pocket folder where well owner records about well construction, maintenance, and water testing can be stored. Clinic will be held from 9am to 1pm at the Elko New Market library.
8. Data Analysis - I am working on writing up a request for data analysis services for the Credit River monitoring data being collected this season and for Sand Creek watershed data that will be collected in 2024 season by the SWCD. We are requesting this in-depth analysis by an outside consultant as we prepare for our next Watershed Plan update that will be started next year.

9. Staff Training - I will be attending the Midwest Climate Resiliency Conference – Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> in Duluth in preparation for our Watershed Plan update.

### **1W1P (One Watershed One Plan)**

Updates from Vanessa Strong

Vanessa gave a brief update regarding the 1W1P planning process. The main points include:

- Staff has been involved in the planning process of helping prioritize issues and priorities in the upstream areas in Le Sueur & Rice counties.
- The partnership voted to form a Joint Powers Entity for the implementation phase. The county is not interested in joining another entity. We will focus on implementation of our Plan in Scott County.
- At the moment, the Scott SWCD is leaning towards joining the partnership. If that is the case, we would liaison with them if there are specific projects/programs through the partnership we would be interested in.

## **V. New Business**

### **SWMO 2024 Proposed Levy:**

Presented by Vanessa Strong

- This is the preliminary levy being proposed for 2024.
- We are proposing a levy of \$1,417,065 with a draft budget of \$2,542,150.
- Key factors influencing this 2024 budget include:
  - Overall revenue remains lower when compared with the past ten years. Due to grants, the 2024 revenue is expected to be approximately \$100,000 higher compared to 2023.
  - The proposed levy increase is 1.5% which is below the amount proposed in the approved 2019-2026 Watershed Management Plan. This is in line with both Scott WMO and County policy for levy increase.
  - The proposed 2024 levy is \$1,417,065 compared to the 2023 levy of \$1,396,123 (an increase of \$20,942).
  - Tax Rate is a **decrease** of 0.024% (0.929% to 0.905%)
  - The draft budget is 73% Land and Water Treatment
  - Cost share demand has slowed down. The current budget is near a dedicated baseline fund for the TACS program based on a slowing demand.

- There is an anticipated \$158,000 increase to Land and Water Treatments targeted projects to continue design and installation of Xanadu streambank stabilization and Picha Creek ravine stabilization as well as structural practices identified in the FY21WBIF and NKE Phase 1 grants. It is a high priority to complete these CIP projects to stay on Plan and complete the current WMP Implementation Plan before it expires in 2026.
- There is an anticipated \$205,000 increase to Monitoring in order to contribute towards increased data collection to inform the next planning cycle as identified in the WMP. Specifically, Sand Creek Monitoring (\$225,000) and Credit River Monitoring (\$36,000) are planned for 2024.
- There is an anticipated \$44,000 increase to Inventory and Data Analysis to complete activities identified in the current WMP to prepare for the next WMP update including a U of MN Social Attitudes Survey (\$50,000), a Multipurpose Ditch Assessment (CD4) (\$35,000), and Credit River monitoring data analysis (\$40,000).
- It is anticipated that there may be a maximum deficit of \$740,491 in 2024. The deficit was partially planned as it takes time to save funds sufficient to implement large CIPs. It is also partially due to slower moving grants that must be completed in 2024. The difference is proposed to come out of the restricted fund balance that the SWMO has been setting aside for the CIPs since 2020, and unused 2023 general fund balance.

Motioned by Commissioner Vierling, Seconded by Commissioner Caselius to recommend approval of the SWMO 2024 proposed levy.

**The Motion carried unanimously to recommend approval of the SWMO 2024 proposed levy.**

### **SWMO/SWCD Joint Tour Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>**

The fall tour date is set for September 18<sup>th</sup> from 3-7pm. The fall tour is one week earlier than our WPC meeting due to our Outdoor Education Days at Cedar Lake Farm Park. Rather than hold a WPC meeting a week after the fall tour, Commissioners have the option of moving the September WPC meeting to coincide with the tour. Staff recommends moving the September 25<sup>th</sup> WPC meeting to coincide with the fall tour on September 18<sup>th</sup>.

Motioned by Commissioner Thill, Seconded by Commissioner Vierling to approve moving the September 25<sup>th</sup> WPC meeting to September 18<sup>th</sup>.

The Motion carried unanimously to approve moving the September 25<sup>th</sup> Watershed Planning Commission meeting to September 18<sup>th</sup>.

VI. Adjournment


Motion by Commissioner Caselius; Seconded by Commissioner Vierling to adjourn the meeting at 5:23 PM.

The Motion carried unanimously to adjourn.

  
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Virgil Pint  
Vice Chair, Watershed Planning Commission

11/28/2023

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Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Melissa Bokman Ermer  
Senior Water Resources Planner/SWMO

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date