

## **Technical Advisory Committee**

### **January 9th, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

#### **Attendance:**

- Andover
  - Dave Berkowitz, Director of Public Works
  - Jason Law, Assistant City Engineer
  - Kameron Kytönen, Natural Resources Technician
- Anoka County Highways
  - Michelle Pritchard, Design Engineer
  - Jerry Auge, Assistant County Engineer
- Blaine
  - Megan Hedstrom, Water Resources Coordinator
- Coon Creek Watershed District
  - Tim Kelly, Administrator
  - Jon Janke, Director of Operations/Operations & Maintenance Coord.
  - Justine Dauphinais, Water Quality Coordinator
  - Erik Bye, Planning Coordinator
  - Jessica Lindemyer, Engagement Coordinator
  - Erin Margl, Watershed Development Coordinator
  - Emma Krause, Water Quality Intern
- Coon Rapids
  - Mark Hansen, City Engineer
  - Olivia Dorow Hovland, Sustainability Planner
- Ham Lake
  - Dave Krugler, City Engineer (RFC)
- Spring Lake Park
  - George Linngren, Public Works Director
- Fridley
  - Jim Kosluchar, City Engineer/Public Works Director

**Absent:** Anoka Conservation District, Board of Water and Soil Resources, and Columbus

## **1. Management Situation**

Jon Janke provided the TAC with a brief update on recent weather and hydrology. The relative lack of precipitation this winter is a bit unusual for this time of year, however, CCWD is keeping an eye on frost penetration and depth as it may impact shallow utility systems.

Tim Kelly and Dave Krugler informed the TAC of the passing of Tom Collins, Engineer for the City of Ham Lake. They shared the details of Tom's funeral and expressed their sincere condolences.

## **2. Concerns**

### Legislative Update

The legislature convenes Tuesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>. There will be a drainage bill that has a good chance of getting through. While there are no major implications locally for this bill, as the District does not operate under the drainage law, CCWD will be watching for the cumulative impact of these additions to the drainage law.

In the world of stormwater, there has been an increase in the assertiveness of the PCA in relation to the 401 certification process and an apparent change in procedures by the DNR for issuing permits. Both of these have led to delays in projects within the District. So far neither the PCA nor the DNR have been particularly responsive to the concerns that have been raised. Tim indicated that he has separate meetings set up with the commissioners of both agencies (PCA & DNR) next week.

Tim asked the TAC to share any cases they may have of PCA or DNR permits being delayed or unclear processes/standards resulting in undue delays.

### MS4 Audit Insights

Tim indicated that both the City of Blaine and the City of Coon Rapids completed their MS4 Audits. He asked that they share how the process went and any insights that were gained as a result.

Mark Hansen shared that while they did discover a few areas of non-compliance it was a good experience overall. There will be some items to follow-up on, but overall Coon Rapids was able to provide most of the information they were looking for during the audit. Mark expressed appreciation for the help Coon Rapids received from CCWD on the items related to public outreach. Some of the education materials were even requested by the auditors to be used as an example for other cities. Mark shared that one of the areas Coon Rapids struggled with compliance was illicit discharge training for police and fire in past years. Verbal warning

documentation was also considered to be lacking by the auditors.

Megan Hedstrom shared that Blaine had a very similar experience with their MS4 audit. One of the biggest issues Blaine had was the timing of the audit as it occurred during a very hectic time for the City. Megan echoed Mark's appreciation of CCWD's assistance in the area of public outreach and education stating that Blaine relies fully on CCWD for the development of MS4 compliant education and outreach materials. Blaine also had issues with training and documentation for police and fire.

Given that annual illicit discharge training for police and fire was an issue for both Blaine and Coon Rapids, Jim Kosluchar inquired about the possibility of CCWD assisting with the development of a joint training opportunity to help address this challenge. Mark Hansen added that in 2024 Coon Rapids incorporated a training PowerPoint from CCWD into the Cities standard training module which was sufficient for the MS4 auditors. Megan shared that Blaine went a similar route and shared a training video with the public safety supervisors to disseminate to their staff. Unfortunately, due to the large amount of public safety personnel and lack of interest from the supervisors, stormwater staff simply do not have the time to chase down individual officers to complete such a training.

Justine Dauphinais asked if either Coon Rapids or Blaine received comment from the auditors on if an email "read receipt" would be sufficient documentation. Megan shared that she had asked this question and the auditors informed her that "read receipts" are not sufficient, they are specifically looking for individual sign-offs.

Jon Janke suggested that it may be better to try to get the PCA to lead regional external trainings rather than having each municipality develop their own. Mark Hansen expressed his agreement with this idea. He also noted that the auditors were looking for illicit discharge documentation beyond what is provided on the initial incident form such as copies of emails, photos, and follow-up letters. The auditors did not look as favorably on simple written summaries.

### PCA & DNR Permitting

Tim again asked if any of the TAC members had any examples to share related to issues with PCA Threatened & Endangered Species Program and/or the DNR 401 certification process.

Megan Hedstrom indicated that Blaine has had issues obtaining dewatering permits from the DNR in regards to rare plants and they anticipate continuing to have this issue. The plants are not getting caught in the beginning of a project because the projects do not have a wetland impact and as such aren't going through the full Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) process, however

when the dewatering permit gets pulled the rare plants are flagged by the DNR and the project timeline gets significantly delayed. In one specific incident construction has been delayed by almost a full year.

### Floodplain Maps (HUC 8)

Erik Bye shared that CCWD and Stantec have been in communication with the DNR to get a better understanding of the process. The DNR is hesitant to give out specific details as some of it may change. Stantec will be submitting the model within a few weeks to the DNR. Once that has been submitted the process will be fully within the hands of the DNR and FEMA. The DNR will review CCWD's model and map it themselves. With the help of FEMA that process typically takes 2-3 years. After that, the DNR and FEMA will hold three local meetings with the intent of receiving feedback and comments on the draft maps from local entities. After the initial meetings the DNR will hold an official public notification meeting with a 90-day appeal window following. Appeals can add years to the process, so we'll want to do whatever we can to get all of our comments submitted during the initial feedback window. On average, this entire process takes 3 – 5 years.

The DNR has confirmed that they intend to use 2022 LiDAR data and recommended that cities keep handy their Letter of Map Change records.

Erik confirmed that we have no confirmed dates or hard deadlines at this time. The DNR communicated that Anoka County and Washington County are their current priorities within the Twin Cities HUC 8. Erik and Stantec will continue to meet with the DNR on a regular basis.

There was a brief discussion about the current status of 2022 LiDAR data, specifically the 1' contours. Jon Janke stated that Anoka County has the data and it should be available soon. Communities along the Mississippi may need to get additional data from Hennepin County as the areas abutting the Mississippi were flown as part of the Hennepin County mapping efforts in a previous year. CCWD will keep the TAC updated on the availability of the data.

### Eastbrook Terrace Groundwater Contamination Update

Justine Dauphinais explained that she recently attended a meeting of the Crooked Lake Association and several residents approached her about getting updates on the groundwater contamination mitigation status. Dave Berkowitz share that the City of Andover had a meeting with the MPCA in late December to talk about where things are going. Andover requested that the MPCA get information out to the residents and they will be having a meeting on January 14<sup>th</sup> to specifically discuss community outreach. At this time it sounds like the work will be done in phases with Red Oaks-Second Phase constructed in 2026 and Eastbrook terrace potentially addressed in 2027.

## Municipal Insight Survey – Insights from Phase One

Jessica Lindemyer provided a summary of the initial insights from Phase One of the Municipal Insight Survey. The purpose of this work is to gain a better understanding of the needs, values, priorities, and perceptions of CCWD’s municipal partners with the goal of tailoring future municipal engagement efforts to speak to the values and interests of local decision makers in a language that they understand and in terms that are of interest to them.

Jessica outlined the general methods of the municipal insight effort stating that Phase One consisted of 13 interviews with individual decision-makers (roughly two in each municipality) and 25 staff surveys.

Key insights from Phase One include:

- Factors that encourage support for water management funding
  - Mitigation of risk
  - Prevention of loss
  - Public healthy & safety
  - Receiving regular updates
- Factors that discourage support for water management funding
  - Lack of trust in state/federal regulators
  - Lack of perceived benefits
  - Belief that water management is a problem for others
- Actionable Recommendations such as
  - Provide city specific reports and progress updates
  - Provide explainer resources for staff to use when communicating with decision makers who are less familiar with the issues and context
  - Continued presence at city-hosted events.

Jessica explained that Phase Two of this effort will begin shortly and consist of 14 resident interviews followed by a larger survey of taxpayers within the District. Once Phase Two has been completed, she will provide another update to the TAC.

### **3. Briefs**

#### Water Quality Cost Share Program

Justine Dauphinais reminded Committee members that the first deadline for Water Quality Cost-Share Applications is Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup>. More information regarding this program is available on the CCWD website.

### Watershed Based Implementation Funding

Justine Dauphinais informed the TAC that the Coon Creek Watershed Planning Group will be entering its 4<sup>th</sup> biennium of funding under the Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) program. In order to access the funds set aside for the Coon Creek Watershed Planning Group, the Group must hold a convene meeting and vote on a project(s) to submit for funding by April 2025. The project must be focused on water quality; water quantity-centered projects are not eligible. In order for the Convene meeting to be held, the Coon Creek Watershed District, the Anoka Conservation District, and two municipalities with jurisdiction within CCWD boundaries must be present. Justine asked the TAC members to start thinking about potential projects they would like to put forward for consideration. The funds will be made available in 2025 and expire in 2027.

There was a general consensus that the convene meeting could be held at the February TAC meeting scheduled for February 13<sup>th</sup>.

#### **4. Other Water Management Concerns**

None.

#### **5. Announcements**

None.

**All handouts, materials, and presentations for this meeting can be found on the TAC Resource Webpage: <https://www.cooncreekwd.org/tac/>**