

Regular Meeting  
**South Washington Watershed District**  
**Monday, August 9, 2021**  
**6:00 p.m.**  
Woodbury Public Works Building  
2301 Tower Drive, Woodbury

**1. Call to Order and Setting of Agenda**

Manager Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. President Johnson moved item #6-2022 Budget Hearing to item#3 on the agenda. A motion was made by Manager ChapdeLaine to approve the agenda as amended. Manager Williams seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Roll Call:**

- Brian Johnson, President
- Sharon Doucette, Vice President
- Kevin ChapdeLaine, Treasurer
- Mike Madigan, Secretary
- Cole Williams, Manager

**Staff:**

- Matt Moore, District Administrator
- John Loomis, Program Manager
- Tony Randazzo, Watershed Restoration Specialist
- Attorney Jack Clinton-Participated on Zoom Video Conferencing

**Others:** Chris Hartzell, City of Woodbury Engineering Director  
Michelle and Eric Witte, City of Woodbury Residents  
Dan Belka, City of Woodbury Resident  
Gale Meyer, City of Woodbury Resident

**2. Public Open Forum** Michelle Witte read a statement on behalf of the Wilmes Lake residents that were in attendance. The statement is attached to the meeting minutes.

**3. Consent Agenda**

Items on the Consent Agenda include: July 13, 2021 Regular Board meeting minutes, July's Treasurer's Report: accounts payable \$372,793.28 accounts receivable \$2,168,185.29, 4M fund balance \$14,481,326.76, Calendar of Events, Development Reviews, Wetland Conservation Act, Cost Share Program, and Miscellaneous Correspondence. A motion was made by Manager ChapdeLaine to approve the consent agenda. Manager Williams seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Manager's Report**

**Manager Johnson** – Manager Johnson reported that the entire SWWD Board Managers and Staff attended the CDO Overflow celebration in Ravine Parks. Manager Johnson reported that he attended the Woodbury Commissions meeting.

**Manager Doucette** – None.

**Manager ChapdeLaine** –Manager ChapdeLaine reported that he attended the One Watershed One Plan policy committee meeting.

**Manager Madigan** – None.

**Manager Williams** – Manager Williams reported that she applied to Citizens Advisory Committee for the Park Board for the City of Cottage Grove.

**5. Administrator Report**

**SWWD Project Updates.** Included in the board packet are project updates on: Trout Brook, Glacial Valley Park and Open space, Campus Greening, Newport ROWs, McQuade Ravine, Oakdale IESF, Seasons Park Stormwater Filter, Wilmes alum facility, Powers Stormwater filter, Nuevas Fronteras filter, East Mississippi Modeling and Retrofit Analysis, Markgrafs Lake Retrofit Analysis, Northern Watershed/CDSF/East Ravine, and Woodbury Parks guidance.

**Wilmes Lake Update.** Administrator Moore summarized the meeting with the City of Woodbury engineering staff and the Wilmes Lake residents.

**SWWD Board Tour Date.** The managers would be interested in a short tour of some of the SWWD projects in mid to late September. Staff will send out a Doodle Poll with potential tour dates.

- 6. 2022 Budget Hearing.** Manager Johnson suspended the regular meeting and opened the 2022 budget hearing. Staff provided the Board an overview of the draft 2022 budget. The draft budget was published in the St. Paul Pioneer Press on Wednesday July 28, 2021 and Wednesday August 4, 2021. Staff will refine the budget for the September Board meeting and prepare the preliminary certification to Washington County. The preliminary certification will include the tax impact worksheet from Washington County. Mr. Dan Belka, a resident of Wilmes Lake, was present to provide his comments on the proposed 2022 budget. Mr. Belka's comments include: SWWD spend down the fund reserves on flood damage reduction projects, not stormwater rate and volume projects. Requested that SWWD reconsider the need to construct the Glacial Valley Interpretative Center. Mr. Belka stated that the stormwater rate and volume was not resolved with the construction of the Central Draw Overflow system. Additional measures are needed in the Northern Watershed. The 2022 budget hearing will remain open until the next SWWD board meeting on September 14, 2021 to receive written comments on the proposed 2022 budget. Those comments will need to be received by Friday, September 10, 2021. Manager Johnson reconvened the regular board meeting.
- 7. SWWD Annual Insurance-Waiver of Statutory Tort Limits.** The managers reviewed the workers compensation and property and casualty insurance renewal. A motion was made by Manager ChapdeLaine to approve the waiver of statutory tort limits. Manager Madigan seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- 8. Carpenter Nature Center 2021 Professional Services Agreement.** In 2020, staff was working with EMWREP and Carpenter Nature Center to develop and deliver environmental programming for ISD833 5th graders in conjunction with Campus Greening activities. Program resources had been developed, and funds paid for development, but due to COVID-19 restrictions, classroom instruction was put on hold. In Fall, 2021, staff will work with Carpenter and School staff to bring the programming into the classroom. The program will still consist of 5, 1 hour lessons and an all-day field trip to occur in October and November, 2021. It will be offered at 3 schools (Crestview, Valley Crossing and Nuevas Fronteras) where SWWD and ISD833 are working on campus greening projects. A motion was made by Manager Doucette to approve the agreement with Carpenter Nature Center for 2021 educational programming for up to \$11,400. Manager ChapdeLaine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- 9. CCIP Agreement Cancellation, City of Woodbury Pioneer Park.** SWWD previously awarded a Coordinated Capital Improvement Program (CCIP) Grant to the City of Woodbury for a stormwater best management practice (BMP) at Pioneer Park.

The City will no longer pursue that project. A motion was made by Manager Madigan to cancel the CCIP agreement with the City of Woodbury for the Pioneer Park project. Manager Doucette seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- 10. Minnesota Stormwater Research Council 2021 Funding Request.** SWWD has participated in the MN Stormwater Research Council since 2016 through staff participation and in funding. The managers reviewed the Council's annual request for funds and a summary of work. SWWD has \$15,000 in the 2021 budget to continue support of the Council. A motion was made by Manager ChapdeLaine to approve the \$15,000 funding request to the Minnesota Stormwater Research Council for 2021. Manager Doucette seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- 11. Conservation Corps Vegetation Management Agreement for Crestview Elementary.** Staff continues to work on restoration efforts at Crestview Elementary School in Cottage Grove. The 7.5 acre Outdoor Laboratory area has been forestry mowed twice, had canopy thinned and has been grazed by goats once. DNR Grant agreements encourage working with Conservation Corps crews on tasks appropriate to the organization. Staff has identified herbicide applications as the next step in controlling buckthorn, smooth brome, reed canary grass, honeysuckle and Siberian Peashrub. Conservation Corps crews are well suited to the tasks at hand. Expected effort by Corps staff are between 3 and 6 workdays with a crew of 4. A motion was made by Manager Doucette to approve the agreement with the Conservation Corps for up to \$6,500 for work on the Crestview Elementary site. Manager ChapdeLaine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**12. Adjourn**

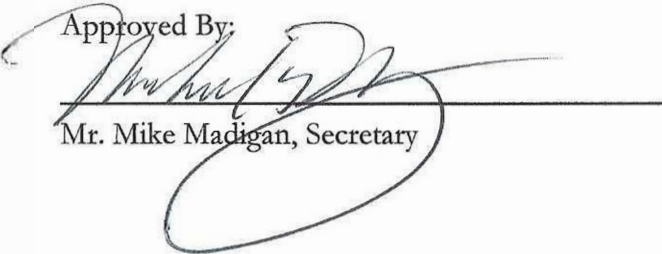
The next regular Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm. A motion was made by Manager Madigan to adjourn at 7:27 p.m. Manager ChapdeLaine seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Melissa Imse, Operations Manager

Approved By:



Mr. Mike Madigan, Secretary

9-14-2021

Date

## MEMORANDUM - Testimony

TO: South Washington Watershed District  
FROM: Michelle Witte and Concerned Woodbury Residents  
DATE: August 9, 2021  
RE: Public Input into 2022 Budget Hearing and Flooding Concerns

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Thank you for letting me address you this evening. As a former elected School Board member, I'm aware of the challenges of your roles to manage your grand mission with public tax dollars. It's not easy! Though I'll confess, I'm jealous that you have taxing authority. When we wanted to raise money for schools – and I ran 4 levy and bond referendums in our community – we had to convince the public of the value of our projects, and I had to ensure that their taxes would be spent for what we said it would be spent for. So I bring that experience and insight with me here also tonight.

I'm here this evening to voice my collective concern about your current budget, which appears to allocate only \$230,000, or less than 2% of your total budget over 2 years, to flood damage reduction and mitigation planning. And yet, 200+ Woodbury homes have been identified as being significantly at risk for flooding by the City of Woodbury.

In our attempt to ask questions and seek clarification about how SWWD is planning to address this identified flooding risk within Woodbury, we have learned the following:

- Residents were taxed and have already paid for the Central Draw Overflow project in the southern end of the district. However, the project came in significantly under budget, and there is a \$12 million fund balance for taxes that were accrued for the express purpose of stormwater rate and volume control.
- In November of 2019, more than 200 Woodbury homeowners were notified that their homes were identified as being at significant risk of flooding, based on the 2018 Woodbury Atlas 14 Report. Of course, those of us around Wilmes Lake already knew of our risk, as we experienced the flooding associated with the October 2005 rain event.
- To address that risk, the City of Woodbury put in place a Flood Risk Reduction grant program, which provides up to 50% or 75% of financial support for possible solutions. However, homeowners need to pay taxes on that grant money, plus research, contract and pay for that project out of pocket, before receiving any grant support.
- In September of 2020, we reached out to County Commissioner Weik to better understand the role of the SWWD in this program and the plans to continue to address flood reduction, and were told by her and Brian Johnson that SWWD could not do anything more to reduce flood risk for Woodbury residents without the City of Woodbury asking them first.

- We then contacted officials at the City of Woodbury, discussed the issue, and were presented with a final report on June 25, 2021 that concluded they as a City would not be doing anything further to address the identified flood risk for residents, other than the grant program.
- So that brings us back to the SWWD tonight, and the presentation of your budget.
  - It is clear that the Atlas 14 report clearly identifies several hundred Woodbury homes being at significant risk for flooding.
  - It is clear that you already taxed Woodbury residents for flood reduction measures, and have what appears to be a \$12million fund balance toward that intended purpose.
  - Therefore, there should be current funds available to address the flooding risks identified.

Our request here tonight then is quite simple:

- Please adjust your budget accordingly to ensure that the fund balance allocated to the Central Draw Overflow - which was meant to be a SYSTEM WIDE SOLUTION for flood control - be used to now to "finish the job."
- The Wilmes stormwater pipe is a central artery for the entire SWWD system, and is only one pipe with no redundancy and demonstrated insignificant capacity to handle large rain events.
- There is also agreement among City and County staff that rain events are clearly posing a significant threat - Matt, you mentioned in our meeting that you've seen evidence of 3-4 rain events per year already in the State of Minnesota that are challenging the 100 year flood levels. As a growing community, you have made countless infrastructure improvements to keep pace with the identified and CHANGING needs and information. Indeed, that's why you did the Central Draw Overflow.
- So we're asking you to simply use the money you already collected to address the issue.
  - We know that the Wilmes Lake level has already been lowered, so that's now complete.
  - We also know - and clarified with Matt Moore - that there is no more identified storage capacity upstream to address the issue.
  - So therefore, the only main issue left is to consider another 48" pipe to drain the Wilmes lake system - a main artery which handles 2/3 of the watershed's water - to protect not just the 200 residents affected, but potentially hundreds more.
  - This could start with a true engineering analysis that looks at the possibility of adding a second drainage pipe for Wilmes.
- We also ask that you consider using some of the fund balance to pay the homeowner cost of the Flood Reduction Grant Program. As a matter of policy, I cannot think of a case where you've asked homeowners to pay thousands of dollars out of their own pockets "up front" to mitigate a risk that is YOUR mission to mitigate. You're essentially asking us to "hold the watershed's water for you" - and to PAY YOU for that privilege. That's absolutely unacceptable. Again, especially because you have taxed us already for this and have the money available to look at real infrastructure solutions - like you did successfully with the overflow.

- And we ask that you also seriously consider solutions such as lowering the emergency overflow in the Wilmes Lake area, and that that be part of a study. This smaller budget item could have tremendous affect to dozens of residents, and could be a meaningful fix among others that could be identified beyond asking residents to PAY TO HOLD YOUR WATER.
- And lastly, we ask you to shelve the Glacial Interpretive Center project, given your awareness of the growing flood risks in our community and the need to fulfill your primary mission of successfully managing the flow of water through our communities. The Center sounds lovely but consider the optics here - of 200+ Woodbury homes flooding - people sandbagging and renting generators and rushing to protect their homes - something I know because I LIVED IT - while others are enjoying a lovely day at the Glacial Interpretive Center.
- Please simply use the tax money you've already collected from us to help provide real infrastructure and flood reduction support to our community.

Thank you for the work you do in our community, and for seriously listening to the concerns expressed here tonight. I and other homeowners affected by this identified flood risk would be happy to help in any way possible.

**Michelle Witte**

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