

MEETING MINUTES

Riley-Purgatory-Bluff Creek Watershed District

June 15, 2023, RPBCWD Board of Managers Work Session

PRESENT:

Managers: Jill Crafton, Treasurer
Tom Duevel, Vice President
Larry Koch
Dorothy Pedersen, Secretary
David Ziegler, President

Staff: Liz Forbes, Communication Manager
Terry Jeffery, District Administrator
Scott Sobiech, Engineer, Barr Engineering Company
Michael Welch, Legal Counsel, Smith Partners

Note: the Board work session was held remotely via meeting platform Zoom because it was deemed not prudent to meet in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Call to Order

1 President David Ziegler called the Board work session to order at 7:00 p.m. He stated the
2 Board is conducting this work session via Zoom out of an abundance of caution regarding the
3 pandemic. Administrator Jeffery called roll as follows:
4

<i>Manager</i>	<i>Action</i>
Crafton	Present
Duevel	Present
Koch	Present
Pedersen	Present
Ziegler	Present

5

2. Approval of Agenda

6 Manager Koch moved to adopt the agenda as proposed. Manager Pedersen seconded the
7 motion. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0 as follows:

<i>Manager</i>	<i>Action</i>
Crafton	Yes
Duevel	Yes
Koch	Yes
Pedersen	Yes
Ziegler	Yes

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3. Update on Ecosystem Health Action Plan

9 Administrator Jeffery reported the second of four Ecosystem Health Action Plan (EHAP)
 10 workshops was held and tonight he will describe what has been discussed at the first two
 11 workshops. He reminded the Board the initiative looks at the ecosystem as a whole to
 12 understand impacts to water quality.

13 Administrator Jeffery said the first workshop was held May 18th and each city in the
 14 watershed except for Deephaven had a representative in attendance. He said also represented
 15 were the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), the Department of Natural Resources
 16 (DNR), Carver County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD), and the Nine Mile
 17 Creek Watershed District (NMCWD). Administrator Jeffery said the goal of the workshops is
 18 to get the planners in the various cities and agencies involved in planning for ecosystem
 19 health in the watershed.

20 Administrator Jeffery shared a PowerPoint presentation “Ecosystem Health Action Plan”. He
 21 summarized landcover in the District can be categorized as either Green (lawn, woodlands,
 22 old field vegetation, agriculture), gray (streets, highways, parking lots, driveways, buildings),
 23 or blue (streams, lakes, wetlands). Administrator Jeffery explained the ecosystem health goal
 24 is to expand the green area and shrink the gray area to protect the blue area. He said ways to
 25 expand the green area include preserving existing open space, transforming lawns into
 26 prairies, and restoring degraded natural areas, among other methods. He said some ways to
 27 shrink or cover the gray include low-impact development, creating walkable communities,
 28 reducing impervious surfaces, and transitioning to green roofs, among other tactics.

29 Administrator Jeffery said the first EHAP workshop resulted in the identification of eight
 30 components of a healthy urban ecosystem, such as biologically diverse, layered, and
 31 connected habitats and wildlife, climate change resilience, and native wildflowers, grasses,
 32 shrubs, and trees incorporated into the built environment. He described the barriers to a
 33 healthy ecosystem such as development, resource availability, and knowledge, among other
 34 barriers.

35 Administrator Jeffrey said handouts are being created to capture the information developed
 36 from the EHAP workshops and the handouts will be distributed to the participants and the
 37 managers. He said the next workshop is on July 20 and the group will discuss how to address

38 gaps in ecosystem protection/improvement and will try to identify the most effective and
39 efficient methods to accomplish ecosystem goals and ways to work together.

40 Manager Pedersen asked about the sentiment of the workshop participants regarding the
41 ecosystem health planning and initiatives. Administrator Jeffery responded there are some
42 participants who seem to be there to stay on top of what is happening but by and large most
43 seem to be participating because they want to be involved and be part of the solution.

44 Manager Crafton said she was inspired by the networking going on at the workshop and how
45 it seemed there was information sharing happening, which helped the participants think
46 outside the box.

47 Manager Koch said he thinks it is important to define the goals, which may include defining
48 problems and working backward from there. He asked what type of legal or regulatory
49 authority the watershed district has to affect any of the possible causes or effects on the
50 watershed's water. Manager Duevel commented on news about Phoenix shutting down
51 development due to water scarcity and agreed with Manager Koch's suggestion of identifying
52 the problems and work back from there in a systematic way.

53

4. Education and Outreach Workplan

54 Liz Forbes displayed the PowerPoint presentation "2023 E&O Workplan" and presented the
55 Board with the District's 2023 Education and Outreach plan and activities calendar.

56 Manager Koch commented he would like to have a 2024 Education and Outreach plan in time
57 for the 2024 budget planning. He said the District needs to find a way to get the word out
58 about the District's permit requirements including making sure the cities have a way to notify
59 city permit applicants.

60 Manager Pedersen said she does not think the District has enough of a presence in the local
61 community newspapers and encouraged staff to submit things on a quarterly basis for
62 publication. She noted many of the lake associations have their own newsletters and the
63 District could provide the associations content to share in their newsletters.

64 Manager Duevel said real estate offices welcome presentations to their agents and he thinks
65 ten- to fifteen-minute presentations by the District would be well received.

66

5. Audit Report

67 Administrator Jeffery shared the Abdo PowerPoint presentation "Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek
68 Watershed District 2022 Financial Statement Audit". He noted Abdo met with the Audit and
69 Finance Committee earlier this week and shared with the Committee this presentation of the
70 audit results and 509 Plan Implementation Fund results.

71 Administrator Jeffery reported the District received an unmodified/clean opinion and one
72 legal/compliance finding on the timely payment of claims. Administrator Jeffery said even

73 though the District updated its contracts for payment terms of 45 days, Abdo let him know
 74 that state law requires payment within 35 days. Administrator Jeffery said Abdo
 75 recommended the District continue stamping the invoices when they arrive at the District and
 76 makes sure the proper process is in place for the District staff to know when invoices have
 77 arrived. Administrator Jeffery reported the 509 Plan Implementation Fund balance remained
 78 relatively stable.

79 Administrator Jeffery said the Audit and Finance Committee is scheduled to meet with 4M
 80 regarding the District’s investments options and diversification.

81 Manager Koch said he did not receive a response to the suggested changes he submitted to
 82 Abdo. He said this audit presentation should have been scheduled far enough in advance that
 83 all the players could have attended to be available to answer questions. Manager Koch said he
 84 did not see that the legal questionnaire required by the state auditor was circulated.

85 Manager Crafton said the audit is an independent audit and is done for the Minnesota Board
 86 and Water Resources. She said the District does not have the capacity to comment on the
 87 independent audit. Manager Koch said the D & A is the District’s work and statement and the
 88 Board should use it to describe what happened during the year on a financial basis.

89 Michael Welch said he will follow up with Mr. Jeffery regarding communication to the
 90 auditor. Mr. Welch said the state statutory provision allows for the District to set contract
 91 terms of 45 days. He said the auditors finding is an incorrect reading of the statute regarding
 92 the 35-day default term. He said perhaps some of the auditor’s finding was due to payment of
 93 invoices of contracts in place before the District updated its contract process to provide for 45
 94 days. Mr. Welch said he and Mr. Jeffery will look into it.

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6. Capital Project Fund Balance Report

96 Administrator Jeffery said staff will present a draft 2024 budget in July. He walked through
 97 the budget for the Upper Riley Creek stabilization. He displayed the budget report format and
 98 explained how the report shows how money is allocated and spent for each project and what
 99 the District is levying for each project each year. Manager Koch asked if Administrator
 100 Jeffery could also include in the report how much of the funds levied per year for each project
 101 remain available versus spent for that project.

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7. Adjournment

103 Manager Koch moved to adjourn the work session. Manager Pedersen seconded the motion.
 104 Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-0 as follows:

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<i>Manager</i>	<i>Action</i>
Crafton	Yes

Duevel	Yes
Koch	Yes
Pedersen	Yes
Ziegler	Yes

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The work session adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Dorothy Pedersen, Secretary

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