Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission

Draft Minutes of Regular Meeting
August 20, 2026
8:30 a.m.
7800 Golden Valley Rd., Golden Valley MN

1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

On August 20, 2026 at 8:32 a.m. Chair Cesnik called the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission (Commission) to order.

Commissioners, city staff, and others present

City	Commissioner	Alternate Commissioner	Technical Advisory Committee Members (City Staff)
Crystal	*Vacant*	Terri Schultz	*Absent*
Golden Valley	Paula Pentel	Wendy Weirich	Emma Rakestraw
Medicine Lake	Clint Carlson	*Absent*	*Absent*
Minneapolis	Jodi Polzin	*Absent*	Liz Stout
Minnetonka	*Vacant*	*Vacant*	*Absent*
New Hope	Jere Gwin-Lenth	Jen Leonardson	Nick Macklem and Lola Ellingson-Shuster
Plymouth	Catherine Cesnik	*Absent*	Ben Scharenbroich
Robbinsdale	*Absent*	*Absent*	Jenna Wolf
St. Louis Park	*Absent*	David Johnston	Erick Francis
Administrator	Laura Jester, Keystone Waters, LLC		
Engineers	Stephanie Johnson, Jim Herbert, Greg Wilson, Meg Rattei - Barr Engineering Co.		
Communications & Outreach Coordinator	Kaitlyn Egan		
Legal Counsel	Dave Anderson, Kennedy & Graven		
Guests/Public	None		

2. PUBLIC FORUM ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Administrator Jester requested the addition of a business item to consider an Education Committee recommendation to support the 2026 Salt Symposium.

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the agenda with the addition of the Education Committee recommendation. Commissioner Polzin seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Administrator Jester requested to remove the July minutes from the consent agenda to correct the meeting attendance list.

MOTION: Commissioner Pentel moved to approve the consent agenda as amended. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

The following items were approved as part of the consent agenda.

- Acceptance of August Financial Report
- Approval of Payment of Invoices
  - Keystone Waters, LLC – July 2026 Administration
  - Keystone Waters, LLC – July 2026 Administrative Expenses
  - Barr Engineering – July 2026 Engineering Services
  - Triple D Espresso – August Meeting Catering
  - City of Plymouth – July 2026 Accounting Services
  - Kennedy & Graven – June 2026 Legal Services
  - LB Carlson – 2025 Financial Audit
  - Strategic Consulting & Coaching – Organizational Assessment Project
  - Bolton & Menk – Parkers Lake Chloride Reduction Project
  - Stantec – WOMP Monitoring Activities (2)
  - Kaitlyn Egan – July Communications & Outreach Activities
- Approval of Resolution of Appreciation for Joan Hauer

5. BUSINESS

4A. Approval of Minutes - July 16, 2026

Administrator Jester reported an error in the minutes noting that Alternate Commissioner Jen Leonardson was present at the meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Gwin-Lenth moved to approve the July minutes as amended. Commissioner Carlson seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

A. Elect New Commission Secretary

Administrator Jester noted that due to the resignation of Commissioner Hauer, the Commission should elect a new secretary, which could be combined with the treasurer position.

MOTION: <u>Commissioner Carlson moved to appoint Commissioner Polzin as Commission Secretary (in combination with the Treasurer position). Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.</u>

NEW AGENDA ITEM: Education Committee Recommendation

Education Committee Chair Weirich reported that the Education Committee met on August 18th and took action recommending that the Commission support the Annual Salt Symposium at the $500 level. Commission Attorney Anderson recommended a conditional approval so he has time to review the appropriateness of the contribution, ensuring that it doesn't pose an issue with the audit.

MOTION: <u>Commissioner Pentel moved to approve a contribution of $500 to support the 2026 Salt Symposium conditioned on review and approval by the Commission Attorney. Commissioner Carlson seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.</u>

B. Consider Approval of 2027 Operating Budget

Commissioner Polzin noted the proposed budget was the same budget presented to the Commission in May and that no comments had been received from the other cities. Discussion touched on the funding needed for the Medicine Lake Task Force, which is to come from the Medicine Lake CIP Project budget with additional support from the City of Plymouth.

Commissioner Polzin noted that the page related to Special Projects would be removed from the final Operating Budget as it was included only to ensure funding is available for the Special Projects from the Long Term Account and is not part of the actual Operating Budget.

There was discussion regarding the Medicine Lake Task Force with Commissioner Carlson noting his concern that the issue of wake boats not included in the scope of the task force. Plymouth TAC member Scharenbroich agreed that boating issues are not something the task force should address because recreation is outside the Commission's purview. Administrator Jester noted the Medicine Lake Task Force work is funded through the CIP budget and does not impact the Operating Budget.

MOTION: <u>Commissioner Polzin moved to approve the 2027 Operating Budget and city assessments. Commissioner Pentel seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.</u>

C. Review Updates from West Metro Watershed Alliance and Consider Approval of Updated Agreement

Administrator Jester referenced the update on the West Metro Watershed Alliance provided with meeting materials. She reported that the group hopes to fill the outreach coordination position which is housed at and shared with Hennepin County and that WMWA is working toward affording a full-time coordinate to help execute initiatives and education efforts. She described the new WMWA website that will launch soon and she described how the WMWA Watershed Prep program is popular with 4th classrooms and meets science standards. Discussion included increasing funding from partner cities year over year, with the goal of moving toward a full-time position rather than relying on grant funding.

Commissioner Polzin asked whether the agreement would need to be approved annually. Administrator Jester explained that the agreement is open-ended and amendable, and that 60 days' notice would be required to discontinue participation.

Commissioner Cesnik asked how partners are selected and noted that the governance standards do not outline how to determine whether a non-watershed organization or nonprofit could be a partner. Administrator Jester noted that such guidance being finalized. It was noted that if WMWA fails to function as intended that Administrator Jester would bring that information back to the Commission.

MOTION: Commissioner Polzin moved to approve the updated agreement with Shingle Creek Watershed Management Commission for the West Metro Watershed Alliance. Commissioner Gwin-Lenth seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

D. Receive Update on Communication & Administrative Assistant Activities and Recommendations

Administrator Jester reported that the Communications & Outreach Coordinator is the public-facing title of the Communications & Administration Assistant. She reported that Kaitlyn Egan already made great strides in advancing communications including developing the survey of Medicine Lake residents and users to help inform the Medicine Lake Task Force. Additionally she updated presentation materials and crafted several proposals.

Communications and Outreach Coordinator Egan reviewed her proposal for the Commission to use Google Workspace for BCWMC email, cloud storage, and related functions noting that it would help improve resiliency and communication abilities. She reported that she compared various platforms and recommends Google Workspace at a cost of $168/year. She noted Google Workspace was also recommended by the Commission's website consultant. It was noted that the Education Committee also discussed the use of Google Workspace and recommended its use by the Commission. t Discussion included whether Google Meet could be used for Commission meetings. The Commission also discussed the possibility of using commission-specific email addresses. Coordinator Egan also reported that if use of Google Workspace is approved, she recommends updating a setting to not allow AI to collect documents and data from Commission files. It was noted that internal procedures and protocols will be developed for more coordinated use of the Workspace including access permissions and file naming conventions.

MOTION: Commissioner Carlson moved to approve the use of Google Workspace as presented. Commissioner Pentel seconded the motion. Upon a vote the motion carried 7-0. The cities of Minnetonka and Robbinsdale were absent from the vote.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Administrator's Report

i. Update on Organizational Assessment Project - Bi-weekly meetings with consultant continue; good response to the survey; interviews with the commissioners, TAC members, and staff will be arranged and outreach to peer organizations for interviews has started.

ii. Update on Medicine Lake Task Force

Task force materials and the survey for residents and lake users were reviewed by commissioners and Plymouth staff, with some edits requested. The Commission will move forward with notifying the public and sending cards and flyers to promote the survey. It was noted that three treatments for starry stonewort are planned by Three Rivers Park District.

Discussion addressed assumptions and limitations of the Task Force related to boating and wake boating, water levels, boat launch hours, and private property conditions. It was noted that BCWMC and the cities do not control these factors. Commissioner Carlson expressed concern that residents may not understand the limitations. Plymouth TAC Member Scharenbroich noted that contentious issues could derail the water quality purpose of the effort and emphasized focusing on factors the Commission can influence. Chair Cesnik noted that controversial issues impacted the effectiveness of the lake group AMLAC.

iii. Update on Ȟaȟá Wakpádaŋ Water Blessing Ceremony

The ceremony will be held at Westwood Hills Nature Center. The Commission will have a table at the October 12 event at 10:00 a.m., which will include reading of the Commission's land and water acknowledgement by Chair Cesnik.

iv. Update on Sochacki Park Water Quality Improvement Project Open House

The public hearing/open house went well, with many questions about the water level drawdown. The Commission will review the 90% plans at the September meeting.

Additional Note: The October 22 Commission meeting is the meeting scheduled to avoid a conflict with MEA weekend.

B. Engineer

i. Report on Bassett Creek Restoration Project

Project construction is being completed in four sections beginning with access installation and herbicide treatments. Earthwork is expected to begin the following week. The first reach is expected to take approximately one month, with all work to be completed by the contract deadline of December 15th.

ii. Report on Theodore Wirth Hydrology Study

As included in the Watershed Management Plan, the Commission is assisting the Board of Water and Soil Resources and MPRB with a hydrology assessment ahead of a peatland restoration project in the Eloise Butler Butterfly Garden area. A scope of work is being developed and will be presented at the October meeting. The area is largely groundwater-fed, so understanding how springs affect the area is important. The project is being scoped, and monitoring equipment is planned for installation this fall, pending approval. Commissioner Polzin noted legal history regarding groundwater ownership and recommended researching water and mineral rights for future projects.

Commission Engineer Johnson also reported that two scopes of work for feasibility studies for CIP projects are anticipated to be presented in September. She also noted a mandatory prebid meeting was held for the Double Box Culvert Repair Project, with strong interest; bids are expected next month.

C. Legal Counsel

Legal Counsel reported that work continues on an access agreement with property owners for the Double Box Culvert Repair Project. The agreement is likely to be presented for approval next month.

D. Communications & Outreach Coordinator - No report

E. Chair - No report

F. Minnesota Watersheds

Commissioners were reminded of the Minnesota Watersheds Summer Tour scheduled for the following week. A report from Administrator Jester is expected at the next meeting.

G. Commissioners - No report

H. TAC Members - Commissioner Pentel will attend the September 2nd TAC meeting as the liaison.

I. Committees

The Education Committee met August 18. Committee Chair Weirich reported that a customer relationship management (CRM) tool is being considered and that watershed signage is under discussion and development. Commissioner Pentel noted that a small Sparks grant may be used for the signage.

7. INFORMATION ONLY (Information online only)

- Administrative Calendar
- CIP Project Updates www.bassettcreekwmo.org/projects
- Grant Tracking Spreadsheet
- July Minnesota Watersheds Newsletter

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.