

Technical Advisory Committee

April 9, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

- Andover
 - Dave Berkowitz, Director of Public Works/City Engineer
 - Jason Law, Assistant City Engineer
- Anoka Conservation District
 - Chris Lord, Administrator
- Anoka County Highways
 - Rebecca Haug, Environmental Project Manager
- Blaine
 - Megan Hedstrom, Water Resources Coordinator
- Coon Creek Watershed District
 - Jon Janke, District Administrator
 - Jessica Lindemyer, Engagement Coordinator
 - Erin Margl, Watershed Development Coordinator
 - Abbey Lee, Watershed Development Manager
 - Erik Bye, Planning Coordinator
 - Justine Dauphinais, Water Quality Coordinator
 - Tyler Thompson, Operations and Maintenance Coordinator
 - Eileen Weigel, District Engineer (Stantec)
- Coon Rapids
 - Mark Hansen, City Engineer
 - Brooke Schultz, Water Resource Specialist
- Department of Natural Resources
 - Ryan Toot, Area Hydrologist
- Fridley
 - Jim Kosluchar, City Engineer/Public Works Director
- Ham Lake
 - Dave Krugler, City Engineer
- Spring Lake Park
 - George Linngren, Public Works Director

Absent: Board of Water and Soil Resources, City of Columbus, Department of Health, Department of Transportation

1. Announcements

Justine Dauphinais gave an update on the Water Quality Cost-Share Program. The two applications received during round one are both recommended for funding at the next board meeting. Approximately \$250,000 remains available for the second round of applications which are due September 11th.

2. Management Situation

Hydrology

Tyler Thompson provided the TAC with a brief update on recent weather and hydrology. Conditions across the district are fairly normal for this time of year with good capacity in the system. Staff are keeping an eye on road restrictions. Beaver activity is picking up.

Jon Janke added that frost is out across the District and staff are shifting their focus to summer storm season.

Legislative Update

Jon Janke shared that the legislative season ends May 18th and we're starting to see the final push on a lot of bills. However, because it is an election year, there's a lot of speculation that there will be more posturing and positioning than actual action on a lot of bills.

CCWD is keeping an eye on a few bills. One in particular relates to capital projects that receive state funding (SF2321). The concept of the bill is to require entities that receive state funding for a project to secure the cost of long-term maintenance and repairs up front. As it stands, if this bill were to pass, it would likely create a lot of financial and logistical challenges.

Chris Lord inquired about the ability to treat lifecycle maintenance costs as match or grant eligible expenses if a bill like this were to pass.

3. Concerns

District Rules Update

Erin Margl reminded the TAC that comments on the draft rules are due April 17th. Staff will review all comments and provide responses in June, with a broader discussion regarding the overall comments to occur at the June TAC meeting.

No additional comments on the rules were given at this meeting.

Stormwater and Housing Affordability

Erik Bye shared that there is a growing trend claiming that stormwater regulation is causing a significant impact to housing affordability.

The Sustainable Land Use Coalition (SLUC) issued a white paper earlier this year proposing policy changes that they believe would address affordable

housing issues. One of these suggested changes is to allow municipalities to absorb all wetland and stormwater regulation from watershed districts.

At the federal level, there was a report published earlier this year by the Manhattan Institute that stated the stormwater regulations from the clean water act, the MS4 permit, TMDL requirements, and the construction stormwater general permit are all adding tens of thousands of dollars to the cost of development. This report also questions the legality of the MS4 permit and TMDLs stemming from the Clean Water Act.

There was a presidential executive order that directed the head of the EPA to review all Clean Water Act Programs (MS4, TMDL, Construction Stormwater) and remove any requirements or restrictions that are not explicitly allowed in statute in the name of increasing affordability in housing.

Erik stated that District staff are keeping an eye on these developments. The Minnesota Association of Watersheds and the League of Minnesota Cities are also aware of these developments and are leading the effort to address some of these claims at the state level. At the federal level, the National Municipal Stormwater Alliance (NMSA) is working address these claims. NMSA is actively seeking input on this topic from municipalities across the country.

Megan Hedstrom stated that Blaine has started to compile numbers and information to submit to the NMSA survey. She shared that Blaine City Council members have shared that they are hearing from developers about the high cost and confusing process for stormwater permits. These complaints come largely from developers on the Rice Creek side of the City.

There was general discussion about the cost of not treating stormwater.

Mark Hansen added that most of the complaints they hear at Coon Rapids come from smaller-scale developments with half a dozen homes that feel the number of inspections are too high.

Dave Berkowitz shared that Andover is considering delegating the full hydrology review to CCWD to help reduce cost and redundancy.

Jim Kosluchar expressed doubt that absorbing all wetland and stormwater regulation under one entity would actually result in any financial savings. On the contrary, having coordination amongst organizations likely results in a more favorable outcome for the permittees.

There was general discussion about how inspections can be further streamlined and coordinated.

4. Briefs

Ditch 39 Resiliency Grant Awarded

Justine Dauphinais shared that CCWD received the full award of \$147,000. This is part of a stormwater-wastewater community resiliency planning grant

program. It is the District's first non-water quality grant. This grant is focused primarily on water quantity and risk mitigation. CCWD will be contracting with Stantec to develop a high resolution 2D model for the D37/Knoll Creek subwatershed. The D37 subwatershed assessment had identified hundreds of homes in this area at risk of flooding. The 2D model will provide more information on timing, duration, and potential regional flood mitigation projects.

MPCA MS4 Permit Reissuance Delayed to Late Summer

Jon Janke shared that the MS4 webpage has been updated to state that the permit reissuance has been delayed to late summer 2026.

Rebecca Haug shared that MCSC is trying to get someone from the MPCA to speak at the MCSC annual meeting on April 23rd. Hopefully they will be able to share more information at that time.

Met Council Water Efficiency Grant Program

Erik Bye stated that met council is offering another round of their water efficiency grant program. The deadline to apply is April 17th. This program can provide up to \$75,000 with 50% match for any efforts that help reduce municipal water use. New this year, programs that help pay for lawn conversions to low-mow/no-mow alternatives are eligible.

Megan shared that Blaine is looking to convert some of the turf in their parks however Council has really only been receptive to initiatives that have very little cost and staff time associated so the required match on these grants would make it difficult to gain council support.

Justine shared that, depending on the project, these efforts could also be eligible for CCWDs cost-share program which could help offset the match requirement of the met council grant.

Chris Lord proposed the idea that a city could pursue the grant and the Conservation District could conduct the implementation, thus reducing the municipal staff time needed to implement. The Conservation District could also implement projects across communities.

MPCA Professional Judgement Group – Middle Mississippi

This group covers the area of the Mississippi from Itasca all the way down to the Twin Cities Metro. The MPCA is looking at the general health of the Mississippi River. CCWD will be participating in this group to see what its about and ensuring CCWD are appropriately coordinating with neighboring organizations and entities. Justine Dauphinais shared that the first meeting is scheduled for April 20th at 1:00 p.m.

5. Other Water Management Concerns

MECA Conference

Rebecca Haug shared that MECA is looking for speakers and presenters to participate in the 2027 conference. They are specifically interested in getting more contractors involved.

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