

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING MEETING
OF THE
BOARD OF MANAGERS
OF THE
NINE MILE CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT**

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2019

Call to Order

Chair Peterson called the meeting of the Board of Managers of the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District to order at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, August 21, 2019, at the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District Office, 12800 Gerard Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55346.

Managers Present: Bob Cutshall, Erin Hunker, Steve Kloiber, Grace Sheely and Jodi Peterson

Managers Absent: None.

Advisors Present: Randy Anhorn, Louis Smith, Janna Kieffer, and Erica Sniegowski

Cornelia Lake Alum Treatment Public Hearing

Chair Peterson introduced herself and opened the public hearing on the Lake Cornelia in-lake alum treatment project. She welcomed those in attendance and introduced the Managers present tonight: Bob Cutshall, Erin Hunker, Steve Kloiber, and Grace Sheely. Also present is the District Administrator Randy Anhorn, District Engineer Jana Kieffer, and District Legal Counsel Louis Smith.

Chair Peterson stated that the purpose of the public hearing is for the Board of Managers to receive comments on the proposed project. After receiving comments, we will close the public hearing and the Board of Managers will deliberate and consider ordering the project. The Nine Mile Creek Watershed District recently completed a water quality study for Lake Cornelia and Lake Edina, two shallow lakes within the City of Edina that are currently on the impaired waters list for excess nutrients. The study concluded that the primary sources of phosphorus to Lake Cornelia during the summer months are stormwater runoff, internal loading from lake sediments, and mid-season die-off of invasive curly-leaf pondweed. An over abundance of bottom feeding fish such as carp, goldfish, and bullhead also contributes to poor water quality in Lake Cornelia. For Lake Edina, the primary sources of phosphorus are stormwater runoff and inflows from upstream Lake Cornelia. As part of the water quality study, several potential projects were identified to help improve lake water quality, including the following:

- Stormwater treatment – specifically a spent lime stormwater treatment system as part of a treatment train to remove additional phosphorus from stormwater prior to discharge into Lake Cornelia
- Alum treatment of Lake Cornelia
- Curly-leaf pondweed management in Lake Cornelia and Lake Edina

- Installation of a winter oxygen injection system in Lake Cornelia to minimize winter kill of predator fish and reduce recruitment of bottom feeding fish
- Further tracking of carp and goldfish to better understand the options for removing or eliminating a portion of the current bottom feeder fish community

Chair Peterson stated that following review of the study at the Board's June 19, 2019 meeting, the Managers directed staff to finalize the report and complete a feasibility study on the in-lake alum treatment project for Lake Cornelia. At the Board's July 17, 2019 meeting the Managers accepted the final report and feasibility study and scheduled tonight's public hearing to receive comments solely for the in-lake alum treatment of Lake Cornelia.

Chair Peterson stated that the estimated cost of the project, which includes two treatments five years apart is \$232,000. Then she stated that in a moment, the District Engineer will provide more detail on the project, including cost estimates. The Managers intend to fund the project cost by a tax levied on real property within the legal boundaries of the Watershed District. She stated that as they proceed with the public hearing, she will first call on the District Administrator and Attorney for any comments, and then the District Engineer will give a brief presentation on the project.

Chair Peterson stated that the public hearing is being recorded to preserve the record. When recognized please come forward and state your name and address for the record. Please limit comments to five minutes.

Administrator Anhorn stated that notice of the public hearing was published on the District website and in the district newspaper. He noted that information was sent to other applicable entities requesting comments. He reported that the City of Edina provided comments in support of the project. He reviewed some of the water quality issues identified in the lake and noted that the District is looking forward to proceeding with applicable treatments that can help to reduce phosphorus and improve the water quality.

Attorney Smith summarized the background information provided by Chair Peterson on how the project evolved from the District plan through to the study, the notice of the public hearing provided by Administrator Anhorn and noted that the next step would be to receive comments from the public. He stated that all legal requirements for the project have been met.

Engineer Kieffer provided background information noting that a study of Lake Cornelia and Lake Edina was ordered and concluded within the past year. She described the study area and reviewed statistics on the lakes. She reviewed the current conditions noting that the phosphorus levels exceed the State standard in both Lake Cornelia and Lake Edina. She reviewed the conclusions of the study noting that there are four sources of phosphorus for Lake Cornelia: stormwater runoff, internal loading from lake sediments, mid-season die-off of invasive curly-leaf pondweed and an overabundance of bottom feeding fish. She reviewed the recommendations of the study which include pursuing watershed management practices within the watershed to treat the stormwater and reduce the phosphorus coming into the lake and to review in lake processes. She reviewed the in-lake treatment option recommendations.

A member from the audience asked the largest source of phosphorus for the lake.

Engineer Kieffer replied that the external watershed loading from stormwater runoff is the biggest source, but the management practices for that source do not provide the same level of improvement for the cost. She stated that while it is important to remember the external watershed loading element, the alum treatment for the internal loading of phosphorus provides the most improvement.

A member from the audience asked if the phosphorus removal provided from alum treatment is permanent.

Engineer Kieffer confirmed that the phosphorus removal from alum treatment is permanent, compared to other treatment options that provide temporary benefit. She stated that this information was provided to the Board previously and direction was provided to staff to pursue treatment options with the desire to begin treatment in 2019. She noted that a feasibility study for the alum treatment was completed, which included obtaining sediment cores. She stated that the sediment cores from 2008 and 2019 show sufficient mobile phosphorus to ensure that alum treatment would be beneficial. She stated that the recommendation was made to complete a split treatment of the alum, completing one treatment this fall and a second treatment in five years. She reviewed the estimated costs for the first and second doses of alum. She provided information on the cost benefit of the treatments, showing the treatment cost per year and comparing that to other watershed management practices. She highlighted the areas that would be used for the proposed project for access and staging.

Chair Peterson invited members of the public to come forward with comments on the project.

Ralph Zickert, 4311 Cornelia Circle in Edina, who expressed support for the project. He noted that he saw trumpeter swans on the lake today. He stated that he understands that the intended benefit of the project would be improved water quality for the plant and predatory fish communities within the lake. He stated that in the past the City of Edina has not been competent in taking ownership for treating the curly-leaf pondweed, in both refusing to complete the treatments and not completing the treatment at the right time of year. He stated that if the District is going to spend the funds identified on the project, there should also be a commitment from Edina to complete curly-leaf pondweed on a regular basis. He stated that he spoke with someone from the DNR who confirmed that predatory fish would be stocked in the lake. He noted that he was surprised to see the cost for winter aeration. He asked the Board to consider floating islands as an additional option. He stated that there is only one outlet from North Cornelia to South Cornelia and asked the District to consider floating islands on both sides of the outlet to provide additional treatment.

Bob Waldron, 6716 Point Drive in Edina, asked if a full drain of the lake has been considered.

Administrator Anhorn stated that has been considered, but in a drawdown the DNR would require a 75 percent sign-on from all landowners. He noted that was a possible option for Normandale because of the amount of land owned by the city in that instance.

Mr. Waldron stated that the drawdown would be a dramatic action that would gain a lot of attention and could cause social changes upstream of the lakes to decrease external loading.

Administrator Anhorn stated that multiple management strategies were including in the study and while tonight's consideration is for the alum treatment, the District will continue to review additional treatment options.

Attorney Smith noted that there are 31 property owners on the lake.

Mr. Waldron commented that he is supportive of the project and appreciates the efforts of the District.

Stephanie Rasley, 6612 Cornelia Drive in Edina, asked for additional information on the tax levy of real property and the funding for the project.

Administrator Anhorn stated that there will be a public hearing related to the proposed 2020 budget on September 4th. He explained that the annual budget includes projects to provide benefit throughout the watershed. He stated that Lake Cornelia projects were included in both the 2019 and 2020 budget. He confirmed that it would not be funded through a special assessment to Lake Cornelia property owners but would instead be funded from the annual budget of the District, which is equally spread across all property owners throughout the watershed district area.

Chair Peterson stated that if there are no other comments, this will conclude the public comment on the Lake Cornelia in-lake alum treatment project. At this time, she closed the record of public comments and the Managers will proceed to deliberate.

Administrator Anhorn stated that the question before the Managers is whether to order the project and proposed resolution.

Manager Sheely thanked the public for their input and observations. She stated that ideas were contributed that had possibly not been considered. She stated that she believes that the alum treatment will not only provide improvement in Lake Cornelia but will provide benefit to downstream water bodies as well.

Manager Kloiber stated that the District is committed to looking at a comprehensive approach beyond the alum treatment. He noted that the proposal includes splitting the alum treatment in two doses, five years apart, and therefore additional treatment options may be implemented prior to the second dosing of alum.

Administrator Anhorn stated that the Attorney has prepared a draft resolution. A motion would be in order to adopt the proposed resolution to confirm the feasibility study and order the project.

Manager Sheely moved, seconded by Manager Cutshall, to Adopt Resolution #19-02 Ordering the Lake Cornelia Alum Treatment Project as amended to include the public comments. The Administrator conducted a roll call vote:

| | <u>Yay</u> | <u>Nay</u> |
|----------|------------|------------|
| CUTSHALL | X | |
| HUNKER | X | |
| KLOIBER | X | |
| PETERSON | X | |
| SHEELY | X | |

The motion carried.

Adjournment

It was moved by Manager Kloiber, seconded by Manager Hunker, to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. Upon a vote, the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Erin Hunker, Secretary

