

MEETING MINUTES

Riley-Purgatory-Bluff Creek Watershed District

February 18, 2026 RPBCWD Board of Managers Workshop

Attendees:

Managers Jill Crafton (Secretary), Tom Duevel (Treasurer), Bonnie Nelson (Vice President), and Leslie Stovring

Staff/Advisors Zach Dickhausen* (Natural Resources Manager), Liz Forbes (Deputy District Administrator), Terry Jeffery (District Administrator), Eleanor Mahon (Community Engagement Coordinator), Josh Maxwell (Resource Management Director), Dylan Monahan (Watershed Planner), Skye Slater* (GIS Communications Specialist), Louis Smith (Smith Partners), Scott Sobiech* (Barr Engineering), and Rachel Whittington* (Education and Outreach Specialist)

Other Attendees: Judy Harder; Jonathan Morales*; Marilyn Torkelson*

**Attended the meeting virtually.*

Call to Order

1 Vice President Nelson opened the Wednesday, February 18, 2026, Board of Managers
2 Workshop at 5:00 p.m. at the District Office, 18681 Lake Drive East, Chanhassen,
3 Minnesota, and Managers Crafton and Stovring were also present.

1. Cost-Share Program Design - 2026

4 Liz Forbes displayed the presentation "Proposed Stewardship Program Updates." Eleanor
5 Mahon reminded the Board that the 2026 Stewardship Program budget is \$275,000 of which
6 \$257,500 is designated for cost-shares. She reported that 94% of the District's 2025
7 Stewardship program budget was awarded. Ms. Mahon said the 2026 program application
8 season begins mid-March.

9 [Manager Duevel arrived.]

10 Ms. Mahon presented proposed program changes such as modifying the yearly maximum
11 for cities to be at the department level instead of the city as a whole, putting a limit in terms
12 of cost per square foot to simplify project review for habitat restoration projects, the
13 addition of a program category for mini-cost share projects, including allowing renters to
14 apply for mini grants with proof of the property owners' approval. Ms. Mahon described the
15 addition of a cost-share program type for improving soil health of lawns, noting it would be
16 a pilot program, and she described types of eligible projects for the mini-costs shares,
17 among other details about the proposed modifications. Ms. Mahon described the difference
18 between a natural shoreline restoration and a waterbody buffer restoration, explaining the
19 shoreline restoration is for lakeshore restoration.

20 Ms. Mahon described a two-part workshop series on native plant design, scheduled for April
21 8th and 22nd. She said the workshops are a continuation of the workshops hosted last year
22 collaboratively by the District, the Carver Soil and Water Conservation District, and the
23 Carver County Watershed Management Organization. Ms. Mahon said the workshops will
24 be an opportunity for people who are considering and planning cost-share projects to sit
25 down with experts and ask questions.

26 Vice President Nelson commented that as part of site visits, the site owners could get a
27 recommendation of doing the seed thing for a year, so the property owners know the way to
28 move forward. Ms. Forbes said the mini cost share grants do not require site visits, but
29 information can be provided with the mini cost share information to encourage applicants to
30 plan ahead. Ms. Forbes mentioned required signage for the cost-share projects and that new
31 signage is being designed for the mini cost shares.

32 CAC member Sharon McCotter commented that there are several CAC members interested
33 in reviewing the proposed 2026 Cost Share Program. She said these members have been
34 through the District's cost-share grant program and can bring that perspective to the review.
35 Ms. McCotter said with the timeline of moving forward with the program, there is not time
36 for the CAC as a body to review and provide recommendations, but individual members
37 could still review and provide individual feedback. Ms. Mahon said that next year staff will
38 start this process earlier to have time for a full CAC review, but for this year, any CAC
39 members can review and provide comments.

40 Ms. Forbes it sounds like the Board agrees with the direction of the proposed program
41 modifications, so the next step is to work out the specifications, including review by the
42 District's legal counsel.
43

2. Steering Committee Progress Report

44 Administrator Jeffery said in the interest of time and to provide him with more time to
45 prepare information on the Steering Committee progress report, he recommends moving
46 directly to the next agenda item.
47

3. Workshop Schedule / Topics Discussion

48 Administrator Jeffery opened the discussion to hear the managers' ideas about workshop
49 topics for 2026.

50 Manager Stoving said the Eden Prairie Historical Society reached out to her with an idea of
51 coming in and sharing the history of the site around the District's Spring Road property. She
52 said the contact at the Society is Cathy Case.

53 Manager Crafton suggested a review of EHAP (Ecosystem Health Assessment Plan). Vice
54 President Nelson agreed.

55 Manager Stovring said she would like a joint workshop with the CAC to hear about their
56 work and ideas. Manager Crafton said she would like the CAC to come in and share their
57 ideas.

58 Administrator Jeffery suggested joint retreat-type of session with the CAC to have enough
59 time for discussion. The managers agreed with the idea.

60 Manager Crafton mentioned the Wetland Conservation Act rulemaking changes and the
61 shift to a hydrogeomorphic (HGM) approach. She said she does not know the implications
62 for the District but this could be a good topic. Administrator Jeffery said he agrees it is a
63 great topic. He said staff member Zach Dickhausen wants to use the HGM model and go
64 through the District's prior assessments to see how they match up. Administrator Jeffery
65 said he thinks the HGM approach matches well with the systems approach the District is
66 taking with the lake management plans. He said he thinks an HGM discussion ties in well
67 with a discussion on what the District wants to accomplish with its buffer rules.

68 The group discussed the District's 2026 Creek Week. Manager Stovring suggested having
69 the CAC provide input about the District's events and maybe they have new events ideas.
70 Ms. Mahon said this year the CAC is going to spearhead that event and she has engaged the
71 CAC for input about Creek Week events.

72 Vice President Nelson said one topic the Board has mentioned but has not discussed is the
73 idea of having managers present at city council meetings or finding other ways for the
74 District to have a presence within local communities. She said there could be a discussion
75 around how that could look and what would be helpful.

76 Administrator Jeffery said he would like to have a visioning session with the full Board
77 regarding the Spring Road property. Manager Stovring said it would take a couple of
78 workshops to discuss the building and the property. Administrator Jeffery said another topic
79 of discussion is what the District wants to do with its chloride management plan. Manager
80 Stovring said she is interested in discussing what can be done at the front end of projects
81 such as during project design, so less salt is needed.

82 Manager Duevel recommended prioritizing the topics. Administrator Jeffery suggested he
83 and staff review this list and look at the Watershed Plan process to see where the topics
84 could align with the Plan process, and from there develop a proposed schedule.

85 Manager Stovring moved to close the workshop. Manager Crafton seconded the motion.
86 The motion carried with no objections. The workshop adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

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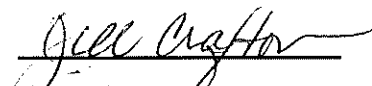
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Respectfully submitted,

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Jill Crafton, Secretary

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