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**Minutes of the Brown's Creek Watershed District Strategic Assessment Workshop
February 5, 2009**

WCD Offices, 1380 W. Frontage Road, Hwy. 16
Stillwater, MN 55082

APPROVED

ROLL CALL

Managers Present:	Others Present:
Craig Leiser, President	Karen Kill, Administrator
Rick Vanzwol, Vice-President	Edward Gordon, Facilitator
Connie Taillon, Treasurer	Lee Miller, Participant
Gail Pundsack, Vice-President	Andrew Weaver, Participant
Absent: Gerald Johnson, Secretary	

- 1. Call Strategic Assessment Workshop to order @ 6:30 PM**
President Leiser called the strategic assessment workshop to order at 6:35 PM.
- 2. Approve Workshop Agenda**
Manager Vanzwol, seconded by Manager Taillon, moved to approve the agenda as presented. Vote: 4/0 .
- 3. Mission & Vision Statement**
The mission and vision statements from the Third Generation Management Plan were read to the group.
- 4. Strategic Assessment Discussion – Edward Gordon, Facilitator**

SUCSESSES – Things That Work

A. BMP Program: rain garden/ cost share program has been an outstanding success

Discussion:

It has resulted in reduced TMDL and run-off volumes to the downstream water bodies. Public awareness of the need to practice conservation techniques has been raised as a result of various educational activities associated with the program.

1
2 It has been especially attractive to a specific demographic – especially owners of larger
3 lakeside homes in the Legends and Liberty developments on Long Lake. This raises the
4 question: How can the BMP Program be broadened to non-participating areas?
5

6 Some possible ways of expanding participation –

- 7 • development of demonstration site(s) in and outside of the District
- 8 • identification of those areas that would benefit most by participation
- 9 • identification of those population segments not participating
- 10 • concentrated education programs that focus especially on benefits arising from
11 participation
- 12

13 **B. Participation in the EMWREP Program**

14 *Discussion:*

15 The shared East Metro Water Resources Education Program educator (Angie Hong) has
16 been instrumental in strengthening and enhancing the District's relations with the
17 community. The program has been especially valuable in promoting a greater
18 understanding of the role of the District to the general public as well as various units of
19 government..
20

21 There is an opportunity to capitalize on the effectiveness of this program by identifying
22 individuals, groups and agencies for focused attention under the program. These targets
23 can be either influential in positive or negative ways.
24

25 This type of outreach can use the earlier THPP and Kismet Basin capital projects as
26 models.
27

28 **PROBLEMS – Things that haven't worked**

29 **A. Oak Park Station/Kern Pond**

30 *Discussion:*

31 This system does not function as the initial design intended. This discussion revealed
32 that:
33

- 34 • the engineering design did not identify the presence and extent of the ground
35 water saturation zone
- 36 • a good working relationship with Oak Park Heights was not (and is not) in place
- 37 • the commercial interests in the area were not considered
- 38 • the benefits to property owners served by the facility were not well developed or
39 explained
- 40

41 **B. Better working relation with each of the District's constituent communities needs 42 to be developed**

43 *Discussion:*

44 The role of the District has not been effectively promoted to city councils. The District is
45 a beneficial expert, but is typically engaged in city projects later rather than earlier with

1 the result that the District is often seen as an adversary – the Fairway Villas proposal,
2 with its failure of communications with the City, is an example of this problem.

3 4 **C. Permitting & Rules**

5 *Discussion:*

6 The District's permitting program needs to be integrated more effectively with the rules
7 and programs of the communities it serves. The current situation is seen by applicants as
8 a confusing multiplicity of layers of permit requirements and rules. Permitting and
9 review need to be simplified as well as reduced in cost if possible, while maintaining the
10 preservation of the water resources.

11 12 **D. The CAC is not used effectively**

13 *Discussion:*

14 It is difficult to engage CAC members unless specific areas of interest can be identified.

15 16 **E. Lake Management Programs goals need to be refined**

17 *Discussion:*

18 The goal of improving water quality in limited-use lakes may not be reasonable. Of
19 particular concern are those lakes which have no public access and which have a
20 relatively small number of lakeshore owners. The use of public funds for improvement
21 projects involving such lakes may not be appropriate; while determination of the nature
22 of the problem and possible development of a solution may be feasible as a district
23 investment, the costs of certain projects involving these lakes should be borne in part or
24 in total by affected property owners.

25
26 A list of criteria for evaluating lakes for Lake Management programs is lacking and
27 should be developed. It may be more appropriate in some cases to orient some of the
28 Lake Management programs on improvement of habitat, wildlife, etc. Consideration may
29 be given to impacts to downstream water bodies of concern, groundwater impacts and
30 state/federal listings for impairment.

31 32 **THE ENVIRONMENT –Factors/questions that can influence our decisions and operations**

- 33
34
- 35 • Political – proposals to elect rather than appoint managers
 - 36 • Funding process - Proposals to change funding provisions
 - 37 • Board manager focus - Internal concern for efficient use of public funds
 - 38 • General funding considerations - Recessionary pressures on the tax base
 - 39 • Continued growth of the District's total market value
 - 40 • Economic downturn enhances BCWD value to communities facing reduced budgets
 - 41 • Are there non-governmental organizations that would make good project partners for BCWD? Who are they?
 - 42 • Should a newsletter be used to further educational goals? Would greater focus on Web
 - 43 based communications be more productive?
 - 44 • Slow-down in construction and a decrease in permit activity allows more time for water
 - 45 quality projects
 - 46 • Is there a shift from construction of single-family units to multi-family units?

- 1 • How will changes in population affect groundwater?
2 • There is still a need to plan for land conservation
3

4 **LEISER'S CONUNDRUM: Do we know what we don't know?**
5

6 **5. Adjournment**

7 **Manager Taillon, seconded by Manager Pundsack, moved to adjourn at 9:30 PM.**

8 **Vote 4/0.**
9

10 Respectfully Submitted by
11 Karen Kill, BCWD Administrator
12 **Edward Gordon, Facilitator**
13