



42 office building. She noted EOR has experience helping other watershed districts develop  
43 new office spaces.

44

45 Mr. Biehn indicated that EOR has the information it needs to undergo the office space  
46 development process. He explained that he expects the building rendering to help the  
47 Board get aligned on its vision and help reach out to the community. President Anderson  
48 indicated the Board needs a special meeting to discuss the funding mechanism for the  
49 new office space, including working with the District's current office rental landlord.  
50 President Anderson indicated the PR consultant will need to be included in office space  
51 outreach discussions.

52

53 Mr. Arhontoulis asked if the staff will be able to continue operating in the current office  
54 space in the interim until the new space is ready. President Anderson indicated the  
55 District can continue its current lease during the interim. She stated that staff can make  
56 do in the current space for a few more years until the new space is available.

57

58 Mr. Arhontoulis asked how the District prioritizes its greenbelt initiative. President  
59 Anderson indicated the greenbelt isn't limited to flooding but is also meant to protect  
60 the natural environment. She indicated the District needs to protect wetlands. She  
61 indicated the District needs to identify the areas of open space that still exist and would  
62 be valuable to the intention which is to alleviate flooding and protect natural  
63 environment areas. President Anderson noted it would be helpful to have the District's  
64 legal counsel attend a special board meeting and explain MN Statute 103D.335 Subd. 19.  
65 Open Space and Greenbelts.

66

67 Mr. Arhontoulis asked if the District has researched grants for land acquisition and the  
68 new office space. Ms. Heinz explained the District has researched grant programs, and  
69 the District needs a clear vision and concise proposal to apply for grants. She noted the  
70 District worked with Access Philanthropy to prepare a report on office space grant  
71 seeking prospects, and the report indicated grants may not be able to cover a majority  
72 of the new office cost. Ms. Heinz noted the District has had success with the Lessard-  
73 Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund and may utilize that program to acquire lands for habitat  
74 protection and restoration purposes. Lessard-Sams grants can be used to purchase  
75 land, including parcels that already have structures built on them, but cannot be used  
76 to fund building construction/renovations.

77

78 President Anderson noted EOR has already identified priority open spaces concentrated  
79 around the Sunrise River corridor.

80

81 Mr. Arhontoulis indicated HR and staffing are part of the strategic planning equation as  
82 well. He noted Cultivate Advisors has some HR resources that it can share with the  
83 District. Mr. Arhontoulis mentioned succession planning and hiring a Business Manager  
84 are part of the District's HR planning. Mr. Kinney indicated he has been discussing

85 succession planning with the Board for the last four years. He explained succession  
86 planning is very important in order to maintain efficiency in the organization. He  
87 indicated that internal documentation is key to operational efficiency in the event of staff  
88 turnover.

89  
90 Mr. Kinney noted the District currently has 11 staff members. Mr. Arhontoulis asked if this  
91 is the maximum capacity for the District, given budget restraints. Mr. Kinney said the  
92 District's workload analysis in 2020 had maximum staffing at 11.25 FTE, which the District  
93 will be at once it hires a seasonal technician this summer. He indicated each employee  
94 has a unique position title. President Anderson indicated the Business Manager position  
95 is separate from the administrator succession role.

96  
97 Mr. Arhontoulis asked what sort of key performance indicators (KPIs) might be helpful to  
98 establish, if they aren't already established in the Watershed Management Plan. He  
99 provided examples including staff head count, revenues, defining a marketing strategy,  
100 tracking strategic partners.

101  
102 Ms. Heinz noted the Watershed Management Plan mentions the greenway corridor  
103 initiative but doesn't provide detailed metrics. She noted that, at the time of writing the  
104 Watershed Management Plan, the District was still uncertain as to these details. She  
105 noted that a specific metric such as acres of easements/acquisitions, would be helpful  
106 in grant seeking. Mr. Kinney said the District needs to prioritize *which* acres to acquire,  
107 and the District is still in the process of utilizing its hydrologic & hydraulic model to do this  
108 prioritization. He explained there are hundreds of acres of wetlands that the District could  
109 acquire, and it needs to be strategic about which sites it will pursue. Mr. Kinney noted the  
110 District needs to quantify how much time is needed to shepherd an acquisition or  
111 easement from start to finish. This will help estimate staff capacity requirements. Mr.  
112 Kinney noted District staff meet regularly with partner staffs and could track meeting  
113 frequency with interagency partners.

114  
115 Mr. Kinney indicated the District would appreciate any suggestions that Mr. Arhontoulis  
116 may have regarding key performance indicators. Mr. Kinney stated the District should  
117 ensure all tracking is useful and not merely tracking for the sake of tracking. Mr.  
118 Arhontoulis indicated that the District could have a report on the District's partners,  
119 including an explanation of the frequency and nature of collaboration. President  
120 Anderson indicated the important thing is that the District is meeting with the people it  
121 is serving, and the District will meet at a frequency as desired by each respective partner.

122  
123 President Anderson stated the District needs to have its engineers determine where the  
124 open space priorities are within each lake management district.

125  
126 Mr. Arhontoulis asked what the purpose and the desired outcome of the PR firm are.  
127 President Anderson said the purpose and desired outcome are engaging the public and

128 successful implementation of the project. She indicated the District is presently focused  
129 on implementing shoreline restoration projects in specific areas of the watershed.  
130 President Anderson noted the District needs signage on all its major projects, which is an  
131 effort the PR firm may support. She indicated that when the District has a message it  
132 needs to get out to the public, it will go through the PR firm. President Anderson indicated  
133 the District has a full-time education & outreach staff person who has been very  
134 successful. She stated the PR firm won't interfere with his work, unless he wants help with  
135 graphic design or some other assistance, which is up to him. President Anderson  
136 indicated the District's ongoing public engagement work is completely separate from  
137 the PR firm's work.

138  
139 Mr. Arhontoulis indicated he will follow up with Ms. Heinz after the meeting and then begin  
140 compiling the final strategic plan deliverable. He indicated the Board may review the  
141 draft plan at the next strategic planning special meeting and see if any changes need  
142 to be made. Mr. Arhontoulis recommended the plan maintain a level of detail necessary  
143 to define next steps without getting too in the weeds.

144  
145 Managers discussed availability for the next meeting and set Tuesday, April 29, 6:00-8:00  
146 pm. Ms. Heinz indicated she will check with Manager Schmaltz and Manager Loth  
147 regarding their availability on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

148

### 149 **3. Adjourn**

150

151 **a) Next regular board meeting – April 24, 2025, 6:30 pm**

152

153 The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:18 pm.

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156

157

158 Dave Bakke, Secretary \_\_\_\_\_