The Board convened the workshop at 1:00 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance: Patricia Preiner, John Waller, Steve Wagamon, Barbara Haake and Mike Bradley.

Board Members Absent: None

Others: Administrator Phil Belfiori; Water Resource Specialist Kyle Axtell; Communications & Outreach Coordinator Beth Carreno; Rachel Olm, Houston Engineering; Chris Otterness, Houston Engineering; John Kolb, Rinke Noonan.

**Update on requested personnel matter.**

Administrator Belfiori stated per the RCWD employee handbook, the Board must approve an employee’s request for Extended Family and Medical Leave. He reviewed the request with the Board. The Board by consensus agreed to add this to the Board’s August 8, 2018 consent agenda.

**Discuss response to BWSR survey regarding the Watershed-Based Funding Pilot Program (WBFP) process**

Administrator Belfiori reviewed a set of draft responses staff had prepared for a survey issued by BWSR related to the WBFP process. Responses to the survey were required to be submitted by Friday, August 3, 2018. Board members discussed the draft responses and indicated that they were consistent with the Board’s experience, perspective and understanding of the WBFP process. Manager Waller had reservations about the responses and that he thought the WBFP was a success and kept funding allocated and targeted to each county within that county. He felt that keeping funding allocated geographically ensures that projects are targeted to those geographic areas. Manager Wagamon stated that he felt that small pots of money may be too restrictive in that rather than directing funds to projects that need the funding, the funds are directed to projects that may not be the biggest priority, simply to ensure that the money is spent in a specific location. Manager Waller indicated that he disagreed strongly with Manager Wagamon’s opinion. Manager Bradley stated that while he was only on the Board a relatively short time, he felt that most of the RCWD’s project funds have been directed to ditch repairs in Anoka and Washington Counties. Manager Haake agreed. President Preiner suggested that the discussion cease, so that the rest of the meeting agenda could continue.
Introduction on meeting purpose, outcomes and status of Strategic Direction Process

Administrator Belfiori presented a review of activities undertaken to-date as well as a reminder of the overall framework for the Strategic Direction process. He gave a description of the desired outcomes for this workshop session, which mostly involved getting further direction from the Board on a few program areas where the team feels there has not been clear direction from the Board to-date, or where the Boards clear direction conflicts with previous RCWD activity levels for a program area. Ten program areas were clear to the team and four needed additional discussion.

A discussion ensued about the District’s two core services: Surface Water Quantity (conveyance through drainage management and storage for flood damage reduction) and Surface Water Quality (sediment and nutrient loading). Water Resource Specialist Axtell added that much of the other program areas that the District undertakes have a relationship to these two areas. Manager Haake emphasized that public education is critical to getting residents to “buy in” to what we are doing and make progress. Facilitator Kolb directed the Board to focus on achieving consensus on these core services.

Review results from June 26, 2018 Strategic Direction Process workshop

Water Resource Specialist Axtell stated that the team’s understanding of the Board’s overall direction is that it would like to see more funding utilized for building projects and doing work “on the ground” to achieve its goals, including maintenance of those projects. He then gave a brief description of the ten program areas which seemed to have a clear direction provided by the Board. The remaining four areas needing additional clarification were then reviewed with the Board, including Regulatory, Surface Water Quality Monitoring, Non-Public Drainage and Water Management.

During the Regulatory discussion, the Board indicated that it would not necessary intend to see funding levels reduced, rather, it wants to ensure that efficiencies are actively sought by staff and the consulting firms and that the rules be given another serious look along with the new WMP, to ensure that we aren’t regulating areas that are not critical to the core services of the District.

During the Surface Water Quality Monitoring discussion, the team reviewed the difference between the District’s “routine” monitoring program, and “project-specific” monitoring efforts. Historically, the District has always budgeted these together in one program. The Board pointed out that they viewed the “project-specific” monitoring as a project costs – not a program cost – and it should be separated out as such both in the next WMP and in the District budget. In this way, the District’s expenses wouldn’t be as misleading in regard to program vs. project expenses.

During the Non-Public Drainage discussion, it became clear that the use of the term “trunk system” should not have been included in this program area. Removing that term from this program area made the Board’s prior direction clear.

During the Water Management discussion, additional clarity was provided by the Board to the team that the District’s existing groundwater management efforts will be continued as related
to water reuse and not duplicating DNR’s role, and that our efforts will take groundwater management into consideration.

**Prioritization of program groups**

Water Resource Specialist Axtell summarized that he felt the team has a good enough understanding of the Board’s “high level” program group priorities, as developed over the last six months, to begin preparation of draft sections of the next WMP. No additional prioritization discussion would be necessary. He also reminded the Board that there will be ample opportunity to make revisions and corrections to the actual draft plan in the months ahead.

**Revisit “Parking Lot” Policy Discussions from Previous Workshops**

The Board revisited one of their agreed upon parking lot policy discussions from the Strategic Direction process related to the District’s criteria for defining local and regional benefits of projects it or its partners undertakes. The team reviewed content from a 2014 presentation prepared by Houston Engineering on the matter. The Board concurred that it would be good to incorporate this material into the WMP to the extent possible.

**Next Steps**

Administrator Belfiori discussed the proposed schedule for the last “Strategic Direction” workshop. Upon further discussion the Board reached consensus that the next strategic direction workshop will be on Tuesday, August 21 at 1:00pm at the RCWD Office.

The workshop was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.