



FEBRUARY						
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MARCH						
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## RCWD BOARD OF MANAGERS WORKSHOP

Monday, February 9, 2026, 9:00 a.m.

Rice Creek Watershed District Conference Room  
4325 Pheasant Ridge Drive NE, Suite 611, Blaine, Minnesota  
Virtual Monitoring via Zoom Webinar

Join Zoom Webinar:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88958260214?pwd=fpq4BmXXNBsSTOqWM4SkuBwZF8IbwB.1>

Passcode: 224622

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Webinar ID: 889 5826 0214

Passcode: 224622

## Agenda

### ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- Rice Creek Watershed District Lobbying Efforts
- Anoka County Ditch 55 Transfer Petition Cost Apportionment

Administrator Updates (If Any)

# **Rice Creek Watershed District Lobbying Efforts**

# MEMORANDUM

## Rice Creek Watershed District



**Date:** February 2, 2026  
**To:** RCWD Board of Managers  
**From:** David Petry, Project Manager  
**Subject:** RCWD Lobbying Efforts

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### **Introduction**

Rice Creek Watershed District has an interest in advancing specific legislative items that align with District goals and objectives.

### **Background**

Rice Creek Watershed District has submitted a \$6.84 million request to Minnesota Management and Budget for state bonding for the portion of the Jones Lake project that remains currently unfunded. HF 204 has been introduced, authored by Representatives Gottfried, Feist, Moller, Curran, and Virnig, as well as companion bill SF 1358 authored by Senator Kunesh. The project was included in the November 2025 MN House Capitol Investment Committee Bonding Tour. Staff maintain contact with bill authors and seek support from elected officials serving on relevant committees as well as those representing districts overlapping Rice Creek Watershed District's boundary. Other proposed legislation and interests of the District, such as District submitted resolutions to Minnesota Watersheds and the Minnesota Watershed's legislative agenda, requires continuous legislator connection and promotion.

The 2026 Minnesota Legislative Session is scheduled to convene on February 17. A bonding bill budget has recently been proposed by the Governor.

Previous discussions during Board Meetings and Workshops recognized the political complexities of legislative work and necessity of sustained effort and directing staff to continue the District's legislative pursuits, and further explore lobbyist opportunities. Managers recommended staff check with our Jones Lake project partner cities to see if they have lobbyists. The City of New Brighton does not have a lobbyist, however the City of Roseville does. Further, staff met with Park Street Public and its proposal (non-public data) has been presented for Managers to review. Staff engaged another lobbyist; however, they declined to submit a proposal.

Staff this year have been able to help advance the Jones Lake bonding bills this far. The project has lingered unfunded since its inception. While staff is experienced in water quality, flooding, and hazard mitigation, we are still learning the intricacies of navigating the political space and remain committed to continuing to advocate for District interests and gathering support from our elected officials, both at the state and local levels.

A representative from Park Street Public will also present their proposal to the Board.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommend the Board of Managers hire a contract lobbyist for the 2026 Minnesota Legislative Session. The Jones Lake project's necessity is recognized locally and now at the State level by legislators, and while funding is not guaranteed, the likelihood of funding has never been more prominent.

### **Attachments**

- *Proposal for Rice Creek Watershed District, Park Street Public*

***Data Practices Act classifies the proposals as non-public data, prohibiting placement of proposals in the packet. Therefore, staff will timely distribute the non-public data proposal under separate cover for managers to handle with due care.***

# **Anoka County Ditch 55 Transfer Petition Cost Apportionment**

# MEMORANDUM

## Rice Creek Watershed District



**Date:** February 4, 2026  
**To:** RCWD Board of Managers  
**From:** Tom Schmidt, Drainage & Facilities Manager  
**Subject:** Anoka County Ditch 55 Transfer Petition Cost Apportionment

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### **Introduction**

This agenda item is a Board discussion on the apportionment of the costs of the city of Lino Lakes' petition for a partial transfer of a portion of Anoka County Ditch 55 (ACD 55).

### **Background**

At the January 14, 2026, Board meeting, the Board accepted the city of Lino Lakes' petition to transfer ACD 55 Branch 8 to the city. The Board action also appointed its district engineer to file a report on the proposed transfer and directed staff to notice a public hearing for February 25, 2026, during its regular Board meeting.

The petitioner is expected to bear the expenses. Per Minnesota Statute 103E.812 Subd. 6, "Costs, including engineering and attorney's fees, related to the proceedings to transfer a drainage system must be paid by the proposed transferee water management authority. If the drainage authority or court orders that the drainage authority should not be transferred, the drainage authority shall reimburse the water management authority from the drainage system account for the reasonable value of engineering work conducted as part of the transfer proceedings". However, both courts and the code recognize the drainage authority's discretion to incur costs for the benefit of the drainage system. If the Board finds, as part of the proceedings, that there is a benefit to the remainder of the drainage system from the transfer, then it may waive a portion of the costs described above.

The direct physical benefit that would result from the transfer is the removal of approximately 4,600 feet of drain tile from the ACD 55 system under the jurisdiction of the District in its capacity as drainage authority. The value of this removal can be measured by the reduction in the inspection and maintenance burden on the drainage authority.

### **Staff Recommendation**

Staff is seeking Board consensus on the amount, if any, of reduction it wishes to apply to the District's costs incurred in acting on the city of Lino Lakes' petition.