

M E E T I N G

CAL-SAG WATERSHED PLANNING COUNCIL MEETING

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Orland Park Village Hall
14700 South Ravinia Avenue
Orland Park, Illinois

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Wednesday, April 30, 2025
6:10 PM

M E E T I N G

CAL-SAG WATERSHED PLANNING COUNCIL

METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT

OF GREATER CHICAGO

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Held on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, commencing
at the hour of 6:10 PM, at 14700 South Ravinia
Avenue, Orland Park, Illinois.

1 PRESENT: (District Personnel)

2 MR. JOSEPH KRATZER, Managing Civil Engineer

3 MS. LOLITA THOMPSON, Principal Civil Engineer

4 MS. DAYANA REYES, Associate Civil Engineer

5 MS. CLARE ADAMS, Assistant Civil Engineer

6 ALSO PRESENT:

7 MR. GERALD R. BENNETT, President, City of
8 Palos Hills

9 MS. VICTORIA SMITH, SCM, Executive Director

10 MS. BRITTANY MATYAS, SCM

11 MR. JOHN RYAN, Village of Alsip

12 MR. MIKE FRAIDER, Village of Alsip

13 MR. DAVE BRADY, Village of Bedford Park

14 MR. GARY D. LEWIS, Village of Bridgeview

15 MR. JOHN "JACK" LIND, Village of Chicago Ridge

16 MR. KEN KLEIN, Village of Crestwood

17 MR. BRIAN SKALA, Village of Crestwood

18 MR. KRZYSZLOF WASOWICZ, Village of Justice

19 MR. MATTHEW ZAREBCZAN, Village of Justice

20 MR. LANCE BEIGH, Village of Justice

21 MR. JOHN EGOFISKE, Village of Lemont

22 MR. TERRY VORDERER, Village of Oak Lawn

23 MS. COLEEN BARKMEIER, Village of Oak Lawn

24 MR. KEITH PEKAU, Village of Orland Park

1 ALSO PRESENT (continued):

2 MR. JOEL VAN ESSEN, Village of Orland Park

3 MR. ALADDIN HUSAIN, Village of Orland Park

4 MR. ROBERT STRAZ, City of Palos Heights

5 MR. RICK BOEHM, Village of Palos Park

6 MS. MARY WERNER, Village of Worth

7 MS. KELSEY PASSI, Illinois Tollway

8 MR. DENNIS POPLSY, WSP

9 MR. STEVE PAPPAGEORGE, Moraine Valley CC

10 MR. JASON LUNDERMAN, Comcast

11 MS. NOREEN KUBINSKI, HBK Engineering

12 MR. DANIEL REST, HBK Engineering

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16 Members of the Public
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1 MR. BENNETT: All right. I will call this
2 meeting to order of the Cal-Sag Watershed Planning
3 Council. Welcome.

4 Vick, you want to read the roll call,
5 please.

6 MS. SMITH: Alsip.

7 MR. BENNETT: Again, Mayors, please
8 identify yourself and your town.

9 MS. SMITH: Alsip.

10 MR. RYAN: Mayor John Ryan.

11 MS. SMITH: Bedford Park.

12 MR. BRADY: Village President Dave Brady.

13 MS. SMITH: Blue Island.

14 (No response.)

15 MS. SMITH: Bridgeview.

16 MR. LEWIS: Trustee Gary Lewis.

17 MS. SMITH: Burbank.

18 (No response.)

19 MS. SMITH: Chicago.

20 (No response.)

21 MS. SMITH: Chicago Ridge.

22 (No response.)

23 MS. SMITH: Crestwood.

24 MR. KLEIN: Mayor Ken Klein, present.

1 MS. SMITH: Evergreen Park.
2 (No response.)
3 MS. SMITH: Hickory Hills.
4 (No response.)
5 MS. SMITH: Hometown.
6 (No response.)
7 MS. SMITH: Justice.
8 MR. WASOWICZ: Mayor Kris Wasowicz.
9 MS. SMITH: Lemont.
10 MR. EGOFSKI: Mayor John Egofski.
11 MS. SMITH: Merrionette Park.
12 (No response.)
13 MS. SMITH: Midlothian.
14 (No response.)
15 MS. SMITH: Oak Forest.
16 (No response.)
17 MS. SMITH: Oak Lawn.
18 MS. BARKMEIER: Coleen Barkmeier, grants
19 administrator.
20 MS. SMITH: Orland Hills.
21 (No response.)
22 MS. SMITH: Orland Park.
23 MR. PEKAU: Here. Mayor Keith Pekau.
24 MS. SMITH: Palos Heights.

1 MR. STRAZ: Mayor Bob Straz, City of
2 Palos Heights.

3 MS. SMITH: Palos Hills.

4 MR. BENNETT: Mayor Jerry Bennett.

5 MS. SMITH: Palos Park.

6 MR. BOEHM: Rich Boehm, village manager of
7 Palos Park.

8 MS. SMITH: Robbins.

9 (No response.)

10 MS. SMITH: Summit.

11 (No response.)

12 MS. SMITH: Tinley Park.

13 (No response.)

14 MS. SMITH: Willow Springs.

15 (No response.)

16 MS. SMITH: Worth.

17 MS. WERNER: Mary Werner, village
18 president.

19 MS. SMITH: Unincorporated Cook County.

20 (No response.)

21 MS. SMITH: Bremen Township.

22 (No response.)

23 MS. SMITH: Calumet Township.

24 (No response.)

1 MS. SMITH: Lemont Township.

2 (No response.)

3 MS. SMITH: Lyons Township.

4 (No response.)

5 MS. SMITH: Orland Township.

6 (No response.)

7 MS. SMITH: Palos Township.

8 (No response.)

9 MS. SMITH: Stickney Township.

10 (No response.)

11 MS. SMITH: Worth Township.

12 (No response.)

13 MR. BENNETT: Thank you, Vick. We do have
14 a quorum. And before you are the minutes of our
15 January 29th meeting.

16 I'll entertain a motion to accept the
17 minutes.

18 MR. LEWIS: So moved. Gary Lewis,
19 Trustee, Village of Bridgeview.

20 MR. BRADY: Second. Dave Brady, village
21 president of Bedford Park.

22 MR. BENNETT: Moved and seconded. All
23 those in favor, signify by a vote of aye.

24 (Chorus of ayes.)

1 MR. BENNETT: Opposed, a vote of no.

2 (No response.)

3 MR. BENNETT: Motion carries.

4 First item on the agenda is our stormwater
5 capital improvements update. Clare.

6 MS. ADAMS: Good evening, everyone.
7 Welcome to the Cal-Sag Channel Watershed Planning
8 Council meeting. My name is Clare Adams. I'm an
9 assistant civil engineer with the MWRD. I'm also
10 the facilitator of these meetings, so if you have
11 any questions about content or planning or anything
12 on the administrative level, you can reach out to
13 me.

14 Right now we have a total of 39 projects
15 in this watershed, seven regional projects, 17 local
16 partnership projects, 13 GI projects, and one Space
17 to Grow school, and one flood-prone property
18 acquisition. You can see the state of those
19 projects as ongoing or completed on the map.
20 Collectively, these projects benefit over 2,000
21 structures and create over 250 acre feet, or
22 83 million gallons, of stormwater storage.

23 Our partnerships help communities manage
24 stormwater and improve their resilience to flooding.

1 Applications are currently closed for our stormwater
2 partnerships, and they plan to open in late
3 spring -- reopen.

4 We have several prerecorded webinars that
5 go through what information and documentation is
6 needed to apply as well as recent updates to each
7 program's requirements. We have project highlight
8 videos with interviews of past partners where they
9 share how their partnership with the MWRD helped
10 them build their stormwater project. You can access
11 all of that content on
12 mwrld.org/stormwater/partnerships.

13 You can also stay up to date by joining
14 our mailing list which you can request at
15 stormwater@mwrld.org.

16 All right. We're going to go over some of
17 these projects. First stormwater partnership
18 program project, the diversion channel for flood
19 control project on Midlothian Creek in Robbins. The
20 Robbins Phase II project -- let's start with
21 Phase I.

22 So the first phase of this project
23 includes the establishment of a new culvert under
24 135th Street and a diversion channel with three

1 drop structures to control flow from an upstream
2 stormwater pond and provide storage and a new outlet
3 to the Cal-Sag Channel. That phase reached
4 conclusion in October of 2024.

5 We are now moving on to Phase II which
6 involves conveyance and storage improvements along
7 Midlothian Creek near 137th and Kedzie. Phase II
8 began construction in July of 2024, and there are no
9 updates on that.

10 Worth local flood control project in Worth
11 Woods Subdivision. So this project intends to
12 provide stormwater management improvements due to
13 flooding in Worth Woods Subdivision benefiting
14 19 structures during the 100-year storm. Design
15 elements are being addressed and were updated to
16 incorporate Bullet 17 modeling.

17 All right. Palos Heights local flood
18 control project, 135th Street and Cypress Lane.
19 This is the installation of a drainage swale, new
20 downstream storm sewer and outlet headwalls in
21 Navajo Creek. Additionally, a storm sewer was
22 replaced. The construction is currently approaching
23 substantial completion, anticipated to finish in
24 June of 2025.

1 All right. Flood control project on
2 Cal-Sag Tributary C in Midlothian and Crestwood.
3 This project is to address flooding along Cal-Sag
4 Tributary C. The IGA is currently being negotiated.
5 Construction is anticipated to begin at the end of
6 2025 and go through 2026. This is a beneficiary of
7 the ARPA, the American Rescue Plan Act.

8 All right. Stormwater storage at
9 Community High School District 218 Administration
10 Sports Field and storm sewer improvements in
11 Oak Lawn. This project will protect 95 structures
12 from the 100-year storm event through detention and
13 conveyance improvements in neighborhoods surrounding
14 Stony Creek in the south part of the Village of
15 Oak Lawn. Construction is scheduled for fall of
16 2025, but the project is on hold while we wait for
17 the notification on FEMA funding.

18 All right. Next is our conceptual project
19 partnerships. We have 157th Street and Spring
20 Creek flood study in Orland Township. This -- the
21 final design is to raise 157th Street out of the
22 floodplain and construct compensatory storage to
23 mitigate flooding of surrounding residential
24 properties caused by high water levels of Spring

1 Creek during periods of high precipitation. The
2 conceptual report is finalized. This is also an
3 ARPA recipient, and an IGA between Orland Township
4 Road District and MWRD is being negotiated.

5 All right. Alternative stormwater
6 diversion plan in Bedford Park, Justice, and Summit.
7 This planning study was completed last year. The
8 study identified alternative to construct a new
9 stormwater and new outfall to the Chicago Sanitary
10 and Ship Canal. The proposed stormwater and other
11 upstream stormwater improvements intend to address
12 flooding on the Archer Road viaduct and flooding at
13 the 71st Street ditch in Justice.

14 To address flooding in Summit we have been
15 coordinating with IDOT to cost share in upsizing the
16 proposed storm sewer on Harlem Avenue as part of
17 IDOT's Harlem Avenue grade separation project. We
18 are also working with the Village of Summit and the
19 Summit Park District to design and construct a
20 detention basin on the park district property. The
21 upsized sewer will also allow Summit to plan for
22 future sewer separation projects within the village.

23 All right. Green infrastructure projects.
24 First we have Lake Katherine commuter parking lot in

1 Palos Heights. This project will serve as a
2 demonstration site for various GI applications and
3 practices. The project scope includes the new
4 construction of an additional commuter parking lot
5 for utilization of the newly constructed Cal-Sag
6 corridor multiuse path. Construction is anticipated
7 to be complete in 2025. The actual pavers are
8 complete, but we are still waiting on the final
9 wetland plantings.

10 Public library green roof in Blue Island.
11 This is the installation of green roof on the
12 existing Blue Island public library providing an
13 estimated 2,760 gallons of designed detention
14 capacity. The IGA was executed in December of 2024,
15 the design is complete, and construction is to be
16 completed in 2025.

17 Town Center green infrastructure
18 improvements in Willow Springs. This is replacing
19 impervious streets with permeable pavers providing
20 an estimated over a million gallons of design
21 retention capacity. The IGA was completed in
22 January of 2025, design was just completed in
23 February of 2025, and construction is to be
24 completed this year as well.

1 All right. We are going to take some time
2 to talk about some services that the MWRD provides
3 that you can take advantage of. One of them is our
4 Rain Barrel Program. MWRD is continuing with the
5 Rain Barrel Program in 2025 by offering Cook County
6 residents discounted pricing while supplies last.
7 Rain barrels capture rainwater from the roof and
8 save it for later use. They can help prevent
9 basement backups, street flooding, and sewer
10 overflows by keeping rainwater out of your sewer
11 system.

12 Even if you don't garden, a rain barrel
13 can be extremely useful for chores. You can not
14 only water your lawn or garden, but you can also
15 wash your car, you can wash dirty work boots or your
16 car mats, anything that doesn't require super clean
17 tap water.

18 The MWRD rain barrel pricing is listed.
19 It's \$25.50 each, \$10.50 if you are over the age of
20 65. That is with the delivery included. It
21 comes --

22 MR. BENNETT: Does that come with a
23 high-pressure hose?

24 MS. ADAMS: It comes with an overflow

1 hose. It comes with a mosquito filter screen and
2 the overflow adapter and spigot, so everything that
3 you would need to install it to your gutters.
4 There's also instructions on the website on how to
5 install it.

6 All right. Got another program. It's
7 Restore the Canopy program. We provide free native
8 tree saplings through this program which can help
9 reduce flooding by soaking up stormwater. You can
10 pick these up every Wednesday from April through
11 October from 9:00 to noon at MWRD reclamation
12 plants. These will also be available at some of our
13 community outreach events this summer, but every
14 Wednesday they'll definitely be at the plants while
15 supplies last.

16 If you have an order of 50 or more, you
17 can complete a form on line and we can fulfill as
18 well. Also note that saplings can grow 50 to
19 80 feet tall before you plant them.

20 All right. We have also got some upcoming
21 events. So there's the Calumet Water Reclamation
22 Plant open house and tours. This is on Saturday,
23 May 10th, noon to 3:00 PM. This is an open house
24 in conjunction with Chicago Water Week. The public

1 will have the opportunity to visit without advance
2 reservations to learn how we are recovering
3 resources and transforming water. Parking is free.
4 All ages are welcome. We just ask that you please
5 wear closed toe shoes.

6 There's a ceremony for the opening of the
7 Nicholas J. Melas Centennial Fountain which will
8 open for the season on Thursday, May 15th, at
9 2:00 PM, weather permitting. The MWRD will host a
10 very brief ceremony in coordination with 42nd Ward
11 Alderman Brendan Reilly. The fountain was
12 constructed in honor of the MWRD's 100-year
13 anniversary in 1989 and named in honor of Nicholas
14 J. Melas who served as a commissioner from 1962 to
15 1992, and as Board president from 1975 to 1992.
16 During summer months, the fountain periodically
17 sends an 80-foot water arc across the river. So if
18 you want to see them turn that on, you can go to
19 that event.

20 All right. We have got some Monitoring
21 and Research seminars at the Stickney Water
22 Reclamation Plant. These are also available
23 virtually. All seminars start at 10:30 AM on
24 Friday, so usually -- always on Fridays.

1 Reservations are required at least 24 hours in
2 advance, and if you're not an MWRD employee, you can
3 join the mailing list by e-mailing Dr. Heng Zhang at
4 dot e-mail or visit that link on the presentation
5 day -- or you e-mail first and then day of you
6 access via that link.

7 Okay. Lastly, we have our WPC survey.
8 All right. Just by show of hands, who has been
9 attending these meeting for more than a year?

10 Amazing. Okay. So you've seen a full
11 year of how this progresses, so you could probably
12 form an opinion on how things go; and if you have
13 feedback, I would highly encourage you to fill out
14 this five-minute survey that I made. It's user
15 friendly. It's just getting some feedback on how
16 you feel about the content of these meetings, their
17 format, and whatever needs your watershed might have
18 that we can address in this environment.

19 I'm going to put this up at the end of the
20 meeting too so you can have some time as people are
21 trickling out to access it. It was also sent to
22 your e-mail list. But please fill out my survey.
23 I'm closing it tonight at 8:00 PM after this
24 meeting.

1 All right. That's all I have for capital
2 improvements. I'm going to switch over to our other
3 presentation now.

4 MR. BENNETT: Any questions on project --
5 go ahead, Mayor.

6 MR. WASOWICZ: I have a question.
7 Regarding the project for Bedford Park and Justice,
8 I would like to know more about this project. And
9 the question would be when this project is finished,
10 how much of the village can be removed from the
11 floodplain? Because that's of great importance to
12 my residents because they paying exorbitant
13 insurance fees, and if that could be alleviated,
14 that would be a very nice thing. So who can we
15 contact about this project?

16 MR. BENNETT: Mayor, if I can, without
17 answering on behalf of the MWRD, the project we have
18 in our town, when it is complete, we will work with
19 the city engineer, our city engineer and the
20 building department to file. What you have to do is
21 refile areas affected with FEMA, and based upon the
22 end result of the project, they will then determine
23 how many homes you can take out of the watershed,
24 which is really important. It's -- that's usually

1 done, I think, by the city itself, to have to file
2 that documentation.

3 MR. WASOWICZ: Well, add to that, yeah.

4 MR. BENNETT: Is your mic on down there,
5 guys? It should be on red.

6 MR. BRADY: High tech for me. But did,
7 you know, I heard about the project through our
8 engineer about two weeks ago. Thank you. I asked
9 the Summit mayor at a Midway meeting a week ago. He
10 didn't know a thing about it. So I think it's got
11 to be communicated a little. I mean, we're ecstatic
12 to hear about it. Kris --

13 MR. WASOWICZ: Yes.

14 MR. BRADY: -- same thing.

15 Is there a chance that it's going to get
16 done or you won't know until you figure out the
17 moneys?

18 MR. WASOWICZ: Well, some those projects
19 last very long time.

20 MR. BRADY: Yes.

21 MR. WASOWICZ: We know that.

22 MS. ADAMS: Yeah, I'm going to get back to
23 you.

24 MR. BENNETT: Go ahead.

1 MR. KRATZER: Joe Kratzer with MWRD.

2 Yeah, we really just got started on this
3 project; we just kicked it off. We had done the
4 planning study mentioned in the presentation to look
5 at different alternatives for all the communities
6 affected there. I think you're on 71st Street
7 ditch; right?

8 MR. WASOWICZ: Correct.

9 MR. KRATZER: Then Bedford Park, along
10 Archer, the --

11 MR. BRADY: The viaduct.

12 MR. KRATZER: -- viaduct is a big issue.
13 We are looking at advancing probably multiple
14 projects out of this design work, and we expect to
15 move forward from the preliminary design that's done
16 through final design and towards construction in
17 multiple projects with this project.

18 Our -- at the point where we finished the
19 planning, the preliminary and moved to final, we had
20 a new project manager assigned. They'll be reaching
21 out to you and your public works and your engineers,
22 staff, to make sure that you're aware of what the
23 steps are. So far they haven't really done anything
24 but maybe gone and done the survey work. But the

1 concepts that were put forward do intend to, you
2 know, help provide flood relief.

3 Now, one thing I want to comment on. I've
4 been working in stormwater management for over
5 20 years now at MWRD, and I do understand the
6 importance of getting homeowners some relief from
7 flood insurance. But I always like to advocate for
8 if you're removed from the floodplain -- that's a
9 process, Mayor, like you said, with FEMA -- there's
10 no guarantee because you get to that stage of the
11 project, you have to complete the project, provide
12 the modeling. There's a lot of things that happen.
13 It takes about a year to get FEMA to change a map,
14 if not longer.

15 Even if you do have a resident or multiple
16 residents that come out of the floodplain, we always
17 encourage them to maintain some flood insurance
18 because there can always be a bigger storm. Right?
19 If you're removed from the floodplain as a resident,
20 you can get reduced rate flood insurance because
21 you're no longer in that floodplain, and it's a
22 fraction of the cost of what they're probably paying
23 now.

24 So I just want to mention that in this

1 forum because we hear a lot of comments about
2 wanting to remove people from the floodplain. Our
3 goal is to remove the risk of flooding and there's
4 that ancillary benefit of reducing the floodplain
5 that could end up saving people money in their
6 insurance bills. But we also want to be cognizant
7 that there could always be a bigger storm. Don't
8 tell all your residents cancel your flood insurance
9 after you do it, but --

10 MR. WASOWICZ: No, that's not my
11 intention. How many years, Mayor, I have been
12 talking about this project?

13 MR. BENNETT: Yeah, one of the things --
14 things -- the points here is that with the watershed
15 obligations now under the MWRD -- I shouldn't say
16 obligations, the authority, they were to from day
17 one pick projects that they thought were of
18 substance that they would go ahead and plan and try
19 to improve. In this case, obviously it wasn't a
20 city or village initiating the project. You're
21 doing it as one of the regional-type projects.

22 MR. KRATZER: It is, yeah.

23 MR. BENNETT: So that's why apparently,
24 Mayor, not necessarily confused, but you guys have

1 not been informed yet. So they can initiate
2 projects on their own, and hopefully pay for it all;
3 correct?

4 MR. KRATZER: We always look for
5 partnerships, and we will. And actually, this is a
6 great example of one because we going to bring in,
7 you know, work that IDOT -- leverage work that IDOT
8 is already doing. I'm sure we'll be pursuing some
9 federal funding if there's still some to be pursued.
10 And any other possible partners, we are going to be
11 looking for help where we can because then we can
12 stretch our resources even farther.

13 MR. BRADY: And related, when we heard
14 about this, we started planning just a little bit
15 with our engineer, but we want to -- our sewers are
16 separated for the stormwater and the sanitary. We
17 want combine them then because I think that will fit
18 with the project, and that's something obviously
19 we'll do.

20 MR. KRATZER: Yeah, I think our goal is to
21 kind of straighten out all the drainage issues,
22 provide relief for the existing sewer systems, and
23 take advantage of the fact that the Sanitary and
24 Ship Canal is right there to provide, you know, a

1 better outlet for all that there.

2 And then detention storage is big
3 component. If, you know, if you just find another
4 place to push the water, you're going to create a
5 problem somewhere else. So storage is also a key
6 component of that.

7 MR. WASOWICZ: And please do not
8 misunderstand this. I'm very happy that you guys
9 finally got around to it because we have been
10 pushing for this for many, many, many years.

11 MR. KRATZER: Yeah. There's a lot of
12 these projects now that are getting started that I'm
13 really hoping to see done before I end my career
14 too.

15 MR. WASOWICZ: I'm not getting any
16 younger, to that point.

17 MR. KRATZER: Thank you.

18 MR. BENNETT: Just a follow-up question,
19 Clare. You mentioned 39 projects. Those are active
20 projects right now in the watershed?

21 MS. ADAMS: Yeah, let's go all the way
22 back. Oh, think the number was 39. Some of them
23 are completed.

24 MR. BENNETT: I guess the point of my

1 question is, that's updated annually, so do you see
2 more projects come into our watershed that's on the
3 books or possibly get on the books?

4 MS. ADAMS: We update this map quarterly
5 for every meeting.

6 MR. BENNETT: Okay. This is a current --

7 MS. ADAMS: Yes.

8 MR. BENNETT: Okay. I don't know how many
9 towns may have applied for a project last year and
10 now it's in this program.

11 MS. ADAMS: I actually don't know the
12 number, but I can get back to you if you would like
13 to know.

14 MR. BENNETT: No, that's fine.

15 The second question is, just talking to
16 the mayor, Orland Township has a project.
17 Unfortunately, our townships which are part of, you
18 know, this organization very seldom come, attend our
19 meetings. I don't know if the District can reach
20 out to those townships. I know they're shrinking in
21 size so maybe their watershed projects are going to
22 be involved more so with cities and villages and not
23 the township itself, but obviously that's a major
24 project in Orland Township. They haven't been here,

1 so obviously you've had some communication with them
2 to get this thing, to get their project rolling.

3 MR. KRATZER: Yeah. In fact, that
4 township, the arrangement is with the highway
5 department, the road district.

6 MR. BENNETT: Yeah, their highway
7 commissioner.

8 MR. KRATZER: Yeah. And there was a new
9 commissioner-elect. So we are trying to get in
10 touch with the current and the new to make that
11 transition.

12 MR. BENNETT: And I know the obligation of
13 the District is to include all parties within the
14 Cal-Sag watershed. Just, again, I don't know what's
15 going on with some of the townships, whether they
16 don't have activity going on or they've shrunk their
17 unincorporated areas to a point where they don't --

18 MR. KRATZER: We know they have flooding
19 problems, but, yeah.

20 MR. BENNETT: I would think so.

21 MR. PEKAU: I will tell you in
22 Orland Park, Orland Park itself doesn't really have
23 any flooding issues. Our flooding issues are all
24 Orland Township and state highways. So everything

1 else, as far as village itself, is fine. But there
2 are some major issues in the township not too far
3 from Orland Park. And Cook County also -- it's
4 unincorporated, so they continue to approve things
5 that make the projects, make the problem worse so.

6 MR. BENNETT: And this --

7 MR. PEKAU: -- engaging the township
8 should be there already.

9 MR. BENNETT: With this watershed,
10 obviously they have an opportunity. Again, that's
11 my point about reaching out to the townships,
12 especially the bigger ones, to get them to be
13 participants in this so they can see and possibly
14 plan themselves or submit projects themselves, but
15 without knowing.

16 MS. SMITH: Vicky Smith. They are
17 invited, all of them, including unincorporated Cook
18 County, which they used to always come. The
19 townships have been spread -- I, for the September
20 meeting, will make it a point to try to get them to
21 come. I will make phone calls. But they are
22 invited. They all get e-mails. And they used --
23 some are sporadic, they used to come early on, but
24 we have not had them in a while. But for the

1 September meeting, I will make a point because any
2 new officials will have been sworn in by then. So I
3 will work on that, Mayor, and try to get more
4 township people there.

5 MR. BENNETT: To the MWRD, townships,
6 again, most of them that would be involved in
7 certain unincorporated areas which overlaps
8 Cook County, who would initiate a project, the
9 township or the County? How would you work that out
10 with them?

11 MR. KRATZER: Joe Kratzer again. The
12 townships can apply, just like a municipality, to
13 our partnership programs. And then if there's a
14 regional project where we have -- I think we talked,
15 it wasn't quite regional, but there was a project in
16 Midlothian, Bremen Township, and Crestwood. So we
17 will work with the townships, but a lot of times
18 they don't have a lot of resources to bring to, you
19 know, finding solutions or they're kind of like in
20 between two communities.

21 But we do reach out to them every time we
22 have a partnership, call for projects for our
23 partnership programs. We send it out to all the
24 townships. And we do hear from some of them, but

1 not very many.

2 MR. BENNETT: And again, referring to
3 Cook County, I would think if township felt they
4 couldn't come close to resources, with the County
5 then or encourage the County then to get involved
6 with them to possibly cooperate or potentially fund
7 these or participate in the funding of these
8 projects.

9 MR. KRATZER: Yeah, that has happened on
10 occasion too. We worked with Cook County Highway
11 Department to help advance a project on an
12 unincorporated area. So it's possible, it's just
13 not the norm. It just -- we need to kind of, like
14 you said, Vicky, just kind of keep pushing them to
15 get more and more involved in the watershed planning
16 process.

17 MR. BENNETT: And certainly the
18 municipality, if they're adjacent to an
19 unincorporated area, we contact the township to help
20 them or assist them in flooding project that's, as
21 we all know, it's -- they're not sitting there.
22 They cross over to other towns and stream and
23 creeks, flow through not only unincorporated areas
24 but cities themselves so.

1 Just a thought going forward with the
2 townships. I remember in the early days we did have
3 attendance by them.

4 MS. SMITH: Cook County used to always
5 have someone. We'll work on it.

6 MR. BENNETT: And Cook County too, yeah.

7 MS. SMITH: For September, I will work on
8 that.

9 MR. KRATZER: If they knew what they're
10 missing food wise, they'd probably be here.

11 MR. BENNETT: We encourage them all. And
12 the variety each month too.

13 I'm sorry, any other questions on capital
14 projects?

15 (No response.)

16 MR. BENNETT: Clare, thank you. Moving on
17 is?

18 MS. ADAMS: All right. I'm going to just
19 take a second here to switch our slides.

20 MS. REYES: Hello, everyone. I'm Dayana
21 Reyes, and I am presenting for the Watershed
22 Management Ordinance and Infiltration and Inflow
23 Control Program. I'm an associate civil engineer,
24 and I'm with the permit unit.

1 So this is just a friendly reminder that
2 we have updated our websites. So if you go to
3 mwrdd.org/wmo, you'll be easily able to submit a
4 permit application, instructions on how to use
5 WPASS, and be able to make a payment.

6 We have updated our checklist, and this is
7 meant to be able to help co-permittees and
8 permittees and also design engineers. So we have a
9 minimum acceptance requirement list all items
10 required for the District to assign the application
11 a permit number and to begin review.

12 On the left side we have a minimum
13 issuance checklist, and this was based on Article 4,
14 5, 6, and 7 of the WMO. Depending on your
15 development or your project, this -- some
16 requirements may not apply or some might not be
17 included in this checklist.

18 Oh. Please note that these are not
19 required for you to submit a project, but they are
20 guidelines to help you to make the process a lot
21 easier.

22 We also have an amendment to the WMO, and
23 the following WMO articles and appendices were
24 recently amended including some updates, minor

1 clarification, revised section layout, and I'll be
2 covering some of those today. If you'd like to
3 learn more, there's a summary available on our
4 website.

5 The recent amendments were approved by the
6 Board of Commissioners on May 2nd, 2024, and
7 January 9, 2025. For update in May 2024 amendment,
8 this mostly targeted by the change of the Army
9 Corps. Previously, the WMO required applicants to
10 request a JD from the Army Corps wetlands were
11 present or within a hundred feet of the development.
12 The Army Corps has decided to, based on their
13 workload, to not prioritize JDs, and in doing so,
14 WMO permits were being delayed. And in response to
15 that, the WMO was amended to minimize the
16 requirements for JDs.

17 For the January 2025 amendment, this was
18 more of a typical amendment with updates to various
19 sections. If you would like to know about the red
20 line or the most recent, please check out our
21 website, and you can see a summary of the changes.
22 Some of these changes include the pilot study
23 deadline which was from 2025 to 2026 for offsite
24 retention-based practice and detention facilities

1 within the Lower Des Plaines or Little Calumet River
2 watershed planning areas. Other updates were for
3 new or reconstructed outfalls to District-controlled
4 waterways or to Lake Michigan will require a permit.
5 Previously all outfalls to waterways were required.

6 It's also any modification to a control
7 structure, facility modification, or storage volume
8 over District permitted volume control facility,
9 detention facility, or compensatory storage. This
10 facility would require a permit.

11 If you are unsure what is a
12 District-controlled waterway, we do an Appendix D
13 and exhibit that shows all the controlled waterways
14 for the District.

15 Now we are going to talk about Article 5.
16 So for the on-site detention-based practices and
17 off-site detention facility, we have added a
18 grandfathered provision for projects in the pilot
19 program area that wish to utilize off-site
20 detention-based practices and off-site detention
21 facilities supply sets after the project studies
22 ends in 2026. Applicants may seek to book to
23 arrange offsite volume of supply sites if the
24 project are located in the Lower Des Plaines or the

1 Little Calumet River.

2 Some other updates are the development
3 area maybe re-aggregated up to 0.5 acres once
4 detention is provided to a previously aggregated
5 development in full.

6 So I believe a very important one is that
7 detention storage is not -- will not have to be
8 required for development on properties holdings
9 immediately adjacent to waterways as specified in
10 Appendix D.

11 Now we'll go to Article 6 updates which
12 include floodplain, wetlands, and riparian. For
13 floodplains, there's a new provision noting
14 compensatory storage is not required for fill within
15 the flood protection area of Lake Michigan. For
16 mitigation credits for wetlands, there's going to be
17 no longer a hierarchy. And then for riparian
18 environment, the development that impacts the lesser
19 of the 2 percent or 1/10th of the acre of on-site
20 riparian environments do not require mitigation when
21 said impacts are forced to water outfalls.

22 Then for Article 7, we have some updates
23 of what defines qualified sewers. We also have some
24 updates for direct connections to District

1 facilities. And then we also have for backflow
2 prevention. So backflow prevention device required
3 at the point of connection between proposed private
4 storm sewers and combined sewer systems.

5 We are also updating our time frame. So
6 we are now basically updating any simple projects to
7 have an official time frame of 15 working days and
8 review time of 15 days as well. Complex permits,
9 which we define as permits that require detention,
10 the D legacy, outfalls, Schedule H which is
11 floodplain, and then W, which is wetland, would be
12 25 initial submittal time, and then for review once
13 it resubmits would be 15 days. This would also
14 include facility connections as well.

15 Another of our appendixes that were
16 updated were for definitions and for fees. Now
17 there's a 750 flat fee for violations.

18 What's the next step? So we are planning
19 to revise our permit application forms, so please
20 make sure to check our website because Schedule O
21 will be changing and a couple other schedules as
22 well.

23 So these are the following articles that
24 are going to be updated next, and they're going to

1 be updated to match the WMO amendment and make sure
2 that there's consistency throughout.

3 So now that we've talked about the WMO,
4 we'll talk about construction. So construction
5 under issued WMO permit is monitored by our MWRD's
6 local sewer system section field office unit.
7 Please e-mail them or call them, and let us know
8 before you start construction. And please be
9 reminded that development for which a WMO permit is
10 required cannot begin until MWRD has issued a
11 permit.

12 And then just so you know, please make
13 sure that new staff are aware about the WMO and that
14 access engineers and permittees, the village is
15 expected to inspect the work under construction and
16 designing RFIs.

17 We also have a new flow chart for
18 permittee and co-permittees. On the left, there are
19 next steps for co-permittees that notify the field
20 office before construction, coordinating with the
21 inspector, and then submitting requests for final
22 inspection.

23 And on the right are steps for permittees
24 like monitoring the jobsite, notifying the District

1 if work is occurring without an inspector, and then
2 attending final inspection as well.

3 Now we'll move on to the Infiltration and
4 Inflow Control Program. The annual summary report
5 is due March 1st of each year. The five-year
6 period for short-term requirement is past due. If
7 you are unsure if you are in compliance, please
8 contact Ann Gray. And once short-term requirements
9 are completed and approved by MWRD, you will be
10 transitioned into the long-term program. If you
11 have not done so, please share your atlas with us.
12 We would greatly appreciate it.

13 And these are our contact information for
14 permit determination. If you're unsure if a permit
15 is required, you can e-mail the correct person. If
16 you would like to set up a pre-application meeting
17 or you want to know about the permits in that area
18 before you submit a new, these are the contact
19 information that you would need. And I would highly
20 recommend you join our e-mail list for WMO updates,
21 especially because we're about to have some
22 schedules being updated.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. BENNETT: Thank you. To the mayors

1 and probably more public works commissioners that
2 are here, with the whole permitting process and the
3 changes that take place, I've not yet heard from any
4 of the towns the problems they have or delay in
5 process or the process itself. And if you're here,
6 that's the point of this meeting, certainly the
7 point of working with the District if there are
8 problems. The changes constantly seem to take
9 place, so please, if you do have something going on
10 and you're not sure of, please let the District know
11 or let us know and we can pass it on to the
12 District, but it seems like even the changes that
13 have taken place, things have been running fairly
14 smooth.

15 Any question or comments permitting
16 process?

17 MR. WASOWICZ: I just remember, if I may.
18 Kris Wasowicz, Justice.

19 MR. BENNETT: Mayor, can you turn your
20 mic, and press that button.

21 MR. WASOWICZ: I remember, and you mayors
22 remember that too, when the MWRD first came up with
23 this ordinance, it was very hotly discussed; and the
24 fact is, it did affect negatively redevelopment in

1 Cook County, and some of our proposals were adopted.
2 Since then, nothing was hotly discussed; and like
3 every good bureaucratic agency, that ordinance
4 evolves. And it doesn't evolve to be simpler,
5 easier, but it's getting more complicated, more
6 restrictive.

7 How about this, guys? How about if the
8 engineers that do the projects for villages got
9 certified by you, subject to review of the plans
10 that they will come up with, to cut all this stuff,
11 and you could concentrate on the projects that you
12 finance and you do. Because we having a redundancy
13 here. Those people go to college, just like you,
14 get their engineering degree, and all they pretty
15 much need is a certification by you. Village will
16 do the project. You will check it out. We would be
17 responsible if something is going on, that it's not
18 up to par. And we could avoid all of this
19 bureaucratic rigmarole. Because believe me, filling
20 those applications and getting with all the
21 information, it's a pain in the neck and it takes
22 time.

23 MR. KRATZER: Point taken.

24 MR. WASOWICZ: And the project that cost a

1 million dollars, after you guys get on it two years
2 later is \$2 million. Where do I get the million
3 dollars extra?

4 MS. REYES: I do want to answer your
5 question. Right now we actually do have authorizing
6 municipalities. They went through a process to
7 allow their engineers to be able to review it. What
8 we review is only the sanitary connection or the
9 sewer connection. So there is actually a process of
10 municipalities being able to authorize their own
11 permits.

12 I'm going to come back with more
13 information on if they're still allowing other
14 municipalities to submit, but Orland Park is an
15 authorized municipality.

16 MR. WASOWICZ: Okay. So there is some
17 common sense. Thank you.

18 MR. KRATZER: Just to address one of your
19 other comments. So our program for the capital
20 projects is completely separate from the permitting
21 program. So we are focused. We have a full-time
22 dedicated staff working on those projects. They
23 have a full-time dedicated staff working on the
24 permitting.

1 And just going back to some of the other
2 comments like, you know, the unincorporated areas
3 you hear, the county may have issued building
4 permits that sometimes make things worse. What
5 we're trying to do is make sure that when
6 development happens, it's done responsibly so that
7 you're not creating more problems with that
8 development.

9 But again, for authorized municipalities
10 like Orland and there are some others around the
11 county, they have taken the steps to go through that
12 process and it works very well. We just basically
13 have to check the sanitary sewer details and issue
14 that piece of the permitting, but otherwise, you
15 know, it's really what you're describing so.

16 MR. WASOWICZ: So in other words, if my
17 engineer would come to you and get certified by you,
18 would that be fine?

19 MR. KRATZER: It's not an engineer, it's a
20 community that gets certified.

21 MR. WASOWICZ: Okay.

22 MR. KRATZER: And then they can actually
23 issue the WMO permits for their -- in the community.

24 MR. WASOWICZ: I'd like to know more about

1 this process.

2 MR. KRATZER: Yeah, there's actually -- I
3 was just looking at our website, and we can send you
4 a link. There's an FAQ about the authorized
5 municipality process, so we can provide that.

6 MR. WASOWICZ: Sounds like a plan.

7 MR. PEKAU: Village of Orland Park. So it
8 does help, does work. Don't kid yourself. It's
9 still -- there's still a lot of bureaucracy for a
10 lot of other stuff; but for some things, it really
11 does simplify the process. There are still some
12 things that it doesn't, but it does help for a lot
13 of stuff so.

14 MR. BENNETT: A lot of it is the daily
15 stuff that goes on for permitting. You have
16 projects and et cetera that go on in the town, and
17 that's where that would kill some time or certainly
18 reduce the review process, so to speak.

19 MR. PEKAU: But the bureaucracy is still
20 there.

21 MR. WASOWICZ: I know. Thank you.

22 MR. BENNETT: Any other questions
23 regarding?

24 MS. REYES: Have any of you guys dealt

1 with new review process? Do you guys find it faster
2 or slower?

3 MR. BENNETT: That was kind of my point of
4 asking the questions too. If there's problems with
5 that, including bureaucratic ones --

6 MS. REYES: So for us --

7 MR. BENNETT: -- it's an open forum to
8 speak your piece.

9 MS. REYES: So for us internally, it's
10 actually helped us a lot. So before it was 15 days
11 and when you would resubmit, it would be 10. So
12 what would happen was new permits were basically
13 given less time to review and was taking us longer.
14 So now that everyone was coming back at 15, it put
15 everyone who was resubmitted in the correct line and
16 nobody was any more cutting the line basically.

17 So it made us able to handle our workload
18 a lot faster. So on our end, we are seeing better
19 results, so I was just curious to know if anyone
20 also is also experiencing the same thing.

21 MR. BENNETT: No, but as a suggestion
22 going forward, which you opened up your suggestion
23 box, is that there could be some topics just like
24 this that could be discussed as a topic going

1 forward, whether it's identifying how to become a
2 certified community and/or permit processing, I
3 think that would be probably be appreciated.

4 MS. REYES: Thank you.

5 MR. PEKAU: And a better topic than rain
6 barrels.

7 MS. ADAMS: Yeah, it's multiple of you
8 feel this way or any one, this is something. Great
9 information I would love to hear about in the
10 survey.

11 MR. BENNETT: That was my --

12 MS. ADAMS: So that if this is programming
13 that need like more details on future WPC meetings,
14 that's excellent feedback to put down in the survey,
15 which I will make available at the end of the
16 meeting again.

17 MR. BENNETT: Any other questions,
18 comments?

19 (No response.)

20 MR. BENNETT: Thank you, MWRD.

21 We won't meet again until September. So a
22 lot more information to gather on rain barrels
23 between now and then.

24 With that in mind, ladies and gentlemen, I

1 thank you all. I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

2 MR. PEKAU: So moved. Orland Park.

3 MR. RYAN: Second. Village of Alsip.

4 MR. BENNETT: Moved and seconded. All in
5 favor, signify in the usual manner.

6 (Chorus of ayes.)

7 MR. BENNETT: Motion carries. Meeting
8 adjourned. Thank you, all.

9 (WHEREUPON, at 6:57 PM the
10 meeting was adjourned.)

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I do set my hand at
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