



City of Blaine

Natural Resource Conservation Board

August 19, 2025 | 7:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM.

2. Roll Call

Present – Chair Rafferty, Boardmembers Anderson, Dahl, Gramstad, Mereness, Panning, Truchon.

Others Present: Stormwater Coordinator Megan Hedstrom.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

4. Approval of Minutes

- 4.1. 2025-421 Approval of the March 18, 2025 NRCB Minutes
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Boardmember Panning requested the blank line in Section 6.1 be filled in by staff.

MOVED by Boardmember Truchon, seconded by Boardmember Anderson, to approve the minutes of the March 18, 2025 board meeting as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Open Forum for Citizen Input

No one appeared to address the NRCB.

6. New Business

- 6.1.** 2025-422 Update from ISG on the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Wetland Bank.
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Stormwater Coordinator Hedstrom stated monitoring work began earlier this spring within Site 7 in Blaine Wetland Sanctuary. ISG and Engineering staff have conducted meetings with the Army Corps of Engineers, Board of Water and Soil Resources, and Rice Creek Watershed District to review preliminary monitoring data and the proposed maintenance plan for Fall of 2025. In the upcoming months, preliminary herbicide treatments, prescribed burns and mowing, grazing and haying will be conducted while monitoring continues. Monitoring results from 2025 will be compiled into a year-end report later this fall which will be presented to the Natural Resource Conservation Board at either the October or January meeting.

Boardmember Anderson asked if the fen areas were fed by natural springs. Ms. Hedstrom reported this was the case.

Boardmember Anderson inquired if there was a date certain in the spring when the burns would occur. Ms. Hedstrom explained that in the past burns were held when the snow was out in the middle of March through mid-May.

Boardmember Truchon questioned if ISG had identified where herbicides would be used. Ms. Hedstrom commented GPS areas have been identified where the canary reed grass and other invasives will be treated. She reported there would not be a broad treatment of the entire wetland sanctuary.

- 6.2.** 2025-444 Update on Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Trail System development from Stantec
Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Ms. Hedstrom stated the city and Stantec team met with the watershed and permitting agencies to review the existing wetland banks and previous wetland delineations. Current wetland delineations were required by the agencies for all sanctuary area outside of the wetland banks. The wetland delineations are complete and final wetland/upland delineations and significant plant community observations are being reviewed. Once complete, final design will resume to make alignment modifications and reestablish boardwalk/gravel trail transitions accordingly. We should be ready for any final reviews of the 100% Construction Documents needed prior to bid letting by late August or the first weeks of September.

Chair Rafferty asked what portion of the project would be bid in late August or early September. Ms. Hedstrom reported the three sections on the southern portion of the wetland sanctuary would be bid. She reviewed the location of these three sections on a map with the board. She explained these three sections would allow for connections to the three neighborhoods to the south. She stated once the numbers come in, staff can begin

planning for when the remaining trail sections can be completed.

Boardmember Truchon questioned if the watershed district had delineated the wetland area. Ms. Hedstrom stated this work had been completed by the watershed district and Stantec.

Boardmember Truchon encouraged staff to look into new building materials for the boardwalk in order to find a material that lasts longer. Ms. Hedstrom indicated composite materials were being considered given how the price for lumber was on the rise. She noted the contractors would be allowed to present bids with either type of building material.

Boardmember Anderson recommended ditch maintenance be completed prior to the trail segments being constructed. Ms. Hedstrom indicated the city's portion of ditch would be abandoned, which meant no maintenance would be required by the city.

Boardmember Panning asked how the rare plants would be addressed or relocated. Ms. Hedstrom explained this would depend on the process that is followed by the city. She indicated the goal would be to avoid the rare plants all together.

Further discussion ensued regarding how the watershed district addresses invasive/nuisance weeds and ditch management.

Boardmember Panning expressed concern with how the wildness from the wetland sanctuary was spreading into residential backyards. Ms. Hedstrom stated she would look into this concern further. She noted open space boundary signs had been posted near the wetlands.

Boardmember Truchon asked if the trail alignment could be altered. Ms. Hedstrom explained the proposed trail alignment has been proposed in order to lessen the impact on the existing homeowners.

Boardmember Truchon thanked staff for this information and stated she understood property owners had the right to fence in their rear yards.

6.3. 2025-445 NRCB Updates

Sponsors: Megan Hedstrom, Stormwater Coordinator

Ms. Hedstrom provided the board with an update on the following items:

Pioneer Park Boardwalk - The city hired a contractor to replace some of the boards along with replacing many of the supports along the boardwalk. It is back open and in good condition for walkers and park users to enjoy.

Restoration of Hidden Ponds Park has continued since viewing the project at the June tour. Native grasses are starting to come in more fully and tree replacement projects have been completed. Staff thanked the Anoka County Conservation District for their partnership with the City. Staff reviewed photos of the restoration work that had been completed to date.

It was noted the next NRCB meeting would be Tuesday, October 21 at 7PM.

Boardmember Truchon commented on a culvert that was installed in a neighboring community that would assist with providing safety for pedestrians and turtles.

Boardmember Anderson asked if staff had an update for the board on the city's comprehensive water management plan. Staff had no update for the Board.

Boardmember Anderson inquired if the city had a fund in place to assist with purchasing vacant land for open spaces.

Boardmember Truchon stated it would benefit the city to have a fund in place for unintended acquisitions as this would assist in protecting open space for the community.

Further discussion ensued regarding developments that would be occurring in Lino Lakes and Ham Lake.

7. Adjournment

Chair Rafferty adjourned the meeting at 8:25PM.