

5.02: Anoka County Cooperative Weed Management Partnership

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report.

Board Member Hiatt stated that he noticed that the Rum River Watershed District is not listed.

City Planner Anderson noted that Ramsey staff pointed out that both the Upper Rum River and Lower Rum River WMO's were not included. He stated that a few other agencies that were not listed were pointed out at the meeting as well.

Chairperson Valentine stated that this seems like a very good program. He noted that there are a lot of residents that are trying to establish restoration projects and weeds are a huge component of those projects.

Board Member Hiatt stated that there is a great diversity included in the list, from inner city to rural cities like Ramsey. He asked if there is a sense that there will be fair and equal treatment to all the entities involved. He wanted to ensure that there is equality in decision making.

City Planner Anderson stated that there is a working group that is working to develop a baseline that would be equitable across the County. He stated that the funding source is \$20,000 but that is to be spread County wide. He noted that he is looking at this more from an educational standpoint, as this will provide quick access to educational materials that were created by other entities. He provided an example of featuring a weed of the month in City newsletters and on the website.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated that he was not aware that this was a County wide problem and is excited that Ramsey is being included. He stated that the EPB does have a Work Plan and was unsure that noxious weeds were included on the plan. He cautioned the group to temper the item to ensure that the Work Plan can still be accomplished. He noted that if this item becomes more of a focus, perhaps something else from the Work Plan can be placed on the back burner. He suggested that perhaps someone on the EPB sit in on the working group as there is an education piece involved in the process and the EPB is a voice to the residents.

Chairperson Valentine asked if any Board Members would be interested in being involved in more depth, should that be the direction.

Board Member Covart stated that she would volunteer if the schedule aligns with her schedule.

Board Member Hiatt asked if City Planner Anderson would be able to attend.

City Planner Anderson noted that the meetings take place during the work day. He stated that he continues to attend these meetings. He noted that the meeting the previous week was a high-level and basic meeting. He stated that the EPB Work Plan is a three-year plan and therefore the Board has the ability to review items in addition to the four items listed on the plan. He stated that he does not envision that this will be a large drain on the Board resources as the Conservation District will work as the fiscal agent for grant management. He noted that there is already information on

invasive species listed on the City website and therefore tweaking that information should not take a great deal of time and effort. He did not anticipate this being a large taxing of staff resources and should not pull the Board away from the priorities on the Work Plan. He stated that he can send the information on the next scheduled meeting to the Board Members and interested members can attend the meeting if desired.