

**Clean Water Council
Budget and Outcomes Committee (BOC) Meeting Agenda
Friday, December 5, 2025, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Hybrid

2025 BOC Members: Steve Besser (BOC Chair), Dick Brainerd (BOC Vice-Chair), Steve Christensen, Warren Formo, Brad Gausman, Holly Hatlewick, Annie Knight, Fran Miron

9:30 Regular Business

- Introductions
- Approve agenda & September meeting minutes
- Chair and Staff update

9:45 Public Comment

Any member of the public wishing to address the Council regarding something not on the agenda is invited to do so as a part of this agenda item.

10:00 (DISCUSSION ITEM) Budget Forecast

The November Forecast was released on December 4th, 2024. Information at this time is at a coarser level, with Clean Water Fund-specific information anticipated later. We will review what we can and prepare for how we want to discuss the forecast with the Full Council later this month.

10:45 Break

11:00 (DISCUSSION ITEM) KPI Dashboard: Review of next iteration

Agency staff have been working hard since the last meeting to refine the draft dashboard concepts we looked at in November. This meeting will provide an opportunity to see how the dashboards are evolving and provide input for next steps.

12:00 Adjourn

Budget and Outcomes Committee Meeting Summary

Clean Water Council (Council)

November 7, 2025, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Committee Members present: Steve Besser (Committee Chair), Dick Brainerd (Committee Vice Chair), Steve Christenson, Brad Gausman, Holly Hatlewick, and Annie Knight.

Members absent: Fran Miron and Warren Formo.

To watch the Webex video recording of this meeting, please go to <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/clean-water-council/policy-ad-hoc-committee>, or contact [Brianna Frisch](#).

Regular Business

- Introductions
 - Justin Hanson, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR): Note that the Government shutdown at the federal level has not impacted the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) as much due to the state funding. There is a lot of gratitude towards the Clean Water Funds (CWFs), regarding the Watershed Based Implementation Funding (WBIF).
- Approve November 7th meeting agenda along with the September 5th and October 3rd meeting minutes, motion to approve by Dick Brainerd and seconded by Steve Christenson. Motion carries unanimously.
- Chair and Staff update:
 - Jen Kader: There were 159 responses for the Council's survey. In general, the tone of the responses, in aggregate, is that Minnesotans place a high regard on Minnesota's waters. Those familiar with the Council response was high, as it was our target audience. These are folks who know about the Council. We are still missing input from people who don't know about the Council, so there is additional outreach to do, as we move into the next budget cycle. A preliminary analysis will be presented at the full Council meeting.
 - Dick Brainerd: Is there a demographic on what part of the state responders were from? *Answer:* There is a question of which Council member position they can relate to most.
 - December 6th BOC may be cancelled, if the budget forecast has not been shared before December 5th.

No public comment provided at this meeting.

Feedback on Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Dashboard examples (Webex 00:28:30)

Last month, the BOC reviewed the topic of developing a KPI dashboard for the Clean Water Council. This month, we will review a few potential measures that could be used for the dashboard for each of the Strategic Plan Goals. This is for Council members to review each grouping of possible measures to share what they like, what could be improved, and what's missing. Members were in three groups (two in-person in the room, and one virtual) to review potential measures.

- Discussion following the activity:
 - Steve Besser: Our group preferred the simple graphs and charts, as it was easier to understand right away. The other graphs required a deeper dive. There can be a link included for a "deeper dive", so the information was available to those that want to look at greater details of the measure. We need to be cognizant of who might be looking at the dashboard, so most people can understand it, for simplicity.
 - Steve Christenson: Having a KPI dashboard is supported, and having it come out once or twice a year is supported. This first version will not be perfect, but we will continue to focus in on which measures evolve and get better. We are torn between the graphs that are simple and wanting more information. So, the option to have a way to get to those greater details is an important one (like links). We saw pros and cons with each, and thought maybe you need both. In general, the simpler is better. We spend half our money on One Watershed One Plan (1W1P), and so we would like to see a measurement connected to that one.
 - Brad Gausman: Our Strat plan is not the reality of where we are, and we don't want people to think that. We should describe the problem up front, to have the narrative included.
 - Annie Knight: We went through the slides, then pulled back and had an overview discussion. The Performance Report already exists, and it is a heavy lift for the agencies. Having this KPI is hopefully not adding too much additional work, so we don't want to duplicate the good work already but use it in a

better way. The ability to dive into specific programs is helpful to see how they are contributing to the larger goals. So, being able to zone in on some components, is good. Additionally, a graphic across the board talking about a strategy, action, or measure. There are a lot of measures, and how does that bring us back to how it is being invested.

- Key reactions, needs, clear next steps:
 - Jen Kostrzewski, Met Council: In general, if there was any series data, to show trends, we should provide context of when CWFs started, to see that impact on the trajectory. There was shared knowledge of the impact of the CWFs, but that was not shown on the graphs. So, it should be included to show the impact.
 - Annie Knight: Spelling out acronyms would be helpful to Minnesotans. Including when the CWFs came into play (like adding in the logo to the graph at the time) would be helpful. Additionally, defining what a violation is for certain graphs, so it is easier to digest the info presented on the graphs. Explain what a nitrate is, why is there a concern for nitrates, and why we are doing what we are doing for it. We can tell that story, so people do not make assumptions.
 - Jen Kostrzewski, Met Council: We know dashboards are supposed to be clean, and not busy. Perhaps, there is a little information button, so people could scroll over or click on it to provide greater information to the viewers. They would be breadcrumbs for people to follow for greater information.
 - Annie Knight: Perhaps, on each of the dashboard items, there is a link of the programs that are actively addressing the measure. Hovering over it can link to each program. I think that would be particularly helpful for a Council member's perspective.
- Slides: "Drinking water is safe for everyone, everywhere in Minnesota"
 - Steve Christenson: The graphs need some work to make them simpler to understand. Perhaps, it is the wrong map, because you need to know what all is in your water. There is likely something better to use.
 - Glenn Skuta, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA): That concerned me. It is not the finished water, so it could be very misleading on a dashboard.
 - Frieda von Qualen, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH): I agree, there are better options. We can discuss which one might be a better fit moving forward.
- Slides: "Groundwater is clean and available to all in Minnesota" (four slides)
 - Glenn Skuta, MPCA: Trying to display as much information as you can, without it trying to be too busy, is a challenge. Some of the graphics show if a location is getting better or worse, while other show the level of contamination - but we do not know if it is getting better or worse. Perhaps an arrow or color can share the direction of the change happening. It takes a little more interpretation (not sure how much is too much versus not enough). Help the viewer understand the change over time. If you show both kinds of graphics, it hopefully helps share the story of what is happening over time. Yet, still digestible for people.
 - Julie Westerlund, BWSR: Try to make it as obvious as possible what you want the viewer to read into. Response from Jen Kader: Part of this, is that these graphics already exist somewhere. These are coming from different reports, from different agencies, and so there are a lot of inconsistencies.
 - Jen Kostrzewski, Met Council: To build onto what is being said. It is better to have some context provided, versus just a map provided. Making sure there is a measure you want to get out of the map. The next few slides could be interpreted in different ways. I work with this information, but others need that guiding information next to the maps/graphs.
 - Julie Westerlund, BWSR: Should the overall of the measure reflect where the CWFs are being spent? The level of effort going into contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) in comparison to other funds is low. Thinking along that line, is there a way to calibrate it, to some extent? However, on the flipside, an issue that is not getting enough attention, the Council would like more light to shed on it, they could use this to highlight it. It is a conversation for the Council to have.
 - Steve Christenson: Our main theme is that the maps should show both the trend, and if it is good or bad. We need to refine them. In general, we liked these maps, including the water availability.
 - Annie Knight: It is hard to know what percentage of a program goes to which measure. Should the Council indicate somewhere the level of investment the Council has made in this strategy. Is there some kind of way to reveal it, like a pie chart on the dashboard (like we are investing fifty percent of the CWFs in WBIF).
- Slides "Minnesotans will have fishable and swimmable waters throughout the state" – Lakes, rivers and streams, and delisting of impaired waters:
 - These are the surface waters.

- Steve Besser: We had comments on why it is just lakes (versus all the surface waters). We were wondering what that has to do with our progress. When we think about the watershed approach cycle, and these are outputs of where the monitoring is being done across the state. We are making progress across the state, leading to implementation. I do not know if that is interesting to the general Minnesotan, versus the Council? It is a good question to ask. We also talked about the index of biological integrity (IBI) as a measure, and it would apply to rivers and lakes.
 - Response from Glenn Skuta, MPCA: We have a better IBI on rivers. It took longer to develop the lake IBI, so there is not as much data there.
 - Justin Hanson: If the public is your target audience, that could help folks understand it better.
 - Jen Kader: The first audience would be the Council members, but in a public ably available format. This may be where some of the survey data comes in too.
- Slides “All Minnesotans value water and take actions to sustain and protect it.”
 - Glenn Skuta, MPCA: It feels like there are a few things going on here. Measures that are related to what the average citizen can do. There are other programs to spotlight (like water stewardship), that could be included too. Additionally, the Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program, along with the easements up by the Mississippi. These are just examples of the work the CWFs are supporting. It could be included to show the work of the CWFs of actions people can do on the land currently. There is power in showing the actions people are taking now, as a whole, and then spotlight a particular program.
 - *Response from Jen Kader:* Now I want to have a map where people can toggle on and off to view the participation in the different programs.
 - Glenn Skuta, MPCA: We have the help our watersheds, and you can toggle over the best management practices (BMPs). So, perhaps those can be linked.
 - Julie Westerlund, BWSR: Some local government can also have links too – it comes in different varieties and forms, but could also be included to show that work. To show the engagement of the work at this local level.
 - Steve Besser: I am thinking about the We Are Water too. Also, the number of lakes that have lake associations would be helpful too, because those folks are concerned about the quality of their water too. Perhaps, something like that could be helpful.
 - Justin Hanson: I’m not sure how to track that.
 - Jen Kader: From the social side, it would be good to know about it.
 - Jen Kostrzewski: The Met Council recently did an exercise in measures, and we were seeing Met Council measures, and those are the ones that we can control. Then, there were regional measures. You can have both, but you need to define them and explain what they are within your dashboard.
 - Glenn Skuta, MPCA: The WRAPs, GRAPS, and 1W1P guide a lot of what CWFs are doing but also guide a lot of other funds too. Local partners are using these plans to help guide the work.

KPI Dashboard Report Out and Next Steps (Webex 01:20:00)

This is to discuss next steps for developing the KPI dashboard.

- Would members of the BOC like to join a small work group to continue working on this item? It cannot be more than four voting members. This is to work on iterations, prior to the BOC’s review at the next meeting.
- Jen Kader, Annie Knight, and Steve Christenson will plan to meet with Glenn Skuta and Kim Laing at the MPCA, to create a revision of this KPI dashboard for the next BOC meeting. After review by the BOC, it could go to the full Council for review and approval.

Adjournment (Webex 01:21:38)

November budget forecast

Jen's preliminary notes

Forecast information to date is largely focused on the General Fund which, while the forecast is better than it looked in February, is still projecting a deficit for the FY28-29 Biennium. Clean Water Fund-specific items will be out shortly, and further information will be available in advance of the December Full Council meeting.

We were given a heads up that there will be approximately \$12.9M additional funding for the current biennium beyond what was estimated at the end of the legislative session. That's great news!

In the meantime, here are a couple of indicators that I am looking at:

- Published CWF Budget numbers:
 - o CWF FY26-27 Budget approved by the Legislature: \$303,926,000
 - o Close of Session FY26-27 CWF Budget: \$313,284,000 (July 17, 2025)
 - o Close of Session FY28-29 CWF Estimate: \$345,019,000 (July 17, 2025)
- Sales Tax Revenue:
 - o FY26-27: \$15.797B
 - o FY28-29: \$16.462B
- So far in FY26, net sales tax receipts are \$13 million (0.5 percent) higher than the February estimate.

Bottom line: I don't believe we are looking at a smaller budget than FY26-27. More likely similar or a little better.